



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee on Procedures

Minutes of Proceedings

15 September 2021

Meeting Location: Virtual Meeting

Present by Video-Conference:

Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA (Chairperson)

Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA

Ms Nicola Brogan MLA

Ms Joanne Bunting MLA

Mr Gerry Carroll MLA

Ms Linda Dillon MLA

Mr William Humphrey MLA

Apologies: Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

In Attendance by Video-Conference:

Emer Boyle (Committee Clerk)

Paul Gill (Clerk Assistant)

Stewart Kennedy (Assistant Clerk)

Joanne Keenan (Clerical Officer)



Northern Ireland
Assembly

The meeting commenced at 2.34pm in open session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30 June 2021.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Statement of Entitlements for an Official Opposition – Draft response

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that Mr Trevor Reaney previously briefed the Committee on his Review of the Statement of Entitlements for an Official Opposition and that the Committee had been given the opportunity to respond to those report recommendations which had particular procedural implications.

The Committee noted a paper from the Clerk and considered a draft response.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft response and to forward it to the Assembly and Executive Review Committee.



Northern Ireland Assembly

5. NI (Ministers, Elections and Petition of Concern) Bill - Update

The Chairperson reminded Members that, at its meeting on 30 June, the Committee agreed for a further update on the status of the passage of the NI (Ministers, Elections and Petition of Concern) Bill be brought back to the first meeting after summer recess.

The Committee noted a memo from the Clerk which provided an update on the current status of the passage of the Bill through the House of Commons.

The Committee noted that the Clerk would bring a further update when there is a change in status and / or when the Bill moved to the House of Lords stage.

6. Consent Decisions – Response to consultation

The Chairperson reminded the Committee about its ongoing consultation on the options for handling Consent Decisions which relate to the role of devolved legislatures in respect of draft regulations proposed by UK Ministers.

The Committee noted a cover note from the Clerk which provided the Committee with the background to the relevant issues and a summary of the responses received to the Committee's consultation.

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to send further, follow-up correspondence to the Executive, seeking its views prior to the Committee taking a decision on the issue.



Northern Ireland Assembly

7. Petitions/E-Petitions

The Chairperson informed the Committee that given that the Committee had completed its inquiry into Members' Statements, the next priority on the Committee's strategic long list was E-Petitions.

The Committee noted a cover note from the Clerk which provided further information regarding Petitions and E-Petitions, including some explanation of the key differences between the current arrangements and the full provision of a full E-Petition service.

The Committee also noted that a project to consider making provision for E-Petitions, which would involve the requirement to work alongside the Commission's IS service and Engagement teams, would likely to be a significant piece of work which would require more than a 9-month plan of work.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that E-Petitions should be listed as a priority in its legacy report for immediate attention by the next Committee.

8. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider how meetings will take place going forward.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Clerk to provide a report on the areas of Entitlements of an Official Opposition which could not be agreed by the previous Committee during its consideration of this issue.

Ms Joanne Bunting sought an update on the proposed changes to Standing Orders in respect of consent. The Clerk advised the Committee that an update on the inquiry into Legislative Consent Motions would be provided at the next meeting.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

9. Correspondence

The Committee noted the latest publication of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's newsletter.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee agreed the draft forward work programme.

11. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's business.

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Agreed: It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 29 September 2021 at 2.30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 3.09pm.

Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures
29 September 2021