Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

14 October 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
Apologies:	None
Via Videoconferencing:	Mr Paul Boggs MLA Mr Harry Harvey MLA Mr Justin McNulty MLA Mr Peter McReynolds 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 10:00 am in public session.

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1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Chairperson's Business

None.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 7 October 2026.

5. Matters Arising

The Chairperson informed Members that, following its decision last week to consider a proposal for a Statutory Rule on The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Newtownabbey) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 on 28 October, this would be considered following the recess period at the Committee's meeting on 4 November 2026.

Agreed: That the proposal for the Statutory Rule will be formally considered on 4 November 2026.

Agreed: To write to the Bill Sponsor, Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA, enclosing the RaISe research on the Display of Flags and Emblems Bill for a response to the issues contained.

Agreed: To write to the Department for Infrastructure enclosing the RaISe research for the Display of Flags and Emblems Bill seeking a response to the issues contained.

6. Correspondence

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing the current status of work undertaken by The Department surrounding concerns raised by the LCD Academy in relation to the trailer towing restrictions.

Agreed: To forward the response to LCD Academy for information.

Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure providing a briefing paper on the Road Noise Action Plan (RNAP) – Round 4.

Agreed: To schedule oral evidence subject to sufficient capacity in the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance providing a Department of Finance response on actions taken to address issues relating to Claims Management Companies Regulation.

Agreed: That the Clerk should liaise with the Clerk to the Committee for Justice.

Correspondence from Northern Ireland Water providing a response to correspondence in relation to flooding concerns raised by the Newcastle Regional Community Resilience Group.

Agreed: To forward the response to the Newcastle Regional Community Resilience Group for information.

Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission providing a response to the Display of Flags and Emblems Bill.

Agreed: To publish on the Committee webpage and include in the Bill folder.

Correspondence from Ards & North Down Borough Council providing a response to the Tree Protection Bill.

Agreed: To publish on the Committee webpage and include in the Bill folder.

Correspondence from Councillor Ruth Brooks providing evidence in relation to the ongoing concerns raised surrounding the Accessibility Standards for Temporary Street Works.

Agreed: To forward a previous response from the Minister for Infrastructure to Councillor Brooks for information.

Correspondence from Platinum Limousines highlighting concerns about illegal taxis and limousine operators operating in Northern Ireland.

Mr Cathal Boylan MLA joined the meeting at 10:04 am.

Agreed: To write to the Department to seek detail on the legal status of cross border taxi operators operating in Northern Ireland.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure on Departments on public sector transformation, strategic investment planning, infrastructure delivery, and the planning system following Committee correspondence on a publication from Ulster University entitled “unlocking NI’s potential.”
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing the timeline estimate for publication the terms of reference for the Northern Ireland Water forensic governance audit;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing the current and forecasted costs associated with the Bi-lingual traffic signs pilot scheme;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing the minutes from the first meeting of the Active Travel Stakeholder Engagement Forum held on 20 April 2026;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing a report detailing potential liability in the event of an accident involving approved equipment under the Cross Pavement Solution Pilot;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing a timeline provided for progressing the amendments to the existing byelaws in relation to the Strangford Lough ferry service;

- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing details on the proposals as part of the Safer Journeys to School Programme and the anticipated timeline for implementation;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure providing an update on expenditure incurred in respect to the A5 project including consultancy, contractors, land vesting, legal costs, and any associated compensation payments to landowners;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to issues raised in the paper from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council entitled “Rural Affairs Research;
- Notification from the Minister for Infrastructure to make an oral statement to the relating to the A5 Western Transport Corridor;
- Notification from the Minister for Infrastructure to make a written statement in relation to on the terms of reference for the Northern Ireland Water forensic governance audit;
- Departmental correspondence providing an update on phase 2 of the Community Transport Review;
- Correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure providing notification of a public consultation on proposed changes to the Safety of Street Works: A code of practise;
- Correspondence from the Committee for Communities on a call for evidence on the Housing (Amendment) Bill;
- Correspondence from the Speaker’s Office providing a notice of a public petition entitled ‘Bus Service Provision in Bleary’;
- Copy of the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee Annual Report 2026;
- Correspondence from a member of the public proposing an affordable public transport discount scheme for those aged 24 and over;
- Correspondence from LCD Academy regarding a complaint against the Driver and Vehicle Agency;

- Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission providing a response to the Display of Flags and Emblems Bill; and
- Correspondence from AutoDrive regarding a complaint about the availability of MOT appointments.

7. SL1 – The Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Formal Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: To write to DfI to seek a detailed explanation of the decision to proceed with the proposal for a statutory rule given that 82% of respondent were not supportive.

8. SL1 – The Loading Bay and Parking Place (Church Street, Antrim) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Formal Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Loading Bay and Parking Place (Church Street, Antrim) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

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

9. SL1 – The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 5) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 5) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

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

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 11 November 2026.

