



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for the Economy

Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 26 November 2025

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Mr Phillip Brett MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Gary Middleton MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Ms Diana Armstrong MLA

Mr Pádraig Delargy MLA

Present by video-conferencing:

Ms Jemma Dolan MLA

Mr David Honeyford MLA

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA

Ms Kate Nicholl MLA

Apologies:

Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA

In Attendance:

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)

Katie McMaster (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Karen O'Hare (Clerical Supervisor)

Kyle Lawlor (Clerical Officer)

Aoibheann Baker (Bill Office Clerk) – item 1 only

Aidan Stennett (Research Officer) - item 8 only

Karen Clarke (Research Officer) – item 8 only

Jonny Redpath (Bill Office Senior Assistant Clerk) – item 14 only

The meeting commenced in closed session at 10:04am.

1. Insolvency (Amendment) Bill – Bill Office Guidance

Aoibheann Baker joined the meeting at 10:05am.

Aoibheann briefed the Committee on the Insolvency (Amendment) Bill.

The Chairperson thanked Aoibheann for her briefing.

Aoibheann Baker left the meeting at 10:28am.

Proceedings continued in public session at 10:28am.

2. Insolvency (Amendment) Bill – Formal Clause by Clause Scrutiny

The following officials joined the meeting at 10:29am:

- Richard Monds, Director of Insolvency, DfE; and
- Jack Reid, Deputy Principal, Insolvency, DfE

The session was recorded by the Official Report.

Part 1: Introductory

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 1 as drafted.

Part 2: Office Holder Actions

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 2 to Clause 4 as drafted.

Part 3 Removing requirements to seek sanctions

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 5 to Clause 6 as drafted.

Part 4 Position of Creditors

The Committee noted Departmental assurances in respect of virtual meetings and protections for creditors with limited access to digital assets or limited understanding of their use.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 7 as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 8 as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 9 to Clause 10 as drafted.

Moratoriums

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 11 to Clause 13 as drafted.

Company voluntary arrangements

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 14 to Clause 20 as drafted.

Administration

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 21 to Clause 22 as drafted.

Receivers and managers

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 23 to Clause 24 as drafted.

Winding Up

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 25 to Clause 58 as drafted.

Other Provision

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 59 to Clause 62 as drafted.

Individual Voluntary Arrangements

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 63 to Clause 73 as drafted.

Bankruptcy

The Committee noted Departmental assurances indicating that case law suggested that bankrupts were less likely to lose their homes in Northern Ireland than in England and Wales.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 74 to Clause 87 as drafted.

Part 5 Administration

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 88 to Clause 89 as drafted.

Part 6 Small Debts

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 90 to Clause 91 as drafted.

Part 7 Trustees in bankruptcy

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 92 as drafted.

Part 8 Voluntary arrangements

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 93 as drafted.

Part 9 Protection of essential supplies

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 94 to Clause 100 as drafted.

Part 10 Remote attendance

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 101 as drafted.

Part 11 Other insolvency amendments

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 102 to Clause 106 as drafted.

Part 12 Insolvent partnerships etc.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 107 to Clause 117 as drafted.

Part 13 General

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 118 as drafted.

The Committee noted a Departmental amendment altering the regulation-making power from negative to draft affirmative.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Departmental amendment to Clause 119.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with clause 119 as amended.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 120 to Clause 121 as drafted.

Schedules

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with Schedule 1 to Schedule 4 as drafted.

Other matters

The Committee noted a Departmental explanation that practices relating to petitioning for insolvency without a court judgement are the court's discretion and should not be in the Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forego a related amendment.

Long title

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Long Title of the Bill as drafted.

The Chairperson thanked the officials.

The officials left the meeting at 10:37am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Shadow Civil Justice Council in respect of the reported practice direction in Northern Ireland which prevents petitioning for insolvency without a court judgement.

3. Apologies

Apologies were as indicated above.

4. Declarations of Interest

There was no declarations of interest.