



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## **Committee for Infrastructure**

### **Minutes of Proceedings**

**9 April 2025**

**Meeting Location:** Room 29, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

- Mrs Deborah Erskine MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
- Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

**Apologies:** None

**Via Video Conference:**

- Ms Nicola Brogan MLA
- Mr Mark Durkan MLA

**In Attendance:**

- Ms Barbara Love (Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
- Mr Oliver Briant (Clerical Officer)



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The meeting commenced in public session at 10:00 am.

### **1. Apologies**

None.

### **2. Declaration of Interests**

None.

### **3. Chairperson's Business**

None.

### **4. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 2 April 2025.

### **5. Matters Arising**

None.



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### 6. Correspondence

Invitation from the Department for Infrastructure to 7 Foundations for the Future stakeholder engagement conferences, aimed at enhancing infrastructure development and public welfare.

**Agreed:** To write to DfI to reiterate the Committee's disappointment with the scheduling of and limited timescale for the Committee to consider whether it wished to attend the events and seek a written update on each of the '7 Foundations' round table events to include a list of stakeholders in attendance, key themes and proposed solutions.

Response from the Minister of Finance to Committee correspondence regarding the motor insurance taskforce.

**Agreed:** To write to the Department of Finance to request that the Committee is updated on the outputs and issues discussed in the meeting anticipated to take place between the Minister and the Department for Transport.

Response from the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland to the Committee's request to be provided with Annual Accessibility Reports for all Northern Ireland Airports.

**Agreed:** To write to Andy Allen MLA enclosing copies of the reports from the Consumer Council for information and to highlight the Committee's willingness to consider any other related issues relevant to the Department for Infrastructure.

Invitation from Belfast City Airport to visit the airport, meet staff and tour the facilities.

**Agreed:** That the Clerk engages informally with representatives of Belfast City Airport to establish the issues under consideration for the proposed visit and their relevance to the Committee's remit.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing an update the Department's approach to reviewing its ALBs.

**Agreed:** To write to the Committee for Finance enclosing the Minister's response around the review of Arms-Length Bodies for information.



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Committee for the Executive Office correspondence regarding the Budget 2025/2026 – Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

**Agreed:** To write to DfI seeking detail on what role it has, if any, in delivering the strategy and to establish what funding has been bid for or earmarked to support its delivery for the 2025-26 financial year.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Notification of appointment of nine Non-Executive Members to the Board of Belfast Harbour Authority by the Department for Infrastructure;
- Notification from the Department for Infrastructure regarding Planning Reference: LA07/2023/2225/DCA. Proposed new four-storey theatre & conference centre extension to the Town Hall, Newry. Granting of conservation area consent;
- Notification from the Department for Infrastructure regarding Planning Reference: LA07/2023/2275/DCA. Proposed demolition of existing split deck/multi-storey car park at Abbey Way, Newry. Granting of conservation area consent;
- Notification from the Department for Infrastructure regarding Planning Reference: LA09/2019/0024/O and Planning Reference: LA09/2019/0025/F Granting of planning permission at former Maghera High School.;
- Department for Infrastructure monthly report on traffic congestion in Belfast City Centre;
- Quarterly update from the Department of Finance on sickness levels in the Department for Infrastructure;
- Copy of the Department for Infrastructure Investing Activity Report for March 2025;
- Response from Translink to Committee correspondence regarding perceived cost differentials associated with Zero Emission buses procured by Translink;
- Copy of the Retail NI – Survey Report from the Committee for Finance;



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- Follow up from Assembly Research and Information Service following briefing session on policy approaches to transport decarbonisation; and
- Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Audit Office following up from the briefing on Funding Water Infrastructure in Northern Ireland Report.

**7. Better Use of Public and Community Sector Funds for the Delivery of Bus Transport in Northern Ireland – Implementation of Recommendations - Department for Infrastructure – Oral Evidence**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:07 am:

- Peter Rice – Director of Public Transport Operations, Department for Infrastructure;
- Leona Lees – Project Manager of the Community Transport Phase 2 Review, Department for Infrastructure; and
- John Conville – Community Transport Review Team, Department for Infrastructure.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The officials provided the Committee with an update on the Implementation of Recommendations for the Better Use of Public and Community Sector Funds for the Delivery of Bus Transport in Northern Ireland.

A question and answer session followed.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11:21 am.

**Agreed:** To write to DfI seeking further detail on:

- An overview of historical funding for Community Transport since 2013 to include the Opening and closing baselines;



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- A copy of the Terms of Reference and objectives for the cross-departmental working group and copies of the minutes of all meetings/note of meetings held;
- Confirmation on what engagement has been undertaken with the Community Transport Association to contribute to the Regional Transport Strategy;
- Biannual updates on the key themes and solutions proposed (October); and
- An overview of DfI's engagement with former service users in areas where Community Transport services have been cut or withdrawn.

### **8. Department for Infrastructure – Contribution to the Programme for Government – Written Evidence**

The Committee considered written evidence from the Department for Infrastructure on its contribution to the Programme for Government (PfG).

The Chairperson sought views on any specific areas of interest that would be used to form the basis of the future oral evidence from departmental officials however, members' indicated the preferred approach would be to consider the entirety of the Department's responsibilities in supporting the delivery of the PfG.

The Chairperson informed members that the Minister of Finance highlighted in a recent Written Ministerial Statement an overall allocation of approximately £425 million to deliver the priorities set out in the Programme for Government.

**Agreed:** To schedule oral evidence session(s) on DfI responsibilities in supporting the delivery of the PfG.

**Agreed:** To write to the Minister of Finance to seek a disaggregation of £425 million highlighted in the written statement in relation to allocation towards PfG priorities.



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### **9. Subordinate Legislation – SR's Not subject to Assembly Procedure**

The Committee noted the following Statutory Rules that were laid in the Business Office and are not subject to Assembly Proceedings:

- SR 2025-71 The Road Races (Cookstown 100 Motor Cycle Road Race) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025; and
- SR 2025-72 The Road Races (Craigantlet Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

### **10. Subordinate Legislation – SL1s Not subject to Assembly Procedure**

The Committee noted the following proposals for a Statutory Rules, which are not subject to Assembly Proceedings:

- SL1 - The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025;
- SL1 - The Road Races (Maiden City Stages Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025;
- SL1 - The Road Races (North West 200) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025; and
- SL1 - The Parking Places on Roads (Diplomatic Vehicles) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

### **11. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered the draft Forward Work Programme.



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**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to meet externally to receive oral evidence from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners in relation to DfI's recent consultation on the Review of Trust Ports.

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

### **12. Any Other Business**

None.

### **13. Date, Time and Place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 30 April 2025 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 am.

**Mrs Deborah Erskine**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure**

**30 April 2025**