



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURES

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Standing Orders for Principal Deputy Speaker

26 May 2011

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Ms Sue Ramsey (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister
Mr Sam Gardiner
Mr Gerry Kelly
Mr Chris Lyttle
Mr Oliver McMullan
Mr Alban Maginness
Lord Morrow

Witnesses:

Mr Ray McCaffrey) Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service
Mr Tim Moore)

The Chairperson:

I welcome Tim Moore and Ray McCaffrey and thank them for the paper that they provided to the Committee.

Mr Tim Moore (Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service):

Before Ray presents his paper, I remind members that the Research and Information Service is here to provide research and information to the Committee as a whole and to individual members confidentially. We do not provide legal advice. You heard from Mr McMillen, who gave legal

advice. Nor do we have any opinion on whether the creation of the position is a good or bad thing: we are simply presenting information and research to the Committee. With that, I pass over to Ray.

Mr Ray McCaffrey (Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service):

Thank you, Chair. Members have the paper in front of them. I will speak to the key points. The Research and Information Service was asked to look at examples of other legislatures where there might be a distinction or hierarchy among Deputy Speakers. To that end, it examined the position in the other devolved legislatures in Scotland and Wales, along with Dáil Éireann and the Houses of Commons at Westminster and in Canada.

The role of Deputy Speakers is broadly similar across the institutions. They can generally be defined as chairing plenary meetings, determining questions relating to the interpretation or application of Standing Orders and representing the institution in exchanges with other bodies. The first point to note is that there is only one Deputy Speaker in the National Assembly for Wales and Dáil Éireann, so, of course, there is no distinction.

There are two Deputy Presiding Officers in the Scottish Parliament; the Scotland Act 1998 specifies that there should be two. They are elected, and there is a requirement that the three successful candidates for the positions of Presiding Officer and the two deputies should come from at least two different political parties. However, the Scotland Bill, which is currently before the UK Parliament, will allow for the Scottish Parliament to appoint more Deputy Presiding Officers, who could operate for a limited period in the event of illness or other unforeseen circumstances. That recommendation arose out of the Calman Commission, which was set up to review the impact of Scottish devolution. Another interesting point is that it also recommended that more flexibility be built into the system so that the Presiding Officer and the deputies did not have to be appointed at the first plenary sitting. That would give parties more time to consider their options if, for example, they were unsure about having to commit a Member to a non-voting role.

There are some issues with comparing sovereign Parliaments to regional Assemblies, but, nevertheless, Westminster and the Canadian House of Commons provide an interesting

perspective on the issue of Deputy Speakers. At Westminster, three deputies are elected by the House. Until recently, they had been appointed, but a 2009 report by the Procedures Committee recommended introducing elections, thereby enhancing the transparency of the process. The Principal Deputy Speaker is the Chairman of Ways and Means, which is a role that predates the role of Deputy Speaker, although there is no longer a Ways and Means Committee. The other two Deputy Speakers are the Deputy Chairmen of Ways and Means. They are known respectively as the First and Second Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means.

The Deputy Speaker can exercise all the functions of the Speaker in his or her absence, but the deputy also has three distinct roles from the Speaker: the supervision of arrangements for sittings in Westminster Hall, general oversight of matters connected with Private Bills and Chair of the Panel of Chairs, with responsibility for the work of general Committees. The First and Second Deputy Chairmen of Ways and Means are entitled to exercise all the powers of the Deputy Speaker.

The rules governing the election of the Deputies stipulate that at least one man and one woman shall be elected across the four posts of Speaker and Deputy Speakers and that the candidates should reflect party balance in the House. That is interesting for the Assembly given the consociational nature of the arrangements that underpin it. There appears to be no requirement that the three Deputies reflect party strength, albeit that they are elected with cross-community support.

The arrangements in the Canadian House of Commons bear some similarities to those at Westminster in that there are three Deputies: Deputy Speaker, Deputy Chair and Assistant Deputy Chair of the Committees of the Whole. The creation of the posts of Deputy Chair and Assistant Deputy Chair really reflect the increasing workload of the House over the past century. For example, the position of Deputy Chair was created in 1938 via an amendment to Standing Orders, with the post of Assistant Deputy Chair following in 1967 after the House had identified the need for an additional Presiding Officer. However, there is an important difference: there are no elections for Deputy Speakers in Canada. Rather, the Speaker proposes the names following consultation with party leaders.

