Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

11 November 2026

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

Present:	Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA (Chairperson) Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson) Mr Cathal Boylan MLA Mr Stephen Dunne MLA Mr Andrew McMurray MLA Mr Peter McReynolds MLA
Apologies:	None
Via Videoconferencing:	Mr Paul Boggs MLA Mr Harry Harvey MLA Mr Justin McNulty MLA
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) Ms Ally McNamara (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 9:32 am in public session.

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1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA declared an interest as a former councillor on Ards & North Down Borough Council.

3. Chairperson's Business

None.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 4 November 2026.

5. Matters Arising

None.

6. Correspondence

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence regarding the assessment of road defects.

Agreed: To forward the response to the original correspondent on this issue for information.

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Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence requesting information regarding the legal status of cross-border taxi and chauffeur operators when operating and providing services in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: To forward the response to the original correspondent on this issue for information.

Notification from the Department for Infrastructure of its intention to publish a consultation on proposals to modernise Northern Ireland's drug driving laws.

Agreed: To schedule oral evidence following the consultation if time permits.

Copy of the Department for Infrastructure 2025-26 Annual Report and Accounts.

Agreed: To schedule oral evidence following the consultation if time permits.

Correspondence from the Committee for the Executive Office on a call for evidence on the Age Discrimination Bill.

Agreed: To write to DfI to seek its assessment of any operational impacts in the delivery of services by the Department, Northern Ireland Water, Translink and Waterways Ireland arising from the provisions within the Bill.

Correspondence from a member of the public requesting sight of the Ministerial response to Committee correspondence regarding Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

Agreed: To forward a copy of the response to the correspondent for information.

Correspondence from Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners following its oral evidence on the Harbours Bill and to extend an invitation for an external visit.

Agreed: To schedule a visit if time permits.

Correspondence from Translink requesting a meeting with the Committee regarding its recent public consultation on its Equality Impact Assessment on potential fare and service changes.

Agreed: To invite representatives to provide oral evidence to the Committee at a suitable date in the work programme.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Department for Infrastructure notification of the publication and launch of the Transport Strategy 2035;
- Copy response from the Department for Infrastructure to the Committee for the Economy on the Regional Balance Bill; and
- Copy of the Northern Ireland Fiscal Council report on retention and the use of income.

7. SL1 - The Reservoirs (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 1) Order 20 - Formal Consideration**

The Committee considered SL1 - The Reservoirs (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 1) Order 20**.

Having noted the potential impacts arising from the proposed statutory rules for agenda items 7 to 11, the Committee considered its approach and potential areas requiring further information.

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 09:44 am:

- Mr James Kelly, Head of River Operations, Department for Infrastructure;
- Mr David Courtney, Reservoirs Operations & Engagement Team, Department for Infrastructure; and
- Mr Ryan Robinson, Head of Flooding & Drainage Policy, Department for Infrastructure.

Agreed: To write to privately owned reservoir owners to highlight the Committee's consideration of proposed legislation to further implement The Reservoirs (Northern Ireland) Act 2015 seeking their views on:

- Their awareness of the proposed commencement of the legislation and potential impacts this may have on their reservoirs; and
- To establish what steps they have or intend to take in response to the requirements set out in the proposed legislation to achieve compliance.

Agreed: To defer a decision on the proposal for the statutory rule to a later date.

8. SL1 - The Reservoirs (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 1) Order 20** - Formal Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 - The Reservoirs (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 1) Order 20**.

Agreed: To defer a decision on the proposal for the statutory rule to a later date.

9. SL1 - The Reservoirs (Visits by Supervising Engineers, Stop Notices and Grants) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 20** Formal Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 - The Reservoirs (Visits by Supervising Engineers, Stop Notices and Grants) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 20**.

Agreed: To defer a decision on the proposal for the statutory rule to a later date.

10. SL1 - The Reservoirs (Commissioning of Panel Engineers) Order (Northern Ireland) 20** - Formal Consideration

The Committee considered The Reservoirs (Commissioning of Panel Engineers) Order (Northern Ireland) 20**.

