



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure Minutes of Proceedings

10 April 2024

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present:

- Mrs Deborah Erskine MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
- Mr Patrick Brown MLA
- Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Mr Mark Durkan MLA
- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

Apologies: Mr Danny Baker MLA

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In Attendance:

- Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Philip Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
- Mr William Kinnear (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 10:01 am in public session.



1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

The Chairperson reminded members of their responsibilities under Standing Order 69(5) that all Assembly Members are required to register any relevant financial and other interests in the Register of Members' Interests and the requirement to declare, at various times, any relevant financial or other interests which relate to the work of any committee of which they are a member.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed members that she received an invitation to meet with representatives of Renewable Energy Systems Limited (RES) to discuss their insights into how to unlock economic and renewable energy opportunities.

Agreed: To request written evidence in the first instance from RES, Renewables NI and ABO Wind with a view to scheduling a joint oral evidence session at a future date in the Forward Work Programme.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 20 March 2024.



5. Matters Arising

None.

6. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding Large-Scale Renewable Energy Schemes – Planning Fees/Delays.

Agreed: To ask the Department to be copied into its response to the Committee for the Economy.

Correspondence from NICVA requesting to brief the Committee.

Agreed: To request more detail from NICVA outlining how it considers their work aligns with the remit and work of the Committee for Infrastructure.

Correspondence from Re-Gen requesting to brief the Committee.

Agreed: To request more detail from Re-Gen outlining how it considers their work aligns with the remit and work of the Committee for Infrastructure.

Correspondence from North Channel Wind requesting to brief the Committee.

Agreed: To seek a response from the Department on the issues raised for consideration at a later date.

Correspondence from Ards and North Down Borough Council requesting that the Committee agree to postpone any further decision on the Green Road (Conlig) Abandonment Order to allow the determine potential options on a way forward.



Agreed: To request that the Department defer progressing the policy proposals as contained SL1 letter to until the range of options and subsequent decision has been taken by Ards and North Down Borough Council.

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure providing a response to issues arising from the Committee meeting on 28 February 2024.

Agreed: To receive a breakdown from the Department of the nature of individual compensation payments of successful personal injury claims and the figures for the 2023-2024 financial year when available.

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure providing a response to issues arising from the Committee meeting on 13 March 2024.

Agreed: To express the Committee's concern to the Department regarding the potential indicated timescales and delays completing the York Street Interchange project and to request further information on the impact of these delays and the totality of spending drawn from monies secured through the confidence and supply agreement.

Agreed: To express the Committee's concerns to the Department about the future of the Belfast Living with Water Plan and the viability of proposed Londonderry plan.

Agreed: To receive a copy from the Department of the guidance issued by the Office of Rail and Roads in response the Department's regulations.

Agreed: To request detail from the Office of Rail and Roads of the review it is undertaking on Translink's network statement including the nature and associated timescales for the review and the agreed Terms of Reference.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure regarding The Heavy Goods Vehicles (Charging for The Use of Certain Infrastructure on The Trans-European Road Network) (Revocation and Consequential Provisions) Regulations 2024.



The Committee noted a response from the Minister for Infrastructure to issues arising from the Committee meeting on 6 March 2024.

The Committee noted the Fifth Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

The Committee noted the Sixth Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

The Committee noted copy correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure to Phillip Brett, MLA regarding Planning Delays - Renewable Energy Infrastructure and Renewable Energy Planning Costs and Delays.

The Committee noted a copy of the response from the Department for Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs regarding historical dispensations granted by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency to Northern Ireland Water.

The Committee noted the Investing Strategy for Northern Ireland Department for Infrastructure Investing Activity Report for March 2024.

7. Overview of the role and functions of the Utility Regulator for Northern Ireland – oral and written evidence

The following representatives joined the meeting at 10:16 am.

- Mr John French, Chief Executive, Utility Regulator Northern Ireland; and
- Mr Ciaran McCann, Head of Water and Gas Price Control, Utility Regulator Northern Ireland.

The representatives provided the Committee with oral evidence.



A question and answer session followed.

The representatives undertook to provide further information on who has responsibility for determining the ratios for offsetting storm water and how this is enforced as contained in articles 95 and 201 of the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

Agreed: To receive a response from the Utility Regulator on any of the issues not covered during the oral evidence session.

The representatives left the meeting at 10:59 am.

8. Issues Affecting the Taxi Sector – Licensed Taxi Operators' Association - oral and written evidence

The following representatives joined the meeting at 11:03 am.

- Mr Stephen Anton, Representative, Licensed Taxi Operators Association;
- Mrs Cathy Mallie, Proprietor, Clanrye Taxis; and
- Mr Gerry Lennon, Chief Executive, Visit Belfast.

The representatives provided the Committee with oral evidence.

A question and answer session followed.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:20 pm.

9. Consultation on Water, Flooding and Sustainable Drainage - Department for Infrastructure - Written Evidence

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure on the Consultation on Water, Flooding and Sustainable Drainage in advance of the Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny scheduled on 24 April 2024.



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**10. Implementation of The Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 –
Consultation Response Report – Written Evidence**

The Committee considered Implementation of The Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 – Consultation Response Report – Written Evidence.

Agreed: That the Clerk seeks to establish anticipated timescales for the development of the regulations and to schedule oral evidence in the Forward Work Programme as appropriate.

**11. Planning in Northern Ireland – Northern Ireland Audit Office and Public
Accounts Committee Reports – Written Evidence**

The Committee noted the previously published reports by the Northern Ireland Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee on Planning in Northern Ireland.

**12. SL1 - The Period Products (Department for Infrastructure Public Service
Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024**

The Committee considered SL1 - The Period Products (Department for Infrastructure Public Service Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the proposal for the Statutory Rule.

**13. SL1 - The Planning (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland)
2024**

The Committee considered SL1 - The Planning (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.



Agreed: To request further detail on planning fees increases over the last three years and its assessment of the how these are determined against Consumer Price Index (CPI) statistics published by the Office of National Statistics.

14. Subordinate Legislation – SL1s – Not Subject to Assembly Proceedings

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

- SL1 - The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Larne) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SL1 - The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Carrickfergus) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024; and
- SL1 - The Waiting Restrictions (Ballygally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.

15. Subordinate Legislation – SRs – Not Subject to Assembly Proceedings

The Committee noted the following Statutory Rules not subject to Assembly Proceedings.

- SR 2024-59 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Banbridge) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-60 The Road Races (Croft Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-61 The Schools (Part-Time 20mph Speed Limit) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-63 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Londonderry) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;



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- SR 2024-64 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Omagh) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-65 The Prohibition of Right-Hand Turn (Enniskillen) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-66 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Banbridge) (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-67 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Banbridge) (Amendment No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-83 The Road Races (Cookstown 100 Motor Cycle Road Race) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-84 The Road Races (Maiden City Stages Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024; and
- SR 2024-85 The Road Races (Craigantlet Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.

16. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: To update the draft Forward Work Programme to reflect decisions taken today.

17. Any Other Business.

Agreed: All suggested actions in the correspondence memo.

Agreed: To receive details from the Minister for Infrastructure of any proposed plan to introduce or improve existing safety measures on the A1.

Agreed: To schedule oral evidence in the Forward Work Programme from the Police Service of Northern Ireland on transport and road safety issues.



18. Date, Time and Place of next meeting.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 17 April 2024 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm.

Mrs Deborah Erskine MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure
17 April 2024