



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Committee on Procedures

### Minutes of Proceedings

**2 July 2025**

**Meeting Location:** Room 21, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Kellie Armstrong MLA (Chairperson)  
Trevor Clarke MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**  
Órlaithí Flynn MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Robbie Butler MLA  
Danny Donnelly MLA  
Aoife Finnegan MLA  
Cara Hunter MLA  
William Irwin MLA  
Maolfíosa McHugh MLA

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:** Stella McArdle, Assembly Clerk  
Christine Darrah, Assembly Clerk



Michael Best, Assistant Assembly Clerk

Veronica Lo Pinto, Clerical Officer

The meeting started at 10.01 a.m. in public session.

### **1. Apologies**

As above.

### **2. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2025.

Órlaithi Flynn joined the meeting at 10.03 a.m.

### **3. Matters Arising**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that, following the motion on new Standing Order 18C to provide for an annual debate on the Executive's Legislation Programme being agreed by the Assembly on 1 July 2025, the online version of Standing Orders would be updated immediately and the hard copy version of Standing Orders would be updated in due course.

Aoife Finnegan joined the meeting at 10.06 a.m.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that the meeting should move into closed session.

The meeting moved into closed session at 10.06 a.m.

Robbie Butler joined the meeting at 10.07 a.m.

### **4. Northern Ireland Act 1998 Section 42 – Petitions of Concern – Further Consideration**

The Committee considered a range of issues relating to optional provisions for Standing Orders for petitions of concerns .



**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to commission an illustrative draft Standing Order and associated legal advice for petitions of concern based on the preliminary position reached by the Committee during its discussions.

**5. Inquiry into an Extension of Standing Order 27A Voting by Proxy –  
Absence on Official Business – Legal Advice**

The Chairperson welcomed Jonathan McMillen, Head of Legal Services, to the meeting.

Mr McMillen outlined an illustrative draft Standing Order and associated legal advice to provide for proxy voting for absence on official Assembly business.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked Mr McMillen and he left the meeting.

The Committee indicated its preferred approach in relation to Standing Order 27A and provision for absence on official Assembly business.

The Committee discussed the organisations/associations to which such a proxy vote should apply and the duration of the proxy vote for absence on official Assembly business.

The Committee discussed a number of principles that may be included in the Standing Order and a range of practical / administrative issues.

**6. Repeal of Standing Order 70 and Consequential Amendments to Standing  
Orders – Consideration of Proposals by Committee on Standards and  
Privileges – Written Paper**

Trevor Clarke declared an interest.

Danny Donnelly declared an interest.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee on Standards and Privileges regarding the potential repeal of Standing Order 70 and the consequential amendments resulting from such a repeal.

Cara Hunter left the meeting at 11.17 a.m.



**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to commission legal advice from Assembly Legal Services on the repeal of Standing Order 70 and any potential consequential amendments.

The meeting moved into public session at 11.19 a.m.

## **7. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered an updated Forward Work Programme.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the updated Forward Work Programme.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to review its strategic priorities at a working lunch following the meeting on 24 September 2024.

## **8. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following correspondence :

- I. a copy of an email from a member of the public to the Speaker regarding statements made by a MLA during a Plenary debate on 17 June 2025 on a Mineral Licensing Moratorium; and
- II. a letter from the Clerk to the Public Accounts Committee on the Northern Ireland Audit Office report on Health and Social Care Imaging Services in Northern Ireland.

## **9. Chairperson's Business**

The Committee considered arrangements for dealing with Freedom of Information requests during the summer recess period.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to submit, during the recess period, views on the releasing or withholding of the information in any non-routine or contentious Freedom of Information requests received by the Committee.



## **10. Any Other Business**

None.

## **11. Date, Time and Place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10 September 2025 at 10.00 a.m. in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.24 a.m.

Kellie Armstrong MLA  
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures  
10 September 2025