



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Public Accounts Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday, 8 October 2026

Meeting Location: Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Daniel McCrossan MLA (Chairperson)

Tom Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Cathal Boylan MLA

Stephen Dunne MLA

Colm Gildernew MLA

David Honeyford MLA

Mike Nesbitt MLA

Gareth Wilson MLA

Apologies:

Áine Murphy MLA

In Attendance:

Lucia Wilson (Committee Clerk)

Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Karen Barry (Clerical Supervisor)

Yannie Mahood (Clerical Officer)

The meeting opened in public session at 2.08pm.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Draft minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting on 1st October 2026.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson declared an interest in extensive engagement with the Planning Appeals Commission in constituency work as MLAs.

4. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's Business.

5. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising.

6. Correspondence

The Committee considered further correspondence from an individual concerning governance and assurance arrangements within the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and oversight by the Department of Education (DE).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Northern Ireland Audit office (NIAO) and request a short report on the outcome of its engagement with DE and any further action proposed.

7. Committee Inquiry on A Strategic Review of the Planning Appeals

Commission: Oral Evidence from the Planning Appeals Commission

The following officials joined the meeting at 2.11pm:

- Andrea Kells, Chief Commissioner, Planning Appeals Commission; and
- Pamela O'Donnell, Deputy Chief Commissioner.

In attendance:

- Dorinnia Carville, Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland (C&AG);
- Conor McGeown, Director, Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO);
- Tomas Wilkinson, Director, NIAO;
- Claire Turner, Audit Manager, NIAO ; and
- Stuart Stevenson, Treasury Officer of Accounts, Department of Finance.

The Committee received oral evidence from the Planning Appeals Commission officials for the inquiry.

Deputy Chairperson left the meeting at 3.22pm

Deputy Chairperson returned to the meeting at 3.26pm

The Chairperson thanked the officials for attending.

The meeting moved into closed session at 3.51pm.

8. Committee Inquiry on A Strategic Review of the Planning Appeals

Commission: Preparation Session

The following officials joined the meeting at 3.52pm:

- Dorinnia Carville, Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland (C&AG);
- Tomas Wilkinson, Director, NIAO;
- Conor McGeown, Director, NIAO; and
- Claire Turner, Audit Manager, NIAO.

The Committee considered its forthcoming evidence sessions for the inquiry.

The Chairperson thanks the officials for attending.

9. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered a draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will take place on Thursday 15th October 2026 at 2.00pm in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.17pm.

Chairperson

Public Accounts Committee

15 October 2026