



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Chairpersons' Liaison Group

## Minutes of Proceedings

**16 April 2024**

### **Room 21 Parliament Buildings**

**Present:**

Cáral Ní Chuilín MLA (Chairperson)  
Deborah Erskine MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Kellie Armstrong MLA  
Paula Bradshaw MLA  
Tom Elliott MLA  
Matthew O'Toole MLA  
Joanne Bunting MLA

**Apologies:**

Phillip Brett MLA  
Nick Mathison MLA  
Alan Chambers MLA  
Philip McGuigan MLA

**In Attendance:** Lesley Hogg (Chief Executive)  
Frank Geddis (Clerk Assistant)  
Stephanie Mallon (Clerk Assistant)  
Roisin Kelly (Assembly Clerk)  
Pamela Carson (Senior Assistant Clerk)  
Charmaine McBride (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Jenny Massey (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 1:09pm in closed session.

The Chairperson welcomed members to the second meeting of the CLG and gave a brief overview of the day's business.

*Paula Bradshaw joined the meeting at 1:11pm*

*Tom Elliott joined the meeting at 1:11pm*

### **1. Apologies**

As above.

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**Agreed:** The Chairpersons agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2024.

### **3. Matters Arising**

#### **Timescales for Interaction between Committees and Departments**

Members noted the Timescales for Interaction between Committees and Departments document.

Members shared experiences and identified common issues arising from examples of recent interaction with departments. Members noted the important role to be played by the Departmental Assembly Liaison Officers (DALO) in briefing departmental officials prior to attending meetings.

**Agreed:** Chairpersons requested a standard form of words that they could use to remind witnesses to keep to their allocated time.

#### **4. Hybrid Proceedings – Committee Meetings**

Chairpersons noted the clerk's memo and the draft guidance note on Hybrid Proceedings – Committee Meetings to be issued to all Members. Members discussed the provisions in the guidance note. Members also discussed, briefly, virtual meeting technicalities that may pose an obstacle for the Chairperson to recognise without delay, when a member who is attending remotely raises their hand to participate in committee meetings.

**Agreed:** Clerking and Members Support Office (CAMS) will update the guidance note to incorporate reference to standards of dress

The Group noted that CAMS office will issue the updated Hybrid Proceedings – Committee Meetings guidance note to all members.

**Agreed:** CAMS office will liaise with Assembly Broadcasting to explore how the visibility of members attending remotely might be improved, and will issue a guidance memo to all Chairpersons on using the Zoom meeting functions during hybrid meetings to improve the experience of members.

*Matthew O'Toole left the meeting at 1:35pm*

#### **5. Correspondence**

##### **Assembly and Executive Review Committee – Potential Work Topics for the AERC**

Chairpersons noted the correspondence from the Assembly and Executive Review Committee (AERC) seeking views on potential work topics for the AERC.

**Agreed:** CLG will respond to AERC in the following terms:

to thank the AERC for its correspondence of the 21 March 2024; to inform AERC that CLG met on 16 April 2024 at which it agreed that the AERC should progress Recommendation 7 of the Report on Strengthening Committee Scrutiny; and that CLG will respond to the AERC on its other suggestions once CLG has considered its priorities at its Strategic Planning day in June 2024.

## **6. Any Other Business**

The clerk to CLG provided an overview of the planned session on Awareness of Personal Security outside the parliamentary estate, scheduled for 30 April, and highlighted other forthcoming sessions to be delivered as part of the Parliamentary Excellence Programme in May and June 2024.

Chairpersons were asked for preliminary views on what topics or areas they would wish to include in a chairpersons' development programme. Topics were noted by the CAMS office.

**Agreed:** The Group will meet on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 1pm as part of the CLG development programme and in lieu of its usual monthly meeting.

**Agreed:** Chairpersons preferred to schedule their Strategic Planning activities as two shorter sessions rather than a half day event due to pressures on Members' time.

## **7. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the CLG is on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 1pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50pm.

**Cáral Ní Chuilín MLA**

**Chairperson, Chairpersons' Liaison Group**

**16 April 2024**

