Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure

Minutes of Proceedings

21 October 2026

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

Present:
Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA (Chairperson)
Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Paul Boggs MLA
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr Andrew McMurray MLA
Mr Peter McReynolds MLA

Apologies: None

Via Video-Conferencing: 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 10:02 am in public session.

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, 14 October 2026.

5. Matters Arising

None.

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA joined the meeting at 10:04 am.

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6. Correspondence

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence on work being taken forward by the Department following her oral evidence session.

Agreed: To write to the Department for a timescale for the road maintenance prioritisation framework.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence on the findings of the inquest into the death of Noah Donohoe and the associated inspection regime for storm drains.

Agreed: To write to the Department to establish whether responsibility for storm drain rests with the Department and if so, to provide the details of its inspection regime and remedial costs incurred.

Mr Peter McReynolds MLA joined the meeting at 10:06 am.

Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence seeking a response on the issues raised in "The Prevalence and Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Northern Ireland" report.

Agreed: To forward the response to the Committee for the Executive Office for information.

Department for Infrastructure correspondence providing notification of the launch of a public consultation on proposals to update The Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: To schedule oral evidence on conclusion of the consultation if time permits.

Department for Infrastructure correspondence providing the Committee with an update on the 2026 Speed Limit Review.

Agreed: To write to the Department for a timescale for the next stage of the Speed Limit Review.

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance providing an update from the Department of Finance providing further details in relation to the procurement of a replacement contract for the supply of agency staff.

Agreed: To write to the Department seeking details of business areas in which agency staff are employed and plans to recruit permanent staff in these areas.

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance requesting confirmation of whether the Committee has received written or oral briefing on budgets from your respective departments within the last 4 to 6 weeks.

Agreed: To forward the relevant documents and details to the Committee for Finance.

Correspondence from Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council providing a response to the call for evidence on the Tree Protection Bill.

Agreed: To publish on the Committee webpage and add to the Bill folder.

Correspondence from the Police Service for Northern Ireland requesting to present written evidence to the Committee in respect of the Display of Flags and Emblems Bill.

Agreed: To write to the PSNI to highlight that, in noting its correspondence, the Committee considers that oral evidence provides a more effective opportunity for it to scrutinise operational aspects of the provisions within the Bill, and to invite the PSNI to give oral evidence on 17 November.

Correspondence from a member of the public in respect of the Committee's scrutiny of the Harbours Bill.

Agreed: To add to the Bill folder.

Correspondence from a member of the public enclosing an Independent River Lagan case study for information.

Agreed: To forward the case study to the Department for its view on the approach suggested.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence on the Armed Forces Covenant and Guidance on Climate Change and Flood Risk;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence highlighting the issues raised in correspondence from the Newcastle Regional Community Resilience Group;
- Response from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Committee's correspondence requesting a copy of the Department's response to a member of the public regarding the alleged change of use for waste storage at Warrenpoint Harbour;
- Department for Infrastructure correspondence providing notification of the extension of the public consultation period by 4 weeks on its proposals in relation to the Review of the Classes and Thresholds in the Schedule to the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015;
- Department for Infrastructure correspondence providing a copy of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company 2025-2026 Annual Report and Accounts;
- Department for Infrastructure correspondence regarding the departmental amendments to the Water, Sustainable Drainage and Flood Management Bill;
- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance providing an update on Departmental 5 year plans (including that of DoF) and their current relationship to ongoing budgetary matters;
- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance providing Outturn and Forecast Outturn Oral Briefing - variances and reprofiling;
- Correspondence from the House of Lords in relation to conditions for testing compliance with brake particle emission limits and setting out durability multipliers for gaseous pollutants of heavy-duty vehicles of categories M3, N2 and N3;
- Correspondence from a member in respect of roadworks at Ballymiscaw/Whinney Hill; and

- Invitation from the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council to provide oral evidence on the Display of Flags and Emblems Bill.

7. SL1 – The Exchange Street, Belfast (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Exchange Street, 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 18 November 2026.

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

8. SL1 – The Craighill Park, Ballyclare (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 – The Craighill Park, Ballyclare (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 18 November 2026.

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

Mr John Stewart MLA joined the meeting at 10:11 am.

9. SL1 - The U7402 Old Bog Road, Moy (Abandonment and Stopping-Up) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 – Initial Consideration

The Committee considered SL1 - The U7402 Old Bog Road, Moy (Abandonment and Stopping-Up) 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 18 November 2026.

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

10. SR 2026-168 The Circular Road, Newtownards (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

The Committee considered SR 2026-168 The Circular Road, Newtownards (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Agreed: That the Committee for Infrastructure has considered SR 2026-168 The Circular Road, Newtownards (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026, and has no objection to the rule.

11. Harbours Bill – Belfast and Foyle Harbour Authorities – Oral Evidence

The following representatives joined the meeting 10:10 am.

- Dr Theresa Donaldson, Chairperson, Belfast Harbour Commissioners;
- Joe O'Neill, Chief Executive Officer, Belfast Harbour;
- Ryan McCready, Chairman, Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners; and
- Ian Luney, Chief Executive, Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners.

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

The representatives left the meeting at 11:31 am.

The meeting suspended at 11:31 am.

The meeting resumed at 11:40 am with the following members present:

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

Mr Peter Mc Reynolds left the meeting at 11:41 am.

Agreed: To write to the Department to establish when it anticipates the proposals for delegated legislation for revised Harbour Orders could be brought forward in respect of the Bill.

Agreed: To schedule further oral evidence session from the Department on 4 November 2026.

Agreed: To issue the agreed press release in relation to the Bill.

Mr Peter McReynolds re-joined the meeting at 11:43 am.

12. Display of Flags and Emblems Bill – Department for Infrastructure – Oral Evidence

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting 11:44 am.

- Mark McPeak - Acting Director, Road Asset Management (RAM), TRAM Group, Department for Infrastructure;

- Graeme Belshaw - Organisation Design and Improvement, TRAM Group, Department for Infrastructure; and
- John Gamble - Transport Policy, TRAM Group, Department for Infrastructure

The Committee agreed that the evidence is recorded by Hansard.

A question and answer session followed.

The departmental officials left the meeting at 1:19 pm.

The Chairperson highlighted that, due to the time constraints of the meeting, that departmental officials will be scheduled to provide further oral evidence at a later date, and Members who did not get an opportunity to question officials will be selected first during the next session.

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.

Agreed: To write to Royal Town Planning Institute to provide oral evidence on 4 November 2026 on the Tree Protection Bill.

Agreed: To commence its meeting on 11 November at 9:30 am to allow Members the opportunity to attend the Act of Remembrance ion Parliament Buildings.

14. Any Other Business

None.

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15. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, 4 November 2026 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 1:19 pm.

Mr Jonathan Buckley
Chairperson, Committee for Infrastructure

4 November 2026