



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

19 June 2024

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present:

- Mrs Deborah Erskine MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Danny Baker MLA
- Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
- Mr Mark Durkin MLA
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

Apologies:

- Mr Cathal Boylan MLA

In Attendance:

- Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
- Mr William Kinnear (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced in public session at 10:04 am.



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1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

Deborah Erskine declared an interest stating that she has family members who live along the A5 route.

Peter McReynolds left the meeting at 10:06 am.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed members she had been contacted by a number of taxi drivers highlighting issues in respect of other vehicles parking in approved taxi ranks, particularly in evenings and at weekends in Belfast city centre. Members noted that information on signage and enforcement at taxi ranks had previously been sought from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

Agreed: To ask the Department for details of the number of parking enforcement officers operating in Belfast; the hours within which they operate and how many are on duty at night; and the number of occasions on which enforcement action has been taken against those parking in taxi ranks.

Peter McReynolds returned to the meeting at 10:08 am.



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4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 June 2024, subject to one amendment.

5. Matters Arising

None.

6. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding the Public Sector Transformation Board.

Agreed: To request a copy of the return submitted by DfI to the Department of Finance on its transformation proposals.

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance requesting responses from Assembly committees on the extent of the engagement from departments for the 2024-25 Budget.

Agreed: To respond to the Committee for Finance outlining the written and oral evidence received and scheduled by the Committee on the 2024-24 Budget and June Monitoring Round.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure in respect of issues highlighted by the Committee concerning grass cutting of sightlines.

Agreed: To request an update from Department for Infrastructure on the pilot bio-diversity project and details of the amount of weed killer sprayed on verges.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure on the calculation of the costs of road drainage.

Agreed: To request a detailed breakdown of the factors included in the expected cost of £31m for road drainage for 2024-25.



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Copy of Correspondence from the Community Transport Association (CTA) to the Minister for Infrastructure on the allocated funding for the 2024-25 financial year.

Agreed: To request a copy of the Minister for Infrastructure's response to CTA once issued.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Department for Infrastructure and the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs on the regulation of public drinking water by the Drinking Water Inspectorate.
- Copy of the response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Speaker on the Public Petition on Phase 2 of the A1 Junctions Road Improvement Scheme.

7. Road Safety Strategy to 2030 – Department for Infrastructure – Oral Evidence

The following officials joined the meeting at 10:17 am:

- Dr Chris Hughes, Director of Safe & Accessible Travel, Department for Infrastructure;
- Liam McEvoy, Director of Road Asset Development, Department for Infrastructure; and
- David Mullan, Head of Strategy, Governance and Driving Policy Branch, Department for Infrastructure.

The officials provided the Committee with an overview of the Road Safety Strategy to 2030.

A question and answer session followed.

Danny Baker left the meeting at 11:04 am.

The representatives agreed to provide further information as requested during the evidence session.



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The Committee noted correspondence from the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), which included details of the issues it highlighted in the consultation on the Road Safety Strategy.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The evidence session ended at 11:25 am.

8. Subordinate Legislations – SRs Not Subject to Assembly Proceedings

The Committee noted the following Statutory Rule not subject to Assembly Proceedings:

- SR 2024/129 The Waiting Restrictions (Royal Hillsborough) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.

9. Subordinate Legislation – SL1s Not Subject to Assembly Proceedings

The Committee noted the following proposals for Subordinate Legislation not subject to Assembly Proceedings:

- SL1 The Road Races (Armoy Motorcycle Road Race) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.
- SL1 The Road Races (Bushwhacker Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.
- SL1 The Road Races (Ulster Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.
- SL1 The Waiting Restrictions (Cloughey) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.
- SL1 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Bangor) Order (Northern Ireland).



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10. Budget 2024-25 – Equality Impact Assessment Consultation

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure on its commencement of an Equality Impact Assessment Consultation on the proposed allocations for the 2024-25 Budget.

The Committee expressed concern over the lack of engagement by the Department on the consultation as set out in the agreed timescales for interaction between departments and Assembly committees.

11. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme until summer recess. Members noted that there will be no meeting on 3 July 2024.

12. Any Other Business

None.

13. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 26 June 2024 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

14. A5 Western Transport Corridor Scheme: Next Steps and Indicative Timings – Department for Infrastructure – Oral Evidence

The following officials joined the meeting at 11:36 am:



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- Mr Colin Woods, Deputy Secretary, Transport & Roads Asset Management Group, Department for Infrastructure;
- Mr Colin Hutchinson, Director of A5 and Active Travel, Department for Infrastructure; and
- Mr Seamus Keenan, Deputy Director of A5, Department for Infrastructure.

The officials provided the Committee with overview of the A5 Western Transport Corridors Scheme including the next steps and indicative timescales.

A question and answer session followed.

Danny Baker returned to the meeting at 11:56 am.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard while in public session.

The meeting went into closed session at 12:28 pm.

John Stewart left the meeting at 12:28 pm.

Agreed: That the Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer (DALO) can remain in attendance for the evidence in closed session.

The evidence session ended and the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 pm.

Mrs Deborah Erskine
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure
26 June 2024