



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Finance

Minutes of Proceedings

10 June 2025

Meeting Location: Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Matthew O'Toole MLA (Chairperson)
Diane Forsythe MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Steve Aiken MLA
Phillip Brett MLA
Jemma Dolan MLA
Paul Frew MLA
Deirdre Hargey MLA

Apologies: Gerry Carroll MLA
Eóin Tennyson MLA

In Attendance: Peter Hall Committee Clerk

Clairita Frazer Assistant Assembly Clerk

Tom Armstrong Assistant Assembly Clerk

Stephen Magee Clerical Supervisor

Heather Graham Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 9.38am in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

Steve Aiken declared an interest as a member of the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee.

3. Data (Use and Access) Bill – Legislative Consent Motion – Oral briefing from Department Officials

The following officials joined the meeting at 9.39am:

Neil Gibson Permanent Secretary, Department of Finance

Paul Duffy Deputy Secretary, Digital and Finance Shared Services,
Department of Finance

The officials briefed the Committee on the current status of the Data (Use and Access) Bill Legislative Consent Motion. The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

A number of issues were discussed including; a tracker for all Legislative Consent Motion, confirmation that the Minister will be putting forward a motion for debate to

note the Bill and communications between the Department and the UK Government on the progress of the Bill.

Phillip Brett joined the meeting at 9.49am.

Paul Frew joined the meeting at 10.13am.

The Chairperson thanked the witness for his attendance and the officials left the meeting at 10.28am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an update on a number of issues including;

- the wording for the Motion that the Minister will lay for the Legislative Consent Motion;
- a copy of correspondence dated 9th May 2025 from the Minister to the Executive;
- date (and copy) of the final submission to the Minister of Finance apprising him of the entire LCM situation;
- an understanding of what has been communicated to the UK Government regarding the entire process;
- details of the LCM tracker referenced by officials and how this be co-ordinated across all Departments;
- any other communication with Departments to ensure that this situation does not happen again;
- any legal advice the Department of Finance can share with the Committee around this process; and
- clarification on whether or not the Attorney General will be consulted in respect of any precedent being set regarding this motion.

4. Any Other Business

None.

5. Date and Time of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 2.00pm in Studio Ulster.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.29am.

Matthew O'Toole

Chairperson, Committee for Finance

18th June 2025