

Minutes of the 136th Imtac Meeting

Date and place: 17th February 2021, ZOOM meeting.

Present: Sam Bell (Chairperson), Jean Dunlop, Aaron McKane, Christine McClements, Brian Murray, John McErlane, Eileen Drumm, Paul McCloskey, Alison Lockhart, Andy Boal, Terry McCorry, June Best, Dave Morton.

Observers: Sean Coulter (Department for Infrastructure), Naomi Roberts (Equality Commission), Terry Butler (Translink), Richard Williams & Rachael Coulter (Consumer Council).

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer

Apologies: Bert Bailie, Diane Marks, Scott McClenaghan.

1. Introductions and updates

1.1 Members agreed that Sam Bell should chair the meeting. Sam asked the minutes record best wishes to Bert and asked members and observers to introduce themselves.

2. Observer's Updates

2.1 Naomi updated members on initial work being undertaken by IMNI updating the list of issues for next report into the UK Government response to its UNCRPD obligations. She updated members of plans to hold the first meeting of the IMNI Disability Forum on the 4th March. Naomi also highlighted the current consultation on the PfG Framework.

2.2 Richard updated members on research undertaken by the Consumer Council in partnership with Age NI into the transport needs of older people. He also outlined plans to organise focus groups looking at issues around recovery from COVID. Richard also highlighted issues around the issuing and renewals of

vouchers issued by airlines in response to COVID. He asked members affected by these issues to get in touch.

- 2.3 Terry updated members about proposed changes to Cullybackey and Dunmurry rail halts. He also updated members on the introduction of 60 new single deck and double deck low-floor vehicles.
- 2.4 Sean thanked Diane Marks and Vivien Blakely for their contribution to a PfG Case Study on BRT / Glider. He updated members on plans for engagement with Imtac on future work programme and budget and current work within the Department on removing 24 hour notice requirements and tackling pavement parking. Sean informed members the Department may seek Imtac's help in a short consultation around SmartPasses.

3. Updates

- 3.1 Michael updated members on the work of the Translink Accessibility working group including:
- Meetings with Translink and the Department around new bus and coach procurement
 - Engagement around the removal of 24 hour notice requirements on Ulsterbus and Goldline services
 - Engagement around proposed station improvements at Bangor and Cullybackey
 - Engagement around the design and introduction of ticketing barriers at some rail stations
 - Updates to the content around accessibility on the Translink website
- 3.2 Members expressed frustration and disappointment about the plans for bus and coach procurement. It was agreed Imtac should continue to strongly promote the necessity of embedding inclusive design principles in vehicle procurement. Members also highlighted that accessibility and sustainability should work together and not be viewed as incompatible.

- 3.3 Michael updated members on the recent work of the People, Streets and Places Working group including:
- Initial work with stakeholders on options for cycling infrastructure at bus stops
 - Proposals to write to Minister Mallon around consulting on options to address pavement parking
 - Discussions with DfI around removing physical barriers on the Greenway network
 - Proposals to hold a “Build Back Better” event with local councils aimed at developing inclusive communities and built environment
- 3.4 Members expressed support for the proposed approach on pavement parking and engaging with councils.
- 3.5 Michael and June briefed members about recent meetings of the Disability Strategy Co Design Group including emerging recommendations from the Expert Panel report and plans for engagement. Michael expressed some concerns about the approach to engagement and the delay in making the full Expert Panel report available to the Group.
- Action: Following discussion it was agreed to arrange a detailed briefing for members with the DfC Team once the detail of the Expert Panel report is available.**
- 3.6 Michael updated members on the ongoing recruitment process and reminded members affected to return applications by 22nd February. He also reminded members due to step down that this would happen after the AGM in June.
- 3.7 Michael updated members on developments around travelling with assistance dogs following the ending of the Brexit transition process. He explained he had prepared a short briefing to circulate to stakeholders which is currently being reviewed by DAERA officials.

Action: Michael to circulate briefing once available.

4. Work Programme 2021 / 22

4.1 Members were asked to discuss and consider priorities for the 2021 / 22 Imtac Work Programme, recognising the likely continued uncertainty created by COVID-19.

4.2 Members identified two clear priorities. The first is the importance of the Disability Strategy in joining the dots between transport, travel and other issues in lives of disabled people. The second is the need for Imtac to develop clear, direct advice on a range of issues to ensure that the “build back better” agenda is inclusive.

Action: Members will be asked to comment on the emerging work programme following engagement with the Department.

5. Current Consultations

5.1 Michael briefed members on current consultations concerning the Programme for Government Outcomes Framework, the Nithco Audit of Inequalities, and proposals for enhanced Park & Ride facilities at Moira train station and the latest public realm proposals for Banbridge Town Centre.

5.2 Members raised a number of issues around the provision of accessible parking including the need for larger accessible bays.

Action: Michael to draft responses and circulate to members for comments.

7. Minutes of the last meeting / Matters arising

7.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed unanimously and adopted.

Proposed: Terry McCrory

Seconded: Dave Morton

7.2 Members broadly agreed to adopt the latest draft of the revised Policy Paper on Taxis. It was agreed to defer publication due to

the current situation with COVID and to review the paper again prior to publication.

8. Any other business

8.1 There was no further business.

9. Dates of future meetings

9.1 Wednesday 30th June 2021 2pm – 3.30pm