



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

30 April 2025

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mrs Deborah Erskine MLA (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: Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
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

Mrs Deborah Erskine declared an interest stating that she has family members who are land owners along the A5 route.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson highlighted the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Road Policing and Safety Unit's 'Operation Lifesaver' to conduct road safety operations over the Easter period.

The Chairperson highlighted with concern the range of offences that were being highlighted on social media as a result of the operation.

Mr Cathal Boylan and Mr Peter McReynolds declared an interest as being members of the Policing Board along with Mr Mark Durkan and Mr Keith Buchanan.

Agreed: To write to the PSNI to seek detail of the nature and number of offences detected in the course of Operation Lifesaver and to establish whether similar operations will be undertaken in the future.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 9 April 2025.



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5. Matters Arising

None.

6. Correspondence

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to a Committee request regarding improving safety for school children entering and exiting school buses.

Agreed: To request details of options to improve safety for school children being considered by the Minister when available.

Agreed: To write to the Minister of Education enclosing the Education Authority's response and to ascertain detail of specific initiatives being considered by the Department to improve the safety for school children.

Responses from Translink and the Education Authority Northern Ireland in relation to safety of children travelling on school bus routes.

Agreed: To write to the Committee for Education enclosing the responses from Translink, the Education Authority and a copy of the Chairperson's letter to the Minister of Education for information.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to a Committee request for information on the Department's consideration of Translink's business case for a late-night service.

Agreed: To write to DfI to seek details of the list of stakeholders the Department intends to engage with as part of its consideration of the night movers business case, a summary of issues discussed and a summary of the outcome of each meeting once complete.

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure providing a copy of the Terms of Reference for the forensic accountant investigation into Northern Ireland Water and a response from the Minister to a Committee request for information on the appointment of the forensic accounts.



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Agreed: To write to DfI seeking confirmation of the date of Pricewaterhouse Cooper's (PWC) appointment to undertake the forensic review of Northern Ireland Water.

Agreed: To schedule an oral evidence session in the Forward Work Programme at a suitable date.

Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure requesting that the Committee consider the SL1 for The Green Road, Conlig (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2024.

The Chairperson reminded members that, following the previous consideration of the proposed statutory rule, the Committee noted concerns that had been expressed within the area of the proposed abandonment through a public petition.

As a result of the local public interest and following the oral evidence with departmental officials, the Chairperson highlighted that the Committee had previously written to Ards and North Down Borough Council (ANBC) to examine the scope for it to assume responsibility of the abandonment as part of the active travel infrastructure.

Members noted that responses had been received from ANBC however, the current position is not known.

Agreed: To write to Ards and North Down Borough Council to seek an update on its consideration to assume responsibility for the site proposed for abandonment by the Department, referencing the heritage aspect of the site.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing information on the attendees at the roundtable discussion on Regional Planning, what issues were raised and what proposals were developed to inform the Department's work.

Agreed: To write to DfI to request an update on each of the phases of the planning improvement agenda once complete.

Update from the Minister for Infrastructure to a Committee query regarding the issue of medical fitness to drive.

Agreed: To write to DfI seeking a readout of the issues discussed with the stakeholders and potential changes to existing legislation once the assessment as referenced has been conducted as highlighted in the response.



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Response from the Department of Finance providing clarification on whether there are any minimum qualification requirements for land agents.

Agreed: To forward to the committees for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and Finance for information.

Response from the Department of Finance providing a disaggregation of the £425 million from the Written Ministerial Statement of 3 April 2025 for Programme for Government (PfG) priorities.

Agreed: To forward to all Statutory Committees for information.

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding the application of EU law on type-approval of motor vehicles to Northern Ireland.

Agreed: To write to the Committee for the Economy to establish what consideration it has had, if any, on the impacts of type approval once the transitional arrangements under the Windsor Framework expire and to request that the Committee is kept updated on any areas of mutual interest.

