

## **Minutes of the 106<sup>th</sup> Imtac meeting**

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> September 2013, The Mount, Belfast

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

Ann Collins, Barbara Fleming, Peter Livingstone, Ann Gamble, David McDonald, Joe Kenny, David Mann, Eimear McCracken, Vivien Blakely, Joan Harbison, Bert Bailie, Rosemary Patton.

**Observers:** Olive Smith (DRD), Scott Kennerley (Consumer Council), Terry Butler (Translink), Dermot McCluskey (Disability Action), Olaf Hvattum (Greater Belfast Seniors Forum).

**Secretariat:** Michael Lorimer

### **1. Apologies**

1.1 Apologies were given and accepted from June Best, Jim Nash, Moira Heap, Des McAuley, Naomi Roberts and Keith Walsh.

### **2. Observers update**

2.1 DRD Update: Members received updates from DRD including ongoing efforts to secure funding for the roll out of AV on buses, the refreshing of the Travel Safe Guide and the development of a travel wallet scheme. Members were also given an update on closed consultations around changes to the Blue Badge Scheme and the Railways Investment Strategy.

2.2 Members asked that Imtac be consulted as part of the development of the travel wallet scheme and reminded DRD about the need to include the provision of accessible formats when revising the travel guide.

- 2.3 Consumer Council Update: Members received an update on Train the Trainer events being run by the Consumer Council around rights when travelling by air and sea. Members were briefed on potential changes to EU Regulations around delayed flights. Members were briefed on the background to the Consumer Council report into Door2door transport and Rural Dial-a-lift services included in members packs.
- 2.4 Disability Action update: Members received an update on development of the new Disability Action Transport Services including initial teething issues. Members were informed that Disability Action planned to review the current membership, contacting members who had not used the service to see if they still wished to be members. Limited promotion of the new service is taking place on an area to area basis. Disability Action is also looking at the potential of travel training working through Volunteer Now.
- 2.5 Translink update: Members were briefed on a new training video for bus drivers made in conjunction with Guide Dogs and further training planned around people with autism. Members were updated on plans for the new website journey planner to advertise 1200 accessible bus services. Members were updated on the recent introduction of 23 new Ulsterbus coaches. Michael confirmed these vehicles have stepped access and limited access for wheelchair users.
- 2.6 Members discussed the situation in relation the recent bus purchase.  
**Action: It was agreed this was a retrograde step and that formal correspondence should be sent to both DRD and Translink. It was also agreed to raise the issue in the meeting with the Minister and to consider making the Equality Commission aware of the situation.**

- 2.7 Members discussed the paper on Consumer Council paper and the update from Disability Action. There was recognition that many of the issues raised in the Consumer Council Report were still relevant. Members advised that Disability Action look carefully at the membership issue and not simply consider non-use of the service by existing members as a lack of interest in the service.  
**Action: Michael agreed to contact Volunteer Now for an update on the travel training project.**

### **3. Work programme/Treasurers update**

- 3.1 Treasurers update: David McDonald highlighted his concerns to members around the initial delays in receiving this year's funding. This has now been resolved.
- 3.2 Convenors updates: Ann Collins gave members an update on the recent meeting Personal Mobility Group meeting. Barbara gave members an update on the recent Public Transport Group meeting including on-going discussions with NISRA officials around the wording of a proposed survey looking at disabled and older people's attitudes to public transport.  
**Action: After discussion it was agreed that any Imtac questionnaire must include questions reflecting the social model of disability. It was agreed the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson should attend the proposed meeting with NISRA officials.**
- 3.3 Michael briefed members on two further walking reports covering Moira and Omagh town centres. Members requested a glossary be included to include technical terms used in these audits.  
**Action: Max asked that members provide any comment on the reports within the next 10 days.**
- 3.4 Michael briefed members on comments received from DRD around the Committee's report into training currently provided to transport staff.

**Action: After discussion it was agreed the report should be strengthened but that the involvement of disabled people in the design and delivery of future training should remain a recommendation.**

#### **4. DoE Consultation on Taxi Driver Test and Periodic Training**

- 4.1 Michael briefed members on the proposals and the draft response included in members packs. Following discussion it was agreed that the response should include a paragraph highlighting ongoing issues for disabled people and older people using taxis. It was also agreed to include more detail on the type assistance required by disabled people who are not wheelchair users, the example of a driver assisting a blind person to find their destination after getting out of taxi was suggested.

**Action: Members to submit final comments in the next 7 days. Michael to amend and submit response.**

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

- 5.1 Max asked that the term Chairperson be used in place of Chair. A number of corrections in relation to numbering were pointed out.
- 5.2 Subject to these changes the minutes were agreed.

#### **6. Matters arising**

- 6.1 Members noted updates on the development of Stadia Guidelines by Disability Sports, a briefing planned for the December Imtac meeting by OFMDFM on the Disability Strategy, meetings with Roads Service to discuss the walking audits, the submission to the Social Development Committee of written evidence in relation to the Pavement Café Bill, the planned meeting between Minister Kennedy and the Business Group and feedback from the DRD in relation to accessibility of vehicles of private operators.

6.2 Michael updated members on the legal situation regarding pavement parking.

**Action: Members requested that Michael circulate email correspondence from PSNI in relation pavement parking and revisit this issue at a future meeting.**

6.3 Michael updated members on discussions with Belfast City Council over plans to introduce a Bike Hire Scheme in Belfast City Centre. It was agreed that members should receive a more formal presentations as locations for the proposed docking stations become clearer.

## **7. Any other business**

7.1 Ann raised general concerns over the suitability and safety for disabled people of venues such as hotels where facilities are not on the ground floor. Michael assured members that ground floor facilities were a key consideration in the choice of venues for Intac meetings.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

**The next meeting will be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 starting at 12.30pm at the Mount.**