



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE (AERC)**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2020, ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mervyn Storey MLA, Chairperson  
Maolíosa McHugh MLA, Deputy Chairperson  
Jonathan Buckley MLA (via StarLeaf)  
Alex Easton MLA  
Colin McGrath MLA  
Jim Allister MLA  
Kellie Armstrong MLA (via StarLeaf)  
Gerry Kelly MLA  
Robbie Butler MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Aoibheann Baker (Assistant Clerk)

*The meeting commenced at 12:43pm in open session.*

**1. Apologies**

There were no apologies

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Members were advised of the ongoing requirement to declare relevant financial or other interests as and when they arise on the Committee.

**3. Draft Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2020 were agreed under the provisions of Standing Order 115(9) on 24 July 2020.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

The matters arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **5. Review of the Statement of Entitlements for an official opposition**

Members received a briefing from the Committee Secretariat on this agenda item.

Members noted the briefing paper and discussed the draft Terms of Reference.

*Colin McGrath joined the meeting at 13:06pm*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the draft Terms of Reference will be amended to include:

- (a) the reference in paragraph 3.7 of Annex C of the New Decade, New Approach deal that ‘The parties recognise that additional funding should be made available to parties who form the Opposition’;
- (b) reference to the ‘appropriate independent person’ being appointed via a tender process with representatives of the AERC involved in the evaluation of tenders and the selection of the appointee.
- (c) a requirement that the review takes account of the views of stakeholders, including the parties and independent Members represented in the Assembly, the Commission and the Committee on Procedures; and
- (d) the inclusion of a four-month deadline for the completion of the review report.

*Agreed:* The Committee further agreed that the amended draft Terms of Reference will be sent to Members for consideration and approval under Standing Order 115 (9).

*Robbie Butler declared an interest as a member of the Assembly Commission*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Committee secretariat will consult further with the Assembly’s Procurement Office and provide a briefing paper on the procurement process at the next meeting.

## **6. Research briefing on institutional review committees**

Members received a briefing from the Assembly's Research and Information Service on institutional review committees. The briefing covered a number of topics including the work of comparable committees in other legislatures and reviews of the devolution settlements in Scotland and Wales

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that follow-up research should be conducted by the Assembly's Research and Information Service to ascertain whether there are any comparable committees in legislatures beyond the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

## **7. Committee work programme**

Members received a briefing from the Committee Secretariat on this agenda item and noted the submissions by six of the political parties in the Assembly.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that:

- (a) Committee members will give additional consideration to potential topics of interest and forward any further suggestions to the Committee office no later than 4 December 2020;
- (b) at the next meeting, the Committee secretariat will provide an initial scoping and feasibility assessment of the topics identified to establish the extent to which they fall within the Committee's remit and any overlap with other work being progressed, including by other committees; and
- (c) the submission by the Green Party will be forwarded to the independent person (once appointed) conducting the review of the Statement of Entitlements for an Official Opposition.

## **8. Correspondence**

8.1 Members noted correspondence from the Speaker regarding the establishment of a Youth Assembly.

8.2 Members noted correspondence from the Committee on Procedures regarding a Review of Standing Orders 110-116.

**9. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

**10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will take place at 1:20pm on Tuesday 15 December 2020.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 13:36pm*

**Mervyn Storey MLA**

**Chairperson**

**Assembly and Executive Review Committee**