

## **MINUTES OF THE 107<sup>th</sup> Imtac MEETING**

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013, The Mount, Belfast

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

Ann Collins, Barbara Fleming, Peter Livingstone, Joe Kenny, David Mann, Eimear McCracken, Joan Harbison, Francis Hughes, Bert Bailie, June Best, Jim Nash.

**Observers:** Keith Walsh (DRD), Andy McClenaghan (Consumer Council), Terry Butler (Translink), Dermot McCluskey (Disability Action), Naomi Roberts (Equality Commission)

**Secretariat:** Michael Lorimer

### **1. Apologies**

1.1 Apologies were given and accepted from Moira Heap, Ann Gamble, Vivien Blakely, David McDonald, Des McAuley and Rosemary Patton.

### **2. Chairpersons and Convenors updates**

2.1 The Chairperson briefed members on the meeting with Minister Kennedy.

2.2 The Chairperson briefed members on a meeting held with NISRA officials around research into the attitudes of disabled and older people to public transport. Max explained that wording around questions about disabled people and disability remains a difficulty. During discussion members highlighted how this was a UK issue and the need to raise the matter with organisations such as the

Equality and Human Rights Commission. Members agreed the wording of a short paragraph for inclusion in the survey, making clear Imtac's opposition to current ONS guidelines.

**Action: Paragraph to be forwarded to DRD officials with a view to finalising the survey.**

2.3 Barbara briefed members on a meeting with Minister Durkan regarding the implementation of the Taxis Act. The Minister has reaffirmed a commitment to implement the Act in full. Some of the timeframes may subject to changes.

2.4 Barbara updated members on a meeting with Translink regarding the purchase of coaches. Barbara explained that whilst there was a constructive proposal to look at alternative low-floor design no guarantees were given that further coaches would not be purchased. Max informed members that a meeting with the DRD would be arranged in the New Year to discuss the matter further.

2.5 Ann Collins, Michael and David Mann updated members on the evidence given to the Social Development Committee in relation to the Pavement Cafés Bill. Members expressed disappointment that issues raised had not been included in recommendations from the Committee. Members agreed it was crucial for Imtac to be involved in developing proposed guidance for local councils.  
**Action: Michael to contact DSD re involvement in development of Guidance.**

2.6 Ann Collins and Michael briefed members on meetings with Roads Service to discuss walking audits of Lisburn and Bangor. Members gave a cautious welcome to proposals for a code of practice on the use of A Boards in North Down. Members asked for the issue of using rubber tactile paving is to be looked into further before Imtac endorses its use.  
**Action: Michael to examine use of rubber tactile paving.**

### 3. Work programme tasks

- 3.1 Michael briefed members on the draft paper on the work of PTE's in Great Britain. Michael highlighted the approach of Transport for London. Members were shown two innovative "how to" videos developed by TfL.

**Action: Max asked that members provide any comment on the report within the next 10 days.**

- 3.2 Michael briefed members on the 5<sup>th</sup> draft of the report looking at training currently provided to staff and volunteers by transport providers.

**Action: Max asked that members provide any comment on the report within the next 10 days.**

- 3.3 Michael briefed members on the draft policy paper on step free transport. During discussions members endorsed the issues raised in the paper. It was suggested the paper could include local examples of good and bad practice.

**Action: Max asked that members provide any comment on the report within the next 10 days.**

### 4. Observers update

- 4.1 Keith updated members on the evaluations of the Transport Buddy Scheme, flexible transport services as well as the review of the Travel Safe Guide and development of Travel Wallets. Members also receive an update on funding for AV on buses, the Belfast Bike Hire scheme and the Blue Badge consultation. Max asked Keith to find out the reasons for the delays to publication of a report into changes to the Blue Badge Scheme.

**Action: Keith to follow up with Transport NI officials.**

- 4.2 Andy updated members on research commissioned by the Consumer Council into people's opinions around getting information about public transport and a further project looking

specifically at passenger requirement in the Dungannon pilot area. Michael suggested that the Consumer Council include disabled people and older people in any future research about public transport.

- 4.2 Terry updated members on plans to purchase 144 new buses, all low-floor. Terry informed members that a business case has been developed to introduce audio and visual information systems at all mainline bus and train stations. Members raised issues around inconsistencies with audio announcements on trains.

**Action: Terry to follow up audio announcements with NIR officials.**

- 4.3 Naomi updated members on “mystery shopper” type research commissioned by the Equality Commission. Members highlighted mixed experiences of participating in this work.

**Action: Naomi to feed back comments from members to the Equality Commission.**

- 4.4 Dermot briefed members on plans by Disability Action to set up Regional User Forums for DATS. Dermot also informed members that the Mobility Centre has recently undergone an assessment for continued accreditation.

## **5. Minutes of the last meeting/Matters arising**

- 5.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.
- 5.2 Michael briefed members on a recent meeting with Volunteer Now and plans to extend the Buddy Service by using other organisations. Michael also briefed members on discussions with other travel training practitioners including New Horizons.

## **6. Any other business**

- 6.1 Michael highlighted two recent approaches to Imtac around the use of segways by disabled people. After discussion it was agreed

that Imtac could do very little given the legal position around the use of segways.

- 6.2 Michael briefed members on proposals from DoE around changes to bus licensing in Northern Ireland. These changes broadly reflect proposals consulted on in 2010 which Imtac supported. Members agreed that Imtac should not change the previous position. As the proposals have already been subject to consultation members agreed further consultation would not be meaningful. Members asked that DoE develop a straightforward guide to changes to reassure community and voluntary organisations.

**Action: Michael to feedback to DoE.**

### **Observers left the meeting.**

- 6.3 Members discussed the current consultation looking at future arrangements for consumer representation including the role of the Consumer Council. After discussion it was agreed that Imtac should respond to the consultation highlighting the need to retain the Consumer Council particularly in relation to their transport remit. It was agreed to highlight the positive work undertaken by the Council around policy and for individual consumers including older people and disabled people.

## **7. Date of future meetings**

- 7.1 Max asked members to consider a change in time for future Imtac meetings. After discussion it was agreed that future meetings would start at 1.30pm and finish by 4pm. Meetings would take quarterly on a Thursday.

**The next meeting will be on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at the Mount starting at 1.30pm.**