Northern Ireland Assembly

# Committee for the Economy

## Draft Minutes of Proceedings

## Wednesday 18 November 2026

**Meeting Location: Room 30**

**Present:** Ms Diane Forsythe MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr David Honeyford MLA

Mr Declan Kearney MLA

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA

Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA

Ms Kate Nicholl MLA

**Present via video conferencing:**

Mr Pádraig Delargy MLA

**Apologies:** Mr Phillip Brett MLA (Chairperson)

Ms Julie Middleton MLA

**In Attendance:** Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)

Katie McMaster (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Karen O'Hare (Clerical Supervisor)

Ethan O'Neill (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced in public session at 10:06am.

## 1. Apologies

Apologies were as indicated above.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

Sinead McLaughlin declared an interest in respect of being the Bill Sponsor of the Regional Balance Bill.

## 3. Chairperson's Business

### 3.1 Committee Membership

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to Peter Martin MLA to thank him for his service to the Economy Committee.

### 3.2 NI Retail Consortium motion

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to lay the following motion for debate in plenary:

*''That this Assembly welcomes the Retail Trust's Let's Respect Retail campaign, which is supported by the Northern Ireland Retail Consortium and the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers; notes that the campaign aims to encourage kind, courteous and respectful behaviour towards retail workers and customers, particularly during the busy festive period; believes that any mistreatment of retail workers is utterly reprehensible and should not be tolerated; and commends the positive and collaborative campaign and its objective of ensuring that people are able to enjoy shopping safely over the festive period while supporting the vibrancy of retail destinations and the local jobs that they bring.''*

## 4. Draft Minutes

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the Economy Committee meetings of 11 November 2026.

## 5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

## 6. LCM Commercial Payments Bill – agreement of report

The Committee considered responses from the Department of Finance and the Department for the Economy in respect of the commercial Payments Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Finance seeking further information in respect of the possible impact on NI of the changes to construction retention payments in GB and the timeline for the consultation and legislation for the development of NI alternatives to construction retention payments.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department for the Economy indicating its agreement to support the related Legislative Consent Motion with the caveat that business stakeholders are properly informed of the changes which will alter late payments guidance into statutory obligations.

The Committee considered a draft of the Committee report on the Commercial Payments Bill LCM.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the Background section, as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to Consideration of the LCM section, as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the Appendices, as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that the report should be published as its 12th report of the mandate.