There is also a requirement that the Deputy Speaker be fluent in the official language that is not that of the Speaker, the official languages of Canada being French and English. As with the House of Commons at Westminster, the Deputy Speaker has certain administrative responsibilities. Those include serving on the Board of Internal Economy and as a member of the Panel of Chairs for legislative Committees.

The table on remuneration in our paper sets out the additional salaries enjoyed by the Deputy Speakers.

To sum up, Westminster, and its equivalent in Canada, are examples of legislatures with hierarchical arrangements among their Deputy Speakers. Within those structures, the Speaker is supported by three Deputies, one of whom has more responsibilities than his or her counterparts. Those additional duties are reflected in the increased salary applied to this role. There is no hierarchical arrangement in the Scottish Parliament, where both Deputies have identical roles. The National Assembly for Wales and Dáil Éireann have only one Deputy each.

The Chairperson:

OK, thank you.

Mr T Clarke:

I picked up on something in your comments about the remuneration. In Westminster, is there a difference between the role of the principal Deputy Speaker and those of the First and Second Deputies?

Mr McCaffrey:

The principal Deputy Speaker has more responsibility. He has three distinct roles from the Speaker, which I pointed out: supervision of arrangements for —

Mr T Clarke:

So, that could attract more remuneration.

Mr McCaffrey:

That attracts the increased salary.

Mr Allister:

I have two questions for you. Stormont has 108 MLAs. Westminster has 650 MPs or thereabouts. Scotland has somewhat more Members than Stormont and survives with two Deputies. Wales and the Republic of Ireland survive with one. So, at three Deputies, we are on a par with a House six times our size. Are you aware of any difficulties in the past four years that would necessitate this change?

Mr McCaffrey:

I cannot really offer a comment on that. The research was asked —

Mr Allister:

Have you been here for the past four years?

Mr McCaffrey:

No, I have not.

Mr Allister:

Has your colleague?

Mr Moore:

I have been here for the past four years, but I do not think that I would want to give an opinion on whether there have been difficulties. We did not research beyond the motion. We would be happy to look back at the Hansard report to see whether anybody raised difficulties.

Mr Allister:

Very well.

The Chairperson:

On that point; is that a suggestion, Mr Allister?

Mr Allister:

No, it was a question.

Mr A Maginness:

From what Mr McCaffrey has said, in Westminster, a clearly stated hierarchy has emerged over time. I am sure that that is not set in statute, is it?

Mr McCaffrey:

Assembly Legal Services referred to the fact that there is the Deputy Speaker Act 1855.

Mr A Maginness:

Ok, so it is set in statute.

Mr McCaffrey:

The role of Deputy Speaker is.

Mr A Maginness:

Therefore, there is a clear statutory basis for that. It is clear that that is a hierarchical system. That is all that I wanted to clarify.

Lord Morrow:

Is it not also the case that, in the House of Commons procedure, there is a panel from which a Speaker can be drawn, from the smaller parties, I think?

Mr McCaffrey:

I think that, in the event of the absence or unavailability of the Speaker and the Deputy Speakers, there is contingency for other Members to take the Chair as need be.

Lord Morrow:

So, they recognise that, potentially, there could be occasions when that will arise.

Mr Allister:

Is that not just in Committee?

Lord Morrow:

I do not think that it is. I am aware that, quite recently, a Member from Northern Ireland chaired proceedings in the House of Commons. I understand that that was the first time that that had ever happened.

Mr Moore:

Rather than speculating on that, we are happy to go away and find out for sure.

The Chairperson:

Members would find that useful. I thank the witnesses.

We will now move to consideration of oral and written submissions from parties. We have received a number of written submissions, which are contained in members' folders. They have been arranged alphabetically so that we can consider each of them in turn. Do members have any comments on any of the written submissions?

Mr Allister:

This proposition emanated from the two parties opposite, but we have yet to hear from either of them — or from both of them if they have an agreed position — about whether it is anticipated that there should be additional functions for the Principal Deputy Speaker if he is appointed. I do not think that either of the written submissions put that beyond doubt, and it would be helpful to know the DUP and Sinn Féin's position. Is it a single position? Is there a disagreement about the matter, or where does it stand?

