

MINUTES OF THE



98th Imtac MEETING

Date: 8th September 2011, The Mount Belfast

Present: Frank Caddy (Chair)
Bert Bailie
Jim Nash
Norma Moore
Elizabeth Black
Kellie Armstrong
Ronnie Patterson
Andrew Murdock
Max O'Brien
Etta Mann
Barbara Fleming
Francis Hughes

Apologies:

Ann Gamble
June Best
James Watson
Terry Butler
Philip Blair
Des McAuley
Naomi Roberts

Observers: Alan Preston (Mobility Inclusion Unit)
Gavin Hamilton (Mobility Inclusion Unit)
Ryan Simpson (General Consumer Council)

In attendance: Deidre Kenny (DoE)
Alex Boyle (DoE)
Sharon Clements (DoE)

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer

1 Appointment of officers

- 1.1 The Committee agreed that June Best should replace David McDonald as convenor of the Information and Training Working Group.

2 Presentation from DoE officials on implementation of the Taxis Act

- 2.1 Members received an update from officials on the implementation of the Taxis Act.
- 2.2 Following the presentation officials answered a number of questions from members. Issues raised included the importance of training for both drivers and depot staff, the need for more wheelchair accessible vehicles and vehicles accessible to other disabled people, reducing the cost of taxis and definition of a taxi rank.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

4 Matters arising

4.1 Concessionary fares information

Frank reported that no progress has been made around meeting with DRD officials to discuss concessionary fares information.

4.2 Streets Ahead/Belfast on the move

Michael updated members on the recent change to traffic management in Belfast City Centre.

4.3 Imtac Review

Frank asked that members approve two changes relating to the review of Imtac. It was proposed to limit tenure of members to two three year terms after which members must step down for one year. It was proposed to reduce the size of the Committee to 18. During discussion Max highlighted

the importance of Imtac remaining representative of a range of stakeholders. It was agreed that both proposals would allow this to continue to happen and both were adopted.

4.4 AV on buses

Andrew gave members an update on progress around the pilot of audio visual information systems on buses and stops on Metro Route 5 (Castlereagh Road). To date around 30-40 people have participated in the pilot with feedback positive.

5 **Consultation on Taxi Licence and Powers of Seizure**

5.1 Michael explained the purpose of the consultation and took members through the main proposals.

5.2 Max made the general point that some of the questions were very specific and not relevant to older people and disabled people. He suggested that consultations should allow people to indicate where they had no opinion about a specific question.

5.3 During discussion members expressed concerns over whether the proposals would result in the increased availability of wheelchair accessible taxis particularly outside Belfast. Concern was also raised that proposals failed to consider accessibility of vehicles for other disabled people. It was pointed out that hailing taxis in the street was difficult or impossible for people with a visual impairment.

5.4 Members were asked to forward further comments to Michael before the end of September.

6 **Paper on Belfast City Centre Mobility Hubs**

6.1 Michael gave members the background to the idea of developing Mobility Hubs to improve access to Belfast City Centre. Michael explained that having looked at provision in the city the potential to develop hubs was limited. He proposed that a number of individual initiatives be pursued to improve access to key locations in the city centre.

6.2 It was agreed that members should provide feedback on the issues raised and that a draft paper be prepared for the next Personal Mobility Group meeting.

7 DRD Update

7.1 Alan thanked members for their co-operation with implementing changes connected to the Review of Imtac. Alan informed members of recent staff changes in DRD including the departure of Jenny Pyper. Alan also informed members that after consultation with Frank he was looking into the potential of seconding a civil servant to assist with Imtac activities.

8 Paper on flexible transport

8.1 Michael explained the purpose of the paper and highlighted to members examples of demand responsive transport from Great Britain and Ireland.

8.2 During discussion members suggested that the paper should contain more analysis of the costs of demand responsive transport schemes and should also highlight barriers such as licensing that make operating such schemes difficult.

8.3 Michael agreed to prepare a draft paper for the next Public Transport Group meeting.

9 Any other business

9.1 Ronnie asked whether a date had been arranged to meet with the new Regional Development Minister. Michael agreed to keep members informed.

10 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 8th December 2011 at 12.30pm in the Mount Belfast.

