



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee on Procedures

Minutes of Proceedings

29 April 2026

Meeting Location: Room 21, Parliament Buildings

Present: Kellie Armstrong MLA (Chairperson)
Órlaithí Flynn MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Trevor Clarke MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Danny Baker MLA
Cheryl Brownlee MLA
Robbie Butler MLA
Danny Donnelly MLA
Cara Hunter MLA

Apologies: Philip McGuigan MLA

In Attendance: Stella McArdle, Assembly Clerk
Christine Darragh, Assembly Clerk
Michael Best, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Veronica Lo Pinto, Clerical Officer

The meeting started at 10.04 a.m. in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2026.

3. Matters Arising

None.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the meeting should move into closed session.

The meeting moved into closed session at 10.06 a.m.

4. Repeal of Standing Order 70 and consequential amendments to Standing Orders - Consideration of consequential amendments to Standing Order 22(2) and Legal Advice

Robbie Butler joined the meeting at 10.06 a.m.

The Chairperson welcomed Assembly Legal Adviser, Ms Helen Smyth, to the meeting.

Trevor Clarke joined the meeting at 10.09 a.m.

Ms Smyth outlined a revised draft amendment to Standing Order 22(2) and the associated legal advice.

Trevor Clarke declared an interest as a member of the Business Committee.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked Ms Smyth and she left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the wording of the revised amendment to Standing Order 22(2).

The Chairperson informed the Committee that this amendment would be formally agreed at the meeting on 13 May 2026.

Trevor Clarke left the meeting at 10.48 a.m.

5. Northern Ireland Act 1998 Section 42 Petitions of Concern – Further consideration of provision in draft Standing Orders

The Chairperson welcomed Assembly Legal Adviser Ms Helen Smyth and Clerk Assistants Mr Paul Gill and Dr Frank Geddis to the meeting.

Ms Smyth outlined her legal advice on the issues raised by Members on draft Standing Orders 28A, 36A and 40A.

Mr Gill briefed the Committee on the Speaker's response to the issues raised by Members on draft Standing Orders 28A, 36A and 40A.

Dr Geddis briefed the Committee on the issues raised by Members on draft Standing Orders 28A, 36A and 40A and on the potential impact of late or no notice amendments to Bills.

The briefings were followed by a question and answer session.

Danny Baker left the meeting at 11.28 a.m.

Cara Hunter left the meeting at 11.30 a.m.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request that Legal Services provide advice on the issues raised in relation to late and no notice amendments.

The meeting moved into public session at 12.05 p.m.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered an updated Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the updated Forward Work Programme.

7. Correspondence

The Committee considered correspondence from the Clerk to the Committee for Finance regarding the Managing Public Money Guidance and the procedures by which an MLA or Committee can raise an objection to a Department undertaking a contingency liability in excess of £300,000 for which there is no specific statutory authority.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add this matter to the list of issues to be included in its Legacy Report for consideration by the next Committee on Procedures and to write to the Committee for Finance advising it accordingly.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Public Accounts Committee on its primacy over Northern Ireland Audit Office reports.

8. Chairperson's Business

None.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 10.00 a.m. in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.08 a.m.

Kellie Armstrong MLA
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures
13 May 2026