



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**COMMITTEE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2021**

**SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr David Hilditch MLA (Deputy-Chairperson)  
Ms Martina Anderson MLA (*via Starleaf*)  
Mr Roy Beggs MLA (*via Starleaf*)  
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA (*via Starleaf*)  
Mr Keith Buchanan MLA  
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA (*via Starleaf*)  
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA (*via Starleaf*)  
Mr Andrew Muir MLA (*via Starleaf*)

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Ms Alison Ross (Assembly Clerk)  
Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk) (*via Starleaf*)  
Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor) (*via Starleaf*)  
Mr William Kinnear (Clerical Officer)

*The meeting commenced in open session at 10:03 am.*

**1. Apologies**

As above.

**2. Chairpersons Business**

None.

**3. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 February 2021.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

*Ms Martina Anderson joined the meeting at 10:05 am.*

The Committee considered a draft response to the Committee for Finance regarding its draft budget considerations.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider this under any other business.

#### **5. Correspondence**

Response from Logistics UK to Committee correspondence following the briefing on 20 January 2021.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Copy response from the House of Lords, Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee, to Rachel Maclean MP regarding the Operator Licensing Framework and Commercial Road Transport Framework.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and consider it at a future briefing on the common framework.

Ministerial response to Committee correspondence regarding issues arising from the Committee meeting on 20 January 2021.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister urging her to engage with the Haulage sector to discuss the introduction of a means tested financial support package.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting the Logistics Performance Tracker report from December 2020, provided by Logistics UK, be broken down into the number and percentage of hauliers on furlough and the number of heavy goods vehicles parked-up, and not in use, in Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting information on any financial hardship assistance schemes for taxi operators.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister expressing disappointment with her response to the Committee's request for information on the current financial support scheme for Coach and Bus operators and whether this scheme is to be extended or a new scheme introduced.

*Agreed:* The committee agreed to write to the Minister for information on her Department's engagement with Coach and Bus Operators, in particular how they have engaged with the smaller operators who were ineligible for the 1<sup>st</sup> scheme.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from Departmental officials on planning policy on battery energy storage.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department for the Economy to request information on how many applications it has received from taxi operators to Part B of the CRBSS and the number of those applications that were successful.

Correspondence from Investing Strategy for Northern Ireland providing a copy of the Department for Infrastructure's Investing Activity Report – January 2021.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Committee for Justice regarding accelerated passage of the Damages (Return on Investment) Bill.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Airport Operators Association regarding the Airport Recovery Plan for Aviation.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from Mr Cathal Boylan MLA regarding operating hours for taxis at the weekends in Belfast.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ascertain if they are considering operational hours for drivers in the current review of the taxi regulations.

Correspondence from the Speaker regarding a Public Petition - Ballycastle to Ballymoney Greenway.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from a member of the public regarding broadband provision for students.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward it to the Department for the Economy for information.

Correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs requesting to be kept updated in respect of the issues raised during the briefing from the Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, Logistics UK and the Road Haulage Association.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Service requesting member participation in Ulster University's Planning, Regeneration and Development degree.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

## 6. Subordinate Legislation – SR’s – Not Subject to Proceedings

- The Committee considered the following SR’s not subject to Assembly proceedings.
  - SR 2021-19 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons’ Vehicles) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021
  - SR 2021-20 The Loading Bays on Roads (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021
  - SR 2021-22 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No.2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021
  - SR 2021-23 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the Statutory Rules.

## 7. Departmental Briefing - Structural Maintenance and Winter Service

*The Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:15 am.*

Mr Conor Loughrey, Director of Network Services (Roads) (*via Starleaf*)  
Mr Joe Lawson, Network Maintenance and Development (*via Starleaf*)

The Departmental officials provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

*Mrs Dolores Kelly joined the meeting at 10:22 am.*

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

*Mr Boylan declared an interest as family members carry out work for Roads Service.*

The Chairperson thanked the Departmental officials for their attendance.

*The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11:34 am.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting clarification on the criteria in place for the number of days a school needs to be closed before the roads in the surrounding area would be gritted.

*Agreed:* The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with the critical temperature below which road maintenance works will not be carried out.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to review the findings of the inquiry report by the Committee for Regional Development into un-adopted roads at next week’s meeting.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting information on the current staffing levels within the Department Roads Maintenance activities and the

cost of using contractors to make up for the staffing shortfall as a consequence of the Voluntary Exit Scheme.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting details of expenditure for claim payments for the damage caused to road vehicles due to potholes and how much of this could be offset by actual repairs.

## **8. Briefing from Assembly Research and Information Service**

*The Researcher joined the meeting at 11:37 am.*

Mr Desmond McKibbin, Research and Information Service (*via Starleaf*)

The researcher provided the Committee with an oral briefing on Electric Vehicle Waste and Water and Sewerage Company Business Models in GB and Ireland.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the researcher for his attendance.

*The researcher left the meeting at 12:14 am.*

*Agreed:* The Researcher agreed to provide the Committee with further information on a range of issues.

## **9. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

## **10. Any Other Business**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting information on how it intends to deal with the expiry of smart cards for the Strangford Ferry that, due to the lockdown, still have journeys outstanding.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department for clarification of the current arrangements for notifying members of the public that their temporary exemption certificate is due to expire and they are now required to book an MOT.

The Committee considered a draft response to the Committee for Finance regarding its draft budget considerations.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Finance.

## **11. Date, Time and Place of next meeting**

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be on Wednesday, 17 February 2021 at 10:00 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

*The Committee adjourned at 12:18 am*

**Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure**

**17 February 2021**