

Minutes of the 147th Imtac Meeting

Date and time: 29th November 2023 at 1pm

Place: Hybrid meeting held at the Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast and via ZOOM.

Present: Bert Bailie [BB] (Chairperson), Aaron McKane [AMc], Andy Boal [ABo], Jackson Minford [JM], June Best [JB], Terry McCorry [TMc], Christine McClements [CMc], Eileen Drumm [ED], Rebecca Bamford [RB], Nigel Flynn [NF], Paula Meenan [PM], Alison Lockhart [AL].

Observers: Scott McClenaghan [SMc] (Department for Infrastructure), Hannah Brown [HB] (Consumer Council), Danielle Campbell [DC] (Translink), Brian Drury [BD] (Equality Commission), Andrea Brown [AB] (Disability Action).

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer [ML].

Apologies: Hayley Smallwoods [HS], Dermot Devlin [DD], Sam Bell [SB], Lynsey Burrows [LB].

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 BB welcomed everyone. He asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Chairperson's update

2.1 BB updated members about his attendance at an Equality Commission / NICVA seminar about the impact of the budget situation, and meetings about active travel and bus procurement. He briefed members about a request to meet with the new DfI Permanent Secretary which has been accepted with a suitable date being sought.

2.2 BB briefed members about positive meetings with David Cowan and most recently Chris Conway at Translink. He informed

members that an invitation has been extended and accepted for Chris to attend a future Imtac meeting.

Action 1: ML and DC to liaise about dates for Chris Conway to attend an Imtac meeting.

3. Observer updates

3.1 DC informed members that the Disability Equality Training for the Senior Leadership Team will take place in the New Year. She asked for interest in participation in guided journeys which form part of the training.

Action 2: Members interested in leading guided journeys to let ML know.

3.2 DC updated members on ongoing visual awareness training and plans for further engagement about the Hub. DC thanked members for their advice around the future provision of tactile wayfinding at railway stations.

3.3 AB briefed members about an increase in DATS fares because of ongoing funding reductions. AB also updated members about Disability Action's input into the review of community transport services. ML suggested the Committee ask for an update on the review.

Action 3: SMC agreed to seek an update on the community transport review next steps,

3.4 BD updated members on IMNI awareness activities since the CRPD Committee session in Geneva in August. A date of the 18th March 2024 has been set for the UK Government to brief the CRPD Committee with wider stakeholder engagement in the days after.

3.5 BD briefed members on the outcome of recent legal cases and an event on employment and disabled people to be held on the 5th December. Members commented about accessibility of the venue and the provision of Changing Places Toilets.

3.6 HB updated members on a site visit to City of Derry airport and thanked members for their assistance in securing the installation of a Changing Places Toilet. HB also updated on the ongoing survey on electric vehicles and reported on two complaints about wheelchair / mobility scooter batteries in relation to air travel. Members asked for further detail on the air travel complaints.
Action 4: HB to forward further details about the complaints about batteries and air travel.

3.7 SMC outlined the ongoing budgetary pressures on the Department and indicated that the 2024/25 budgetary position was still unclear. SMC also updated members about progress with analysing the response to the Concessionary Fares consultation and the review of community transport services.

4. Current consultations

4.1 BB asked members to comment on the draft response to the Belfast City Council consultation on Pavement Café Licensing. During discussion members requested that enforcement be given greater prominence and reference included to a complaints mechanism. The Committee requested that specific reference be made to footpaths being for people first.
Action 5: Members to submit final comments on the pavement café licensing response before the end of the day.

4.2 BB introduced the Active Travel Plan Inclusive Design Framework updating members about meeting between Imtac members, the Department and the consultants, Atkins. During discussions the unanimous consensus was the framework, apart from being an unwieldy unclear document, fell some way short of addressing the Committee's expectations around inclusive design. It was agreed to highlight the Committee's concerns to the Department at the first opportunity.
Action 6: BB to highlight the Committee's concerns about the draft Inclusive Design Framework to the Department as soon as practicable.

5. Imtac Policy papers

- 5.1 BB asked members for comments on the last draft of the policy paper about the future role of the car for mobility with a view to finalising the paper for publication.

Action 7: Members to feedback comments on the draft policy paper by the 15th December 2023.

- 5.2 BB introduced the discussion paper on access to health and transport and ML outlined the approach used by MACS on a similar project. During discussions members highlighted the cost of travel, the lack of flexibility with appointments and issues accessing both community transport and Patient Transport Services. Members broadly agreed the approach to the task should be in line with that taken by MACS.

Action 8: It was agreed a small group of members including BB, TMc and RB, should develop a delivery framework for the task.

Action 9: ML agreed to contact the Disabled People's Regional Health Forum to discuss joint working.

6. Working group and other updates

- 6.1 ML updated members about the recent meeting of the Translink Accessibility Working Group and subsequent developments including a request from Translink for advice about proposals to provide a footbridge at Jordanstown train station.

Action 10: ML to circulate details of the Jordanstown station proposal with the aim of providing final advice to Translink before the Christmas break.

- 6.2 ML briefed members about site visits in Belfast and Craigavon relating to active travel projects.

7. Members discussion on priority activities until the end of March 2023

7.1 BB briefed members about the rationale for the discussion. During discussion the unanimous preference for members was to undertake further engagement activities. Suggestions included engagement events in more remote parts of Northern Ireland such as Fermanagh, engagement with the Deaf community and utilising online engagement including hybrid meetings. Members also suggested utilising resources for better promotion of the work of Imtac and the Accessible Transport NI website.

8. Minutes of the last meeting / matters arising

8.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Proposed: Andy Boal Seconded: Aaron McKane

8.2 All matters arising have been completed or addressed during meeting.

9 Date, time and venue of next meeting

9.1 The next meeting will be held on the 21st February 2024, at 1pm in the Crescent Arts Centre.

List of actions

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