



Northern Ireland
Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 20 JANUARY 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
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: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Alison Ross (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor) (*via Starleaf*)
Mr William Kinnear (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced in open session at 9:42 am.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairpersons Business

The Chairperson informed the Committee of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group meeting regarding the impact of the Health Regulations on Committee Meetings.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to discuss an options paper to be put forward by the Chairpersons' Liaison Group for safe working at next week's meeting.

Ms Liz Kimmins joined the meeting at 9:46 am.

Mrs Dolores Kelly joined the meeting at 9:46 am.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13 January 2021.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Transport Hub Alternatives Group requesting to meet with the Committee regarding developments planned for the Belfast Transport Hub.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to respond to the group requesting that it provides details of its concerns in writing for consideration and forwarding to the Department for information and comment.

Department for Infrastructure correspondence regarding the increase in penalty points for the illegal use of mobile phones when driving.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from Belmont Strategy requesting to meet with the Chairperson regarding concerns about recent planning guidance issued by DfI Planning in relation to battery energy storage projects.

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed that Committee staff liaise with Belmont Strategy to arrange an informal meeting with the Chairperson and interested members.

Copy correspondence 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 to consider it further at a future meeting dealing with Common Frameworks.

Copy correspondence from The Rt Hon Michael Gove to the Committee for the Executive Office regarding Committee scrutiny of Common Frameworks for information.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and to consider it further at a future meeting dealing with Common Frameworks.

Copy of the Examiner of Statutory Rules Nineteenth Report of the Session 2020-2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the report.

Copy correspondence from The House of Lords, European Union Committee to HM Treasury in relation to a number of scrutiny items with implications for Northern Ireland under the Protocol.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and to consider it further at a future meeting dealing with Common Frameworks.

Copy correspondence from the Scottish Parliament, Local Government and Communities Committee to Kevin Stewart MSP regarding the Hazardous Substance Planning Provisional Common Framework.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and to consider it further at a future meeting dealing with Common Frameworks.

Correspondence from the Examiner of Statutory Rules detailing statutory rules relevant to the Committee for Infrastructure that she will comment on in her next report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed note the correspondence.

6. Subordinate Legislation - SL1s - Not Subject to Assembly Proceedings

- The Committee considered the following SL1 not subject to any Assembly proceedings.
 - SL1 - The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposal for the Statutory Rule.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 13.

13. SL1 - Further Financial Assistance for Taxi Drivers due to Coronavirus

The Committee considered SL1 - Further Financial Assistance for Taxi Drivers due to Coronavirus.

Mr David Hilditch joined the meeting at 9:51 am.

The Departmental officials joined the meeting at 9:52 am.

Dr Chris Hughes, Director of Safe and Accessible Travel (*via Starleaf*)
Mrs Beverley Cowan, Head of Driving Policy (*via Starleaf*)

The Departmental officials provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked the Departmental officials for their attendance.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 10:01 am.

Mr Cathal Boylan joined the meeting at 10:02 am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposal for the Statutory Rule.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister highlighting its concerns regarding the shortfall of the scheme for some individuals and requesting that she look again at how to ensure that those Drivers who have incurred costs while shielding can be more accurately accounted for in the scheme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting that she and her officials reconsider a new financial assistance scheme for the taxi operators.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting an update on her Department's financial assistance scheme for bus and coach operators and to ascertain if the scheme will be extended or if a second scheme will be introduced.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 7.

7. Departmental Briefing - Progress on options for Driver & Vehicle Agency issues

The Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:03 am.

Mr Jeremy Logan, Chief Executive, Driver and Vehicle Agency
Mr Pat Delaney, Director of Operations, Driver and Vehicle Agency

The Departmental officials provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Mr Roy Beggs declared an interest as his car is the MOT waiting list.

Mr Cathal Boylan declared an interest as his car is the MOT waiting list.

The Chairperson thanked the Departmental officials for their attendance.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11:09 am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to revisit the issues facing the DVA in future meetings.

8. Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, Logistics UK & Road Haulage Association - Brexit - Issues facing the freight/haulage sector

The representatives joined the meeting at 11:10 am.

Mr Aodhán Connolly, Director, Northern Ireland Retail Consortium (*via Starleaf*)
Mr Seamus Leheny, Policy Manager for Northern Ireland, LogisticsUK (*via Starleaf*)
Mr John Martin, Policy Manager (Northern Ireland), Road Haulage Association (*via Starleaf*)
Mr Darryl Morgan, Director, Morgan McLernon (*via Starleaf*)
Mr Paul Jackson, Director, McBurney Transport (*via Starleaf*)
Mr Patrick Derry, Director, Derry Refrigerated Transport (*via Starleaf*)
Mr Chris Slowey, Director, Manfreight (*via Starleaf*)

The representatives provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for Infrastructure and Department for Health regarding COVID testing arrangements for haulage drivers who require evidence of a negative COVID test within 72 hours of travelling.

Agreed: The representatives of Logistics UK and the Road Haulage Association agreed to speak to their membership and to provide the Committee with information on issues arising in respect of workers' rights in Dublin Port due to delays in processing shipments and information in respect of what measures can be put in place now to mitigate against such situations arising on 1 April and 1 July in Northern Ireland ports if no easements are agreed with the UK Government.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for his attendance.

The representatives left the meeting at 1:20 pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister in support of a financial assistance scheme to support the Haulage and Logistics Industries.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting that she considers a relaxation of Drivers Hours similar to that given in spring 2020

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Northern Ireland Ports to establish what barriers exist to haulage firms due to Brexit and what can be done to alleviate them.

Agreed: The committee agreed to revisit the issues from the briefing at next week's meeting.

9. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme as amended.

10. Any Other Business

None.

11. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be on Wednesday, 27 January 2021 at 10:00 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Committee adjourned at 1:22 pm

Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

27 January 2021