



Northern Ireland
Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY 15TH APRIL 2015
ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present:

Mr Trevor Clarke MLA (Chairperson)
Mr John Dallat MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Mr Chris Lyttle MLA
Mr David McNarry MLA
Mr Stephen Moutray MLA
Mr Cathal Ó hOisín MLA

In attendance:

Mrs Stella McArdle (Clerk to the Committee)
Mr Gavin Ervine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Ms Christine Dodson (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Barry McLernon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

Mr Sean Lynch MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Joe Byrne MLA
Mr Ross Hussey MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA

10:27am The meeting commenced in open session

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairperson's Business

10:28am *Mr Moutray joined the meeting*

The Chairperson informed Members that he had been contacted by a number of Community Transport Groups in relation to cuts in the 2015/16 budget.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Community Transport Network for NI to invite them to brief the Committee on this issue at next week's meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to invite them to brief the Committee on this issue at next week's meeting.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting of 25th March 2015.

4. Correspondence

Members noted the correspondence received.

Agreed: The Committee noted holding correspondence from the Department for Regional Development regarding Committee queries on Translink fare increases.

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Regional Development regarding Committee queries on Belfast Public Hire Taxi ranks.

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Regional Development regarding non-executive member appointments to Warrenpoint and Londonderry Harbour Commissioners.

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Regional Development regarding an update on EU funding.

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Regional Development regarding the report on the public consultation on the Bicycle Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Regional Development regarding an extension to Millennium Way, Lurgan.

- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Regional Development inviting NI Assembly Secretariat staff to view York Street Interchange proposals.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted a copy of the Northern Ireland Audit Office guidance on Conflicts of Interest.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from the Consumer Council regarding Translink efficiency.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from the Consumer Council regarding Committee queries on rail tickets.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from Unite the Union to the Minister regarding Translink and agreed to forward to the Department for comment.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from Paschal Lynch regarding the York Street Interchange and agreed to write to the Department to request a further briefing on this issue as soon as possible and before the public inquiry concludes.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted the North West Region Cross Border Group March Newsletter.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence relating to the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland – Investing Activity Report for March 2015.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister regarding a meeting with the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and agreed to write to the Department to request this briefing as soon as possible. Members also agreed to write to the Department to ask for information on how Ministerial duties are being discharged throughout the General Election campaign, especially with the Special Advisor currently unable to carry out Departmental work.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Regional Development regarding protocols for the opening or announcement of funding for publicly funded projects attended by the Minister.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding sick absence in the Northern Ireland Public Sector.

5. Translink Briefing: Public Consultation on Ulsterbus Services

10:40am The following officials joined the meeting

Ciaran Rogan – Marketing Executive, Translink

Philip O’Neill – Chief Operating Officer, Translink

The officials presented to the Committee in respect of the work of the above. Following the presentation, Members put questions.

11:18am Mr McNarry left the meeting

11:26am Mr McNarry re-joined the meeting

11:32am Mr Ó hOisín left the meeting

11:35am Mr Ó hOisín re-joined the meeting

11:44am Mr Moutray left the meeting

11:48am The officials left the meeting

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Translink to request a further briefing when the public consultation outcome report is completed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Translink to request a further briefing on the Voluntary Exit Scheme and the future of apprenticeships in Translink.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Translink to seek clarification on the timescale of the procurement process for the Coleraine to Londonderry Rail Track and ask where the information on a delay in procurement, as reported by the BBC on 13th April 2015, originated from.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Translink to seek clarification on the start and finish dates for the public consultation exercises.

6. NI Water Briefing: Non-Domestic Charging Scheme

11:49am The following officials joined the meeting

Ronan Larkin – Director of Finance and Regulation, NI Water

Michael Mulholland – Regulatory Finance Manager, NI Water

The officials presented to the Committee in respect of the work of the above. Following the presentation, Members put questions.

11:50am Mr Easton joined the meeting

12:33pm The officials left the meeting

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to NI Water to seek clarification on the water usage by farms in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to NI Water to request financial information in relation to slide 2 of the presentation.

7. Subordinate Legislation not Subject to Assembly Procedure

Members noted:

- The Cycle Routes (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015
- The Parking And Waiting Restrictions (Antrim) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015
- The Road Races (Cairncastle Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

12:34pm Mr McNarry left the meeting

8. SL1: The White Lodge Court, Greenisland (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Agreed: That the Committee for Regional Development is content with the merits of the policy proposal.

9. SR 2015/134: The A54 Ballymacombs Road, Portglenone (Abandonment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Agreed: That the Committee for Regional Development is content with the merits of the policy proposal.

10. Any Other Business

Mr Dallat raised the issue of the timing of the procurement process for the Coleraine to Londonderry Rail Track.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward an extract of the official report from the Committee meeting of 25th March 2015 to Translink for clarification on the timing of the procurement process.

Mr Lyttle raised the issue of forthcoming Committee meetings during the General Election campaign.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that no meeting would take place on 6th May 2015 and that the Committee Office would notify Members of this.

11. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will be Wednesday 22nd April 2015 at 10:00am in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

12:37pm *The meeting was adjourned*

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Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Regional Development
22/04/15