

Minutes of the 125th Imtac Meeting

Date: 12th September 2018, The Guildhall, Derry.

Present: G. Max O'Brien (Chairperson)

Paul McCloskey, Moira Heap, Jean Dunlop, Vivien Blakely, David McDonald, Sheelagh McRandal, Dave Morton, Andy Boal, Nuala Crilly, Brian Murray, Diane Marks, Bert Bailie.

Observers: Sean Coulter (Department for Infrastructure), Naomi Roberts (Equality Commission), Orla McCann (Disability Action), Francis Hughes (Age Sector Platform).

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer

Prior to the start of the meeting Max asked Michael to contact members still to complete the Register of Interest form.

1. Introductions and apologies

1.1 Apologies were given and accepted from Joe Kenny, Alison Lockhart, Sam Bell, Anne Straghan, Anne Scott, Ciaran Crilly, Terry Butler, Scott Kennerley, and Jenny Robinson.

2. Observers updates

2.1 Max asked the minute record congratulations to Jenny Robinson who recently got married.

2.2 Sean briefed members on the plans to hold a workshop on the Department's draft Delivery Plan linked to the draft Accessible Transport Strategy. Sean highlighted recent developments including the inclusion of Changing Places facilities at 4 Translink stations and the launch of Glider. Members raised issues relating to Glider and the North West Transport Hub.

- 2.3 Naomi provided an update on plans by the Independent Monitoring Mechanism in Northern Ireland to establish an advisory committee including disabled people to inform its role in monitoring implementation of CRPD.
- 2.4 Orla gave members an overview of the results of the recent survey of the experiences of DATS users. Members asked when the survey results will be published, what the results will be used for and if there is any likelihood of service restrictions in evenings and weekends being lifted.
- 2.5 Francis raised concerns about information about Smartpass holders contained on bus tickets that may present data protection issues.
- Action: Sean agreed to discuss concerns with officials in the Department.**

3. Chairperson and other updates

- 3.1 Before providing his update Max thanked current and past Imtac members, observers, officials from the Department and Michael for the support he has received during this time as Chairperson. Max informed members that the recruitment for a new Chairperson and for members will be launched on the 13th September.
- 3.2 Max updated members on a meeting with David Cowan from Translink and a meeting of the Business Group in July as well as his attendance at the launch of the Glider service and the renaming of Lanyon Place station.
- 3.3 Bert informed members that Michael will be making a presentation to a technical meeting of CIHT members on the 8th October 2018. The title of the presentation is “Creating and Maintaining Modern Infrastructure to Deliver a More Inclusive Society”.

- 3.4 Michael updated members on the delivery of Disability Equality Training (DET) to Glider drivers and Customer and Revenue Protection Officers over the summer. He thanked Dave, Diane and Vivien for their support in delivering the training. Michael updated members on recent discussions with David Cowan about the Translink Senior Management team undertaking DET.
- 3.5 Sheelagh updated members about her attendance at a recent Glider Marketing & Communications Stakeholder Group Meeting, expressing frustration about the absence of information about how to use the service. Michael briefed members on the development of a guide to using Glider for disabled people and older people. Members emphasised the need for the Guide to be available in a range of formats.

David and Vivien joined the meeting.

- 3.6 Michael updated members the development of signage for priority seating on Glider and highlighted some issues identified by members during training and travel on Glider. Members raised further issues including access for wheelchair users.
Action: Michael agreed to circulate a list of issues to members for comment in advance of meeting with Translink.
- 3.7 Michael updated members on the refurbishment and renaming of Lanyon Place station.
- 3.8 Michael updated members on the launch of the Urby bus service, including the introduction of 28 new low-floor double deck buses. Members expressed frustration that advice from the Committee about the layout of the bus interior had not been followed. It was agreed that in future the Committee should request Translink formally respond to written comments from Imtac, highlighting why advice has not been followed.
- 3.9 Michael provided an update on a request from Translink for advice on footbridge provision at Lambeg station. Members endorsed the

position adopted that Translink should first and foremost look at step-free solutions with refurbishment being the last resort and that it is essential that Translink have a clear policy to provide an alternative means of travel where stations are not accessible.

- 3.10 Michael updated members on proposals to redevelop Yorkgate station in Belfast. Members broadly welcomed the positive changes including the inclusion of a Changing Places facility.
- 3.11 Michael updated members on the recent taxi survey undertaken by the Department. Over 700 responses have been submitted.
- 3.12 Michael updated members on proposals to organise walking audits of the proposed areas for Belfast Streets Ahead Phase 5 in late September and early October. Michael also briefed members on the development of the Better Bedford Street project, including the widening of footways and the use of pavement art. It was agreed to include an assessment of the project as part of the Phase 5 street audits. Michael provided an update on public realm schemes proposed for Dromore and Newry.

The meeting stopped for a short break.

- 3.13 Bert informed members that a recent application to the Big Lottery Awards for All to develop a one-stop shop website for disabled people and older people has been successful. Members agreed that the Business Group should take forward the project.

Sean Coulter left the meeting.

- 3.14 Nuala provided members with an update on requests made to the Department on behalf of the Smartpass Equality Campaign in relation to the Commercial Bus Service Permitting scheme. Michael informed members that the Department is still considering changes to the scheme.

- 3.15 Michael updated members on proposals to establish a working group to work with Translink on a range of issues. The working group will be a sub-committee of Imtac, and will include a Convenor from Imtac and up to 3 other Imtac members. It is proposed that 8 further members will be disabled or older people. Members expressed their support for the proposed way forward.

4. Evaluation of Pavement Café Licensing

- 4.1 Michael briefed members on the draft report including the outcome of recent Freedom of Information requests made to local councils. Michael also updated members about recent correspondence from DfI Roads relating to the Highways Considerations Guidance. Members expressed significant frustration about the approach adopted by councils, the Departments involved and the Equality Commission throughout the development and implementation of pavement café licensing.

Action: Members to provide further comments in the next 7-10 days.

Action: It was agreed to write to both the Department and the Equality Commission outlining the Committees continuing concerns about the approach of both bodies.

5. Draft Annual Report

- 5.1 Max asked members to discuss which issues to include in advice to the Department in the Annual Report. Following discussion members asked that the following be included: the current impasse over pavement café licensing, issues for Half-Fare Smartpass holders in relation to the Translink Ticketing Project and raising standards of the accessibility of public transport vehicles, particularly for wheelchair users.

Action: Members to provide further comments in the next 7-10 days.

Action: Members agreed to request a meeting with the Permanent Secretary to present the final report.

6. Minutes of the last meeting

6.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Proposed: Bert Bailie

Seconded: Vivien Blakely

7. Matters arising

7.1 With relation to the review of the Memorandum of Understanding between Imtac and the Department (3.3), Max asked the Committee to delegate responsibility for amendments to current arrangements for provision of the secretariat to the Business Group. This was agreed.

Proposed: Sheelagh McRandal Seconded: Andy Boal

8. Any other business

8.1 Members requested that briefings be arranged on developments around the North West and Belfast Transport Hubs.

8.2 Sheelagh led tributes and thanks to Max to mark his last Imtac meeting as Chairperson.

9. Date of future meetings

9.1 It is planned to hold the next meeting at the Mount, Belfast on the 12th December 2018 starting at 12.30pm.