



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Communities and Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Concurrent Meeting

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 21 May 2026

Meeting Location: Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Committee for Communities

Present: Mr Colm Gildernew MLA (Chairperson)
Ms Cathy Mason MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Andy Allen MBE MLA (via Zoom)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA
Mr Mark Durkan MLA (via Zoom)
Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA
Mrs Sian Mulholland MLA

Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Present: Mr Robbie Butler MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Declan McAleer MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr John Blair MLA
Ms Aoife Finnegan MLA



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Mr Daniel McCrossan MLA (via Zoom)

Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA

Mr Gareth Wilson MLA

Committee for Infrastructure

Present: Mr Peter Martin MLA (Chair) (via Zoom)

Mr Andrew McMurray MLA (via Zoom)

Mr Justin McNulty MLA (via Zoom)

In Attendance: Mrs Emer Boyle (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)

Mrs Victoria Bourquin (Assistant Clerk)

Mr Chris McAfee (Clerical Supervisor)

Ms Katie Egan (Clerical Officer)

Ms Patrice Morris (Senior Assistant Clerk)

Ms Kathryn Black (Senior Assistant Clerk)

Ms Glenda Doherty (Senior Assistant Clerk)

The meeting commenced in public session at 10.08 a.m.

1. Declarations of Interest

Mark Durkan – Family Member is a Regeneration Officer for Derry and Strabane District Council.



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2. Apologies

Mr Maurice Bradley MLA

Mrs Kellie Armstrong MLA

Ms Áine Murphy MLA

Ms Sinéad Ennis MLA

3. **Shaping Sustainable Places consultation: Oral briefing from the Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs**

Justin McNulty joined the meeting at 10.16 a.m.

The Committee for Communities Chairperson welcomed the following Officials to the meeting:

Department for Communities

Paul McNaught - Director, Regional Development Office, SSP Senior Responsible Owner

Rosheen Thompson - Deputy Director, Regional Development Office, SSP Programme Manager

Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

Jason Foy - Director of Rural Affairs

Department for Infrastructure

Colin Hutchinson - Director of A5 Western Transport Corridor and Active Travel

Michelle McIlveen joined the meeting at 10.32 a.m.

Daniel McCrossan joined the meeting at 10.43 a.m.

Peter Martin joined the meeting at 11.00 a.m.

A question-and-answer session followed the briefing and the main areas of discussion were:

- Cross departmental collaboration



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- Local government role; powers & access to funding
- Funding model for SSP
- Implementation and impact of Dilapidation Bill
- Equality screening
- Centre-first approach and implementation for rural towns
- Access to services
- Implementation / Delivery timeline and delivery partners
- Active travel
- Community and public transport
- Arms length bodies' role in delivering heritage, culture and arts within regeneration
- Family & child friendly regeneration
- Water infrastructure within towns
- Targets and measuring value for money

Sian Mulholland left the meeting at 11.08 a.m.

Pam Cameron left the meeting at 11.10 a.m.

Gareth Wilson left the meeting at 11.12 a.m.

Agreed: That a letter is sent to the three relevant Departments to ask:

- Does Shaping Sustainable Places (SSP) interact at all with the recent policy announcement re UK High Street organised crime task force to mitigate against shops being used as fronts for criminal activity
- For details of SSP interaction with other existing strategies, particularly the Dilapidation Bill
- If planning flexibilities can be considered when SSP proposals are under consideration or if there are any ongoing conversations with planning officials re flexibility
- For clarification on how “services” and “access to services” will be defined in SSP, particularly in relation to rural areas where local hubs are used for a broad range of activities.



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4. Any other business

There was no other business.

The Committee for Communities Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.15 a.m.

Colm Gildernew MLA

**Chairperson
Committee for Communities**

Robbie Butler MLA

**Chairperson
Committee for Agriculture,
Environment & Rural Affairs**