

Minutes of the 143rd Imtac Meeting

Date and time: 7th December 2022 at 12pm

Place: Hybrid meeting held at the Mount Business & Conference Centre, Belfast and via ZOOM.

Present: Bert Bailie [BB] (Chairperson), Aaron McKane [AMc], Terry McCorry [TMc], Andy Boal [ABo], Dave Morton [DMo] Jackson Minford [JM], June Best [JB], Eileen Drumm [ED], Alison Lockhart [AL], Jean Dunlop [JD], Brian Murray [BM].

Observers: Sean Coulter [SC] (Department for Infrastructure), Michelle Kelly [MK] (Consumer Council), Rosanna Jack [RJ] (Translink) Andrea Brown [ABr] (Disability Action).

.Secretariat: Michael Lorimer [ML]

In attendance: Kay Inckle [KI], Kate Ball [KB] (Wheels for Wellbeing), Anne Madden [AM] (Sustrans NI)

Apologies: Dermot Devlin [DD], Sam Bell [SB], Sean Murphy [SM], Christine McClements [CMc], Vivien Blakely [VB], Brian Drury [BD] (Equality Commission).

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 BB welcomed everyone and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

2. Discussion topic: How do we make cycling an option for disabled people?

2.1 BB welcomed Kay Inckle [KI] and Kate Ball [KB] to the meeting. KI made a presentation outlining the work of Wheels for Wellbeing, the barriers to cycling experienced by disabled people and the policy and other changes required to make cycling inclusive.

2.2 Following the presentation a lively question and answer session took places. Issues raised included potential options for

addressing the cost of cycles including potential use of Motability, the underuse of accessible cycles provided by local councils in Northern Ireland, the reliance on volunteers and issues travelling on public transport as a disabled cyclist.

- 2.3 In summing up ML highlighted the need to run a similar session for policy makers and others including Councils to ensure that investment in cycling benefits everyone.

Action 1: It was agreed that the issue of a cycling workshop should be discussed in the planned meeting with the new DfI policy lead on walking and cycling.

- 2.4 BB thanked KI and KB for their presentation and contribution to the meeting.

KI, KB and BM left the meeting.

3. Chairperson's updates

- 3.1 BB updated members about the retirement of Terry Butler. He proposed that he represent the Committee at the Translink event to mark Terry's retirement and present a thank you card on members behalf. It was agreed to invite Terry to a future Imtac meeting to thank him formally for his contribution.

- 3.2 BB briefed members about meetings with Chris Conway, Colin Woods (Head of DfI Roads) and Andrea Brown. He also highlighted a meeting with the Department to discuss the development of Transport Plans and the latest A4N meeting hosted by DPTAC in October.

Action 2: ML to contact Tony Rafferty to arrange a follow up meeting to discuss Transport Plans

- 3.3 BB outlined the outcome of a major reorganisation within the Department. He welcomed SC back to his role with the Sponsor Team and asked that the minutes record his thanks to Jackie Robinson and Attracta Tremers both of whom have taken up new roles elsewhere in the Department.

3.4 JB highlighted several meetings and events she had attended including the Equality Commission conference on strengthening rights legislation, the latest Disabled People's Parliament event at Stormont and an event hosted by Belfast City Council to highlight barriers to work and employment for disabled people. JB also highlighted a meeting of the All Party Working Group on Visual Impairment and work being undertaken by RNIB on rural transport.

4. Observer updates

4.1 SC explained he has only recently re-joined the Sponsor Unit. He suggested that the Committee ask for updates on key issues in advance for future updates. Members asked for an update on pavement parking issues.

Action 3. SC to obtain an update on pavement parking issues and circulate through ML.

4.2 ML gave members an overview of recent Department for Transport Workshops on the review of PSVAR. The aim is to agree the focus of a Call for Evidence on the review with issues including extending the existing scope of PSVAR, changing the current schedules of PSVAR and how PSVAR should respond to the move to zero emission vehicles.

