



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Chairpersons' Liaison Group

Minutes of Proceedings

18 November 2025

Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Phillip Brett MLA (Chairperson)
Kellie Armstrong MLA
Robbie Butler MLA
Paula Bradshaw MLA
Paul Frew MLA
Colm Gildernew MLA
Nick Mathison MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Matthew O'Toole MLA

Apologies: Jonathan Buckley MLA
Alan Chambers MLA
Ciara Ferguson MLA
Peter Martin MLA
Cathy Mason MLA
Daniel McCrossan MLA
Philip McGuigan MLA

In Attendance: Roisin Kelly (Clerk)
 Sinead Kelly (Senior Assistant Clerk)
 Mary Kerr (Senior Assistant Clerk)
 Charmaine McBride (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
 Danielle Saunders (Clerical Supervisor)

 Lesley Hogg (Chief Executive/Clerk to the Assembly)
 Frank Geddis (Clerk Assistant)
 Paul Gill (Clerk Assistant)
 Stephanie Mallon (Clerk Assistant)

The meeting commenced at 1:15pm in closed session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairperson's Business

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Agreed: Chairpersons agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2025.

4. Matters Arising

Letter issued from Chairpersons' Liaison Group (CLG) to Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) regarding Committee Amendments

Members noted a letter that was issued from CLG to the CiNI on 11 November 2025, regarding the Committee for Education's amendments to the School Uniforms (Guidelines and Allowances) Bill.

Letter from CLG to the Committee for Finance in reference to correspondence from the Minister of Finance regarding the Northern Ireland Civil Service Advertising Policy.

Members noted a letter from CLG to the Committee for Finance on 11 November 2025, regarding the Northern Ireland Civil Service Advertising Policy.

Letter from CLG to the Speaker on standards of dress by Members in committee meetings

Members noted a draft letter from CLG to the Speaker regarding standards of dress by Members in committee meetings that will be issued once the guidance on **Hybrid Proceedings – Committee Meetings** has been updated, as agreed by Chairpersons at the meeting of CLG in October 2025.

The Clerk to CLG provided more information on the update to the guidance on **Hybrid Proceedings – Committee Meetings** and the work that the Clerking and Members Support (CAMS) Office is progressing to support the updated guidance.

Colm Gildernew joined the meeting at 1:17pm

Parliamentary Excellence Programme (PEP) Autumn/Winter Programme 2025-26 - update

Members noted the updated PEP Autumn/Winter programme for 2025-26.

Robbie Butler joined the meeting at 1:18pm

Update on XODO PDF Reader application

Members noted an update from the Northern Ireland Assembly IS Office on the issues with the XODO pdf application and noted the pilot on the replacement application, which is currently being rolled out to those Members who have reported issues.

Frank Geddis joined the meeting at 1:19pm

5. Strengthening Committee Scrutiny

Update on Strengthening Scrutiny of Delegated Legislation

Members noted the Clerk's briefing note at page 24 of the meeting pack, and the Guidance for Departments on Delegated Legislation document, together with

- Annex A the updated SL1 template;
- Annex B Overview of the Delegated Legislation Process (tabled papers); and
- Annex C Example timeline (tabled papers).

Members also noted the draft letter to FMdFM, at page 39 of the meeting pack.

The Clerk to CLG to briefed Members on:

- the updated SL1 (proposals for Statutory Rules) template which has been finalised by Assembly Officials in collaboration with the Executive Office;
- the detailed guidance that has been prepared to support departments in implementing the new process for submitting proposals for statutory rules (SL1s) and drafts of proposed statutory rules to committees;
- the engagement that Assembly officials have had with Departmental Assembly Liaison Officers (DALOs) and the delivery of awareness sessions to officials across departments; and
- the next steps for this project, including proposed correspondence to the First Minister and deputy First Minister (copied to all Ministers), outlining the finalised arrangements before their implementation on 5 January 2026 and including a copy of the updated SL1 template and Guidance.

Paul Gill (Clerk Assistant) and Roisin Kelly (Clerk to CLG) spoke to questions raised by Members in relation to the new approach to scrutiny of delegated legislation, the updated SL1 template, the impact of deferring a decision on the new approach, and the continuing ability of Committees to respond flexibly and to scrutinise certain types of delegated legislation within shorter timeframes.

Members agreed the following:

Agreed: Members were content with the updated SL1 template.

Agreed: Members were content with the Guidance for Departments on Delegated Legislation, subject to additional text clarifying the continuing ability of Committees to respond flexibly and to scrutinise certain types of delegated legislation within shorter timeframes.

Agreed: Members were content to issue the letter as drafted, together with the Guidance for Departments on Delegated Legislation (updated as above), to the First Minister and deputy First Minister and copied to all Ministers.

Progress report on implementation of the recommendations of the CLG's Report on Strengthening Committee Scrutiny – update

Members were content to note the progress paper on the report recommendations.

Agreed: Members were content to receive further updates on the implementation of recommendations in the CLG Report on Strengthening Committee Scrutiny at future meetings of CLG.

6. Correspondence

Memo from the Clerks to the Committee on Procedures regarding a request from Timothy Gaston MLA, that meetings between witnesses and a Committee Chairperson be codified in Standing Orders

Members noted correspondence from the Committee on Procedures referring this matter to CLG as the Committee on Procedures would be unable to commit to considering this request in this mandate, due to that Committee's ongoing work and agreed priorities.

Agreed: Members noted the correspondence from the Committee on Procedures and further noted that CLG has no remit to change the Assembly's Standing Orders.

Correspondence from member of the public to CLG

The Clerk spoke to correspondence received from a member of the public and advised that the Clerking and Member Support (CAMS) Office is collating information regarding the correspondence for consideration by CLG at a future meeting.

Agreed: Members were content that the CAMS Office provide more information on this correspondence for consideration by CLG at a future meeting.

7. Draft Forward Work Programme

Update from Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Assembly Artificial Intelligence (AI) Steering Group – Tara Caul (Director of Legal Services, Research and Governance).

Members noted the written update from the AI Working Group, and that the AI working group will brief CLG at a future meeting.

Parliamentary Excellence Programme (PEP) - Update on the provision of Artificial Intelligence (AI) training

Members were content to note an update from Pamela Carson (Senior Assistant Clerk for PEP) on plans to offer Members training sessions, through PEP, on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Draft Forward Work Programme

Agreed: Members agreed to consider their strategic priorities and forward work programme in December's meeting and discuss any further areas of shared concern.

8. AOB

There were no other items of business.

9. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 9 December 2025, at 1:15pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.56pm.

Nick Mathison (Deputy Chairperson)

18 November 2025