



## **COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURES**

### **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**Thursday 30 September 2020**  
**SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS AND VIDEO-  
CONFERENCE**

Present: Ms Linda Dillon MLA  
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Video-Conference: Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA  
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA  
Ms Sinéad Bradley MLA  
Mr Gerry Carroll MLA  
Ms Catherine Kelly MLA  
Mr Gary Middleton MLA

In attendance: Nick Mitford (Committee Clerk)  
Stewart Kennedy (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Joanne Keenan (Clerical Officer)

Assembly Official: Mr Raymond McCaffrey (Research Officer)

Apologies: Mr John O'Dowd MLA

The meeting commenced in open session at 3.00pm.

*Mr Raymond McCaffrey joined the meeting at 3.00pm.*

The Chairperson informed Members that John O'Dowd was a made a Member of the Committee on 28 September 2020.

The Committee Clerk informed Members that he had received notification from Mr O'Dowd that he had nominated the Chairperson to vote on his behalf.

**1. Apologies**

As above.

**2. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17 September 2020.

**3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

*Mr Gary Middleton MLA joined the meeting at 3.03pm.*

**4. Members' Statements**

The Chairperson reminded Members that, following a request from the Speaker, the Committee agreed to include Members' Statements in its forward work programme.

*Mr Tom Buchanan MLA joined the meeting at 3.07pm.*

The Committee noted a paper from RalsE on Members' Statements and a letter from the Speaker of 19 February 2020.

The Chairperson welcomed Raymond McCaffrey to the meeting.

Mr Raymond McCaffrey briefed the Committee which was followed by a question and answer session.

*Mr McCaffrey left the meeting at 3.24pm.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to defer its consideration until the deadline of responses from parties and Independent Members have been received and to schedule a further session at the meeting on 4 November 2020.

**5. Review of Standing Order 45A**

The Committee considered amending Standing Order 45A to provide that a party can enter the Official Opposition up to two years following the formation of the Executive.

The Committee considered a response from the Minister of State for Northern Ireland.

The Committee noted that a response from the Executive Office had not been received.

*Agreed:* Following discussions, the Committee agreed to proceed with amending Standing Order 45A.

Mr Gerry Carroll MLA expressed his opposition to proceed with amending Standing Order 45A.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed a draft motion to amend Standing Order 45A.

Mr Gerry Carroll MLA expressed his opposition to the draft motion.

## **6. Budget Setting Methodology**

The Chairperson reminded Members that, at its last meeting and following a request from the Speaker, the Committee agreed to include the “Budget Setting Methodology” to its forward work programme.

The Chairperson advised Members that, as it’s the role of the Audit Committee to scrutinise the Commission’s budget and potentially utilise the “Methodology”, the Audit Committee had agreed to seek advice on the best approach to codify its role.

*Agreed:* Given the cross-cutting element of this issue, the Committee agreed the following:

- Write to the Chairperson of the Audit Committee confirming the Committee’s decision to include this issue in its forward work programme;
- Forward the Speaker’s correspondence to the Audit Committee for information; and
- Seek an update from the Audit Committee once it has concluded its deliberations.

## **7. Proxy Voting**

The Committee gave further consideration to the instances in which proxy voting could be retained on a more permanent basis and how this might be reflected in Standing Orders.

*Agreed:* Following discussions, the Committee agreed the following:

- Commission research on proxy voting;
- Write again to its stakeholders who had not yet responded; and
- Schedule a briefing from a Business Clerk to brief the Committee on the use of proxy voting, as well as a procedural view of the current temporary provisions.

## **8. Correspondence**

The Committee noted a number of items of correspondence including responses from the Chairperson's Liaison Group, the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee regarding the temporary provisions in Standing Orders 110 to 116.

## **9. Forward Work Programme**

The Chairperson advised Members that the additional topics in relation to the New Decade, New Approach agreement, proxy voting and budget scrutiny, as agreed by the Committee at its last meeting, would be factored in to the forward work programme where necessary.

The Committee noted a paper from RalsE on legislative consent motions and agreed to schedule a briefing from RalsE at its next meeting.

## **10. Chairperson's Business**

There was no Chairperson's Business.

## **11. Any other Business**

*Agreed:* the Committee agreed to print hard copies of the amendments to Standing Orders for Members' copies.

## **12. Date, time and place of next meeting**

*Agreed:* It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 14 October at 2pm in Room 29.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 3.42pm.

**Linda Dillon MLA**  
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures  
14 October 2020