The Chairperson:

I will allow parties to give a general view of the issues. For members' information, I asked for a Hansard report on the debate on the motion to be included in members' packs. That gives some of the parties' views.

Lord Morrow:

In the submissions in which the various parties outline their positions, all the parties, whether they are for or against, take a consistent position with that which they took in the Assembly on the day of the debate. Since Mr Allister asked for comments from the DUP, I will outline what we said we said in our submission:

“The creation of such a post is consistent with procedures in other jurisdictions, particularly Westminster. In each jurisdiction there is a post of Speaker, and a number of Deputy Speakers, with one performing the role of principal deputy.”

We do not have much to add to that.

I will digress a bit. I listened to what Mr Gardiner read out from his submission. He talked about the size of this House. I happen to believe that this House is too big in number, that there are too many Ministers and that there a whole lot of things that need changing. *[Interruption.]*

The Chairperson:

You mentioned Westminster. That is Big Ben.

Mr A Maginness:

A timely intervention.

The Chairperson:

I am glad that people have a sense of humour. I remind members that they need to switch off their electronic devices and phones.

Mr Gardiner:

I apologise.

Lord Morrow:

I am sort of lost now. *[Laughter.]*

The Chairperson:

I will go round the parties and ask for oral submissions, which gives everybody an opportunity to come back. Are members agreed on that? I will do it in alphabetical order. I am not forcing members to make an oral submission if they do not want to; they should not feel that they have to

do that.

Mr Lyttle:

No.

The Chairperson:

Lord Morrow, I will allow you to finish.

Lord Morrow:

We made a submission, be it long, short or indifferent. As I said, our position is consistent with what was said in the Chamber when the matter was debated. However, if we want to go through all the wrongs of the Assembly, this is not the day to do it. I am quite happy to have that debate some day. If it were down to our party, I assure you that there would be fewer MLAs and fewer Departments, but that was all established by others.

The Chairperson:

You are right that this is not the time to do that. We could end up dealing with a lot of things that we were not instructed to deal with in the motion.

Mr McMullan:

Any amendments to Standing Orders will be on basis that the functions are exercisable only when the Speaker is unable to act or has delegated the function. A Principal Deputy Speaker would not have functions as of right and would have nothing distinct from a Deputy Speaker other than the increased frequency. We agree to the drafting of any necessary Standing Orders to give effect to the position. However, we also state that it is clear that, although the intent of the motion is to give a differential standing to a Principal Deputy Speaker, that will not arise from amendments to Standing Orders alone. In view of that, we suggest that the Committee on Procedures recommends that the Assembly writes to the British Secretary of State requesting that the 1998 Act be amended to enable the Principal Deputy Speaker to chair the Assembly Commission as of right and also to chair the Business Committee when the Speaker is unable to do so.

Mr A Maginness:

I have a couple of points. What Sinn Féin is asking for is over and beyond what we are dealing with. Clearly, Sinn Féin sees the Principal Deputy Speaker as having additional functions over and beyond the functions exercised by other Deputy Speakers. That is very clear from what Mr McMullan has just read out. I presume that that is Sinn Féin's official position. However, it is also quite interesting. I am confused about the political instructions and the political intention of all this. Is it a change in title, or is it a change in function? Clearly, Sinn Féin sees it as a change in function. I am not sure what the DUP sees it as, but I will read from the Chief Whip's position paper:

"The creation of such a post is consistent with procedures in other jurisdictions, particularly Westminster. In each jurisdiction there is a post of Speaker, and a number of Deputy Speakers, with one performing the role of principal deputy. This amendment to the Assembly procedures would simply bring us into line with other jurisdictions."

If you look at Westminster, we are talking about a Principal Deputy Speaker who has different functions from the other Deputy Speakers. It is also based on statute, which Mr McCaffrey mentioned. The statute is under the Deputy Speaker Act 1855.

So really, there is a bit of pretence here. At least, I think that there is either pretence or confusion. What is being attempted here? Is it a change in function, a change in title or something in between? I just do not understand where the parties are coming from; it is quite unclear. But it does point out that the intentions of both parties seem to be inconsistent with section 39 of the 1998 Act. That is quite clear from what they are saying now.

