



Minutes of Proceedings

9 March 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, Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk

Krystal Clarke, Executive Assistant

Jonathan McMillan, Head of Legal Services, NI Assembly Legal Services (Agenda item 6)

Helen Smyth, Legal Adviser, NI Assembly Legal Services (Agenda item 6)

John Hart, Head of Communications, NI Assembly (Agenda item 7)

The meeting commenced at 9.28 am.

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

There was no Chairperson's Business.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2026 subject to minor amendment.

5. Matters Arising

The Board noted the IPSA announcement of the 2026-27 pay award for MPs.

6. Assembly Members (Salaries) Determination (NI) 2026

Jonathan McMillan, Head of Legal Services, NI Assembly Legal Services and Helen Smyth, Legal Advisor, NI Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 9.33am.

The Board considered responses to its consultation on the Assembly Members (Salaries) Determination (Northern Ireland) 2026.

The Board further noted additional correspondence on the draft Determination from members of the public.

The Board requested minor drafting amendments in relation to the administration of the Determination, further to input from the Northern Ireland Assembly Finance Office.

The Chairperson thanked Mr McMillan and Helen Smyth for their attendance and they left the meeting.

Agreed: The Board agreed to review the amended Determination by correspondence before providing it to the Assembly Commission for implementation.

Agreed: The Board agreed to publish the responses received from statutory consultees.

7. Board Communications

John Hart, Head of Communications, NI Assembly joined the meeting at 9.55am.

Mr Hart provided an update to Board members on the communication of the Draft Assembly Members (Salaries) Determination (Northern Ireland) 2026.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Hart for his attendance and he left the meeting.

8. Consideration of Next Determinations

The Board considered options for engagement and consultation on its Determinations for the 2027-2032 mandate.

Agreed: The Board agreed to give further consideration to options for engagement and consultation at its next meeting.

The Board noted the Northern Ireland Assembly Members' Pension Fund Annual Report and Accounts year ended 31 March 2025.

9. Publication Policy

The Board noted receipt of Freedom of Information requests.

The Board requested an update to its Retention and Disposal Schedule.

10. Correspondence

The Board noted the correspondence it had received from members of the public in relation to its Draft Determination had been considered at agenda item 6.

11. Forward Work Programme

The Board discussed a draft programme of work relating to determinations for the current Assembly and the next Assembly (2027-2032).

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

Agreed: The Board agreed to consider the Assembly Members Pensions Scheme at its next meeting.

The Board discussed the requirement of the Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review & Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, to provide an Annual Report on the performance of its functions to the Assembly Commission.

Agreed: The Board agreed to consider a draft Annual Report at its next meeting.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The Board noted the Assembly is in recess between 28 March - 13 April.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on 27 April 2026 in Room 106, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting ended at 11.20am.

Chairperson, Independent Remuneration Board

27 April 2026