



Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

15 September 2021

Meeting Location: Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA (Chairperson)
Mr David Hilditch MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Andrew Muir MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jonathan Lawless (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr William Kinnear (Clerical Supervisor)



The meeting commenced at 10:01 am in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairpersons Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Martina Anderson, thanking her for her service and contribution to the Committee.

3. Draft Minutes.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 September 2021.

4. Matters Arising

None.



5. Correspondence

Invitation from Scotland Policy Conferences to The future for infrastructure in Scotland - policy, investment, and contributing to economic recovery, societal priorities, and the path to net-zero.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

Invitation from the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce to NI Chamber & SONI Energy Forum - Innovation in transport for a clean energy future.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation and request that the Assembly researcher attend and report back to the Committee for inclusion in the Committee's Inquiry.

Copy correspondence from Baroness Vere, Minister for Roads, Buses and Places to Lord Jay, Chairman of the European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland - Northern Ireland Protocol Motor Vehicles Alcohol.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward a copy to the Department and The Executive Office to seek their views on the implementation of the regulations.

Copy correspondence from Baroness Vere, Minister for Roads, Buses and Places to Lord Jay, Chairman of the European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland - vehicle on-board diagnostics information.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward a copy to the Department and The Executive Office to seek their views on the implementation of the regulations.

Invitation from the Westminster Business Forum to Policy Conference Priorities for green and sustainable finance in the UK.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.



Correspondence from Pivotal providing a copy of the new report Pivotal tracker - policy priorities for Northern Ireland and request to meet the Chairperson.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Copy of letter from Rachel Maclean MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to Lord Jay, Chairman of the European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland – Northern Ireland Protocol manufacturers of engines intended for use in non-road mobile machinery.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward a copy to the Department and The Executive Office to seek their views on the implementation of the regulations.

Copy of the Examiner for Statutory Rules First Report of the Session 2021-2022.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the report.

Minister for Health response to Committee correspondence regarding funding for community transport.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from Belfast City Airport regarding support for the taxi industry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the taxi industry to ascertain what the industry is doing to retain driver numbers and to attract new drivers into the industry.

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

The Committee considered the following SL1's not subject to any Assembly proceedings.



- SL1 - The Urban Clearways (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021
- SL1 - The Parking Places, Loading Bay and Waiting Restrictions (Downpatrick) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021
- SL1 - Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 7) Order 2021
- SL1 - The Prohibition of U-Turns (Belfast) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the proposals for the Statutory Rules.

7. Ministerial Briefing – Current Issues and the term ahead

The Minister and Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:09 am.

Ms Nichola Mallon; Minister for Infrastructure
Mrs Katrina Godfrey, Permanent Secretary, Department for Infrastructure
Mr Jeremy Logan, Chief Executive, Driver and Vehicle Agency

The Minister and Departmental officials provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

A question and answer session followed.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with further information on bids for funding for the Driver and Vehicle Agency that the Department has made and are intending to make.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with clarification on the status of the road maintenance work that has been stalled due to contractual issues and whether it will be prioritised when the issues are resolved.

Mr David Hilditch left the meeting at 11:57 am.



Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide the Committee with the evidence and rationale for the use of Controlled Parking Zones in Lisburn and Newry and examples of how the policy has worked in other cities.

Mr David Hilditch re-joined the meeting at 12:04 pm.

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

The Minister and Departmental officials left the meeting at 12:06 pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request specific numbers in the backlog for driver and vehicle testing and the average waiting time for an MOT test.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request that it considers those who have been unsuccessful in passing a driving test reverting to the back of the queue and to consider a quicker way to enable them to avail of a retest.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to encourage continued discussions between the Department and the Taxi Industry and that the Minister review the complexity of the testing process for taxi drivers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting statistical information regarding the number of planning applications, the timescales that applications are spending in the system and specifically, the timescales for responses by statutory consultees to planning consultations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to all local authorities to request their views on the Strategic planning policy on Development in the Countryside, how it is being implemented and their views on and interpretation of the Minister's latest Planning Advice Note on the planning system in rural areas and formulation of local development plans.



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- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department for clarity on the funding threshold for road surfacing and maintenance work in those areas where there are legal issues over road surfacing contracts and what work can be carried out under the road recovery fund.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek assurance that the roads maintenance budget for Northern Ireland is being spent and will not be surrendered due to the impact of the legal issues.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department for information on whether the PSV booking system has been unavailable and if so what was the issue.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for Finance expressing its concerns in relation to the budgetary impact on the Department for Infrastructure particularly for NI Water given its importance to the overall economy.

8. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on 22 September 2021.

9. Any Other Business

None.



10. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be on Wednesday, 22 September 2021 at 10:00 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:16 pm.

Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

22 September 2021