Agreed: To defer a decision on the proposal for the statutory rule to a later date.

11. SL1 - The Reservoirs (Northern Ireland) Regulations 20** - Formal Consideration

The Committee considered The Reservoirs (Northern Ireland) Regulations 20**.

Agreed: To defer a decision on the proposal for the statutory rule to a later date.

12. SL1 - The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 5) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 - Formal Consideration

The Committee considered The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 5) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

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

13. SL1 - The Motor Vehicle (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 - Formal Consideration

The Committee considered The Motor Vehicle (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

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

14. SR 2026-184 The Loading Bay and Parking Place (Church Street, Antrim) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered SR 2026-184 The Loading Bay and Parking Place (Church Street, Antrim) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee noted the Statutory Rule.

15. Tree Protection Bill - The Northern Ireland Local Government Association - Oral Evidence

The following representatives joined the meeting 10:06 am.

- Alderman Hazel Legge, President, Northern Ireland Local Government Association;
- Councillor Matt Garrett, Vice-President, Northern Ireland Local Government Association;
- Alison Allen, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Local Government Association; and

- Ann McCullough, Head of Planning and Building Control at Ards and North Down Borough Council

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

Mr Cathal Boylan MLA joined the meeting at 10:16 am.

The meeting was suspended at 10:46 am.

The Committee resumed at 11:15 am with the following members present:

Present:	Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA (Chairperson)
	Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
	Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
	Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
	Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
	Mr Peter McReynolds MLA
Via Videoconferencing:	Mr Paul Boggs MLA
	Mr Justin McNulty MLA

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 17.

17. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: To request written evidence from the Department on the review of Class C taxi licensing, in place of the oral session scheduled for 25 November.

Agreed: To proceed with the evidence sessions as set out in the draft Forward Work Programme and to reflect any decisions taken today.

The Committee agreed to return to agenda item number 15.

15. Tree Protection Bill - The Northern Ireland Local Government Association - Oral Evidence

The representatives re-joined the meeting 11:16 am.

The question and answer session continued.

Agreed: To write to NILGA enclosing the RaISe research papers in respect of the Bill and to invite them to respond any issues not addressed in its written or oral evidence**.**

Agreed: To write to the Bill sponsor, Mr Peter McReynolds MLA to provide a response to NILGA's written and oral evidence.

Agreed: To write to the Department for Infrastructure to enclosing NILGA's written evidence for a response to the issues contained.

The representatives left the meeting at 11:39 am.

The meeting moved into closed session at 11:40 am.

16. Harbours Bill – Initial Deliberations

Dr Kathryn Aiken, Assembly Clerk joined the meeting at 11:40 am.

Mr John Strewart MLA joined the meeting at 11:41 am.

The Committee considered the content of the provisions in the Bill and issues raised in the course of the oral and written evidence.

Having considered the content of the issues raised and procedural advice the Committee agreed to receive oral evidence from departmental officials.

The meeting moved into public session at 11:53 am.

The following departmental officials joined the meeting 11:53 am.

- Sian Kerr, Director of Transport Planning and Policy, Department for Infrastructure;

- Adele Campbell, Head of Gateways Bill Team, Department for Infrastructure; and
- Royanne Kincaid, Gateways Bill Team, Department for Infrastructure.

A question and answer session followed.

The departmental officials left the meeting at 11:56 am.

The moved into closed session at 11:57 am.

The Committee considered the issues raised in the course of its initial deliberations and oral evidence.

Agreed: To write to the Department for Infrastructure to highlight the discrepancy in respect of the Delegated Powers Memorandum surrounding Clause 4 of the Bill and to request for an updated version to be provided.

The Committee moved into public session at 12:00 pm.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 18.

18. Any Other Business

Agreed: That the Clerk would liaise with the Ulster Farmers Union regarding the scheduling of oral evidence on the Tree Protection Bill.

19. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, 17 November 2026 at 2:00 pm in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 12:03 pm.

Mr Jonathan Buckley
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

18 November 2026