



Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

6 October 2021

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Mr Pdraig Delargey MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Ms Liz Kimmins MLA
Mr Andrew Muir 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 10:02 am in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairpersons Business

None.

3. Draft Minutes.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 29 September 2021.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding the 3 Year Budget Setting Process.



Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance New Decade, New Approach – Unique Circumstances Funding.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for information on whether there is any role for it in the scope of the fund.

Responses from the Minister for Infrastructure to issues arising from the Committee meeting on 8 September 2021 and the Minister’s briefing on 15 September 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note and forward the extracts of the responses to the relevant organisations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from representatives of Insurance companies in the forward work programme to discuss the issues surrounding insuring vehicles in the situation where vehicle testing is backlogged.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request that it considers issuing exemption certificates for newer vehicles outside of the initial 4-year MOT to relieve pressure on the system.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting an indicative timeline for the introduction of the grant scheme for reservoirs.

Correspondence from an individual regarding issues around applying for HGV driver’s licenses.

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

Correspondence from Investing Strategy for Northern Ireland providing a copy of the Department for Infrastructure’s Investing Activity Report for September 2021.



Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the review of Hydrocarbon Development Policy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note and raise the issue with the Chief Planner at the briefing on 13 October 2021.

Response from the Public Accounts Committee regarding Primacy over Northern Ireland Audit Office Reports.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

Correspondence from Pivotal providing a copy of the Transforming the 14-19 education and skills system in Northern Ireland - youth voices and solutions report

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from Bus & Coach NI regarding additional on-going financial support for the bus and coach industry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Minister urging her to consider further support for the bus and coach industry.

Correspondence from the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee providing a copy of their Annual Report from 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure regarding the Review of Financial Process.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Response from Mid Ulster District Council to Committee correspondence regarding the Strategic planning policy on Development in the Countryside.



Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and include in the meeting pack for the briefing from the Chief Planning Officer.

Response from Belfast City Council to Committee correspondence regarding the Strategic planning policy on Development in the Countryside.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure regarding Transport Common Frameworks rail technical standards (interoperability); motor insurance; driving licensing; and commercial transport and operator licensing for road transport.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and a briefing has been scheduled for 3 November 2021.

Response from Newry, Mourne & Down District Council to Committee correspondence regarding the Strategic planning policy on Development in the Countryside.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Correspondence from Northern Ireland Water regarding PC21 Monitoring Plan.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Response from the Taxi Operator Group to Committee correspondence regarding taxi driver numbers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

Response from Translink to Committee correspondence regarding cross border bus routes.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

Response from Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council to Committee correspondence regarding the Strategic planning policy on Development in the Countryside.



Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

6. Subordinate Legislation – SL1’s – Not Subject to Assembly Proceedings

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

- SL1 - The Prohibition of Waiting (Schools) (Amendment No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

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

7. Subordinate Legislation - SRs - Not Subject to Assembly Proceedings

The Committee considered the following SR’s not subject to any Assembly proceedings.

- SR 2021-273 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons’ Vehicles) (Amendment No. 7) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021
- SR 2021-275 The Prohibition of U-Turns (Belfast) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the Statutory Rules.



8. SR 2021-270 The Planning (Development Management) (Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Amendment No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021

The Committee considered SR 2021-270 The Planning (Development Management) (Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Amendment No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021. These Regulations further extend the emergency period during which the requirement for a public event as part of the consultation stage for major developments will be temporarily removed to 31 March 2022.

Agreed: That the Committee for Infrastructure has considered SR 2021-270 The Planning (Development Management) (Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Amendment No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the rule.

The Committee suspended at 10:26 am.

The Committee resumed at 10:33 am

9. Departmental Briefing – Budget

The Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:33 am

Ms Susan Anderson, Director of Finance
Mr Declan McGeown, Deputy Secretary - Resources, Governance and EU Group
Mr Conor Loughrey, Director of Network Services (Roads)

The Departmental officials provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

A question and answer session followed.



- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from Departmental officials following the conclusion of the monitoring rounds to discuss the outcome and the impact of the results of the process.
- Agreed:** The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on the impact of COVID and the increase in energy prices on the reserves held by the Translink, Driver & Vehicle Agency and NI Water.
- Agreed:** The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with an update on its earlier £56 million bid to replace the European Union Connecting Europe funding.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting clarity on the timing of the procurement process for Roads Maintenance contracts and for an explanation as to why a new contract is not in place in time to replace the outgoing contract.
- Agreed:** The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on details of how the funding provided under June Monitoring for the A5 was spent.

The Chairperson thanked the Departmental officials for their attendance.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11:15 am.

10. Joint Briefing from Logistics UK & Road Haulage Association - HGV Driver Issues

The representatives joined the meeting at 11:17 am

Mr Seamus Leheny, Policy Manager for Northern Ireland, Logistics UK
Ms Justine McGreevey, Training and Development Manager, Henderson Group



Mr John Martin, Policy Manager (Northern Ireland), Road Haulage Association
Mr Chris Slowey, Director, Manfreight

The representatives provided the Committee with an oral briefing.

A question and answer session followed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding the negative impact of rigorous enforcement in relation to HGV drivers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for the Economy supporting the sector's request for a fully funded all age apprenticeship scheme to increase the number of drivers in the sectors.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department urging it to consider the need for dedicated examiners for HGV testing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for the Economy regarding outreach work with colleges and education providers regarding attracting people into the industry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for Infrastructure and Department for the Economy regarding temporary measures that can be taken to alleviate the strain on the industry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to discuss how it proceeds on this matter at its strategic planning meeting.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:05 am.



11. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the forward work programme.

12. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department and Translink to ascertain where the greatest pressures are on the rail network and how Translink intends to utilise its new carriages.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ascertain the pricing structure for provisional driving licenses in Northern Ireland and how that compares with other regions in the UK.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding its lack of a response to correspondence issued by elected representatives in Newry regarding the Carrickcroppan Hill, Camlough development.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Infrastructure highlighting Member's disappointment at the late provision of the written paper from the Department to accompany the Budget Briefing.

13. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be on Wednesday, 13 October 2021 at 10:00 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.



The meeting was adjourned at 12:18 pm.

Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

13 October 2021