

Minutes of the 116th Imtac Meeting

Date: 7th June 2016, The Mount, Belfast

Present: G. Max O'Brien (Chairperson)

Sam Bell, Sheelagh McRandal, Jim Nash, Moira Heap, Paul McCloskey, Eimear McCracken, Peter Livingstone, David McDonald, Ursula Marshall, Joe Kenny, Henry Mayne, Bert Bailie, Vivien Blakely.

Observers: Ciaran Crilly (DfI), Terry Butler (Translink), Jenny Robinson (Consumer Council), Naomi Roberts (Equality Commission), Orla McCann (Disability Action).

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer

1. Introductions, apologies and consideration of absences

- 1.1 Apologies were given and accepted from Joan Harbison, Samantha Browne, Nan Carville, Celia Chambers, Francis Hughes and Ann Gamble.

2. Chairpersons, Treasurers and policy updates

- 2.1 Max updated members on meetings with Minister McIlveen and Chris Conway (CEO Translink).
- 2.2 Ciaran updated members on the changes involved with the new Department for Infrastructure.
- 2.3 Max updated members on revisions made to the Memorandum of Understanding between Imtac and the Department.

- 2.4 Max updated members on changes to the recruitment of Imtac members. This will now take place in September each year. Guidelines for applicants have also been updated.
- 2.5 David updated members on Imtac finances including spending for 2015/16 and agreement of a budget with the Department for 2016/17. Members were informed that the Business Group has adopted the audited accounts for 2015/16 and that Cleaver Black have been reappointed as auditors.
- 2.6 Ciaran updated members on the next steps in the development of ATS 2025. Currently the Department is in contact with key stakeholders around potential actions for inclusion in a delivery plan. Once this engagement is complete Imtac will have further opportunity to comment.
- 2.7 Members received an update on engagement with the Belfast Rapid Transit Team over vehicle design. Members again raised issues over flexibility of space and the need to consider access for more than one wheelchair user.
- 2.8 Members received an update on likely delays in the implementation of changes to the Blue Badge Scheme.
- 2.9 Members received an update on the introduction of licensing for pavement cafes due to be introduced in October 2016. Councils are taking the lead in developing guidance. Imtac has been invited to meet with the councils on the 21st June along with Disability Action and RNIB.
- 2.10 Members received an update on the development and launch of the DVA Taxi Driver Training course. Ciaran updated members on the introduction of further regulations around the Taxis Act introduced on the 31st May 2016. Drivers have been given a 4 month grace period to meet new requirements for meters and printers.

- 2.11 Members received an update on the development of an app to work alongside the audio visual information system on Metro buses. Some members indicated difficulties downloading the app. Members suggested that route destination should be considered as part of the AV message. Ciaran agreed to feedback problems to Departmental officials.
- 2.12 Members received an update on progress by the Department in developing the Integrated Transport Project. Members will have the opportunity to receive a more detailed update at a briefing arranged for the 21st June.
- 2.13 Members received an update on improvements in Belfast City Centre aimed at making cycling easier. Issues with tactile paving have been raised. Members also received an update on emerging proposals for wider cycling infrastructure improvements planned across Belfast. Members raised issues about shared infrastructure and influencing cycling behaviour.
- 2.14 Members received an update on the development of a paper by Imtac aimed at improving engagement. After the paper has been agreed with the Department members will be asked to make final comments.

3. Draft paper on access to bus services

- 3.1 Max explained the background to the paper which has had restricted distribution and asked members and observers to treat the contents as confidential.
- 3.2 Michael briefed members on the content of the paper. During discussions members generally expressed support for the content of the paper. In addition two issues were highlighted. Firstly the need to connect issues around inclusive vehicle design to wider transport services including those provided by the Health Trusts. Secondly members asked that issues for people living in rural communities be given great prominence.

- 3.3 Max explained that he wanted feedback from Translink about the issues raised in the paper before deciding on how to proceed. Max asked Terry to share with colleagues and to liaise with Michael over feedback and a follow up meeting with Chris Conway in September.

Action: Michael / Terry

- 3.4 Max asked members and observers to submit any comments over the summer period with a view to revisiting the paper at the September meeting.

Action: All

4. Update on the Imtac Work Programme 2016/17

- 4.1 Members received an update on the Work Programme for 2016/17 which has been agreed with the Department.

5. Observers updates

- 5.1 Ciaran updated members on the review of the current Bus Stop Design Guide. This is at an early stage but there will be an opportunity for Imtac to input into the review.
- 5.2 Orla updated members on planned improvements to Disability Action Transport Service (DATS) including new vehicles, software improvements and changes to branding. Orla also highlighted the recent Disability Exhibition. Members expressed frustration about difficulties getting to the Exhibition and with notice required to use DAT's. Members also questioned why low-floor buses were not being purchased.
- 5.3 Naomi updated members about Equality Commission communication with the Department for Communities requesting an update around the implementation of the Disability Strategy, associated signature projects, legislative reform and arrangements

for the development of a new Strategy. Members asked to be kept informed of the response.

5.4 Terry updated members about some service reinstatements and plans for driver training in customer care. Terry also updated members on the introduction of 12 low-floor double decked coaches on the 212 Derry service.

5.5 Jenny updated members on plans for a summer campaign to promote passenger rights. Jenny informed members that the report into visits to ferry terminals has been published. Jenny informed members that a site visit to City of Derry Airport was planned for July.

6. Draft Annual Report 2016

6.1 Michael briefed members on the draft Annual Report. Members were asked to provide specific issues for inclusion in the section “Our Advice to Government.” It was agreed that rural issues and the need for more inclusive design of infrastructure including vehicles be highlighted in this section.

Action: Max asked members to send comments in the next 7-10 days.

7. Current consultations – Draft Programme for Government (PfG)

7.1 Michael apologised to members for absence of copies of the PfG and briefed members on the approach taken by the Executive. There was a broad welcome that specific mention had been made of disabled people. It was agreed that Michael should send out a suggested Imtac response alongside copies of the consultation. Members are asked to respond. The consultation closes on the 22nd July 2016.

8. Minutes of the last meeting / Matters arising

8.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

- 8.2 It was agreed to raise the issue of spending areas for assistance dogs at Translink stations.

9 Any other business

- 9.1 Paul updated members on a planned visit to City of Derry airport by North West Forum of People with Disabilities.

10 Dates of future meetings

- 10.1 Provisional dates for the next meetings are 13th September 2016 and 6th December 2016. Times and venues to be confirmed.