4.3 ABr updated members on the work of Disability Action highlighting the impact of the cost of living crisis as well as the impact of ongoing funding uncertainties. ABr also highlighted the innovative online event held to mark International Day of People with Disabilities.

4.5 RJ highlighted a number of current issues work around the accreditation of Changing Places Toilets, the launch of a new Disability Workplace Scheme, a planned meeting of the Bus Fleet Design Working Group and progress with the provision of Disability Equality Training for the Translink Senior Leadership Team.

Members asked for further details about the roles and how the workplace scheme will be delivered.

- 4.6 MK updated members about access audits at City of Derry Airport and Stena. She thanked Christine and Dermot for their support in securing a Changing Places Toilet at City of Derry and Aaron and Jackson for participating in the Stena visit. MK also briefed members in a recent visit to Belfast City Airport, plans to update travel advice booklets and to remind operators of their obligations around people travelling with assistance dogs
- 4.7 ML highlighted recent discussions with the Consumer Council and Translink around reasonable adjustment policies relating to cross border services. RJ confirmed draft revisions were almost complete.

5. Policy Papers

- 5.1 BB asked members to consider the latest draft of the Taxis Paper, stressing the need to agree and publish the paper. Members endorsed most of the revisions, but it was felt that a clearer message was needed on transparency about fares.

Action 4: Members agreed that BB and ML should agree any revisions to the Taxis Paper rather than return to the full committee.

Action 5: It was agreed that revisions to the Taxis Paper should be agreed before Christmas with publication in January 2023.

- 5.2 ML briefed members about the structure of the draft paper on the impact of investment in public realm. He explained that the paper would be taken to the People, Streets and Places Working Group for further development. Members raised a number of issues including the impact of A Boards and the challenges of convincing stakeholders such as traders about the need for change.

Action 6: Members to submit comments on the approach and content of the public realm paper by 20th January 2023.

- 5.2 ML briefed members about the suggested approach to developing a more focused policy paper on demand responsive transport. Members endorsed this approach. ABr suggested engagement with providers of DATS service as part of developing the paper.
Action 7: Members to submit comments on the approach and content of the proposed DRT paper by 20th January 2023.
Action 8: ML and ABr to liaise about engagement with DATS operators.

6. Working Groups and other updates

- 6.1 ML gave a brief update about two recent meetings of TAWG.
Action 9: ML to circulate TAWG Forward Work Programme to members.
- 6.2 ML briefed members about meetings with the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG), placemaking and public realm schemes and the IMNI Disability Forum. He also highlighted the consultation on the NITHCo Draft Disability Action Plan.
Action 10: ML to circulate the NITHCo DAP to members.
- 6.3 ML highlighted concerns about recent decisions connected to the Bolder Vision for Belfast including a decision not to allow the return of outbound buses on Royal Avenue, the opening of stepped access cycle parking in the city centre and the desire to make COVID pavement café licensing arrangements permanent.
Action 11: Members agreed concerns should be raised with the Department and a meeting sought with Bolder Vision Partners.
- 6.4 ML outlined a proposed Changing Places policy for Imtac which commits the Committee to use venues with Changing Places toilets. Where this is not possible the policy is to offer the provision of a mobile Changing Places facility at meetings or events. Members agreed the policy.

Action 12: The Business Committee to be asked to make provision in future budgets for the Changing Places policy.

7. Minutes of last meeting / Matters arising

7.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Proposed: Aaron McKane Seconded: Andy Boal

7.2 ML updated members on the proposed UN CRPD UK examination in 2023. It is now likely this will happen in September rather than March.

9. Dates for future meetings

9.1 The next meetings will be held on the 22nd February and 28th June 2023.

List of actions

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Action 2: ML to contact Tony Rafferty to arrange a follow up meeting to discuss Transport Plans

Action 3. SC to obtain an update on pavement parking issues and circulate through ML.

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Action 8: ML and AB to liaise about engagement with DATS operators.

Action 9: ML to circulate TAWG Forward Work Programme to members.

Action 10: ML to circulate the NITHCo DAP to members.

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Action 12: The Business Committee to be asked to make provision in future budgets for the Changing Places policy.