



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Assembly and Executive Review Committee

# OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Northern Ireland Act 1998: Review of Parts  
III and IV

20 November 2012

# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

## Assembly and Executive Review Committee

Northern Ireland Act 1998: Review of Parts III and IV

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**Members present for all or part of the proceedings:**

Mr Pat Sheehan (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Roy Beggs

Mr Gregory Campbell

Mr Stewart Dickson

Mr Simon Hamilton

Mr Raymond McCartney

**The Deputy Chairperson:** We will move on to agenda item 5, which is the review of Parts III and IV of the Northern Ireland Act. The aim of this session is to allow the Committee to discuss and consider a final draft of its part 2 report on the review of the size of the Assembly and the number of Departments, and the draft motion for a debate on the report in a plenary session.

Members, I propose that we consider for agreement the final text of the draft report, section by section. Are members agreed?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content with the covering pages and paragraphs 9 to 22 in the introduction section of the report?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content with paragraphs 23 to 31, which cover the Committee's approach to the review section of the report?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content with paragraphs 32 to 58, which cover the Committee consideration section of the report?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content with paragraphs 59 to 91, the Committee analysis and conclusion section of the report?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content with the executive summary?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content with appendix 1 of the report?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Appendix 2?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Appendix3?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Appendix 4?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Appendix 5?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Appendix 6?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Members, the final version of the report will be proofread for a final time before it is ordered to be printed. Are members content that the Committee secretariat makes any changes to typos and to the format of the report as and when necessary?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Any changes will have no effect on the substance of the report and will purely be for formatting and accuracy of text purposes.

Members, extracts of the minutes of proceedings and minutes of evidence from today's meeting will have to be included in the report. Are members content that I, as Deputy Chairperson of the Committee, approve the extract of the minutes of proceedings from today's meeting for inclusion in the report?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content that the first edition of today's Hansard's transcript be included in the Committee's report, as there will be insufficient time for members to review the final transcript and provide comments?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Committee Clerk:** We will use the first edition of the Hansard report.

**The Deputy Chairperson:** As with the part 1 report of this review, I propose that the Secretary of State, the First Minister and the deputy First Minister be forwarded a copy of the final embargoed report as soon as it is available. Are members content with that?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** We now move to consideration of the draft motion for a debate on the report in a plenary session, which is included at tab 8. The Chairperson has indicated that he would prefer the motion to be debated on 10 or 11 December. That will be up to the Business Committee. Do any other members have views on that?

**Mr Hamilton:** On the date?

**The Deputy Chairperson:** I think the week prior to that —

**The Committee Clerk:** It is possible that the Committee could request that the Business Committee schedule the debate for 3 or 4 December. The Chairperson has a preference for 10 or 11 December, but, as always, the Committee is in the hands of the Business Committee in its scheduling. Do members have any preference?

**Mr Hamilton:** No, 10 or 11 December is fine. That is the week before recess?

**The Committee Clerk:** It is the last week, yes.

**Mr Hamilton:** That is fine.

**The Deputy Chairperson:** OK. In anticipation of the report being debated, a media operational notice will be drafted to be issued the week prior to the debate. The notice will indicate the date of the debate and state that the report will be embargoed until the start of the debate. Are members content that a media operational notice to that effect be drafted and issued the week prior to the debate?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Finally, are members content that the Committee orders its part 2 report on its review to be printed following today's meeting and that hard copies be kept to a minimum in the interests of efficiency?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** Are members content that a note be put to the Business Office today signalling that a manuscript copy of the report will be laid in the Business Office by close tomorrow?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson:** I advise you that the report should be returned by the printer and distributed to all MLAs early next week.

**The Committee Clerk:** It could be the middle of next week.

**The Deputy Chairperson:** The report will, of course, be embargoed until the commencement of the plenary debate, the date of which will, hopefully, be confirmed by the Business Committee this day next week.