



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

5 February 2025

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings

- Present:**
- Mrs Deborah Erskine MLA (Chairperson)
 - Mr Danny Baker MLA
 - Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
 - Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
 - Mr Peter McReynolds MLA
- Via Video Conference:**
- Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
 - Mr Mark Durkan MLA
- Apologies:**
- Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
 - Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
- In Attendance:**
- Ms Barbara Love (Assembly Clerk)
 - Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
 - Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
 - Mr William Kinnear (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced in closed session at 10:02 am.



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1. Draft Budget 2025-2026 – Overview of the Process and Consideration of Approach

The meeting moved into public session at 10:36 am.

2. Apologies

As above.

3. Declaration of Interests

None.

4. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson reflected upon the collaborative approach between the Committee and the Department over the last 12 months and noted the recent Ministerial appointment to the Department for Infrastructure.

Agreed: To write to the outgoing Minister for Infrastructure, Mr John O'Dowd MLA, to wish him well in his new role as the Minister for Finance.

5. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 29 January 2025.



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6. Matters Arising

None.

7. Correspondence

Copy correspondence, from the Committee for Communities, to the Minister for Infrastructure to highlight the Committee's concerns that a lack of investment in wastewater infrastructure is adversely affecting public services, the economy, and the building of schools and hospitals.

Agreed: To write to the Committee for Communities requesting a copy of the response when received.

Copy of the Department for Infrastructure Investing Activity Report – January 2025.

Agreed: To write to the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) seeking detail on whether the timescales for the projects listed within the Investment Strategy Northern Ireland reports take account of other projects or strategies being progressed.

Reply from a member of the public to Committee correspondence regarding a complaint made in reference to the Northern Ireland Planning Portal.

Agreed: To write to the individual to provide more detail on the role and functions of the Committee and to reiterate that he may wish to write to the Department for Infrastructure to highlight the specific nature of these issues experienced when using the planning portal.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Report from the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee on Regulation (EU) 2024/3110 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2024 laying down harmonised rules for the marketing of construction products and repealing Regulation (EU) No 305/2011; and



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- Copy correspondence from Northern Ireland Electricity to the Minister for Finance regarding Electricity Network Safety Regulations.

Mr Peter McReynolds left the meeting at 10:42 am.

8. Spring Supplementary Estimates (SSEs) 2024-25 – Department for Infrastructure – Oral Evidence

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:43 am:

- Susan Anderson, Director of Finance, Department for Infrastructure;
- Declan McGeown, Deputy Secretary for Water and Departmental Delivery, Department for Infrastructure;
- David Porter, Director of Engineering, Department for Infrastructure; and
- Peter Rice, Interim Director of Public Transport Operations, Department for Infrastructure.

Mr Peter McReynolds re-joined the meeting at 10:44 am.

The Departmental officials provided the Committee with an update on the Spring Supplementary Estimates (SSEs) 2024-25.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

Mr Danny Baker left the meeting at 10:57 am.

The Chairperson thanked the Departmental officials for their briefing.

The evidence session ended at 11:10 am.

The departmental officials remained for the next evidence session.



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9. Draft Budget 2025-26 – Department for Infrastructure – Oral Evidence

The officials provided the Committee with its assessment of the required resources by the Department against the draft allocation in the Draft Budget 2025-2026.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the Departmental officials for their briefing.

Agreed: To write to the Department to seek further detail on consequential written agreements and for a prioritised list of planned capital projects for the 2025-26 financial year.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:39 pm.

10. Phasing Out Sales of New Petrol and Diesel Cars from 2030 and Supporting the Zero Emission Vehicles Transition - Consultation – Written Evidence

The Committee considered the Phasing out Sales of New Petrol and Diesel Cars from 2030 and supporting the Zero Emission Vehicles Transition consultation.

Agreed: To write to the Department for Infrastructure to ask how they are encouraging stakeholders to respond to the consultation to provide the perspective of those operating in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: To schedule an oral evidence session following the conclusion of the consultation to consider the summary of responses and to identify any local impacts.



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11. SR 2024-213 The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024

The Committee considered SR 2024-213 The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.

Agreed: That the Committee for Infrastructure has considered SR 2024-213 The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024 and has no objection to the rule.

12. Subordinate Legislation – SRs Not subject to Assembly Procedure

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

- SR 2025-12 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Derry/Londonderry) (Amendment No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2025; and

Agreed: To write to DfI seeking further detail of the steps taken to engage and consult in the course of the proposal for the statutory rule and to request relevant map area affected by the introduction of rule.

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, subject to any changes agreed during the meeting.

Agreed: To write to DfI seeking copies of each division's business plan and their year to date performance against their objectives.



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- Agreed:** To write to DfI seeking an update on its planned legislative programme including the associated timescales.
- Agreed:** To write to DfI to remind it of the timescales for interacting with Assembly committees and to express the Committee's disappointment of the lateness of papers for the planned evidence for the Draft Budget for 2025-26.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to the proposed date of 5 March 2025 for the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Northern Ireland Water to provide oral evidence to the Committee.

14. Any Other Business

None.

15. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 12 February 2025 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 pm.

Mrs Deborah Erskine
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure
12 February 2025