Mr Allister:

It is not clear to me whether there is a marital rift between the DUP and Sinn Féin on this, because it is clear from what Sinn Féin said that it wants the Principal Deputy Speaker to have additional functions. When you read the penultimate paragraph that Mr Maginness read out from Mr Weir, it seems also to be the message from the DUP, although its members do not want to say that. They say that they want to parallel what exists elsewhere, particularly in Westminster, but, in Westminster, the principal Deputy Speaker has different functions to those of the other Deputy Speakers. So, are DUP members saying that they agree with their Sinn Féin colleagues and that they want extra functions for the Principal Deputy Speaker? They cannot have it both ways. They cannot hide behind a cloak and pretend that they want what exists at Westminster, because, if that is what they are saying, there would be extra functions for the Principal Deputy Speaker.

We need absolute clarity on where we are going with the proposition that the two parties are driving. Is asking the Secretary of State to amend the legislation, thus giving extra powers to the Principal Deputy Speaker, to be a staging post or not? Is the DUP's position that appointing a Principal Deputy Speaker would be a pointless exercise because there would be no distinction from the other Deputy Speakers, that he would have no extra powers and that it is just that somebody's ego requires it, or is it saying that it agrees with Sinn Féin that the Principal Deputy Speaker must have extra status and power? Until we get the answer to that question, we cannot see where we are going.

For my part, I am absolutely clear, and I note with interest that no one in this room or at any time in the past four years in the Assembly has been able to make a case for the need for a Principal Deputy Speaker. There is patently not a need; it is patently a political carve-up between the two parties that came up with it; and it is patently linked with keeping the present Speaker in office until he becomes Lord Hay in three years. It is quite clear that it is all tied in to that and that the DUP, using ambivalent language, appears to be giving a nod and a wink to the Sinn Féin position, which is that it wants a Principal Deputy Speaker with real functions. We want clarity. From my part, it is utterly unnecessary and a waste of time, effort and, if it comes to it, money. There is no cause or need for it whatsoever.

Mr Gardiner:

The Ulster Unionist Party does not support the appointment of a Principal Deputy Speaker. The present system seems to be working, and we do not know what the hidden agendas are for a Principal Deputy Speaker. We will not run with it, because it would incur more expense. The place is overspent as it is and we are trying to cut back, without appointing additional positions.

The Chairperson:

I was opening things up for party submissions, but everybody has touched on other issues, which is the next stage that we need to go to, so we have started the debate. Gerry Kelly indicated that he wanted to come in, so I will open it up for members to make additional comments that will allow us to take the matter to the next stage. We need to get agreement on a number of issues beyond the issue of a Principal Deputy Speaker. It is for the benefit of our staff so that they know

whether to prepare stuff for our next meeting. If anybody, apart from Mr Kelly, wants to come in with a point, they should indicate that they wish to do so.

Mr G Kelly:

I do not think that we are being ambivalent at all. As Oliver McMullan pointed out, the intention of the motion is to give differential standing to the position of a Principal Deputy Speaker. The issue of need is a matter of opinion, and our opinion is that there is a need for it. That was argued for Sinn Féin by Paul Maskey in the debate, and that is in the notes for anybody to read.

However, as we discussed earlier, it is about what can be done in Standing Orders and what can be done by asking for an amendment to the 1998 Act. In the first instance, the title of Principal Deputy Speaker can be sorted out with the Standing Orders. That has already been discussed. What is being suggested here is that, if it is necessary to go to the British Secretary of State, let us do that.

Mr Lyttle:

My previous contribution was made on the basis of a change of title. The legal evidence presented was that a change of title was not inconsistent with section 39. The further submissions would seem, at best, to make it unclear as to whether this is a change of title or a change of function. That makes the agenda for this meeting quite difficult to close on, given that that is a change in the way in which the proposal was presented previously.

The written submission from the DUP makes clear reference to “a practical problem”, about which we have not heard much detail. It also includes the line:

“This ... would simply bring us into line with other jurisdictions.”

We heard from the research papers presented that there is clearly no consistency around this in neighbouring jurisdictions and that it is a matter for individual jurisdictions to decide. I am finding an increased lack of clarity around the proposal, and that is making life difficult.

Mr T Clarke:

I think that it is fairly clear from the motion that was put down in the Assembly, the last part of which said:

“as its first priority, to table the necessary amendments to Standing Orders”.

