



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Committee for Finance

# OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Administrative and Financial Provisions Bill:  
Clause-by-clause Consideration and  
Committee Report

4 March 2026

# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

## Committee for Finance

### Administrative and Financial Provisions Bill: Clause-by-clause Consideration and Committee Report

4 March 2026

**Members present for all or part of the proceedings:**

Ms Diane Forsythe (Deputy Chairperson)  
Dr Steve Aiken  
Mr Gerry Carroll  
Miss Jemma Dolan  
Miss Deirdre Hargey  
Mr Harry Harvey  
Mr Brian Kingston  
Mr Eóin Tennyson

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** I seek agreement from members that Hansard reports on the session.

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** The Committee will now undertake its formal clause-by-clause consideration of the Administrative and Financial Provisions Bill. Members now have the opportunity to formally determine and set out their position on each of the proposed clauses. If required, on any of the clauses on which there is a disagreement, we will divide as necessary. All decisions taken today will be final. If the Committee is not content with a clause, it can register its formal opposition to the Question that the clause stand part of the Bill. That will ensure that the clause in its entirety is debated at Consideration Stage. It is anticipated that the Committee will conclude all formal deliberations at today's meeting and give initial consideration to the Bill report, time permitting.

I will now proceed through the clauses in order and formally put the Question on each. If there is no consensus on a Question, I will ask Members to vote through a show of hands, and the Clerk will confirm the result of each vote.

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 1, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 2, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 3, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 4, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 5, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 6, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 7, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 8, put and agreed to.*

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** Clauses 9 is "Ending violence against women and girls", and clause 10 is "Section 9: supplementary". Do members agree to group clauses 9 and 10?

*Members indicated assent.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clauses 9 to 10, put and agreed to.*

**Clause 11 (Postgraduate qualifications in educational psychology)**

**Ms Forsythe:** Is the Committee content with clause 11, subject to the proposed amendment to introduce bursary schemes supporting initial teacher education in priority subjects and postgraduate leadership development for school leaders that will be administered by the Department of Education or the Education Authority, subject to conditions?

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 11, subject to the proposed amendment, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 12, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 13, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 14, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 15, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 16, put and agreed to.*

**Clause 17 (Travel concession passes)**

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** Is the Committee content with clause 17, subject to the proposed amendment to change the delegated power in the Bill from negative resolution procedure to draft affirmative resolution procedure?

**Mr Carroll:** Chair, I voice my objection to this clause. Thanks.

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** Thank you.

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 17, subject to the proposed amendment, put and agreed to.*

**Clause 18 (Advances out of Consolidated Fund: increase in limit)**

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** Is the Committee content with clause 18, subject to an addition to the explanatory and financial memorandum as follows:

*"DoF will normally only authorise an advance after the notification to the Assembly and Finance Committee has been made, or at least arranged. The circumstances in which advances may be agreed before notification to the Assembly and Finance Committee are limited to cases:*

- Where the urgency justifies making the advance before a statement has been made*
- That arise during an Assembly recess and so notification cannot be made until the Assembly returns"*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 18, subject to the proposed amendment, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 19, put and agreed to.*

**Clause 20 (Appointment of auditor for Northern Ireland Audit Office)**

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** This is the clause that is being removed.

**Mr Kingston:** Is it being removed by an amendment or by us?

**The Committee Clerk:** It will be by an amendment by the Department, but there is a bit that we enter into the record. The agreement is that members are not content.

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 20, put and negatived.*

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** Having decided that we are not content with clause 20, I remind members that, in advance of the Consideration Stage, we have the option of registering our formal opposition to the Question that clause 20 stands part of the Bill. This would ensure that the clause is debated at Consideration Stage. Do members wish to table formal notice of the Committee's opposition to the Question that clause 20 stand part of the Bill?

**The Committee Clerk:** Are members content to do that?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** Clauses 21 to 23 are the interpretation and commencement clauses and the short title. Do members agree to group clauses 21 to 23?

*Members indicated assent.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clauses 21 to 23, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with the long title, put and agreed to.*

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** I refer members to page 48 of the tabled pack for a draft of the Committee's report on the Bill. The section on clause-by-clause consideration will be added following today's deliberations. Any typos or formatting errors in the report will be amended at the final proofing stage before it is circulated to MLAs and published on the Committee's website. Do members have any proposed amendments to the draft report or areas that are not covered? Brian highlighted a couple of typos; I think that we have picked those up.

**The Committee Clerk:** We have registered those, Chair. We will proceed to fix those and bring the report back next week for approval.

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** That is grand. Formal agreement on the report will be scheduled for next week's meeting. Are we content?

**The Committee Clerk:** We are content.

**The Deputy Chairperson (Ms Forsythe):** Grand. Thank you.

**The Committee Clerk:** That is the formal and informal consideration done.