

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2020
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 7.49pm.

Present:

The Speaker (Chairperson)
Ms K Armstrong
Mr K Buchanan
Mr R Butler
Ms S Ennis
Ms D Kelly
Mr C McGrath
Mr A Muir
Mr J O'Dowd
Mr G Robinson

In attendance:

Dr A McGarel	Clerk of Business
Mr P Gill	Clerk Assistant
Ms L Hogg	Clerk/Chief Executive
Ms A Kelly	Examiner of Statutory Rules
Mr R Ramsey	Adviser to the Speaker
Mr P Stitt	PS to the Speaker
Ms P Devlin	Assistant Assembly Clerk
Mr M O'Hare	Clerical Supervisor

Observers:

Mr D Kearney	Junior Minister
Mr G Lyons	Junior Minister
Ms K Morrison	Executive Office

1 Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from John Stewart.

2 **Minutes of previous meetings**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 27 January 2020 were agreed.

3 **Matters Arising**

- 3.1 There were no matters arising.

4 **Finalisation of the Order Paper for plenary meeting on 10 February 2020**

Assembly Business

- 4.1 Members **agreed** to schedule a DUP motion for Gary Middleton to replace George Robinson on the Business Committee.
- 4.2 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion for Alan Chambers to replace John Stewart on the Committee for Health and for John Stewart to replace Alan Chambers on the Committee for the Economy.

Executive Business

- 4.3 Members **noted** that, as previously agreed, four Ministers would respond to Oral Questions on 10 February at 2pm.
- 4.4 Members **noted** that an item of Executive Business could not be tabled in time for inclusion on the Order Paper at this meeting. Members **agreed** that they would be content for the item to be included if it was received on Tuesday morning.

Private Members' Business

- 4.5 Members **noted** that the motion on Abuse of Service Animals would call on the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs rather than the Minister of Justice, and were content with this change.
- 4.6 The Junior Ministers advised that no further Executive business was expected at this stage.
- 4.7 Members **agreed** the draft Order Paper subject to the addition of a further item of Executive Business.

5 **Provisional arrangements for plenary meetings in the week commencing 17 February.**

- 5.1 Members **noted** that there was no Executive Business listed for 17 February in the notice of forthcoming business from the Executive Office.
- 5.2 Members **agreed** that only one sitting would be held in the week commencing 17 February to facilitate the work of Assembly committees. Members sought, and were given, an update on progress with outstanding committee business.
- 5.3 Members **noted** that Question Time would again have four Ministers taking oral questions as follows:
- Executive Office
 - Justice
 - Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
 - Communities
- 5.4 Members **agreed** to schedule Private Members Business, and noted that in accordance with their agreement on 14 January, the next selections would go to the SDLP and UUP.
- 5.5 The following Private Members' motions were selected:
- Violent Crime (SDLP)
 - Ongoing Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland (UUP)
- 5.6 Executive Office officials agreed to seek confirmation that Ministers would be available to respond to these motions.
- 5.7 Members agreed the Provisional Order Paper for 17 February 2020.

6 **Any other business**

- 6.1 Members **noted** that they had been provided with the latest edition of Speaker's Rulings and Conventions updated to May 2017, and **agreed** that these could be issued to all Members.
- 6.2 Members **noted** that they had been provided with a proposed Assembly timetable, including recess dates, for the remainder of this session and the next. Members **agreed** the proposed timetable.
- 6.3 Members were informed that some Members had found that responses to their AQWs were being reported on in the media before the Member had received them. Members agreed that the Speaker would write to the

Departments advising that it is expected that the author of an AQW should have first sight of the response to the question.

7 **Date and time of next meeting**

- 7.1 Members **agreed** that the next meeting would take place after the adjournment of the sitting on Monday 10 February in Room 106.

The Chairperson brought the meeting to a close at 8.00pm

The Speaker
Chairperson