



Minutes of Proceedings

19 January 2026

Meeting Location: Room 106, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Alan Lowry, Chairperson

Craig Griffiths, Member

Robert Herron, Member

In Attendance:

James Gilsenan, Assembly Clerk

Roisin Donnelly, Secretary

Krystal Clarke, Executive Assistant

Michael Scholes, Research Officer, NI Assembly Research and Information Services (Agenda item 6)

Jonathan McMillen, Head of Legal Services, NI Assembly (Agenda item 7)

John Hart, Head of Communications, NI Assembly (Agenda item 9)

The meeting commenced at 9.31 am.

The Chairperson welcomed James Gilson to the meeting and noted James would be providing clerking support to the Board.

The Chairperson welcomed Krystal Clarke to the meeting and advised that Krystal was taking over responsibility for the provision of clerical support to the Board from Claire Ellison. The Chairperson recorded the Board's thanks for the support that Claire has provided and wished her well in her new post.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared in relation to the agenda items listed for the meeting.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised that he had met with the NI Assembly Head of Communications and requested that he attend today's meeting to consider options for the Board in communicating its work to stakeholders and the public.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2025.

The Board requested that its meeting minutes are published on its webpage as soon as practicable.

5. Matters Arising

The Board noted information it had requested on:

- office holder remuneration;
- the effect of the Secretary of State's intervention on MLA salaries during periods in which the Assembly was not functioning; and
- the frequency of meetings held by standing committees of the Assembly.

6. Wider Financial Circumstances in Northern Ireland

Michael Scholes, Research Officer, NI Assembly Research and Information Service joined the meeting at 9.35 am.

Mr Scholes briefed the Board on the further information it had requested on the wider financial circumstances of Northern Ireland.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Scholes for his attendance.

Agreed: The Board agreed to request further information on measures of inflation.

7. Drafting Instructions for first Determination on Salaries

Jonathan McMillen, Head of Legal Services, NI Assembly joined the meeting at 10:54 am.

Following discussion and instruction from the Board, Mr McMillen confirmed that a draft determination would be available for review in four weeks.

The Chairperson thanked Mr McMillen for his attendance.

8. Board Procedures

The Board considered a draft Complaints' Procedure and a draft Privacy Notice.

Agreed: The Board agreed to review revised versions of these papers at its next meeting.

The Board noted an updated version of the Rules of Procedure which will be published on the webpage.

9. Board Communications

John Hart, Head of Communications, NI Assembly joined the meeting at 10.53 am.

Mr Hart outlined options on how the Board may wish to communicate its work to stakeholders and the wider public. Mr Hart also outlined possible branding options as requested by the Board.

Agreed: The Board agreed to consider the communication of its work in further detail at its next meeting.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Board discussed an updated timeline for undertaking its work in relation to determinations for the current Assembly and the next Assembly in the 2027-2032 mandate.

Agreed: The Board agreed to consider its work programme in further detail at its next meeting.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place at 9:30 am on 16 February 2026 in Room 106, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.37 am.

Chairperson, Independent Remuneration Board

16 February 2026