



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

1 July 2026

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

Present:

- Mr Peter Martin MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
- Mr Justin McNulty MLA
- Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA
- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

Via Video Conferencing:

- Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Harry Harvey MLA
- Mrs Sinéad Ennis MLA

In Attendance:

- Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)
- Ms Aoife Keating-Fitzpatrick (Senior Assistant Clerk)
- Mr Philip Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

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

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA left the meeting at 10:05 am.



1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed members that, following the meeting, he would be attending an event organised by the Wastewater Infrastructure Group on the launch of its report 'The Cost of Doing Nothing' and will be making some introductory remarks on behalf of the Committee.

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA rejoined the meeting at 10:06 am.

The Chairperson advised Members that he met informally with representatives from the Competition and Markets Authority in the context of its recent Civil Engineering Market Study. The report has 19 recommendations, most of which have direct relevance for infrastructure in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: To write to DfI to seek its response to the recommendations contained within the Competition and Markets Authority's Civil Engineering Market Study.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 24 June 2026.



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5. Matters Arising

The Chairperson informed Members that the Public Accounts Committee retains primacy on the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) report on the Planning Appeals Commission but has released the report on Flood Risk Management from primacy.

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA declared an interest as a member of the Public Accounts Committee.

Agreed: To write to DfI seeking its response to each of the recommendations contained within the NIAO Report on Flood Risk Management in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: To circulate a copy of the NIAO report for the consideration on issues Members wish to propose in terms of future committee scrutiny.

Mr John Stewart MLA joined the meeting at 10:09 am.

6. Correspondence

Correspondence from the Committee for The Executive Office enclosing written evidence on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) provision from Housing Rights NI.

Agreed: To write to DfI seeking its assessment on the impact of parking provision in relation to planning and HMOs.

Correspondence from the Committee for the Economy enclosing written evidence following its session with Tourism NI in respect of tourism inspection and categorisation.

Agreed: To write to the Department to ask what engagement there has been with the Department for Economy regarding planning guidance and tourist accommodation in the context of the consultation.

Correspondence from the Committee for the Economy seeking advance views on the Regional Balance Bill.

Agreed: To write to the Committee for the Economy indicating that the Committee has not taken a view on the Bill.



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Response from a member of the public to the Committee in respect of its role and remit of the Planning Appeals Commission.

Agreed: To write to the Department to request the criteria for referral of a planning application to the Planning Appeals Commission.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence regarding regionally significant planning applications following oral evidence from departmental officials;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to Committee correspondence regarding Climate Change and Flood Risk guidance;
- Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure regarding a planning application for a site east of Kilfennan Link Roundabout in Derry;
- Notice of the Minister for Infrastructure's intention to make an oral statement to the Assembly on 29 June 2026 on the North South Ministerial Council Inland Waterways Sectoral Meeting;
- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance enclosing a copy of the Public Service Performance Report received from the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure, Public Services Reform and Digitalisation, and Taoiseach;
- Copy of the 2024 Waterways Ireland Annual Report;
- Correspondence from the Residents Against Incineration expressing concern regarding the apparent proliferation in incineration facilities across Northern Ireland; and
- Report from Ulster University's Strategic Policy Unit on Unlocking NI's Potential: A Framework for Economic Transformation.

7. Tree Protection Bill – Oral Evidence – Bill Sponsor

The Bill sponsor joined the meeting at 10:16 am.

- Mr Peter McReynolds MLA



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The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Mr John Stewart MLA left the meeting at 10:17 am.

Mr Harry Harvey left the meeting at 11:21 am.

Members considered the available options for issuing a Call for Evidence prior to the Second Stage of the Bill in order to expedite the responses to the provisions within the Bill in the event that it stands referred to the Committee for its scrutiny.

Proposed: The Chairperson proposed that the Committee waits for the Tree Protection Bill to formally stand referred to the Committee before issuing its Call for Evidence.

The Committee divided: Ayes: 4; Noes: 3

Ayes: Peter Martin, Stephen Dunne, Sinéad Ennis, Maolíosa McHugh

Noes: Andrew McMurray, Justin McNulty, Peter McReynolds.

The motion passed.

The meeting suspended at 11:31 am.

The meeting resumed at 11:42am in public session with the following Members present:

Present: Mr Peter Martin MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA

Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA

Mr Andrew McMurray MLA

Mr Justin McNulty MLA

Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

Via Video Conferencing: Mrs Sinéad Ennis MLA



8. Display of Flags and Emblems Bill – Oral Evidence – Bill Sponsor

The Bill sponsor joined the meeting at 11:41 am.

- Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

The Bill sponsor left the meeting at 12:39 pm.

Members considered the available options for issuing a Call for Evidence prior to the Second Stage of the Bill in order to expedite the responses to the provisions within the Bill in the event that it stands referred to the Committee for its scrutiny.

Proposed: The Chairperson proposed that the Committee waits for the Display of Flags and Emblems Bill to formally stand referred to the Committee before issuing its Call for Evidence.

The Committee divided: Ayes: 4; Noes: 3

Ayes: Peter Martin, Stephen Dunne, Sinéad Ennis, Maolíosa McHugh

Noes: Andrew McMurray, Justin McNulty, Peter McReynolds.

The motion passed.

9. Harbours Bill - Consideration of Draft Bill Timetable

The Committee considered a draft timetable in respect of its scrutiny of the Harbours Bill.

Mr Peter McReynolds MLA left the meeting at 12:44 pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft timetable and the scheduling of oral evidence from the specified stakeholders in September as outlined.



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10. SL1 - The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 3) (Northern Ireland) Order 2026 - Initial Consideration

The Committee considered The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 3) (Northern Ireland) Order 2026.

Mr Peter McReynolds rejoined the meeting at 12:45 pm.

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 9 September 2026.

Agreed: That a briefing from officials is not required at this stage.

11. SL1 - The Cycle Routes (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 - Formal Consideration

The Committee considered The Cycle Routes (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 - Formal Consideration.

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

12. SL1 – The Parking Places on Roads and Waiting Restrictions (Dungannon) (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Formal Consideration

The Committee considered The Parking Places on Roads and Waiting Restrictions (Dungannon) (Northern Ireland) 2026.

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



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13. SR 2026-123 The Road Races (Eagles Rock Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered the SR 2026-123 The Road Races (Eagles Rock Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

The Committee moved into closed session at 12:48 pm.

14. Water, Sustainable Drainage and Flood Management Bill Final Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered the draft report on its scrutiny of the Water, Sustainable Drainage and Flood Management Bill.

Title Page, Contents Page and Committee Membership and Powers Page

The Committee considered the Title Page, Contents Page and Committee Membership and Powers Page as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the title, contents and Committee Membership and Powers pages for the report.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms Used

The Committee considered the List of Abbreviations and Acronyms Used as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the list of abbreviations and acronyms for the report.

Introduction

The Committee considered the Introduction as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Introduction as drafted



Recommendations

The Committee considered the Recommendations as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the recommendations as drafted.

Consideration of the Bill

The Committee considered the Consideration of the Bill as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Consideration of the Bill as drafted.

Clause by Clause Scrutiny of the Bill

The Committee considered the Clause by Clause Scrutiny as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the clause-by-clause scrutiny as drafted.

Executive Summary

The Committee considered the Executive Summary as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Executive Summary as drafted.

Links and Appendices

The Committee considered the links and the appendices as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the links and appendices for the report as drafted.

Agreed: That the report be published, laid in the Business Office and distributed to all Members.



15. Planning Review - Regionally Significant Developments and Judicial Reviews - Final Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered the draft report on the Planning Review - Regionally Significant Developments and Judicial Reviews.

Title Page, Contents Page and Committee Membership and Powers Page

The Committee considered the Title Page, Contents Page and Committee Membership and Powers Page as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Title, Contents and Committee Membership and Powers pages as drafted.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms Used

The Committee considered the list of abbreviations and acronyms as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the list of abbreviations and acronyms as drafted.

Introduction

The Committee considered the Introduction as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Introduction as drafted.

Recommendations

The Committee considered the Recommendations as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Recommendations as drafted.

Consideration of Evidence

The Committee considered the Consideration of Evidence as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Consideration of Evidence as drafted.



Executive Summary

The Committee considered the Executive Summary as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Executive Summary as drafted.

Links to Appendices

The Committee considered the Links to Appendices as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Links and Appendices as drafted.

Agreed: That the report be published, laid in the Business Office and distributed to all Members.

16. 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.

17. Any Other Business

Agreed: To delegate authority to the Chairperson and deputy Chairperson during the recess period to submit views on the releasing or withholding of information to Freedom of Information requests received.

Agreed: To write to the Minister to highlight the findings within the recent 'Turley' report into wastewater infrastructure and to seek her response to the issues contained.



18. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, 9 September 2026, at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 12:57 pm.

Mr Jonathan Buckley
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

9 September 2026