



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## **Committee for Infrastructure**

### **Minutes of Proceedings**

**2 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 10:05 am.

### **1. Apologies**

None.

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

None.

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

The Chairperson drew member's attention to correspondence from the Chairperson of the Utility Regulator for Northern Ireland extending an invitation for an informal engagement with the Chairperson and the Board of the Utility Regulator to discuss water and sewerage issues.

**Agreed:** The Committee was content for the Chairperson to attend on its behalf and to write to the Chairperson of the Utility Regulator to accept the invitation.

### **4. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 26 March 2025.



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## 5. Matters Arising

None.

## 6. Correspondence

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to a request from the Committee for a further evidence session.

**Agreed:** To confirm the further oral evidence session to take place in June, as proposed, and to explore suitable dates for a follow up session to take place following the summer recess.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to a request from the Committee for further information regarding The Traffic Weight Restriction (Grange Road, Parkgate) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

**Agreed:** To write to the Department to seek clarity on the types of agricultural vehicles that are exempted under The Traffic Weight Restriction (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025 and how often such restrictions are subject to a review.

Copy of the Department for Infrastructure Quarter 3 monitoring report and the DVA Quarter 3 monitoring report.

**Agreed:** To schedule a DVA general business update to coincide with the planned evidence session on the termination of the contract for the vehicle testing equipment.

Invitation from the Department for Infrastructure to participate in a '7 Foundations' roundtable discussion on improving the regional planning system in Northern Ireland.

**Agreed:** To write to the Department seeking:

- a list of the stakeholders in attendance at the event;
- detail of the issues raised and proposals that will be developed to inform the Department's work; and



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- to seek clarity on why the invitation was received at such short notice, leaving the Committee with no opportunity to consider whether it was able or wished to attend.

Copy correspondence from the Committee for Justice received from a member of the public regarding a number of issues.

**Agreed:** That future correspondence be included in the pack if highlighted by the Clerk as requiring Committee consideration.

Response from Northern Ireland Water to Committee correspondence requesting further information in relation to wastewater capacity issues.

The Chairperson reminded members of two items of correspondence previously considered at its meeting on 19 March 2025 requesting sight of the information sought by the Committee on the disparity of compliance rates for announced and unannounced sampling.

**Agreed:** To provide the requested information contained in Northern Ireland Water's response to both individuals.

Correspondence from a member of the public relating to Translink's response regarding public transport to and from medical appointments.

**Agreed:** To write to the individual highlighting the Committee's advisory and scrutiny role and suggest that he may wish to highlight the issues raised to the relevant MLAs within his constituency.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Notice of intention from the Minister for Infrastructure to make an oral statement on Northern Ireland Water's 2024/2025 budget position;
- Oral statement from the Minister for Infrastructure on Northern Ireland Water's 2024/2025 budget position;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to a request from the Committee to provide clarity on the capital allocation of the Budget;
- Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure regarding the Minister's intention to launch a consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy; and



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- Response from the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to Committee correspondence requesting further information regarding the Statement of Regulatory Principles and Intent (SORPI).

### **7. Implementation of The Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 – Consideration of revised SL1s - Department for Infrastructure - Oral Evidence**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:20 am:

- Ms Alison Clydesdale, Director of Water & Drainage Policy, Department for Infrastructure;
- Mr Ryan Robinson, Head of Flooding & Drainage Policy, Department for Infrastructure; and
- Ms Hannah Bee, Reservoirs Legislation Team, Department for Infrastructure.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson reminded members that the Committee previously considered the SL1s at its meeting on 20 November 2024, however, due to the lack of information contained within these, the Committee agreed to request that the Department provides revised SL1 letters to more clearly set out the precise purpose of the proposed rules to assist the Committee in its scrutiny and consideration of this legislation.

The Committee noted the revised SL1s provided by the Department at its meeting on 2 April 2025.

The officials provided the Committee with an update on the revised SL1s for the further implementation of The Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.

A question and answer session followed.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11:16 am.

**Agreed:** To write to DfI seeking:



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- Detail of the engagement undertaken in establishing the number and type of health and safety incidents relating to reservoirs since Royal Assent being received on the Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015;
- An overview of the methodology and factors for calculating/determining the cubic volume of a reservoir; and
- Its assessment of the impact of health and safety factors on planning applications since the Act received Royal Assent.

Mr Cathal Boylan left the meeting at 11:17 am.

- A summary of the audits that were undertaken in 2016 which provides an indication of the extent of the condition of the 176 reservoirs identified by the Department and the percentage of those estimated to be non-compliant in percentage terms within the small, medium and large consequence definition.

Mr Cathal Boylan re-joined the meeting at 11:20 am.

### **8. Report on Funding Water Infrastructure in Northern Ireland - Northern Ireland Audit Office - Oral Evidence**

The following representatives joined the meeting at 11:23 am:

- Ms Colette Kane, Director, Northern Ireland Audit Office; and
- Mr Michael Heery, Audit Manager, Northern Ireland Audit Office.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The officials provided the Committee with an update on the Comptroller and Auditor General's (C&AG) report on 'Funding Water Infrastructure in Northern Ireland.'

A question and answer session followed.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:09 pm.



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**9. Research and Information Service (RaiSe) Briefing - Decarbonising Transport - Policy approaches of UK Regions and Republic of Ireland - Oral Evidence**

The researcher joined the meeting at 12:11 pm:

- Mr Des McKibbin, Research Officer.

The researcher provided the Committee with a briefing on Decarbonising Transport - Policy approaches of UK Regions and Republic of Ireland.

A question and answer session followed.

The researcher undertook to examine/clarify the issues identified in the course of the session.

The researcher left the meeting at 12:37 pm.

**Agreed:** To write to DfI seeking detail of any management policies as indicated in its paper 'Planning for the Future of Transport – Time for Change'.

**10. SR 2025-49 The Planning (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025**

The Committee considered SR 2025-49 The Planning (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025.

**Agreed:** That the Committee for Infrastructure has considered SR 2025-49 The Planning (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 and has no objection to the rule.



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

The Committee noted the following Statutory Rule that was laid in the Business Office and is not subject to Assembly Proceedings:

- SR 2025-65 The Road Races (Circuit of Ireland Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

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

The Committee noted the following proposal for a Statutory Rule, which is not subject to Assembly Proceedings:

- SL1 – The Road Races (Spamont Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

### **13. 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 in the course of the meeting.

### **14. Any Other Business**

None.



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**15. Date, Time and Place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 9 April 2025 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:41 pm.

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

**9 April 2025**