

CENTRAL MANAGEMENT BRANCH



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Your reference: DALO 38F/4/2014
Our reference: SUB-1009-2015 :

30 April 2015

Paul Carlisle
Clerk to the Committee for Regional Development
Committee Office
Room 254
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Dear Paul

COLERAINE TO LONDONDERRY RAIL TRACK PHASE 2 PROJECT

Thank you for your letter dated 16 April 2015 following the Committee meeting which took place on Wednesday 15 April 2015.

The query and response is detailed below:

- **Mr Dallat MLA raised the issue of the procurement process for the Coleraine to Londonderry Rail Track Phase 2 project, highlighting an extract from the official report from the Committee meeting on Wednesday, 25 March 2015, a copy of which is attached for your information. Members agreed to request clarification from both the Department and Translink on this process.**

The comments made by the Permanent Secretary were in reference to the commencement of construction work on the ground, not the actual contract start. Subject to a successful procurement process other related project work will be ongoing from June 2015. The context of what he said should not be misconstrued to imply that the project has been further delayed.

The content of this letter is fully disclosable under FOI.

I trust that this clarifies the position.

This letter is fully disclosable under FOI.

Yours sincerely

[SIGNED]

ALAN DOHERTY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Mr Dallat: Is it?

Mr Kennedy: It is still in Translink's budget. It is a priority. I said in the House that I see that as a Translink commitment.

Mr May: As part of the budget for Translink — the capital —

Mr Dallat: You mentioned it. What is the figure?

Mr May: For 2015-16, £17.3 million has been allocated to Translink for the railway upgrade.

Mr Dallat: But the cost of the upgrade, we believe, is somewhere in the region of £40 million.

Mr May: That is for the one year of 2015-16 —

Mr Kennedy: That is not the total cost. The works will take longer than a single year.

Mr May: You cannot spend it all in one year, so you allocate only the money that you can spend in a year.

Mr Dallat: So, the upgrade is not going to be finished this year.

Mr May: It will be started in September, but it will not be finished —

Mr Kennedy: We anticipate that the work would start this year.

Mr Dallat: I am sorry, Chairperson; keep me right if I am wrong here. I understood that phase 2 — the passing loop — would be finished this year. How many years will it take?

Mr Kennedy: The contract will, hopefully, begin this year. There are other issues to be resolved. *[Interruption.]* I was always expecting handcuffs when I arrived here this morning, but I have avoided that.

The Chairperson (Mr Clarke): They are waiting for you on the way out. We want to hear from you first.

Mr Dallat: In trying to be helpful to you, Minister, and in trying to appreciate the difficulties that you have, I wrote to the Minister of Finance and Personnel asking whether he had made any provision for priority funding for the project. In his reply, however, he said that no request had been made. Surely you should be screaming from the rafters of the Minister of Finance and Personnel's office to get the money to upgrade the railway, rather than pinching the money from one department and moving it to another to keep NIW afloat.