



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## **Committee for Infrastructure**

### **Minutes of Proceedings**

16 February 2022

**Meeting Location:** Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Roy Beggs MLA  
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA  
Mr Andrew Muir MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Mr Pádraig Delargy MLA  
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA  
Mr George Robinson MLA

**Apologies:** Mr David Hilditch MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

**In Attendance:** Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 10:14 am in public session.



## Northern Ireland Assembly

### 1. Apologies

As above.

### 2. Chairpersons Business

The Committee discussed the Stakeholder Event which took place on 9 February 2022 with 6 organisations.

#### **Watertight**

##### **Agreed**

Committee agree to write to the Minister for Infrastructure advising her of the advances in technology and standards in Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures and its increased integration into flood planning in other jurisdictions and seek information on the following issues:

- What work has been undertaken by the Executive to ensure resilience (people and property) is an integral part of key policies and strategies?
- Are there any plans to mainstream Property Flood Resilience (PFR) in Northern Ireland?

#### **ABO Wind**

##### **Agreed**

The Committee agree to write to the Minister for Infrastructure emphasising the important role of an effective and efficient planning system in decarbonising the NI economy seeking action from her department.

- That the Department for Infrastructure maintains a focus on the need for a more efficient and effective planning system that delivers timely decisions and greater certainty to developers, investors and the public.



## Northern Ireland Assembly

- That it encourages and facilitates improved performance of statutory consultees in the planning process.
- That it gives priority to implementing policies relating to renewable energy and green infrastructure development, including planning policy.
- That the Department engages regularly with developers and the renewable energy industry representatives to share information and updates on key industry issues and opportunities.

### **Lough Neagh Partnership**

#### **Agreed**

The Committee agree to write to the Minister for Infrastructure on the following issues:

- Highlight to the Minister that there is a clear remit both legal and practical to improve and address the safety marker needs of Lough Neagh and develop its untapped potential for recreational development.
- Ask the Minister to instruct her officials to take the lead in setting up a new interdepartmental structure with a view to developing a plan for the Lough similar to that implemented for Rathlin Island under a DFI remit.
- Ask the Minister to Implement the recommendations of the DfI Review of Aids to the Navigation on Lough Neagh report with capital funding available via the Blue Green Programme.
- Ask the Minister to listen to the views of local stakeholders and communities around Lough Neagh, similar to other Ministers.
- Ask the Minister to carry out a review of the role of Waterways Ireland for Lough Neagh and the need for a long term formal statutory navigation authority.

### **Lower Old Park Community Association**

#### **Agreed**

The Committee agree to write to the Minister for Infrastructure seeking her assurance that, if asked by the Lower Old Park Community Association for information on when weed spraying will be carried out



## Northern Ireland Assembly

in Lower Oldpark (as specified in the work programme), her officials will provide the relevant information in a reasonable timescale and in accordance with its obligations under the Environmental Information Regulations.

### **Mobile UK**

**Agreed** The Committee agree to write to the Minister for Infrastructure highlighting the critical nature of mobile connectivity and urging her to deal with the challenge of delays in the planning process for Mobile Network infrastructure and requesting that she works to remove the barriers to the development of the mobile infrastructure network by; developing a regional plan as in other jurisdictions, a coordination strategy for local councils, improved guidance for planners, and improve knowledge and accessibility of public assets for mobile infrastructure.

### **Transport Hub Alternatives Group**

**Agreed** The Committee agree to write to the Minister for Infrastructure requesting that she urgently call upon Translink to redesign their plans for the Boyne Bridge area and provide a safe pedestrian crossing other than a Toucan crossing.

### **3. Draft Minutes.**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9 February 2022.

### **4. Matters Arising**

None.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## 5. Correspondence

Examiner of Statutory Rules' Report Twelfth Report of the 2021 – 2022 session.

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

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding Public Finance Scrutiny Unit on Covid Spending.

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

Correspondence from the Department of Infrastructure regarding Options paper on inconsiderate pavement parking.

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

Correspondence from the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee regarding Support for DfI intention to extend Concessionary Fares Scheme to people with disabilities.

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

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding Response to issues arising from Committee meeting on 26 January 2022.

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

Correspondence from the Ulster Architectural Heritage regarding Belfast Transport Hub – Boyne Bridge.

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

Correspondence from the Antrim and District Angling Association regarding Submission - Consultation on Secondary Legislation to Implement Reservoirs Act Northern Ireland 2015 2. 2 Reference N/21/902162.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

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

Correspondence from the Committee for the Executive Office regarding Consultation on the Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.

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

Correspondence from a wedding car provider regarding the regulation of wedding cars.

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

## **6. Subordinate Legislation – SL1s – Not subject to Assembly Proceedings**

The Committee considered the following SL1 not subject to Assembly Proceedings.

