

## **Minutes of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Imtac Meeting**

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018, The Mount, Belfast

**Present:** G. Max O'Brien (Chairperson)

Paul McCloskey, Jean Dunlop, Vivien Blakely, David McDonald, Sheelagh McRandal, Dave Morton, Anne Straghan, Nuala Crilly, Sam Bell, Alison Lockhart, Diane Marks.

**Observers:** Ciarán Crilly (DfI), Terry Butler (Translink), Jenny Robinson (Consumer Council), Naomi Roberts (Equality Commission), Orla McCann (Disability Action), Francis Hughes (Age Sector Platform).

**In Attendance:** David Cowan (Translink)

**Secretariat:** Michael Lorimer

Prior to the start of the meeting Max asked members to observe a moments silence as a mark of respect for former Imtac member Jim Nash who lost his wife, Daphine, in December.

### **1. Introductions and apologies**

- 1.1 Apologies were given and accepted from Moira Heap, Brian Murray, Bert Bailie, Joe Kenny, Andy Boal and Ann Gamble.
- 1.2 Max updated the Committee on the outcome of the recent recruitment process and welcomed Nuala, Anne and Alison to their first meeting. Max reminded members of the importance of claiming expenses. He also updated members on the positive progress in securing a communication system for Imtac meetings.

### **2. Observers updates**

- 2.1 David Cowan briefed members about his role within Translink and the importance of links between the Translink Executive Group and Imtac. He briefed members on the redevelopment of the Translink website and asked for Imtac's input. Members welcomed the offer of engagement.

David left the meeting.

- 2.2 Naomi reported to members on a recent meeting between IMNI and the Bernie Rooney from the Department for Communities. Naomi updated members on the recent UNCRPD event at Stormont. Following the event the Equality Commission is considering establishing an advisory group of disabled people.
- 2.3 Ciaran explained to members the difficulties in taking forward the new Accessible Transport Strategy in the absence of a Minister. However the Department intends to progress many of the actions contained in the draft Strategy through the Programme for Government framework. Ciaran advised that many of the accessibility issues raised during the consultation are in the process of being addressed by Translink and the Department such as improved accessibility and AV on buses and plans for Changing Places facilities in transport hubs in Belfast, Derry and Portrush as well as improved information provision.
- 2.4 Jenny updated members on the recent site visit to the City of Derry Airport. She also highlighted this years Consumer Parliament which is being held in Derry on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March.
- 2.5 Orla highlighted to members research into transport proposed as part of the Drill project. The research will be UK wide. She updated members on the current Independent Review of the assessment process for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Orla informed members that the Disability Exhibition will take place again this year at the Eikon Centre near Lisburn. Members asked that

accessible transport be provided to and from the venue and that this be well promoted in advance of the event.

- 2.6 Francis updated members on the local Pensioner Parliament events, planned for each council area.

### **3. Chairperson and other updates**

- 3.1 Max briefed members on the meetings held since the last Imtac meeting including one with the Permanent Secretary from the Department for Infrastructure, Peter May, and Bernie Rooney from the Department for Communities. Max reminded members about the Imtac public meeting in Coleraine on the 20<sup>th</sup> March and the members meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> March.

The meeting broke for lunch.

- 3.2 Members discussed the recent engagement with Translink on future bus procurement. It was agreed a paper should be developed to highlight key issues for members.

**Action: Michael to draft and circulate the paper for comment.**

- 3.3 Michael updated members on developments on the North West Transport Hub and concerns expressed by Into the West Group on the proposed design. Discussions highlighted potential concerns relating to access if the alternative proposals from Into the West are implemented. It was agreed that a paper be developed highlighting the key access issues on the Hub design for Imtac and that the Committee meet with Into the West to discuss points raised.

**Action: Michael to draft a paper and circulate for comment and to work with Nuala to arrange a meeting with Into the West.**

- 3.4 Michael briefed members on the process to date on the design of a poster to promote wheelchair user priority on Translink buses. Members were asked to agree a design and wording for the

poster. After lengthy discussion members agreed the current design to include the following wording: “This is the wheelchair user’s space. Please move when a wheelchair user gets on the bus.”

**Action: Terry to progress finalising the poster design.**

- 3.5 Michael updated members on developments relating to pavement café licensing, Glider/BRT including the opportunity to view the vehicle on 10<sup>th</sup> May, the Belfast Transport Hub, the difficulties relating to wheelchair accessible taxis, current public realm schemes, the latest unsuccessful attempt to bring a prosecution for Blue Badge fraud and the unsuccessful application to the Big Lottery to develop a website. Members expressed frustration about the attitude of the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) to Blue Badge Fraud and welcomed the proposal to seek a meeting along with the Department and the Consumer Council with the Equality Commission to discuss the issue on wheelchair accessible taxis.

**Action: Michael to explore options on how to bring to the PPS Imtac’s concerns about its decision not to prosecute for Blue Badge fraud and to involve members in the meeting with the Equality Commission.**

- 3.5 Michael updated members on the issues raised at the last meeting on concessionary fares on Airporter and the accessibility of public transport services provided by private operators. The Department has indicated that Airporter has chosen not to take part in the Concessionary Fares Scheme. The Department is still looking at the issue of accessibility requirements for private operators and will respond to the Committees queries in due course.

#### **4. Current papers**

- 4.1 Members discussed the draft paper about cycling. It was felt the section on education need to be strengthened.

**Action: Members to provide further comments in the next 7-10 days.**

- 4.2 Michael briefed members on the background to the paper looking at training for staff involved in the Glider project. After discussion members agreed with the approach suggested in the paper.  
**Action: Members to provide further comments in the next 7-10 days. Michael to develop a project brief and undertake further discussions with Translink.**

## **5. Current consultations**

- 5.1 Michael briefed members on the current consultation from the Department for Transport (DfT) looking at options to extend current eligibility to the Blue Badge Scheme. Michael expressed concerns about the lack of assessment on the impact of the proposals on the Scheme. Members agreed with this position and the thrust of the draft response.  
**Action: Members to provide comments before the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2018.**

## **6. Minutes of the last meeting**

- 6.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

## **7. Any other business**

- 7.1 Jean provided members with an update on issues arising from the Equality Forum of Causeway Coast and Glens Council.  
**Action: Jean to provide further information on the councils draft parking strategy.**

## **8. Date of future meetings**

- 8.1 **Members are to note the change in date for the next lmtac meeting. The meeting will now be held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at the Mount starting at 12.30pm.**