As we have heard in legal advice today, to do maybe what Sinn Féin referred to in its submission would be a change to the 1998 Act; however, to do what the motion said would only be an amendment to Standing Orders. What we are debating today are amendments to Standing Orders, which do not affect the 1998 Act. For that reason, I propose that we go ahead.

Mr Allister:

Is it a precursor to amending the 1998 Act? That is the question.

Mr T Clarke:

We are talking about the motion that was laid in the Assembly.

Mr Allister:

From your perspective, is it a precursor?

Mr T Clarke:

I am here today primarily to speak about the motion that is in front of me. That is the business that I have been charged with: to come here and represent my party. I have been asked to talk about amending Standing Orders in relation to creating a Principal Deputy Speaker.

Mr Allister:

To what end?

The Chairperson:

I said at the start that I am not going to allow this to become a table tennis match. Let Mr Clarke finish. If anybody wants to come in after that, I am more than willing to let people in.

Mr T Clarke:

Chair, as I said, I am here to discuss the motion that was laid in the Assembly. It is possibly a bit disappointing that Sinn Féin did not make any reference in the Assembly that day to the fact that its next stage would possibly be a change to the 1998 Act. We are here today to discuss a change to the Standing Orders, which makes no reference to the 1998 Act at all. The legal advice is that to make any change in the role would be a change to the 1998 Act. We are not agreeing to that.

Our party is agreeing today to a change to the Standing Orders to allow for a Principal Deputy Speaker.

Mr A Maginness:

I am getting more confused by the attitude of the DUP. When I read the penultimate paragraph of its submission by Mr Weir, it seems to me that the DUP is hinting at a change in function. Sinn Féin is straight and honest about the thing. Sinn Féin is saying that it wants the primary legislation changed. This is only part one; you change the title and then you get the Act changed. I want to know what the DUP's position is. Does the DUP see this as just a change in title or does it see this as a change in function some months or years down the line. What is its position? I do not understand it. Maybe the DUP members might explain or give a reassurance that they do not want to see any change in function as far as a Principal Deputy Speaker is concerned.

Lord Morrow:

I think that Mr Maginness is being facetious and, quite frankly, trying to read into the submission something that clearly is not there. There is no mention anywhere in Mr Weir's submission of referral to the 1998 Act. As a matter of fact, it is explicit. It says that:

“We are happy to leave the detail of any procedural changes that are required to the Committee itself, but we would indicate that we would not envisage any additional powers for the post of Principal Deputy Speaker”.

I am not sure what you are seeking clarity on, Mr Maginness. I suspect that you are not as naive as you let on and that you can read plain English like all the rest of us. I think that you are trying to confuse something that is quite clear. We are here today to try to change procedure. We are not here to change any 1998 Act. Others might be trying to do that, but that is a matter for them. That is not what we have been asked to do and it is not what we are getting involved in.

Mr Lyttle:

The problem here is that we are dealing with a role that must command the full confidence of the entire House. I understand and agree that the motion tabled refers to the amendment of Standing Orders, but it does not encourage cross-party confidence when, at the meeting to consider those Standing Orders, amendments to Acts are introduced.

The Chairperson:

I will try to pull this together and move on. We had a vote earlier on the issue of the Principal

Deputy Speaker. There are a number of outworkings from the changes to the Standing Orders. We need to look at the remit of the Principal Deputy Speaker. People need to take on board that this allows our staff — the legal staff, the research staff or the Committee Clerk — to go away and do some work prior to our next meeting. Has anyone any comments to make, or questions to ask, on the remit of the Principal Deputy Speaker?

Mr T Clarke:

To refer to the remit is to break away from the original motion. No reference has been made in that to the remit. What we are talking about is the amendment of Standing Orders to create a Principal Deputy Speaker. If we talk about the remit, it suggests that someone is considering a change in the role. We are not here to discuss that, we are discussing only the creation of a Deputy Principal Speaker.

The Chairperson:

I need a proposal.

Mr T Clarke:

I propose that, in line with the motion that was resolved by the Assembly, we amend the Standing Orders before 6 June to create the role of Principal Deputy Speaker.

The Chairperson:

Is there a seconder for that?

Lord Morrow:

Yes.

The Chairperson:

We have one proposal. Are there any others?

