Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee on Procedures

Minutes of Proceedings

4 November 2026

Meeting Location: Senate, Parliament Buildings

Present: Kellie Armstrong MLA (Chairperson)
Trevor Clarke MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:
Andy Allen MLA
Danny Baker MLA
Danny Donnelly MLA
Cara Hunter MLA
Philip McGuigan MLA

Apologies: Órlaithí Flynn MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Cheryl Brownlee MLA

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

The meeting started at 10.05 a.m. in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2026.

3. Maters Arising

The Chairperson informed the Committee that the debate on the Petitions of Concern Motions was scheduled on the Order Paper for Monday 9 November 2026.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that a copy of the embargoed Report on Petitions of Concern should be provided with the embargoed press release to the media.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the meeting move into closed session for the next two agenda items.

The meeting moved into closed session at 10.09 a.m.

4. Standing Order 69C Members' Interests: Rectification of Minor Errors – Unacceptable Behaviours Policy – Legal Advice and draft Amended Standing Order

The Chairperson welcomed Rebecca Ellis, Assembly Legal Adviser, to the meeting.

Ms Ellis outlined a draft amended Standing Order 69C to widen the scope of the rectification procedure to cover the Unacceptable Behaviours Policy and associated legal advice.

Trevor Clerke joined the meeting at 10.18 a.m.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Committee on Standards to request its views on two proposed amendments to Standing Order 69C.

5. Inquiry into an Extension of Standing Order 27A Voting by Proxy – Further Consideration of Final Position on Absence on Official Assembly Business

The Committee discussed its preferred position regarding the provision of proxy voting for absence on official Assembly business.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the provision of proxy voting for absence on official Assembly business should be based on the approach proposed by the Speaker.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the list of organisations to which this type of proxy voting should apply should be covered in the Proxy Voting Scheme.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that a composite draft revised Standing Order 27A to provide for serious long-term illness or injury, bereavement and absence on official Assembly business would be provided for consideration at a future meeting.

The meeting moved into public session at 10.42 a.m.

6. Review of Assembly Questions – Research Paper on Parliamentary Questions – Comparative Information

The Chairperson welcomed Ray McCaffrey, Assembly Research Officer, to the meeting.

Mr McCaffrey outlined the key issues in the research paper on comparative information on Parliamentary Questions in other legislatures.

Cara Hunter declared an interest as a member of Synthesia AI's Technical Advisory Council.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked Mr McCaffrey and he left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request information regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools by the Assembly Business Office to identify AI generated questions/answers and/or to assist in the administration of Assembly questions.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that, given the other priority areas of work to be completed in the limited time available until the end of the mandate, it would recommend in its Legacy Report that a Review of Assembly Questions should be taken forward as a priority by the next Committee on Procedures and that the details of the preliminary work undertaken, links to the research papers that have been produced and the key issues discussed would be provided in that Report.

7. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered an updated Forward Work Programme and noted the provisional dates for committee meetings from January until the end of the mandate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

8. Correspondence

The Committee considered a request from the Senedd's Legislation Committee Chair, Cristiana Emsley MS, for written evidence on the Assembly's legislative consent process as part of a review of the Senedd's Standing Order 29 Consent to UK Parliament Bills.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that a draft response to the Senedd Legislation Committee would be prepared for consideration at the meeting on 18 November 2026.

9. Chairperson's Business

None.

10. Any Other Business

Trevor Clarke MLA highlighted that a number of Members had raised the issue of the use of cameras when Members are attending Assembly committee meetings remotely via the Zoom video conferencing facility.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Chairperson's Liaison Group requesting a copy of the current guidance in place for Committees and Members and seeking its views on whether this is an issue that warrants further consideration by the Committee on Procedures.

11. Time and date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 November 2026 at 10.00 a.m. in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.16 a.m.

Kellie Armstrong MLA
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures
18 November 2026