



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Assembly and Executive Review Committee (AERC)

Minutes of Proceedings

Tuesday 8 September 2026 at 9.30 a.m.

Meeting Location: Room 21, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Deborah Erskine MLA (Chairperson)
Pat Sheehan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Sinéad Ennis MLA
Michelle Guy MLA
Michelle McIlveen MLA
Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Matthew O'Toole MLA

Apologies:

John Stewart MLA

In Attendance:

Shane McAteer, Committee Clerk



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Ashleigh Mitford, Senior Assistant Clerk

Laura Gourley, Clerical Supervisor

Alison Ferguson, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 9.34 a.m. in open session.

Agreed: The Committee noted that Deborah Erskine MLA has replaced Jonathan Buckley MLA as Committee Chairperson and agreed to write to Mr Buckley to thank him for his contribution to the work of the Committee during his time as Chairperson.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

The Chairperson advised Members of the ongoing requirement to declare relevant financial or other interests, as and when they arise, and before taking part in any Assembly proceedings, including Committee proceedings, relating to that matter.

No declarations were declared at this point in the meeting.

3. Draft minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2026.



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4. Matters arising

None.

5. Review into Assembly and Executive Reform – oral evidence session with Claire Hanna MP

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the oral evidence session to be recorded by Hansard.

Claire Hanna MP joined the meeting at 9.35 a.m.

Ms Hanna briefed the Committee on the SDLP position on reform options and this was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked Ms Hanna for her attendance.

Ms Hanna left the meeting at 10.25 a.m.

Pat Sheehan left the meeting at 10.25 a.m.

6. Review into Assembly and Executive Reform – oral evidence session with Gerry Carroll MLA

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the oral evidence session to be recorded by Hansard.

Noted: The Committee noted the written submission from Mr Carroll.

Gerry Carroll MLA joined the meeting at 10.26 a.m.

Mr Carroll briefed the Committee on the People Before Profit position on reform options and this was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Carroll for his attendance.



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Mr Carroll left the meeting at 10.48 a.m.

The Committee Clerk briefed the Committee on issues related to the review.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to make provision for a reschedule oral evidence session with Paul Givan MLA (in his capacity as former First Minister) on either 15 or 29 September 2026.

Agreed: The Committee noted that the DUP plans to make a written submission to the review and agreed to make provision for a possible oral evidence session with the DUP on either 15 or 29 September 2026.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to advise Pivotal that its recent applicable reports will be added to the evidence base for the review.

Noted: The Committee noted recent related evidence on matters relating to reform of the institutions taken by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee and the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Assembly Commission, dated 22 June 2026, in respect of a potential Civic/Citizen Engagement Exercise and agreed that the advice contained therein is reflected in the Committee's review report.

Agreed: The Committee noted the follow-up correspondence from Dr Katie Johnston, Liverpool University following her attendance at the meeting on 2 June 2026 and agreed to add it to the evidence base for the review.

7. Correspondence

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer consideration of two items of non-urgent correspondence to its next meeting.



8. Forward Work Programme

Noted: The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

9. AOB

None.

10. Date, time and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the AERC will take place on Tuesday 15 September 2026 at 9.30 a.m. in Room 21.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.54 a.m.

Deborah Erskine MLA
Chairperson, Assembly and Executive Review Committee

15 September 2026