



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee on Procedures

Minutes of Proceedings

23 February 2022

Meeting Location: Virtual meeting, Starleaf

Present by Video-Conference:

Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA (Chairperson)

Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA

Ms Sinéad Bradley MLA

Ms Joanne Bunting MLA

Mr Gerry Carroll MLA

Ms Ciara Ferguson MLA

Mr William Humphrey MLA

Apologies:

Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Ms Nicola Brogan MLA

In Attendance:

Emer Boyle (Committee Clerk)

Paul Gill (Clerk Assistant)

Jonathan McMillen (Head of Legal Services) – for agenda items 2&3



Northern Ireland Assembly

Frank Geddis (Clerk Assistant) – for agenda item 4

James Gilsenan (Bill Clerk) – for agenda item 4

Sohui Yim (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Kevin Marks (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 3.02pm in closed session.

1. Apologies

Apologies as above.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that, as this meeting was the last scheduled meeting at which any item which needs to go through Plenary by the end of the mandate could be agreed, any agenda items not agreed at the meeting would be circulated and could be agreed by correspondence as per Standing Order 115(8).

Joanne Bunting joined the meeting at 3.09pm.

Gerry Carroll joined the meeting at 3.15pm.

2. Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) Bill – Update and legal advice

William Humphrey joined the meeting at 3.20pm.

The Committee received a briefing on the legal advice and implications for the Committee of the Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) 2022 Act, which had received Royal Assent and commenced with immediate effect.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for Assembly Officials and Legal Services to liaise in order that a summary of advice memo on the implications of the Act



Northern Ireland Assembly

could be circulated to the Party Leaders and Whips at the Assembly for information and response.

3. Standing Order 3 – legal advice

The Committee considered legal advice in relation to changes to Standing Order 3 in relation to the first sitting of the new Assembly and a members' ability to designate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the proposed rewording of Standing Order 3 (and the consequential amendment to Standing Order 4).

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft motion to revise Standing Order 3 and the consequential amendment to Standing Order 4.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to table the draft motion in the Business Office without delay and to seek a 45-minute timeslot for the Plenary debate.

4. Private Members' Bill Inquiry – Final report

The Committee discussed the final report of the Private Members' Bill (PMB) Inquiry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider and agree by correspondence (in accordance with Standing Order 115(8)), an updated PMB Inquiry report, with new text and information added for clarification, plus a draft Motion, for tabling with the Business Office by Tuesday, 1 March 2022.

5. Legislative Consent Motions Inquiry – Final report

The Committee discussed the final report of the Legislative Consent Motion (LCM) Inquiry.



Northern Ireland Assembly

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider and agree by correspondence (in accordance with Standing Order 115(8)), an updated LCM Inquiry report, with new text and information added for clarification, plus a draft Motion, for tabling with the Business Office by Tuesday, 1 March 2022.

The meeting moved into public session at 4.10pm.

6. Draft Minutes

The Committee considered the draft minutes from the meeting of 9 February 2022.

Ms Joanne Bunting requested that an addition be made to the draft minutes in relation to Agenda Item 1 of that meeting, “Official Opposition – Draft motion for revisions in Standing Orders”.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the minutes of the 9 February meeting to be amended to put on the record Ms Bunting’s concerns in relation to the changes proposed to the handling of Questions and for the re-drafted minutes to be considered again at the next Committee meeting.

7. Matters Arising

The Chairperson advised the Committee of the informal meeting which had just taken place that afternoon with the House of Commons’ Procedures Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider a note of that meeting at the next Committee meeting.



Northern Ireland Assembly

8. Extension of Temporary Provisions– draft motion

Members considered a draft motion to extend the current Temporary Provisions in Standing Orders into the next mandate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft motion to extend the Temporary Provisions in Standing Orders into the next mandate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to table the draft motion in the Business Office and to seek a 30-minute timeslot for the Plenary debate.

9. Legacy Report – discussion of issues

The Committee noted the proposed issues for the Committee’s Legacy Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider and review a full draft of the Legacy Report at its next meeting.

10. Correspondence

The Committee considered a Chairpersons’ Liaison Group’s (CLG) Report on Strengthening Committee Scrutiny.

Agreed: The Committee members agreed to contact the Committee Clerk with any views on the recommendations in the Report which they wished to be reflected in a draft response to CLG.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Speaker regarding recent decisions from the Business Committee related to scheduling business at the end of the current mandate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

The Committee considered correspondence from the CLG regarding increasing the diversity of witnesses before Assembly Committees.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

11. Any other business

There was no other business.

12. Date and time of next meeting

The Committee noted that next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday, 9 March 2022 at 2.30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.18pm.

Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures
9 March 2022