- The Clearway (Moneymore Road, Cookstown) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to note the proposal for the Statutory Rule.

## **7. Subordinate Legislation – SRs – Not subject to Assembly Proceedings**

The Committee considered the following SRs not subject to Assembly Proceedings

- The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 (S.R. 2022 No. 36)
- The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Newtownabbey) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 (S.R. 2022 No. 37)
- The Roads (Speed Limit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 (S.R. 2022 No. 39)



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

- The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Carrickfergus) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 (S.R. 2022 No. 42)

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

**8. SL1 The Narrow Water Bridge Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 and the Newry River (Diversion of Navigable Watercourse and Extinguishment of Public Rights of Navigation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022**

The Committee considered the SL1 The Narrow Water Bridge Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 and the Newry River (Diversion of Navigable Watercourse and Extinguishment of Public Rights of Navigation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Officials joined the meeting at 10:25 am.

- Liam McEvoy – DfI Roads
- Davy Millar – DfI Roads
- John O’Hagan – Louth County Council

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked officials for their attendance.

Officials left the meeting at 10:40 am.

Mr Jonathan Buckley and Mr Roy Beggs reserved their position in relation to the statutory rule.

**Agreed:** The Committee was content with the proposal for the Statutory Rule.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**9. SR 2022 – 35 The Adam Street Belfast (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022**

The Committee considered the Statutory Rule which will abandon an area of 818.786 square metres of road at Adam Street, Belfast from its junction with Duncairn Gardens to its junction with Upper Canning Street, Belfast.

**Agreed** That the Committee for Infrastructure has considered SR 2022 -35 The Adam Street Belfast (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objection to the rule.

**10. SR 2020 – 38 The Glebe Park Moira (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022.**

The Committee considered the Statutory Rule which will abandon an area of 62 square metres of turning area in front of No. 30 Glebe Park, Moira.

**Agreed** That the Committee for Infrastructure has considered SR 202-38 The Glebe Park Moira (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objection to the rule.

**11. SR 2022 – 40 The Mullinure Lane Armagh (Abandonment and Stopping Up) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022.**

The Committee considered the Statutory Rule which will abandon an area of 1849 square metres of road at Mullinure Lane, Armagh and stop-up Mullinure Lane to vehicular traffic after completion of such works as the Department considers necessary to provide alternative facilities.

**Agreed** That the Committee for Infrastructure has considered SR 2022-40 The Mullinure Lane Armagh (Abandonment and Stopping Up) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objection to the rule.





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**The Committee moved into Closed Session at 10:43 am.**

**12. Department for Infrastructure, Driver and Vehicle Agency – Taxi Regulations Enforcement**

The Officials joined the meeting at 10:44 am.

- Mr Jeremy Logan, Chief Executive, Driver and Vehicle Agency
- Mr Stephen Spratt, Director of Compliance, Enforcement and Licensing
- Mr Jonathan Furphy, Head of Compliance and Enforcement

The officials provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

George Robinson joined the meeting at 10:47 am.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked officials for their attendance.

The officials left the meeting at 11:25 am.

**The Committee moved into Public Session at 11:26 am.**

**13. Departmental Briefing – Review of the Implementation of the Planning Act 2011**

The Officials joined the meeting at 11:29 am.

- Mr Angus Kerr, Chief Planner & Director of Regional Planning
- Ms Irene Kennedy, Principal Planning Officer, Planning Policy
- Mr Tom Mathews, Planning Officer, Planning Policy



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

The officials provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

A question and answer session followed.

Officials agreed to provide the figures for the number of called-in applications for the latest available year and comparative figures for other jurisdictions and the figures for the number of regionally significant applications submitted in the past 12 months.

Mr Boylan declared an interest as a member of the Public Accounts Committee and a member of his family works for the Rivers Agency.

Mr Muir declared his interest as a member of the Public Accounts Committee.

The Chairperson thanked officials for their attendance.

The officials left the meeting at 1:00 pm.

**Agreed** The Committee agreed to forward the report to the Public Accounts Committee for consideration.

**Agreed** The Committee agreed to commission a research paper on delivery models and resource allocation of planning services in other jurisdictions.

**Agreed** The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Infrastructure highlighting its concerns on the delays and difficulties faced by planning applicants.

#### **14. Written briefing – Consideration of draft Budget Response to Committee for Finance**

The Committee considered a draft Budget Response to the Committee for Finance.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking a response to the issues raised and to write to the Committee for Finance.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for Finance to inform it that this has been done.

#### **15. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

#### **16. Any Other Business**

None.

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

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 23 February 2022 at 10:00 am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 pm

**Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure**

**23 February 2022**