Response from the Utility Regulator in relation to enforcement notices issued by Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Agreed: To write to the Utility Regulator to request a copy of the agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) once finalised.

Correspondence from the Mineral Products Association Northern Ireland (MPANI) on the impact of Northern Ireland Executive's 2025/26 Budget on Road Maintenance and offer to visit one Northstone Craigantlet Quarry.

Agreed: That Committee staff explore the potential options for an external visit to as proposed by MPANI.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to a Committee request for year-to-date performance on objectives in each Departmental areas respective business plans;
- An update from the Minister for Infrastructure on the position in relation to the termination of the DVA vehicle testing contract;



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- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to Committee request for redacted versions of the historical reports on funding models for NI Water;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to Committee request for details on the misuse of Park and Ride/Share facilities in the Antrim and Templepatrick area;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to questions raised following the RalSe Briefing on Decarbonising Transport: Policy approaches of UK regions and Republic of Ireland;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing further clarification on potential impacts of weight restrictions, particularly upon agricultural vehicles, and request for additional information on the types of agricultural vehicles that would fall within this definition and how often such weight restrictions are reviewed;
- Response from Translink in relation to bilingual signage at Belfast Grand Central Station;
- Response from Northern Ireland Water in relation to engagement between the Department for Infrastructure and NI Water on developer contributions;
- Copy of the 2023 Waterways Ireland Annual Report;
- Copy correspondence from a member of the public to the Secretary of State regarding the provision of public transport for people to and from medical appointments; and
- Copy of the Department for Infrastructure – Investing Activity Report – April 2025.

7. SL1s - Implementation of the Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 – Ulster Angling Federation – Oral Evidence

The following representatives joined the meeting at 10:41 am:



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- Ray McKeeman, Director; and
- David Thompson, Club Development Officer.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The representatives provided oral evidence on their assessment of the impact of the proposed secondary legislation arising from the further implementation of the Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.

A question and answer session followed.

Agreed: To write to the Ulster Angling Federation (UAF) to seek further detail on the issues highlighted in the course of the evidence:

- Its assessment of the impacts the implementation of similar legislation in other jurisdictions;
- A breakdown of the numbers of impacted reservoirs used by anglers that are owned outright, leased or used on a not for profit basis;
- Clarification on the whether any UAF members leasing use of reservoirs are explicitly responsible for compliance as a reservoir manager; and
- UAF's assessment the nature and extent of issues discussed with the Department and how this differed from subsequent correspondence..

The representatives left the meeting at 12:05 pm.

Agreed: To write to DfI to seek clarification as to how the reservoir manager will be determined and what steps will be taken to ensure good and timely communication with reservoir managers or others impacted, particularly in cases where reservoirs are leased to clubs such as the UAF and to private organisations rather than owned outright.

Agreed: To write to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, copying in the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to:



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- highlight the oral evidence received from the UAF and its contention of the potential impacts of the further implementation of the Act; and
- to request details of any discussions or considerations on the potential environmental impacts arising from the dewatering of reservoirs and an assessment of this in the context of progressing the legislation and audit of the Public Angling Estate.

8. SL1 – The Kensington Avenue, Banbridge (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025

The Committee considered SL1 - The Kensington Avenue, Banbridge (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

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

9. SL1 – The Rathenraw Industrial Estate, Antrim (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025

The Committee considered SL1 - The Rathenraw Industrial Estate, Antrim (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

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

10. 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:



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- SR 2025-74 The Road Races (Spamount Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025;
- SR 2025-75 The Road Races (North West 200) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025;
- SR 2025-76 The Road Races (Maiden City Stages Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025; and
- SR 2025-77 The Parking Places on Roads (Diplomatic Vehicles) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

11. 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 Road Races (Drumhorc Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025; and
- SL1 - The Road Races (Tandragee 100) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025.

12. 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.



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13. Any Other Business

None.

14. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 7 May 2025 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 pm.

Mrs Deborah Erskine
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

7 May 2025