



Northern Ireland
Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2020

THE SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

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

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Alison Ross (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr William Kinnear (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced in open session at 10:05 am.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairpersons Business

None.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16 September 2020.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Correspondence

Copy correspondence from the Committee for the Economy to the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the North South Interconnector.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding COVID-19 Funding Allocations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Copy of the Twentieth Report of the Examiner for Statutory Rules.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the report.

Copy of the Mid-South West Economic Engine Regional Economic Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the report to the Department for consideration and for comment on the issues contained in the report which relate to the Department for Infrastructure.

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the planning applications North South Interconnector.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure regarding the extension of the Non-Executive Board Members of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from a member of the public regarding concerns expressed about a Northern Ireland Civil Service Department.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and to seek the individual's agreement to forward it to the Public Accounts Committee and the Northern Ireland Audit Office for their consideration.

Ministerial response to Committee correspondence regarding issues arising from the Committee for Infrastructure meeting on 3 September 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Departmental response to Committee correspondence regarding issues arising from the Committee for Infrastructure strategic planning meeting on 9 September 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

6. SL1 The Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 (Public Service Obligations in Transport) (Amendment) (EU Exit) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020

The Committee considered the SL1 The Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 (Public Service Obligations in Transport) (Amendment) (EU Exit) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was not content to note the proposal for the Statutory Rule and that further information is required.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek further information on Regulation 6, in particular, what mitigations are being put in place for the areas excluded from the Regulations.

7. Ministerial Briefing - COVID-19 Update & Current Issues

The Minister and Departmental official joined the meeting at 10:14 am

Ms Nichola Mallon, Minister for Infrastructure,
Mrs Katrina Godfrey, Permanent Secretary.

The Minister provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with statistics on the uptake of free transport by NHS staff.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with the numbers of staff working in the call centres dealing with bookings for driving tests.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with the timeline for the introduction of the Reservoirs Transfer of Functions SR.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with information on how NI Water, when considering local Water and Sewerage capacity for new developments, take into consideration any reduction in usage caused by commercial property closures.

Mr Andrew Muir declared an interest as a former employee of Translink and as a councillor in Ards and North Down Borough Council. Mr Muir also declared his step-father is Quality Manager on the A6 project.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with information on whether there are any proposals for the closure of Clipperstown Halt railway station due to anti-social behaviour.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with information her Department has shared with the Minister of Finance in respect of Translink pressures.

Mr Keith Buchanan MLA left the meeting at 11:00 am.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with the criteria used by the Department to make a decision on whether a pothole needs repaired and how repairs are prioritised.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with the analysis made by Translink in making its £20 million efficiency saving.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with the Regional Development Strategy.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with information from the Ministerial Advisory Group when it becomes available.

The Chairperson thanked the Minister and Departmental official for their attendance.

Mrs Katrina Godfrey left the meeting at 11:40 am.

8. Ministerial Briefing - Accelerated Passage of the Harbours Bill

The Departmental official, Ms Jackie Robinson, Director of Gateways & EU Relations, joined the meeting at 11:40 am

The Minister provided the Committee with an oral briefing on the Harbours Bill and explained, as required under Standing Order 42(3), why accelerated passage for the Bill was being sought and the consequences of it not being granted.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the Minister and Departmental official for their attendance.

The Minister and Departmental official left the meeting at 12:02 pm.

9. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

10. Any Other Business

None.

11. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be on Wednesday 30 September 2020 at 10:00 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Committee adjourned at 12:03 pm

Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

30 September 2020