

LEGISLATIVE CONSENT MEMORANDUM

SPORTING EVENTS BILL

Draft Legislative Consent Motion

1. The draft motion, which will be tabled by the Minister for the Economy, is:

“That this Assembly endorses the principle of the extension of the provisions of the Sporting Events Bill, as introduced in the House of Commons on 14 May 2026, dealing with provisions relating to specific departmental powers in clauses 1–13, 18–24, 25, and 26–30, together with Schedules 1–3, Schedule 5 (paragraphs 1 and 3 only), and Schedule 6 of the Bill.”

Background

2. This memorandum has been laid before the Assembly by the Minister for the Economy under Standing Order 42A(2). The Sporting Events Bill was introduced in the House of Lords on 14th May 2026, as a Lords Starter Bill. The latest version of the Bill can be found at:

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/59-02/0133/260133.pdf>

Summary of the Bill and its policy objectives

3. The purpose of this Bill is to allow governments to meet legislative commitments required to bid to host future major sporting events. It will assist when bidding for future global sporting tournaments, showing that the regions are event ready.
4. At its core, the bill creates a framework which enables a common set of legislative provisions (“the framework provisions”) to be applied to qualifying major sporting events through secondary legislation.
5. The Bill includes provisions for the following areas:
 - Ticket touting;

- Advertising;
- Trading;
- Unauthorised association;
- Enforcement;
- Financial Assistance; and
- Transport and Traffic Management (England only).

Provisions which deal with a Devolution Matter

6. The Bill establishes a framework for regulating ticket touting, advertising and trading in connection with major sporting events. These areas do not fall within excepted or reserved matters under Schedules 2 and 3 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and are therefore within the legislative competence of the Assembly.
7. The Bill sets out provisions relating to specific departmental powers in clauses 1–13, 18–24, 25, and 26–30, together with Schedules 1–3, Schedule 5 (paragraphs 1 and 3 only), and Schedule 6.
8. Clause 1 - The clause introduces the concept of a legislative framework for sporting events. This clause is essentially an introductory clause which sets out the purpose of Part 1 of the Bill – which enables a common legislative framework to be applied to certain sporting events by regulations. The framework consists of 5 sets of provisions that may be applied to a sporting event. The provisions are on: ticket touting, advertising, trading, unauthorised association and transport (together “the framework provisions”)
9. Clause 2 - The main purpose of this clause is to provide powers to apply the framework provisions set out in clause 1 to a sporting event. This clause gives regulation-making powers to the appropriate national authority (defined by virtue of subsection (8) and clause 4(6) as the Secretary of State, or a Northern Ireland department) to apply one or more parts of the sporting events framework to a sporting event. Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Devolved authorities may apply the ticket touting, advertising and trading provisions. Only SoS may apply the unauthorised association provisions and the transport provisions.
10. The Bill provides at Clause 2 (2) (a) and (b) that “(2) The Secretary of State may by regulations apply either or both of the following parts of the sporting events framework to a sporting event— (a) the unauthorised association provisions;(b) the transport provisions.” The issue of transport will apply to England only.

11. Clause 3 - This clause is to set out conditions that must be met before the regulations making powers in clause 2 may be exercised.
12. Clause 4 - This clause is to define “appropriate national authority” to inform clause 2 and to place certain constraints on the exercise of the regulation making powers in clause 2(1).
13. Clause 5 - This clause makes further provision for regulations which apply the ticket touting provisions to sporting events under section 2(1)(a). The regulations must specify the period for which the provisions apply. The regulations may specify events, including non-sporting events which are connected events.
14. Clause 6 - This clause enables the designation of a person to grant authorisations. The regulations may impose conditions on the person designated.
15. Clause 7 - This clause enables regulations to include exceptions as to when a person may be in breach of the regulations in relation to the ticketing provisions.
16. Clause 8 - This clause makes further provision for regulations which apply the advertising provisions to a sporting event under section 2(1)(b). The clause provides that the regulations must specify the places and the period for which the advertising provisions apply, subject to certain conditions. They may make provision for when a person is or is not to be treated as doing something in a specified place.
17. Clause 9 - This clause enables the regulations applying the advertising provisions to an event under section 2(1)(b) to designate a person to grant authorisations. That person may either be the appropriate national authority or a person who meets certain conditions. These are that a person may only be designated if considered suitable and appropriate. The designation may be subject to conditions.
18. Clause 10 - This clause enables regulations under section 2(1)(b) to provide for when conduct does not constitute a breach of the prohibition on advertising (i.e. exceptions).
19. Clause 11 - This clause makes further provision for regulations which apply the trading provisions to a sporting event under section 2(1)(c). The clause provides that the regulations must specify a place or places and the period for which the trading provisions apply. The regulations may make provision about when a person is to be treated as doing something in or in the vicinity of a place described in accordance with the section.

