

An Ceann Comhairle

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The Speaker

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To: All Assembly Members

24 October 2022

Dear Member,

Deadline for Ministerial Appointments – 23:59 27 October 2022

Since the first sitting of this Assembly on 13 May 2022, I have repeatedly made clear that if parties indicate to me that a Speaker and Deputy Speakers can be successfully elected, then I will make the arrangements for this to happen at an early opportunity.

Electing a Speaker and Deputy Speakers would give the Assembly the ability to proceed to consider the various other Ministerial appointments and the legislative deadline for these Ministerial offices to be filled is 23:59 on 27 October 2022.

I have had no communication from parties at this point to suggest that the political situation has changed and that a Speaker and Deputy Speakers can be elected. However, I am conscious of the duty on me to ensure that the Assembly has the ability to meet the deadline for Ministerial appointments.

I have therefore made clear to the party whips that contingency arrangements are in place to allow a further sitting of the Assembly to be called at short notice on 27 October 2022 if parties indicate that the situation has changed. The Assembly would need to be able to elect a Speaker and Deputy Speakers to then move to make all Ministerial appointments by the end of that day.

If the deadline is not met, all current Ministers will leave office at the end of 27 October 2022. The Opposition will also be dissolved at that time. The legislative duty will then move to the Secretary of State the following day to schedule an election to be held within a twelve week period.

If I receive an indication from parties that all of the required business can be completed successfully by the end of 27 October 2022, then I will issue the notice of a sitting to Members in the normal way – no recall petition is required.

It remains my position that I would prefer to see my successor elected, and Ministerial appointments made to allow the Assembly to return to full normal business, as soon as possible. However, the potential to achieve that is in the hands of the parties.

Yours Sincerely,

**ALEX MASKEY
SPEAKER**