



Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

4 February 2026

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast

Present:

Mr Peter Martin MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
Mr Maoliosa McHugh MLA
Mr Justin McNulty MLA
Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

Via Video Conferencing: Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

In Attendance:

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Aoife Keating-Fitzpatrick (Senior Assistant Clerk)
Mr Philip Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Oliver Briant (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 10:04 am in public session.



1. Apologies

None.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson highlighted that, following the Minister's announcement surrounding plans to introduce graduated driver licencing and the scheduled evidence from departmental officials at agenda item 7, that no written evidence has been received from the Department to inform Members' views on the detail of what has been proposed.

Agreed: To write to the Minister to express the Committee's disappointment in respect of the lack of provision of any written evidence on the proposed introduction of graduated driving licences..

The Chairperson highlighted the ongoing the issue of potholes across Northern Ireland and sought the views of Members on this matter.

Agreed: To write to the Minister for Infrastructure to seek her assessment of:

- the number of potholes by council area across the road network in Northern Ireland;
- any changes in methods in undertaking temporary repairs;



- longevity of temporary repairs and estimated cost; and
- whether motorists are eligible to submit a claim for compensatory payments in response to damage caused by potholes than have been marked for repair but are not visible due to high levels of rainfall.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 28 January 2026.

5. Matters Arising

None.

6. Correspondence

Mr Justin McNulty MLA joined the meeting at 10:21 am, Committee for Finance correspondence regarding the December Monitoring Round and funding allocations.

Agreed: To forward all of the relevant correspondence on issues raised following the December Monitoring Round to the Committee for Finance for information.

Response from Climate NI to Committee request to provide oral evidence on the Committee Stage of the Water, Sustainable Drainage and Flood Management Bill.



Agreed: To note the correspondence and include in the Bill folder.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Invitation from the Department for Infrastructure to the Trainee Planner Programme on event in Belfast Met on the morning of 4 February 2026;
- Committee for Finance correspondence providing a copy of the Official Report for the Administrative and Financial Provisions Bill: Department for Infrastructure;
- Committee for Finance correspondence providing a copy of the Official Report for the Public Procurement: Department of Finance evidence session;
- Pivotal Report – Two Years Restored of the Northern Ireland Executive;
- Invitation from the Westminster Forum Projects to a conference on the next steps for the Nuclear Industry.

7. Graduated Driver Licencing – Department for Infrastructure –Oral Evidence

The departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:28 am.

- Dr Chris Hughes – Director of Driving, Vehicle & Road Safety Policy;
- Adrian Borland – Legislation Branch – Driving, Vehicle and Road Safety Policy Division;
- Pat Delaney – Director of Operations, Driver and Vehicle Agency.

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Mr John Stewart MLA joined the meeting at 11:04 am.

Mr John Stewart MLA left the meeting at 11:47 am.

The representatives left the meeting at 11:50 am.



The Committee suspended at 11:51 am.

The Committee recommenced at 12:03 pm with the following members present:

Mr Peter Martin MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Cathal Boylan MLA

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA

Mr Harry Harvey MLA

Mr Andrew McMurray MLA

Mr Justin McNulty MLA

Mr Andrew McMurray MLA

Via Video Conferencing: Mr Maoliosa McHugh MLA

8. Assembly Research and Information Service – Planning Decisions – Oral Briefing

The Research Officer joined the meeting at 12:03 pm.

- Ms Suzie Cave, Assembly Research Officer

A question and answer session followed.

The Research Officer left the meeting at 12:35 pm.

Agreed: To write to the Minister enclosing the RaISe paper for context and to seek a response on:

- Whether the Department intends to refine or revise the relevant planning legislation to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and draws from comparable legislative changes in other jurisdictions;



- An update on the current status on each of the five Regionally Significant Development Applications as referenced in the RaISe paper;
- How the Department for Infrastructure has engaged with the Department for the Economy to quantify the impact on the local economy as a result of these projects not being progressed as highlighted by the Northern Ireland Audit Office in its report on the Planning System published in 2022; and
- DfI's assessment of the root causes for reducing numbers of planning applications.

9. SL1 - The Quay Pass, Enniskillen (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed statutory rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 4 March 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

10. SL1 - The Drumnagoon Road, Portadown (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed statutory rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 4 March 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.



11. SL1 - The Malone Road, Belfast (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed statutory rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 4 March 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

12. SL1 - The Schools (Part-Time 20mph Speed Limit) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

Agreed: To note receipt of the SL1 and the proposed statutory rule, which will be published as part of the call for views.

Agreed: That the SL1 will be considered at the meeting on 4 March 2026.

Agreed: To indicate whether they are content that a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

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 during the meeting.



14. Any Other Business

None.

15. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 11 February 2026 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:44 pm.

Mr John Stewart
Deputy Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

11 February 2026