



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Committee on Procedures

### Minutes of Proceedings

**27 May 2026**

**Meeting Location:** Room 21, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Órlaithí Flynn MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Cheryl Brownlee MLA  
Trevor Clarke MLA  
Danny Donnelly MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Danny Baker MLA  
Robbie Butler MLA  
Cara Hunter MLA  
Philip McGuigan MLA

**Apologies:** Kellie Armstrong MLA (Chairperson)

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

The meeting started at 10.02 a.m. in public session.

### **1. Apologies**

As above.

### **2. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2026.

### **3. Matters Arising**

None.

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

The meeting moved into closed session at 10.04 a.m.

### **4. Repeal of Standing Order 70 and consequential amendments to Standing Orders – Consequential amendment to Standing Order 22(2) and draft Motion to amend Standing Orders**

The Deputy Chairperson reminded Members that, at the meeting on 13 May 2026, the Committee had rescinded its decisions taken on 8 October 2025 with regard to the original consequential amendment to Standing Order 22(2) and the motion containing that amendment. She also reminded the Committee that all other decisions taken on 8 October 2025 on the repeal of Standing Order 70 and the consequential amendments remained valid.

The Committee considered an alternative amendment to Standing Order 22(2) and a draft motion to repeal Standing Order 70, provide for this new amendment and the other necessary consequential amendments.

Trevor Clarke joined the meeting at 10.09 a.m.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the alternative amendment to Standing Order 22(2) which removes a reference to breach of privilege and replaces it with a reference to matters that could create a substantial risk of serious prejudice to active legal proceedings

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that the motion, as drafted, be tabled in the Business Office to be scheduled for debate in Plenary.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that a one hour debate for the motion remained appropriate.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Speaker, the Business Committee and the Committee on Standards and Privileges to provide an update on this issue.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed a joint letter from the Chairperson of the Committee on Procedures and the Chairperson of the Committee on Standards and Privileges providing information on the position regarding parliamentary privilege in the Assembly, the background to and rationale for the decision to request the repeal of Standing Order 70 and the nature of the consequential amendments to be issued electronically to all MLAs to inform the debate on the motion.

The Committee noted that the necessary administrative amendments to the content pages, divider page and header pages of Standing Orders will be undertaken by committee staff once the motion is agreed by the Assembly.

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

The Committee considered the paragraphs of draft Standing Order 28 that it had not yet agreed.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to bank paragraph (2)(b), as amended, for inclusion in any future motion on a new Standing Order 28.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that Legal Services amend paragraph (3) to make the provision of a statement of the rationale for a petition

voluntary, and to bank that paragraph for inclusion in any future motion on a new Standing Order 28 once amended.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to bank paragraph (4) for inclusion in any future motion on a new Standing Order 28.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that Legal Services amend paragraph (5) to set the deadline for presenting a petition under exceptional circumstances to one hour before the start of the debate, and to bank that paragraph for inclusion in any future motion on a new Standing Order 28 once amended.

Cara Hunter left the meeting at 11.09 a.m.

Philip McGuigan left the meeting at 11.23 a.m.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to defer consideration of paragraph (6)(c) to allow for further consultation.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to bank paragraph (7) for inclusion in any future motion on a new Standing Order 28 with the proviso that this may be revisited once a decision on paragraph 6(c) is made.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to seek advice on whether paragraph (10)(a) could be brought to the Assembly for agreement as a separate motion.

Danny Baker left the meeting at 11.41 a.m.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to seek advice on whether paragraph (10)(b) could be brought to the Assembly for agreement as a separate motion.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request legal advice on a further briefing note from Dr Frank Geddis on deadlines for presentation of petitions on Bills.

## **6. Standing Order 42A Legislative Consent Motions – Further consideration of draft Standing Order**

The Committee considered the relevant recommendations from the previous Committee on Procedures' Inquiry Report into Legislative Consent Memorandums

and the proposed amendments to Standing Order 42A to provide for these recommendations.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that paragraph 13(b) of the proposed new Standing Order 42A should be amended to address the potential conflict with the provisions in paragraph 12.

#### **7. Scrutiny of Delegated Powers in Bills by the Examiner of Statutory Rules to the Assembly – Written Briefing and Consultation with ESR**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to consult with the Assembly Examiner of Statutory Rules on the revised draft Standing Order 43A and request her views in writing in advance of the Committee meeting on 10 June 2026.

Trevor Clarke left the meeting at 12.10 p.m.

The Committee lost quorum at 12.10 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.10 p.m.

Órlaithí Flynn MLA

Deputy Chairperson, Committee on Procedures

10 June 2026