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

10. SL1 – The Reservoirs (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 1) Order (Northern Ireland) 20** - Initial Consideration

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

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 11 November 2026.

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

11. SL1 – The Reservoirs (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 20** - Initial Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Reservoirs (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 20**.

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 11 November 2026.

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

Agreed: To issue a press release to signpost individuals and organisations to the Committee's call for views.

Agreed: To write to DfI to seek an assurance on the consultation for a general grant scheme will include discretion to permit:

- DfI to pay costs in respect of repairs to reservoirs where owners cannot afford to pay;

- Dfl to pay costs to repairs reservoirs that are community assets; and

- Dfl's cost recovery when required to intervene to undertake repairs a privately owned reservoir.

Agreed: To write to the Ulster Farmers Union to seek its assessment of the impact upon landowners with a reservoir on their land.

Agreed: To write to the Ulster Angling Federation to seek its assessment of the impact upon landowners with a reservoir on land owned or used by its members.

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

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

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 11 November 2026.

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

13. SL1 – The Reservoirs (Commissioning of Panel Engineers) Order (Northern Ireland) 20** - Initial Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Reservoirs (Commissioning of Panel Engineers) Order (Northern Ireland) 20**.

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 11 November 2026.

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

14. SL1 – The Reservoirs (Northern Ireland) Regulations 20** - Initial Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Reservoirs (Northern Ireland) Regulations 20**.

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 11 November 2026.

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

15. SR 2026-166 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 4) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered SR 2026-166 The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 4) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

16. SR 2026-172 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Derry/Londonderry) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered SR 2026-172 The Parking and Waiting Restrictions (Derry/Londonderry) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

17. SR 2026-173 The Parking Places on Roads (Clogher) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered and noted SR 2026-173 The Parking Places on Roads (Clogher) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

18. SR 2026-174 The Parking Places on Roads, Loading Bay and Waiting Restrictions (Newcastle) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered and noted SR 2026-174 The Parking Places on Roads, Loading Bay and Waiting Restrictions (Newcastle) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

19. SR 2026-175 The Roads (Speed Limit) (No. 3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered and noted SR 2026-175 The Roads (Speed Limit) (No. 3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

20. SR 2026-176 The Parking Places on Roads and Waiting Restrictions (Cookstown) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered and noted SR 2026-176 The Parking Places on Roads and Waiting Restrictions (Cookstown) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the Statutory Rule.

The Committee moved into closed session at 10:23 am.

21. The Harbours Bill - Assembly Legal Services - Oral Briefing

The legal advisor joined the meeting 10:24 am.

- Ms Julie Byers, Legal Advisor, Northern Ireland Assembly Legal Services.

A question and answer session followed.

The legal advisor left the meeting at 11:03 am.

The Committee moved into public session at 11:04 am.

Following the legal advice, Members discussed the content and provisions of the Harbours Bill that is currently being considered by the Committee.

Members noted and discussed the range of opinions and concerns raised by local groups regarding environmental issues and the potential implications of the proposed changes to the Minister's existing powers should the Bill be enacted.

Having given detailed consideration to the legal advice received, the Committee agreed that the issues highlighted do not fall within the provisions of the Harbours Bill.

Agreed: To issue a press release to highlight the Committee's position in relation to the legislation.

22. Harbours Bill – Coleraine & Warrenpoint Harbour Authorities – Oral Evidence

The following representatives joined the meeting 11:03 am.

- Mr Richard Connor, Vice Chair, Coleraine Harbour;
- Mr Bobby Farren, Head of Corporate Engagement, Coleraine Harbour;
- Dr Gerard O'Hare, Chairperson, Warrenpoint Harbour;
- Mr David Holmes, Chief Executive, Warrenpoint Harbour; and
- Mr Kieran Grant, Finance Director, Warrenpoint Harbour.

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:24 pm.

Agreed: To write to the Department enclosing the response to the Committee's 'Call for Evidence' and to request a response to the amendments suggested by Coleraine Harbour.

The meeting suspended at 12:26 pm.

The meeting resumed at 12:32 pm 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
Via Videoconferencing:	Mr Paul Boggs MLA
	Mr Justin McNulty MLA
	Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

23. Harbours Bill – The Office for National Statistics – Oral Evidence

The following representatives joined the meeting 12:32 pm.

- Tom Davies, Deputy Director for Public Services Division;
- Suzi Robertson, Head of Parliamentary and Public Affairs; and

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:50 pm.

Agreed: To write to the Office for National Statistics to seek further detail on the available guidance which sets out the process for reclassification and the process an indicative view of the policy proposal.

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24. 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.

25. Any Other Business

Mr Andrew McMurray MLA referenced correspondence he had received in respect of sewer flooding and indicated that he will forward it to Committee staff for the Committee's future consideration.

26. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, 20 October 2026 at 2:00 pm in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 12:53 pm.

Mr Jonathan Buckley
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

21 October 2026