20. Clause 12 - This clause enables regulations applying the trading provisions to a sporting event to designate a person to grant authorisations in relation to a sporting event or permit the authority making the regulations to grant such authorisations. A person may only be designated if suitable and appropriate and the designation may be subject to conditions, examples of which are listed.
21. Clause 13 - This clause enables regulations applying the trading provisions to a sporting event to provide for when conduct does not breach the prohibition on unauthorised trading (i.e. exceptions).
22. Clause 18 - This clause provides that regulations under section 2(1) applying the ticket touting, advertising and/or trading provisions to a sporting event may provide for one or more department or public authority to enforce those offences.
23. Clause 19 - This clause sets out the circumstances in which an internet service provider (ISP) does not breach the ticket touting, advertising and trading offences and the prohibition on unauthorised association (i.e. it creates exceptions for ISPs). Broadly, the exceptions are where the ISP simply provides access to a network, transmits information via a network without initiating the transmission, selecting the recipient or modifying the information or stores information in certain circumstances.
24. Clause 20 - This clause informs the ticket touting, advertising and trading offences where the offence is committed by a body corporate. This clause relates to offences created by the exercise of powers in clause 2(1)(a) to (c) by NI Department, or by SoS in respect of NI.
25. Clause 21 - This clause requires any authority making regulations to apply the advertising and/or trading provisions (SoS, NI department) to issue and publish guidance. The clause gives any authority making regulations to apply the ticket touting and/or UA and/or trading provisions to a sporting event a discretionary power to issue and prepare guidance in relation to the provision being applied.
26. Clause 22 - This clause enables the Secretary of State to amend the maximum fine for breaches of the ticket touting, advertising and trading offences by means of regulations. It may only be exercised to reflect changes in the value of money. Prior to making such regulations, the Secretary of State must consult the DGs and such other persons as appropriate.
27. Clause 23 - This clause makes amendments to Schedule 5 to the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 in order that certain enforcement powers in those Acts are available to

“designated enforcement authorities” under this Bill (see clause 18). The purpose is to expand the enforcement tools available to enforcers under the Bill.

28. Clause 24 - This clause is to define terms used elsewhere in the Bill.
29. Clause 25 - provides a power for financial assistance to be given in support of major sporting events. Here, the power is conferred on local devolved departments, rather than the Secretary of State, enabling financial support to be provided for qualifying events hosted here.
30. Clause 26 - This clause enables the Secretary of State to make provisions consequential on the Bill by regulations.
31. Clause 27 - This clause is to make further provision for the regulations to be made under the Act, including their form and Parliamentary scrutiny.
32. Clause 28 - This clause provides for the extent of specific provisions of the Bill and that any amendment, repeal or revocation under the Act has the same extent as the provision amended, repealed or revoked.
33. Clause 29 - This clause provides that the Act comes into force at the end of the period of 2 months beginning on the day it is passed.
34. Clause 30 - This clause provides a short title for the Bill.

Tabled Amendments

35. Clause 18 - leave out paragraph (b) and insert— “(b)a Northern Ireland department;” This amendment provides for any Northern Ireland department to be an enforcement authority for the purposes of Part 1 rather than just the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland.
36. Clause 23, leave out paragraph (5)(c) and insert— “(c) a Northern Ireland department.” This amendment is consequential on Amendment following Clause 18.
37. Clause 26 - after “State” insert “or a devolved authority” This enables a Northern Ireland department to by regulations make provision that is consequential on this Act. Such regulations may only contain provision which is “within devolved competence” (see clause 24(3) with subsequent amendments to 26 (1A), 26 (2A and 2 B), 26 (5) and 26 (6).)

Reasons for utilising the Bill rather than an Act of the Assembly

38. The Sporting Events Bill is being introduced to provide legislative cover for the hosting of major sporting events only. This would support the delivery of

the 2028 UEFA Men's European Football Championship in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, hence the desire for Westminster to legislate now. Subject to a successful bid, it would also support host regions to meet requirements for the 2035 FIFA Women's World Cup.

39. The scope of the Bill may be expanded during its passage through the legislative process, following consideration by the House of Lords. An amendment has been proposed to extend the Bill's application to major national events of international significance, including events such as Wimbledon, major cup finals and The Open.

Consultation

40. Officials in DCMS engaged major event organisers during the development of the policy. To support the policy development process, DCMS had targeted engagement with local authorities, National Trading Standards and the Competition and Markets Authority to learn lessons from the implementation of the previous legislation. DCMS engaged major recurring sporting event organisers to assess demand and held a final roundtable with governing bodies and event owners.
41. The scope of the DCMS consultation included organisers of major global events whose activities would extend here if hosting a major event. Department for the Economy officials have undertaken engagement with four responses received; Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance, Newry, Mourne and Down Council, Ards and North Down Council and Fermanagh & Omagh District Council. Feedback for all has been positive. Department for the Economy officials have also engaged with the R&A who are keen to see the scope of the bill change where major national events with international interest may be included.

Human Rights and Equality

44. DCMS has undertaken an analysis of the compatibility of the legislation with the European Convention on Human Rights. DCMS will make a statement outlining the position on compatibility in due course, but in summary, they consider that Articles 6, 7, 8, 10 and Article 1 Protocol 1 are engaged, and that the provisions of the Bill are compatible with those articles.

Financial Implications

45. According to the DCMS Impact Assessment the Sporting Events Bill is expected to save regions "estimated efficiency savings of £5 million over 10 years, or approximately £0.5 million per year".

46. The Bill does not in itself impose any direct costs or restrictions on businesses or households. Instead, it establishes the legal framework under which such measures could be introduced.

Summary of Regulatory Impact

47. This is expected to result in minimal compliance and administrative costs for businesses. By establishing a standing legislative framework for major sporting events, the approach reduces legislative complexity, avoids duplication of processes, and lowers familiarisation costs across government, regulators and industry stakeholders. Rather than requiring bespoke primary legislation for each event, government will be able to apply relevant provisions through regulations, enabling a more efficient and proportionate response to specific required and international commitments.
48. In the longer term, the Bill is expected to reduce administrative burdens by creating a predictable and consistent regulatory environment for event organisers, sponsors, local authorities, and businesses operating near event venues. Clear statutory conditions will ensure that the powers are applied only to high-profile global sporting events where they are necessary. This stability reduces compliance risks associated with unclear or fragmented legal frameworks.

Engagement to date with the Committee for Economy

49. Officials appeared and provided an oral briefing to the Economy Committee on the 16 September 2026.

Conclusion

50. The Minister for the Economy is supportive of the proposal and recommends to the Assembly that consent should be sought.

Department for the Economy

24 September 2026