



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Audit Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

15 April 2026

Meeting Location: The Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Alan Chambers MLA (Chairperson)

John Blair MLA

Nick Mathison MLA

In attendance by video:

Emma Sheerin MLA

Apologies:

Diane Forsythe MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

In attendance:

Ashleigh Mitford, Assembly Clerk

Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk

Laura Gourley, Clerical Supervisor

Alison Ferguson, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 10.06 a.m. in open session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared at this point in the meeting.

3. Draft minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026.

4. Matters arising

None.

5. Correspondence

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 12 March 2026 from the Committee for Finance in respect of the outworkings of the Chancellor's Spring Forecast Summary.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 24 March 2026 from the Minister of Justice which stated that the new Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses of Crime for Northern Ireland is to be added to the remit of NIPSO.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 25 March 2026 from the Committee for Finance in respect of the 2025-26 Public Expenditure Outturn and Forecast Outturn – February 2026.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 30 March 2026 from RaISe in respect of its recent publications on the draft Budget.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 3 April 2026 from the Assembly Commission in respect of the legislative change relating to the appointment and tenure of the C&AG.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee Clerk updated the Committee on the planned visit to the NIAO on 13 May 2026.

Agreed: The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme and agreed to note that the visit to the NIAO is subject to the DoF timetable for the Estimates.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to move into Closed Session to consider the next two agenda items.

The meeting moved into Closed Session at 10.10 a.m.

7. Audit Committee feasibility study – job evaluation to determine the future salary payable to the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG)

The Committee Clerk briefed the Committee on this agenda item.

John Blair joined the meeting at 10.18 a.m.

Emma Sheerin joined the meeting at 10.25 a.m.

Agreed: The Committee agreed it was content with the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the feasibility study and agreed to consult with the NIAO and C&AG on the ToR before writing to the listed bodies.

Noted: The Committee noted that a discussion on 'formalising processes in relation to the ongoing review of the salary to help ensure a more consistent approach to the tabling of motions in the Assembly going forward' will be scheduled at a future meeting of the Committee.

8. Codification workstream – proposed engagement with bodies

John Blair declared an interest that he is a former member of the Assembly Commission.

The Committee Clerk briefed the Committee on this agenda item.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Committee Clerk will redraft the Committee position paper to reflect the comments by members for consideration at the next meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the covering letters for issue to NIPSO and the NIAO.

Noted: The Committee noted that the policy paper agreed by the Committee on 11 March 2026 will be annexed to the correspondence issued.

9. AOB

None.

10. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Audit Committee will take place on 13 May 2026 at 10.00 a.m. with the location to be confirmed in due course.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.48 a.m.

Alan Chambers MLA

Chairperson, Audit Committee

20 May 2026