



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for The Executive Office

Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 11 February 2026

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present:	Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA (Chairperson)
	Mr Stewart Dickson MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
	Mr Phillip Brett MLA
	Mrs Pam Cameron MLA
	Mr Timothy Gaston MLA
	Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA
	Ms Áine Murphy MLA
	Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Online:	None
Apologies:	Ms Claire Sugden MLA

In Attendance: Mr Nick Mitford (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Porter (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Chairperson's Business

3.1 TEO – Permanent Secretary

The Chairperson advised Members the former Interim Permanent Secretary David Malcolm has been appointed Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education and Moira Doherty has taken up post as Interim Permanent Secretary for TEO.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note this item of correspondence and agreed to write to the newly appointed Interim Permanent Secretary to offer its congratulations and invite them to attend an introductory briefing with the Committee before summer recess.

3.2 & 3.3 Rosetta Trust and Survivors Together – HIA Plaque Memorial

The Chairperson advised Members that Rosetta Trust copied the Chairperson in to correspondence they sent to the First and deputy First Minister in relation to the HIA Plaque Memorial.

The Chairperson advised Members that Survivors Together also wrote them outlining how they did not accept the answer given by the First and deputy First Minister during their oral evidence session with the Committee at last week's meeting regarding the word 'state' being removed from the final wording.

The Chairperson updated Members that Survivors Together had made contact with them yesterday evening indicating that the wording of the plaque is to be altered to now include the word 'State'. The DALO also informally confirmed this with the Clerk earlier today.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note these items of correspondence.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to TEO to request confirmation of the final wording and to ask if this has been shared with HIA Victim and Survivor groups.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed to revise the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 February 2026 in respect of the following action.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding future oral briefings, stating that additional time must be allocated for these sessions with the Committee in future.

5. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

6. Introductory Briefing - Commissioner for Victims and Survivors: Oral Briefing

Agreed: The Committee agreed for Hansard to record the session.

The witness joined the meeting at 2.09pm.

All Members with the exception of Stuart Dickon declared an interest as having met the Commissioner previously in their capacity as individual MLAs.

Members received an oral briefing from:

- Joe McVey, Commissioner for Victims and Survivors, Commission for Victims and Survivors
- Tina McCann, Director of Policy, Engagement and Research Commissioner for Victims and Survivors, Commission for Victims and Survivors
- Andrew Sloan, Chief Executive, Commission for Victims and Survivors

The witnesses provided an introductory briefing on the role of Commissioner for Victims and Survivors.

The oral briefing session was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the witness for their attendance.

Áine Murphy joined the meeting at 3.05pm and returned at 3.14pm.

The witnesses left the meeting at 3.14pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the First and deputy First Minister and to the Head of the Civil Service to request an update on the formal advice submitted in December 2023 in relation to a statutory bereavement payment scheme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Committee team to liaise with the DALO to ask that Departmental officials cover the monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy for Victims and Survivors during their oral evidence session at next week's meeting.

7. Introductory Briefing – Chief Scientific and Technology Adviser: Oral Briefing

Agreed: The Committee agreed for Hansard to record the oral evidence session.

The witness joined the meeting at 3.17pm.

Sinéad McLaughlin left the meeting at 3.17pm.

Phillip Brett left the meeting at 3.17pm and returned at 3.27pm.

Carál Ní Chuilín left the meeting at 3.17pm and returned at 3.21pm.

Members received an oral briefing from:

- Professor Helen McCarthy, Chief Scientific and Technology Adviser, Office for Science and Technology, The Executive Office

The witness provided an introductory briefing on the role of Chief Scientific and Technology Adviser.

The oral briefing session was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their attendance.

The witness left the meeting at 3.45pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Chief Scientific and Technology Adviser to follow up on a number of issues raised during the oral briefing, including Department of Health research projects and trials, associated delivery timelines, and whether Copilot operates as a cross-departmental function across the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to take a short comfort break and suspend the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 3.46pm.

The meeting resumed in open session at 3.51pm.

8. Assembly Research and Information Services (RaISe) – Paper on Good Practice and Reconciliation Processes from other Jurisdictions and Updated paper on Legacy in the Republic of Ireland: Oral Briefing

The officials joined the meeting at 3.51pm.

Members received an oral briefing from:

- Thomas Lough, Research Officer, NI Assembly
- Michael Grieg, Research Officer, NI Assembly

The officials provided information on Good Practice and Reconciliation Processes from other Jurisdictions and Legacy in the Republic of Ireland.

Phillip Brett left the meeting at 4.00pm.

Carál Ní Chuilín left the meeting at 4.28pm and returned at 4.35pm.

The oral briefing session was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

The witnesses left the meeting at 4.45pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to discuss possible areas of Committee Inquiry at a future strategic planning meeting.

9. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted the summary of Committee correspondence.
- ii. The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding the promotion of public transport in the Ballymena area.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note this item of correspondence and agreed to write again to the individual outlining the statutory responsibilities of the Committee and suggest that if they are unhappy with a public service provided by an Executive Department, a formal complaint can be lodged with the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman.

- iii. The Committee considered a response from Belfast City Council to the Committee's correspondence on 30 January 2026 in relation to Belfast Stories.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note this item of correspondence and agreed to keep a watching brief on the issue.

- iv. The Committee considered correspondence from TEO regarding Relatives for Justice and the Victims Payment Board.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an oral briefing with the Victims Payment Board before Summer Recess to provide an update on its Business Transformation Project ahead of the scheme's closure to new applications in August 2026.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Victim and Survivor Service (VSS) to take part in this oral briefing with the Victims Payment Board when scheduled.

- v. The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Youth Assembly – Monthly update: January 2026.
- vi. The Committee noted a news release from the Executive Office – Announcement of senior Civil Service leadership appointments.
- vii. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Committee for Health to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding Legislation on Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol.
- viii. The Committee noted a news release from The Executive Office – First Minister and deputy First Minister welcome Catherine Connolly, President of Ireland to Stormont Castle.
- ix. The Committee noted an Official Report (Hansard) – Inquiry (Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalane Laundries and Workhouses) and Redress Scheme Bill: Committee Report – 28 January 2026.
- i. The Committee noted an Official Report (Hansard) – Northern Ireland Bureaux, China and North America / Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels – 28 January 2026.
- ii. The Committee noted a Report from Legal Services – Fifty-fifth Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules. There are no rules for the attention of this Committee.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the draft forward work programme.

The Committee noted an update from the Assistant Clerk in relation to next week's meeting where the Committee will receive oral briefings from stakeholders and the Department on the Strategy for Victims and Survivors of the Troubles/Conflict 2024-2034. The Committee will also receive an oral briefing from Assembly Legal Services in relation to the Supreme Court ruling on religious education.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to proceed with the remaining briefings as set out in the forward work programme.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 February 2026 at 2.00pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.50pm.

Paula Bradshaw MLA

Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office

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