

Minutes of the 127th Imtac Meeting

Date and place: 14th March 2019, The Mount.

Present: June Best (Chairperson)

Paul McCloskey, Vivien Blakely, Sheelagh McRandal, Jean Dunlop, Dave Morton, Andy Boal, Brian Murray, Nuala Crilly, Sam Bell, Aaron McKane, Alison Lockhart.

Observers: Ciaran Crilly (Department for Infrastructure), Naomi Roberts (Equality Commission), Francis Hughes (Age Sector Platform), Richard Williams (Consumer Council), Terry Butler (Translink).

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer

1. Introductions and apologies

- 1.1 June welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked everyone present to introduce themselves.
- 1.2 Apologies were given and accepted from Bert Bailie, Joe Kenny, Moira Heap, Diane Marks and Orla McCann (Disability Action).

2. Observers updates

- 2.1 Francis thanked the Department for clarification regarding the potential for identify fraud and Smartpasses. He asked for an update on the footbridge at Lambeg station.
- 2.2 Naomi updated members on discussions on the Independent Monitoring Mechanism around creating a consultative forum of disabled people. Decisions are likely to made in April about how to proceed.

- 2.3 Ciaran updated members on staff changes within the Department. Sian Kerr has been appointed Acting Director of Public Transport Division
- 2.4 Ciaran updated members on preparations for Brexit including plans to change the Blue Badge design lead by Department for Transport. Ciaran informed members that there were no plans by either jurisdiction to change all Ireland concessionary travel arrangements regardless of the outcome of Brexit.
- 2.5 Ciaran informed members that the Imtac papers on pavement café licensing and the Enniskillen Public Realm have been circulated to DfI Roads for comment. All Divisions within the Department have also been contacted regarding tasks for inclusion in the 2019/20 Imtac Work Programme. It is planned to have a draft list of tasks by the end of March.
- 2.6 Terry informed members that work is well underway installing Changing Places facilities at Portrush and Lanyon Place stations. It is planned to publicise the opening of these facilities.
- 2.7 Terry updated members on the plans to refurbish Lambeg station footbridge rather than provide a new ramped or lift access bridge. This decision was based on cost and constraints at the site.
- 2.8 Members asked Terry about plans for completing all the works at Coleraine station, including Changing Places. Terry indicated that there was no firm date for works to be completed. Members also raised comments made to Blind Smartpass holders by drivers on cross border services about travel after Brexit. Terry indicated these comments were not correct.
- 2.9 Richard updated members on recent meetings of the Access Forums at Belfast City and International airports as well as plans to visit City of Derry airport on the 19th March. Richard also provided an update on ongoing passenger rights training, the Consumer

Parliament and the extension to the consultation on the Aviation 50 Strategy.

3. Updates on developments since the last meeting

- 3.1 Sheelagh updated members on the recent procurement exercise for auditing services for the Committee. She informed members that following a tender process the Business Group had agreed to change the auditors from Cleaver Black to Dawson & Co on the basis of cost.
- 3.2 Michael updated members on introductory meetings held between Bert and the Department and Translink, correspondence with the Mobility & Access Committee (MACS) and recent and future engagement with MACS, correspondence from DfI Permanent Secretary, Katrina Godfrey and the 5 Imtac public meetings planned for April.
- 3.3 Michael also provided an update on the first meeting of the Translink Accessibility Working Group held in February. The Group will be reviewing the Translink Access and Station Facilities Guide and taking part in the user testing of the new Translink website in April. Michael asked Terry to confirm dates for the testing with the Marketing Team.
- 3.4 Michael briefed members on the demonstration of a system to provide audio announcements at Glider Halts. Subject to cost it is proposed to pilot the system at the 5 city centre halts served by both G1 and G2.
- 3.5 Members were informed that the Equality Commission has written to the Committee following a review of its decision not to progress Imtacs Section 75 complaint against Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. The Commission has decided not to change its original decision. Michael informed members that following meetings with the Commission, reference to 1.5m pavement width

has now been removed from the Every Customer Counts guidance. Members expressed frustration about the decision.

- 3.6 Members discussed the recent meetings held with the Department for Communities around public realm schemes planned for the Clifton Gateway area and Queen's Square area in Belfast. Members agreed that addressing issues around the safety and accessibility of crossings at busy junctions is a priority for Clifton Gateway. Members also agreed that provision of crossings and provision for both cyclists and pedestrians need to be reassessed at Queens Square particularly given restrictions in the area during events.

Action: Michael to draft a response to the Clifton Gateway consultation and a letter to Denis McLaughlin outlining the Committee's concerns about Queen's Square

4. Current consultations

- 4.1 Members discussed the draft response to the consultation from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council about its EQIA on Kerb Heights within the Lisburn Public Realm Scheme. Members endorsed the majority of the draft response but agreed that recommendations should include reinstatement of an appropriate kerb height throughout the scheme.

Action: Michael to make amendments and submit the response.

- 4.2 Members discussed at length a request from the Department to comment on a renewal application from Airporter Ltd to provide a bus service between Derry and Belfast City Airport. Following discussions members agreed to respond (1) welcoming the proposal to provide alternative accessible transport for people who cannot access current vehicles, (2) seeking a longer term commitment from Airporter to purchase accessible vehicles in the future that would enable wheelchair users to remain in their chairs when travelling and (3) recommending that Airporter provide information about accessibility on their website and other

promotional material. Members also asked if mention of concessionary fares could also be raised in the response.

Action: Michael to draft a response based on the issued discussed.

5. Minutes of the last meeting/Matters arising

5.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Proposed: Sheelagh McRandal Seconded: Vivien Blakely

6. Any other business

6.1 Michael briefed members on a proposal to develop a language and style guide for Imtac. Members agreed to the proposal.

Action: Michael to draft a proposal and circulate to members for comment.

6.2 Michael reminded members to submit any outstanding expenses before the end of the financial year.

The meeting stopped for a short break.

Francis Hughes, Naomi Roberts, Ciaran Crilly and Richard Williams left the meeting.

7. Arrangements for 2019/20 meetings

7.1 Following discussion members agreed to maintain the current arrangements for Committee meetings including a meeting in Derry/Londonderry.

Action: Michael and Nuala agreed to check availability for St Columbs Park House for the June meeting.

7.2 Michael briefed members on the recent trip to Glasgow where he attended a MACS Member Information & Development Day. These events allow MACS members to look at issues in more detail or receiving training/detailed briefing around important issues.

Action: Members agreed to include proposals to hold 2 Member Information & Development days in next year's Work Programme.

8. Discussion of Strategic Priorities for Imtac 2019/20 Work Programme

8.1 A lengthy discussion took place over priorities for the 2019/20 Work Programme. The following were agreed as key issues:

- Encouraging inclusive vehicle design including Translink, private operators, community transport and health and education providers
- Promoting inclusive infrastructure including stations, halts, stops and more broadly public realm
- Improving access to taxi services particularly for wheelchair users
- Extending the provision of audio visual information across the public transport network
- Highlighting the specific barriers to travel for people living in rural areas and promoting inclusive solutions
- Influencing the introduction of the new Translink ticketing project particularly looking at issues for Half Fare Smartpass holders
- Encouraging the adoption of inclusive Disability Equality Training by transport providers and policy makers
- Working to remove notice requirements for disabled people and older people to use public and other transport
- Highlighting the impact of pavement clutter
- Monitoring the impact of Brexit on the mobility of older people and disabled people

9. Date, time and location of next meeting

9.1 The next meeting will be held at 12.30pm on the 12th June 2019. Venue is to be confirmed.