



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee on Procedures

Minutes of Proceedings

21 April 2021

Meeting Location: Virtual Meeting (Room 29)

Present by Video-Conference:

Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA

Mr Maurice Bradley MLA

Ms Sinéad Bradley MLA

Ms Nicola Brogan MLA

Mr Gerry Carroll MLA

Ms Linda Dillon MLA

Mr Gary Middleton MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance by Video-Conference:

Emer Boyle (Committee Clerk)

Paul Gill (Clerk Assistant) (Items 5 & 8)

Stewart Kennedy (Assistant Clerk)



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Joanne Keenan (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 2.34pm in open session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24 March 2021.

3. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

4. Review of Private Members' Bill – Draft Terms of Reference

The Committee considered a further paper from the Clerk which included draft Terms of Reference.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Terms of Reference.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from the Bill Office on existing processes, background and any potential procedural weaknesses in the arrangements currently in place for Private Members' Bills (PMBs) at its next meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Clerk to bring a further paper to the next meeting which will outline possible research that the Committee may wish to



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commission and a list of potential stakeholders for consultation on its review of PMBs.

5. Members' Statements

The Committee considered a paper from the Clerk which included a reminder of the status of the work which the Committee had previously undertaken and then placed on hold, in addition to a number of suggestions made by the Speaker and the Business Committee.

Members discussed a number of issues which included the potential approach to managing these statements as an item of business, the frequency with which Members' Statements might be scheduled, when during a sitting Statements might be scheduled and any formal restrictions which should apply to the content or use of a statement.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Clerk to bring back additional further information on the outstanding options to enable Members to consult with their party groups and allow the Committee to make an informed decision at its next meeting on 5 May 2021.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme.

7. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed the Committee that she met with the Speaker to further discuss his letter of 22 March 2021 and in particular, the NDNA commitments in terms of the use of Irish and Ulster Scots in Assembly business. The Chairperson also informed the Committee that the Clerk would provide a note of the meeting with the Speaker at the next committee meeting.



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The Chairperson advised Members that the Speaker is keen for the Committee to first consider the introduction of the simultaneous translation aspect of enabling Assembly business in Irish and Ulster Scots before potentially broadening the scope to other business areas.

Mr Gary Middleton MLA left the meeting at 2.53pm.

During discussions, Members had a number of queries regarding the practical and logistical issues associated with interpretation in terms of both infrastructure and costs.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Assembly Commission to request a briefing regarding the practical, logistical and financial implications associated with introducing simultaneous translation and interpretation into the Assembly.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Communities to seek an update on the Sign Language Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Clerk to provide a paper with further information at its next meeting on 5 May 2021.

8. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Agreed: It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 5 May 2021 at 2.30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 3.03pm.



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Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

**Chairperson, Committee on Procedures
5 May 2021**