



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Public Accounts Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday, 26 March 2026

Meeting Location: Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Daniel McCrossan, MLA (Chairperson)

Tom Buchanan, MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Stephen Dunne, MLA

David Honeyford, MLA

Cathal Boylan, MLA

Colm Gildernew, MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Gareth Wilson, MLA

Jon Burrows, MLA

Jemma Dolan, MLA

Apologies:

In Attendance: Lucia Wilson (Committee Clerk)
Kirsten McClelland (Assistant Committee Clerk)
Karen Barry (Clerical Supervisor)
Yannie Mahood (Clerical Officer)

The meeting opened in public session at 2.14pm.

1. Apologies

2. Draft minutes

Agreed: Members agreed the draft minutes of the meeting on 12 March 2026.

3. Declaration of Interests

4. Chairperson's Business

The Chair shared details of a meeting held alongside the Deputy Chair with the Royal College of General Practitioners to discuss the MOR on Access to General Practice in Northern Ireland, following their evidence to the inquiry.

5. Matters Arising

6. Correspondence

Members noted correspondence from NIPSO sharing their report, "Follow Up Report on the progress of the Health Care Waiting List Communication Recommendations.

Agreed: Members agreed to note the correspondence.

Members considered correspondence from the Business Office regarding a contingent liability from the Department of Health in respect of indemnity relating to a centre for digital healthcare technology city deal collaboration between BHSCT and the Ulster University.

Agreed: Members agreed to note the correspondence.

Members considered correspondence from the Committee for Infrastructure regarding expected publication of the MOR on the Major Capital Projects: Follow Up Report.

Agreed: Members agreed to respond to the Committee for Infrastructure to advise that there is currently no indicative timescale for provision of the MOR but this is being actively monitored by the Committee.

7. MOR on Access to General Practice in Northern Ireland: Departmental Briefing

The following witnesses and officials joined the meeting at 2.18 pm.

Mike Farrar, Permanent Secretary, Department of Health;

Gearóid Cassidy, Director of Primary Care, Department of Health;

Stuart Stevenson, Treasury Officer of Accounts, Department of Finance.

The Chair welcomed the witnesses to the Committee.

Jon Burrows, MLA, left the meeting at 2.18 pm.

Jon Burrows, MLA, rejoined the meeting at 2.19 pm.

Colm Gildernew, MLA, joined the meeting at 2.22 pm.

Cathal Boylan, MLA, left the meeting at 3.17 pm.

Cathal Boylan, MLA, rejoined the meeting at 3.38 pm.

Members received a briefing from the Accounting Officer which updated Members on progress against the recommendations made in the report on Access to General Practice in Northern Ireland.

The meeting was suspended at 3.52 pm.

The meeting resumed at 4.08 pm.

Agreed: Members agreed to seek an update to the MOR to reflect the information provided during the briefing.

Jemma Dolan, MLA, left the meeting at 4.17 pm.

Jon Burrows, MLA, left the meeting at 4.20 pm.

The Chair thanked witnesses for attending. Witnesses left the meeting at 4.29 pm.

The meeting moved into closed session at 4.29 pm.

Daniel McCrossan, MLA, left the meeting at 4.35 pm.

Tom Buchanan, MLA, assumed the Chair at 4.35 pm.

Gareth Wilson, MLA, left the meeting at 4.36 pm.

Daniel McCrossan, MLA, rejoined the meeting at 4.41 pm.

Daniel McCrossan, MLA, resumed the Chair at 4.41 pm.

Stephen Dunne, MLA, left the meeting at 4.42 pm.

Members considered the briefing provided.

8. Draft Forward Work Programme

Agreed: Members agreed the draft forward work programme.

Agreed: Members agreed to defer consideration of future inquiries to the next meeting of the Committee.

9. Any Other Business

Members considered arrangements for attendance at the Balmoral Show.

Agreed: Members agreed arrangements for attendance.

10. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will take place in the Senate Chamber on Thursday 16 April 2026 at 2.00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.53 pm.

Daniel McCrossan

Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee

16 April 2026