



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## **Committee for Infrastructure**

### **Minutes of Proceedings**

**27 November 2024**

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

**Present:**

- Mrs Deborah Erskine MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Mr Mark Durkan MLA
- Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

**Via Video Conference:** Mr Danny Baker MLA

**Apologies:**

- Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Cathal Boylan MLA

**In Attendance:**

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

The meeting commenced in public session at 10:05 am.



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### 1. Apologies

As above.

Mr Mark Durkan joined the meeting at 10:06 am.

### 2. Declaration of Interests

None.

### 3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson highlighted the recent impacts of flooding incidents arising from Storm Bert.

Mr Keith Buchanan joined the meeting at 10:07 am.

- Agreed:** To write to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) to highlight the importance of continued gully maintenance and emptying and that ease of access to sand bags can be an effective way to minimise the impacts of flooding; and to request:
- A report of its assessment of the causes of flooding incidents arising from Storm Bert broken down by each division across Northern Ireland;
  - What learning can be drawn out from these incidents and how that learning can be disseminated to minimise future occurrences of flooding; and
  - Details of technology and systems being developed to monitor and record gully maintenance and emptying.



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### 4. Draft Minutes

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

### 5. Matters Arising

The Committee considered correspondence from the Northern Ireland Wedding Vehicle Association regarding the effect of taxi regulations on the industry.

**Agreed:** To forward the correspondence to the Department for Infrastructure seeking a response to the issues raised and clarification of why any changes would require a full review of the regulatory framework for taxis.

**Agreed:** To schedule an oral evidence session with the Northern Ireland Wedding Vehicle Association at a suitable date in the Forward Work Programme.

The Committee noted the Examiner for Statutory Rules – Twenty Seventh Report.

### 6. Correspondence

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to issues raised by Shopmobility in relation to community transport.

**Agreed:** To forward the correspondence to Shopmobility for information.

**Agreed:** To request that the Committee is kept updated on the review of Shopmobility Services by DfI.

Response from Lilian Greenwood MP, Minister for the Future of Roads, regarding the work of the cross-Government Taskforce on motor insurance which advised that



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the Minister of Finance and her counterparts in other devolved legislatures have been invited to discuss these issues.

**Agreed:** To ask the Minister of Finance to provide an update on the issues discussed following the meeting of the Taskforce with the devolved legislatures.

Copy of correspondence from the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) highlighting concerns over the lack of recognition of motorcyclists as vulnerable road users in the Road Safety Week 2024 campaign.

**Agreed:** To forward the correspondence to DfI to request details of its engagement with MAG for Road Safety Week.

Written briefing on Consumer Council for Northern Ireland on its role and the rights of passengers with disability or reduced mobility travelling by air.

**Agreed:** To ask the Consumer Council to provide the next annual accessibility audits of airports once finalised.

Correspondence from Save the Moat – Save the Sperrins requesting a copy of the response received by the Committee from the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs regarding the delays in Northern Ireland Environment Agency's (NIEA) response to major applications for renewable developments.

**Agreed:** To forward a copy of the response from the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to Save the Moat – Save the Sperrins.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to recommendations in the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) report 'A Review of the Implementation of the Water Framework Directive Regulations and River Basin Management Planning in Northern Ireland';
- DfI Roads Eastern Division – Report to Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Autumn 2024;
- Public Petition - Parking Restrictions: Dungannon which was forwarded by Speaker;



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- Committee for Finance – Budget 2025-26 & Future Years Information Gathering process – timeliness of departmental responses;
- Correspondence from OEP on the publication of its report 'A Review of Implementation of the Bathing Waters Regulations in Northern Ireland';
- Invitation to stakeholder festive reception from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners; and
- Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure on the mitigation measures being implemented to alleviate traffic congestion in Belfast city centre.

### **7. Subordinate Legislation – SRs Not subject to Assembly Procedure**

The Committee noted the following Statutory Rules that have been laid in the Business Office, which are not subject to Assembly Proceedings:

- SR 2024-193 The Roads (Speed Limit) (No. 5) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SR 2024-194 The Waiting Restrictions (Draperstown) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024; and
- SR 2024-195 The Schools (Part-Time 20mph Speed Limit) (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.

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

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

- SL1 - The Loading Bays on Roads (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SL1 - The On-Street Parking (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;
- SL1 - The Urban Clearways (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024;



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- SL1 - The Parking Places on Roads (Saintfield) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024; and
- SL1 - The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Limavady) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.

### **9. Review of The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015**

The Committee considered written evidence from DfI on the Summary of Responses Report for the consultation on proposals in relation to the Review of The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

**Agreed:** To note the Summary of Responses Report and to request that DfI provides an update on the proposed options on the way forward to enable the Committee to provide any views it may have before any final decisions are taken by the Minister.

### **10. 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.

### **11. Any Other Business**

**Agreed:** To request information from DfI on:

- the implementation of active travel initiatives and future plans for North Belfast;
- how much of the £16m announced by Minister Mallon in 2022 for the cycling network in Belfast has been spent;



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- the current level of spending on active travel;
- a breakdown of spending performance against the 10% requirement for active travel expenditure under the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

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

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 4 December 2024 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 am.

**Mrs Deborah Erskine**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure**  
**4 December 2024**