

**MINUTES OF THE
108th Imtac MEETING**

Date: 13th March 2014, The Mount, Belfast

Present: G. Max O'Brien (Chairperson)

Barbara Fleming, Peter Livingstone, Joe Kenny, David Mann, Eimear McCracken, Joan Harbison, June Best, Jim Nash, Vivien Blakely.

Observers: Keith Walsh (DRD), Andy McClenaghan (Consumer Council), Terry Butler (Translink)

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer

In attendance: Michael O'Neill (DoE)

1. Apologies and consideration of absences

- 1.1 Apologies were given and accepted from Moira Heap, Ann Gamble, Ann Collins, David McDonald, Bert Bailie, Naomi Roberts and Dermot McCluskey.
- 1.2 Max informed members of the resignations of Rosemary Patton and Des McAuley since the last meeting.
- 1.3 Max updated members on the on-going recruitment of new Imtac members.
- 1.4 Max paid tribute to both Barbara Fleming and Ann Collins who step down from Imtac at the end of March. Members asked that the minutes record thanks to Barbara and Ann for their contribution to the work of Imtac over the years.

2. Implementation of the Taxis Act and consultation on draft Taxis Accessibility Regulations

- 2.1 Max welcomed Michael O'Neill from DoE Roads Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division. Michael briefed members on the implementation of the Taxis Act and the current consultation on a specification for wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- 2.2 Following the presentation members asked a series of questions around issues such as the design and provision of ramps and steps, the need for all drivers to undertake training relating to disabled people and the impact of regulation at private ranks and at local airports in particular.

Michael O'Neill left the meeting.

- 2.3 Michael (Lorimer) briefed members on the current consultation and the research the new specification is based around. After discussion it was agreed that (1) Imtac should broadly welcome the proposed new specification but ask that it be reviewed every 5 years, (2) that the specification should include the provision of handrails and minimum interior lighting levels and (3) the Imtac response should highlight the need for broader policy measures to encourage the increased availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Action: Michael to draft a response based on discussions. Michael also to check legislation regarding taxi ranks at airports.

3. Chairpersons and Convenors updates

- 3.1 The Chairperson briefed members on the recent meeting with DRD officials, the planned study trip to London and the recent unsuccessful attempt to recruit an additional member of staff to the

secretariat. Keith informed members that he had escalated the issues around staffing the secretariat within DRD. Michael asked that the minutes acknowledge thanks to Bert Bailie for his help in organising the trip to Transport for London.

- 3.2 Barbara and Michael briefed members on the resolution of issues around the wording of the proposed attitudinal survey. Max asked that the minutes record thanks to Nicola Fisher from NISRA for help in finalising the survey. Barbara also briefed members on work on a guide to access to Translink stations and halts.
- 3.3 Michael updated members on the work of the Personal Mobility Group including recent meetings with Roads Service to discuss walking audits in Omagh and Derry, the decision to postpone a proposed workshop around the Blue Badge/Baywatch and the DRD consultation on proposals to change enforcement of obstruction of access to property.
- 3.4 June updated members on a meeting organised by DRD she had attended in January with a range of stakeholders to discuss better provision of travel training schemes. Keith gave members an overview of the work involved and the next steps. Max asked that Intac remain involved as key stakeholder.

4. Work programme tasks

- 4.1 Michael briefed members on the draft walking of Newry City Centre. Members agreed that the pedestrian environment in the city raised significant issues and concerns.
Action: Max asked members to submit final comments in the next 7 to 10 days.

5. Draft Work Programme 2014/15

- 5.1 Michael briefed members on the proposed work programme for 2014/15. During discussion members expressed concerns about the amount of work involved in the Programme given current

staffing issues. It was suggested that Task 3 should not be a priority if decisions had to be made. It was also suggested that an assessment of walking audits work (task 5) should concentrate on influencing planned public realm improvements.

Action: Michael to amend the Work Programme accordingly. Max asked members to submit final comments in the next 7 to 10 days.

6. Consultations

6.1 Michael briefed members on the proposals for Public Passenger Transport (Service Agreements and Service Permits) Regulations. Members broadly endorsed the draft response but asked that the response be more specific about the type of access requirements required under both agreements and service permits. Members also asked that a meeting be arranged with relevant DRD officials to discuss the Imtac response.

Action: Michael to amend draft response and organise meeting with officials.

6.2 Michael briefed members on proposals for secondary legislation relating to EU Regulation 181/2011. Michael explained the urgency around the legislation and the shortened consultation period. Members endorsed the draft response highlighting Imtac's objection to the DoE seeking to opt out of certain obligations of the regulation and the need for one point of contact for complaints around the regulation.

Action: Michael to submit the response based on discussion.

7. Observers update

7.1 Keith informed members of a Departmental restructure following the retirement of a senior official in April. Keith outlined projected savings the Department would have to make in 2014/15 and 2015/16. It is likely that savings in 2015/16 will impact on Imtac's budget. Keith informed members the revised Travel Safe Guide will be launched shortly. Keith informed members that the Travel

Wallets are currently being “road tested” and will be launched shortly. Keith informed members that the evaluation of the Transport Buddy scheme is close to completion. A bid has been made for additional monies for travel training under the OFMDFM Developing Social Change Programme. This bid also includes the roll out of AV systems on buses. The Department are awaiting a decision from OFMDFM.

- 7.2 Andy briefed members on research undertaken by the Consumer Council into the accessibility of information about Translink services. This work should be completed in the next 3 to 4 weeks.

8. Minutes of last meeting/Matters arising

- 8.1 Subject to a change to the numbering of 6.2/6.3 the minutes were agreed.
- 8.2 Michael updated members on changes to bus regulation (6.2). It is unlikely significant progress will be made on this issue until after the next Assembly elections.

9. Any other business

- 9.1 Michael informed members that OFMDFM has published the revised Active Ageing Strategy. Michael agreed to circulate copies to members and to devise a mechanism for members to feedback comments to inform Imtac’s response.
- 9.2 June highlighted the importance of developing partnerships and working with other organisations in the coming year.

10. Date of next meeting

- 10.1 Max informed members of a change to the date of the next Imtac meeting. The meeting will now take place on Thursday 5th June 2014 starting at 1.30pm in the Mount.**