



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

6 May 2026

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast

Present:

- Mr Peter Martin MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Mr Harry Harvey MLA
- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA
- Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA
- Mr Justin McNulty MLA
- Mr Andrew McMurray MLA

Via Video Conferencing: Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Apologies: Mr Cathal Boylan MLA

In Attendance:

- Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)
- Ms Aoife Keating-Fitzpatrick (Senior Assistant Clerk)
- Mr Philip Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk) (Via Video Conferencing)
- Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
- Mr Oliver Briant (Clerical Officer)



The meeting commenced at 10:02 am in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson drew to Members' attention the recent departmental press release highlighting the Minister for Infrastructure's recognition of the work undertaken by her Department's staff to repair in excess of 10,000 road defects.

The Chairperson further highlighted a recent article in the Irish News which suggests that, despite the marked increase in funding allocated for road maintenance, it represents a reduction in efficiency for this financial year.

Mr Peter McReynolds MLA joined the meeting at 10:10 am.

Mr Justin McNulty MLA joined the meeting at 10:11 am.

Agreed: To write to the Department to seek a response on:

- the issues highlighted in the Irish News article;
- its assessment of the extent of roads that will be repaired by the Department prior to the winter period;
- a breakdown of the £40 million expenditure following the reprofiling of resources.



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The Chairperson reflected on the recent stakeholder event as part of its planning review which focusses on issues relation regionally significant developments and legal challenges.

The Chairperson expressed his thanks on the Committee's behalf to the stakeholders who attended the event and for their contributions.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 29 April 2026.

5. Matters Arising

The Committee considered a summary of issues following the evidence from departmental officials on the recent consultation which sought views on a proposed grant scheme for inspection and supervision costs arising from a number of proposals for Statutory Rules that seek to further implement provisions under the Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: That the Clerk would provide the Committee with the overview of the number of reservoirs that are considered to be low, medium and high risk.

6. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding a call for evidence on the Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill.

Agreed: To write to the Committee for Finance to state the Committee does not have a view on the Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill.

Correspondence from Mr Jim Shannon MP regarding access to connections to wastewater infrastructure.



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Agreed: To write to the Department seeking a response to the issues raised in the correspondence and to seek its assessment of the number of businesses in Northern Ireland which are unable to connect to the wastewater system under similar circumstances.

Report from the Inclusive Mobility Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) arising from its survey of Blue Badge use in Belfast City Centre.

Agreed: To write to the Department to ascertain what consideration it has given to include Blue Badge parking in the Eastern Transport Plan.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure confirming the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer for the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (Translink);
- Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure enclosing an update to MLAs of the changes as proposed to introduce Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL);
- ISNI Investing Activity Report – April 2026;
- Office of Environmental Protection Report on the Review of implementation of the Nutrient Action Programme Regulations (2019) in Northern Ireland;
- Correspondence from IMTAC setting out its support to a petition advocating for free travel for those living with a disability;
- Correspondence from Belmont Planning requesting to join the Planning Review Stakeholder event;
- An invitation from the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust their Active Travel Challenge event;
- The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission E-Newsletter for April 2026; and
- Correspondence from the House of Lords regarding the simplification of technical requirements and testing procedures for motor vehicles.



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7. SL1 - The Road Races (Down Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered the SL1 – The Road Races (Down Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed Statutory Rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 3 June 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

8. SL1 - The Road Races (Ulster Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered the SL1 – The Road Races (Ulster Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed Statutory Rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 3 June 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

9. SL1 - The U7487 Vicarage Road, Portadown (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered the SL1 – The U7487 Vicarage Road, Portadown (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed Statutory Rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.



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Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 3 June 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

Mr Harry Harvey MLA left the meeting at 10:43 am.

10. SL1 - The Road Races (Mid-Antrim 150) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered the SL1 – The Road Races (Mid-Antrim 150) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed Statutory Rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 3 June 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

11. SL1 - The Road Races (Garron Point Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered the SL1 – The Road Races (Garron Point Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed Statutory Rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 3 June 2026.



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Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

12. SR 2026-82 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2026

The Committee considered the SR 2026-82 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

13. SR 2026-83 The Schools (Part-Time 20mph Speed Limit) (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered the SR 2026-83 The Schools (Part-Time 20mph Speed Limit) (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

14. SR 2026-84 The Roads (Speed Limit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered the SR 2026-84 The Roads (Speed Limit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

Mr Harry Harvey re-joined the meeting at 10:47 am.



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15. SR 2026-86 The Road Races (Tandragee 100) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered the SR 2026-86 The Road Races (Tandragee 100) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

Mr John Stewart MLA left the meeting at 10:49 am.

16. Using a Mobile Phone While Driving – A Consultation on Widening the Law – Department for Infrastructure – Oral Evidence

The departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:50 am.

- Dr. Chris Hughes – Director of Safe & Accessible Travel Division, Department for Infrastructure; and
- Mrs Deirdre Gallagher – Transport Legislation Branch, Department for Infrastructure

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA left the meeting at 11:17 am.

The departmental officials left the meeting at 11:20 am.

Agreed: To write to the Department seeking further detail as undertaken by departmental officials on:

- An overview of equivalent provisions and best practice for the use of a mobile phone whilst driving in Great Britain and internationally;
- Its assessment of the scope of whether an offence is committed when using a mobile phone on a private residential driveway;



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- Clarification of whether an offence can be determined to have been committed when a vehicle's engine is stopped and the driver is using a mobile phone;
- An overview of fines/penalties for drink or drug driving in Northern Ireland and equivalent penalties in Great Britain;
- An overview of work that is being undertaken to strengthen initiatives to give priority to those turning left at junctions.

17. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: To proceed with the scheduled evidence as set out in the draft Forward Work Programme and to reflect to any changes agreed during the meeting.

18. Any Other Business

Agreed: To write to Lucy Martin to convey the Committee's appreciation of the provision of traybakes for the Committee.

19. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, 13 May 2026 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.



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The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 am.

Mr Peter Martin
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

13 May 2026