



Northern Ireland
Assembly

**COMMITTEE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 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
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA
Mr Andrew Muir MLA

Apologies: None.

In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Bill Kinnear (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced in closed session at 10:02 am.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairpersons Business

The Chairperson provided an update on the Chairpersons' Liaison Group which met yesterday. The Committee considered correspondence from the Clerk of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group and from The Speaker to the Chairperson of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Clerk of the Chairpersons Liaisons Group expressing the Committee view.

The meeting moved into open session at 10:12 am.

The Committee considered the delegation of authority to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to deal with any Freedom of Information requests received during summer recess.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to delegate powers to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17 June 2020.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Departmental Briefing – Roads – Procurement, Planning, Maintenance & Flagship Projects

The officials joined the meeting at 10:15 am

John Irvine, Director of Major Projects and Procurement
Conor Loughrey, Director of Network Services

The officials provided the Committee with a briefing on Roads – Procurement, Planning, Maintenance & Flagship Projects.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with the number of claims made per annum to the Department for damage to vehicles by potholes and the amount of compensation provided.

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 officials agreed to provide the Committee with detail on procedures for dealing with incidents in relation to coastal erosion events.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with an update on the Strathfoyle

Greenway business case which was submitted to the Department by Derry City and Strabane District Council.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ascertain what was the Departmental bid for grass cutting and what was finally allocated.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide further information on the projected return on capital investment based on reduced energy and maintenance cost from the LED lighting scheme.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with further information regarding working guidelines on street lighting levels when moving from a rural trunk road onto an urban road with intense LED lighting.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with an update on EU Funding for the A1 road scheme and whether this has been secured.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with an update in regards to what the £4 million allocation for the Traffic and Information Control Centre will be spent on.

Mrs Dolores Kelly left the meeting at 11:42 am

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their briefing.

The officials left the meeting at 11:44 am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to determine when policy reviews are initiated regarding speed limits when rural landscapes change.

6. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding the need for partnership to rebuild the economy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Committee for Communities regarding the need for consideration of those with a visual impairment when social distancing.

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

Response from the Minister of Finance to Committee correspondence regarding the funding package for ferry operators

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding the House of Lords International Agreements Sub-Committee Inquiry into UK-US Trade Negotiations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from Belfast Public Hire Taxi Drivers requesting to brief the Committee on issues arising from the collapse of the taxi industry as a result of COVID-19.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to table a motion for debate in the Assembly.

Ms Martina Anderson left the meeting at 11:54 am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Belfast Public Hire Taxi Drivers indicating the Committee's course of action and ask for a briefing paper on the issues.

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding a Legislative Consent Motion – Driver Licensing – Statutory Provision for 1 Year License Renewals for Group 2 Drivers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Response from the Minister of the Economy to Committee correspondence regarding the support package for ferry operators.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

Correspondence from Mobile UK requesting to brief the Committee on the Mobile Action Plan and a number of other matters.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an informal discussion.

Invitation to discuss the ICE Report: An infrastructure advisory body for Northern Ireland – Panel discussion.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

Departmental response to Committee questions raised from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding a Legislative Consent Motion – Driver Licensing – Statutory Provision for 1 Year License Renewals for Group 2 Drivers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

Minister for Infrastructure response to Committee correspondence of 3 April 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

7. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the forward work programme as amended.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to arrange a strategic planning day in early September.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to discuss options for a mini inquiry at a future meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Northern Ireland Water to ascertain what waste water treatment works will have their capacity issues addressed this year following the announcement of the capital budget.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding what considerations have been given to the reduction of parking charges or extending of timings for on street parking in town centres in order to assist the economic recovery from COVID-19.

9. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be on Wednesday 1 July 2020 at 10:00 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Committee adjourned at 12:02 pm

Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

1 July 2020