Mr Allister:

May I propose an amendment? That:

“For the avoidance of doubt, there shall be no change to remit or additional functions for the holder of any such office.”

Lord Morrow:

That contradicts the legal advice that we have been given.

Mr T Clarke:

That is not an amendment; it is a new motion.

Mr Allister:

It is an amendment, because the legal advice is that once you add functions, you are breaching the 1998 Act. My own view is that you breach the 1998 Act before you get to that point.

Mr T Clarke:

To make an amendment, we have to take the motion first and then amend it. That means that you have to support the motion that was made in the Assembly, albeit you want to attach a part to the end of it.

Mr Allister:

I can support an amendment and vote against the motion, even if amended.

Mr T Clarke:

It is a direct negative.

The Chairperson:

There are two proposals; we have a second proposal from Mr Allister.

Mr Allister:

I do not want it as a separate proposal.

Mr T Clarke:

It is a direct negative; it is not an amendment.

Lord Morrow:

It is down to you, Chair.

The Chairperson:

I know. Is there a seconder for that proposed amendment?

Mr T Clarke:

We need to clarify that it is not an amendment; it is a counterproposal.

Mr Allister:

If it is a counterproposal, I will not make it. If it is an amendment, I will make it.

The Chairperson:

I am advised that we should take a five-minute break.

Committee suspended.

On resuming —

The Chairperson:

For the record, the Committee Clerk will read out the original motion.

The Committee Clerk:

The motion put forward by Mr Clarke was:

“That we continue with the business to change the Standing Orders as directed by the motion agreed by the Assembly on 16 May.”

The Chairperson;

Do we have a proposer and a seconder for that motion? Mr Allister has put forward an amendment.

The Committee Chairperson:

Mr Allister indicated that he would like to insert in the text of the proposed motion:

“For the avoidance of doubt, there should be no change or addition to the remit or the function of anyone appointed to the position of Principal Deputy Speaker.”

The Chairperson:

Is there a seconder for that?

Mr A Maginness:

I will second that, yes.

Mr T Clarke:

Where is it proposed to insert that?

The Committee Clerk:

It would read:

“That we continue with the business to change the Standing Orders as directed by the motion agreed by the Assembly on 16 May and that, for the avoidance of doubt, there should be no change to the remit or functions of anyone appointed to the position of Principal Deputy Speaker.”

Lord Morrow:

What is your ruling, Chair?

The Chairperson:

I rule that the motion as amended is acceptable, if members support it. If not, we will vote on the amendment.

Lord Morrow:

No, wait. That is not my question. The question is: are you ruling that Mr Allister's proposal amends Mr Clarke's motion? Is that what you are ruling?

The Chairperson:

Yes.

The Committee Clerk:

Yes.

The Chairperson:

No, sorry, I am not ruling that. I am allowing it to go to the vote. I am not ruling; it will go to a vote.

Mr G Kelly:

We are dealing with a proposal and an amended proposal, as opposed to two proposals.

The Chairperson:

Yes. I am not ruling. It is up to members to vote.

Mr Allister:

If the first question is whether it is a proper amendment, is the next question not whether the proposer of the substantive motion accepts it?

The Chairperson:

That is what I will ask, but I wanted clarity. Mr Clarke, do you accept the amendment?

Mr T Clarke:

No.

Mr Allister:

He does not. There is the answer.

The Chairperson:

I will take a vote on the amendment.

Question put, That the amendment be made.

The Committee divided: Ayes 4; Noes 5.

AYES

Mr Allister, Mr Gardiner, Mr Lyttle, Mr A Maginness.

NOES

Mr T Clarke, Mr G Kelly, Mr McMullan, Lord Morrow, Ms S Ramsey.

Question accordingly negatived.

Main Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes 5; Noes 3.

AYES

Mr T Clarke, Mr G Kelly, Mr McMullan, Lord Morrow, Ms S Ramsey.

NOES

Mr Allister, Mr Gardiner, Mr A Maginness.

The following member abstained: Mr Lyttle

Main Question accordingly agreed to.

Resolved:

“That we continue with the business to change the Standing Orders as directed by the motion agreed by the Assembly on 16 May.”

The Chairperson:

Our legal people and the Committee staff are now instructed to come back with first drafts for the next meeting. Unless members have any pressing issues that they wish to raise now, we will adjourn until Tuesday.