

Minutes of the 150th Imtac Meeting

Date and time: 25th September 2024 at 1pm

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

Present: Bert Bailie [BB] (Chairperson), Terry McCorry [TMc], Vivien Blakely [VB], Dave Morton [DMo], Jackson Minford [JM], Eileen Drumm [ED], Dermot Devlin [DD], June Best [JB], Paula Meenan [PM], Rebecca Bamford [RB], Sam Bell [SB], Christine McClements [CMc], Hayley Smallwood [HS], Barbara Fleming [BF].

Observers: Scott McClenaghan [SMc] (Department for Infrastructure), Hannah Brown [HB] (Consumer Council), Danielle Campbell [DC] & Rosanna Jack [RJ] (both Translink), Andrea Brown [ABr] (Disability Action).

In attendance: Chris Conway & David Cowan (both Translink)

Secretariat: Michael Lorimer [ML].

Apologies: Nigel Flynn [NF], Lynsey Burrows [LB].

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 BB welcomed new members and reappointed members attending the first meeting following the recruitment outcome. He asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Guest Speaker – Chris Conway (Translink CEO)

2.1 BB welcomed Chris to the meeting.

2.2 Chris talked about the invaluable partnership between Imtac and Translink including on work on stations and bus design. He highlighted the positive impact of the recent Disability Equality Training undertaken by the Translink Senior Leadership Team.

Chris concluded by mentioning the positive partnership around developing Grand Central Station. He indicated that whilst phased opening created issues and that not everything was not perfect, there was a commitment to resolve any issues as soon as possible.

- 2.3 Members questions included links between Grand Central and the City Centre, the issues created by a quiet station and the welcome addition of an assistance dog spending area. Chris indicated that there were no plans to have a bus link to the city centre at this time but that this may be reviewed later. He explained the rationale for limiting announcements in the bus station.
- 2.4 Wider questions included level access trains, halt accessibility and access to bus stops. Chris indicated that projects around bus stop accessibility and access to halts were being progressed in the next year. Level access trains are being considered and provision has been incorporated into the design of platforms in Grand Central.
- 2.5 ML apologised for the issues for people online. Questions posted in chat will be forwarded to Translink. Chris offered to meet members online if required. Bert thanked Chris for his time.
Action: ML to forward online questions to Chris to RJ / DC

Chris Conway left the meeting.

3. Chairperson's and other updates

- 3.1 BB briefed members about the recent Business Committee meeting and a meeting with DfI Sponsor Branch Head where the Work Programme was agreed and adopted.
- 3.2 BB indicated he would be meeting with the Transport Planning Team on the 26th September. Following correspondence with John O'Dowd, a further meeting with the Minister will be held on the 22nd October 2024 at 11am in Parliament Buildings – any member

available is welcome to attend. BB also indicated that DPTAC will be hosting the next A4N meeting on the 16th October.

Action: Any member wishing to attend the meeting with Minister on the 22nd October should let ML know as soon as possible.

3.3 ML gave members a quick overview of the updates for noting. DM gave a positive report on the visit to Grand Central in early September.

3.4 JB outlined her concerns about the change in approach suggested by the Assembly Outreach Team in relation to the Disabled People's Parliament. She indicated that feedback she had provided appears not to be considered. JB suggested Imtac should consider withdrawing from the proposed consultative panel. Members expressed concerns about the change in approach being presented by TEO.

Action: Following discussion, the Committee agreed final decision about participation in the Parliament should be devolved to BB and JB in consultation with ML.

3.5 ML highlighted a request from the Department for advice from Imtac around EV charging infrastructure for houses without a driveway. He asked for members interested in attending an online meeting.

Action: ML to arrange a meeting with DfI involving TMc, VB, JB, SB and JM. HB from the Consumer Council to also be invited.

3.6 ML indicated that the initial consultation on the vision and outcomes for the North West Transport Plan has been published and asked members how Imtac should respond.

Action: It was agreed that ML should arrange an online meeting with the NW Transport Plan Team and circulate to members.

3.7 ML informed members that the next Translink DET session would take place on the 11th October. The session needs guides for journeys who will be paid £100.

Action: Anyone interested in being a guide should contact ML as soon as possible.

4. Observers' updates

4.1 RJ updated on Translink's plans to create a video highlighting the importance of priority seating and plans for the next meeting of the bus procurement group. DC updated on the launch of the Grand Central Station Accessibility Guide. Members raised issues about enforcement of accessible parking bays at Park & Ride sites.

4.2 AB (DA) welcomed the increase in funding for DATS and other services. She also informed members of funding from the Motability Foundation which will enable the Mobility Centre to improve driver training and assessments and to purchase a drive on vehicle.

4.3 HB (CCNI) thanked members for their participation in the recent site visit to review new security provision at Belfast International Airport. A report will be developed with further visits towards the end of the year. Members raised issues around recent incidents at airports. BB requested any relevant information regarding incidents that could contribute to a discussion on PRM at airports at the A4N Liaison Group meeting.

Action: HB to consider and forward any information to ML.

4.4 SMc (Dfl) highlighted the funding increase to community transport and Shopmobility following the Budget EQIA. He confirmed that the meeting to present the Imtac Annual Report to the Minister will take place on the 22nd October. He updated members on the meeting between Imtac and the Sponsor Team and the Sponsor Team attendance at the launch of the Grand Central Accessibility Guide. He concluded by informing members that Judith Andrews

would be leaving her role to take up a promotion, a replacement is still to be confirmed.

5. Update on Access to Health and Transport task

5.1 ML gave members an overview of progress since the last meeting including the first meeting of the Steering Group, the revision of the timetable, the finalisation of the survey and plans for engagement events. RB informed members about the process of seeking ethics approval for the project which is progressing well.

5.2 Members asked about how the survey would be made accessible to people with learning difficulties and how people in care homes could be included.

Action: ML to develop proposals to ensure that people with learning difficulties can participate in the project.

6. Consultation on the draft Programme for Government

6.1 ML briefed members about draft Programme for Government. He indicated that the Executive Office has reached out offering a meeting. Both ML and members indicated disappointment about the lack of ambition and detail in the draft PfG.

Action: ML to arrange a meeting for members with PfG Team.

7. Current papers

7.1 ML gave members an overview of the two papers looking at public realm proposals in Belfast City Centre and Hillsborough.

7.2 Members asked that comments about footway widths be more specifically linked to standards. Members expressed concerns about the number of outstanding issues in Hillsborough and suggested the Council should be strongly encouraged to implement wider recommendations.

Action: Members to feedback comments on the draft reports in the next 7 to 10 days.

8. Minutes of the last meeting / matters arising

8.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Proposed: Dave Morton Seconded: Terry McCorry

8.2 Progress on actions was noted and it was agreed to carry forward actions relating to re-issue of the Policy & Procedures Manual, PSVAR/bus substitution services and Andy Boal's paper on Half Fare Smartpasses.

Action: ML to circulate an updated Policy & Procedures Manual

Action: ML to facilitate further discussion involving Imtac, DfI and Translink around PSVAR compliance and bus substitution services.

Action: ML and A Boal to discuss progressing the Smartpass paper.

9 Any other business

9.1 JB raised issues around Imtac representation on the VI Sector Forum. PM offered support in resolving the situation.

Action: PM and ML to liaise on a way forward

9.2 ML apologised to everyone about the issues with the WiFi at the venue, he indicated that another venue may need to be identified for future meetings.

10 Date, time and venue of next meeting

10.1 The next meeting will be held on the 27th November 2024, at 1pm in a venue to be confirmed.

List of actions

Action 1: ML to forward online questions to Chris to RJ / DC

Action 2: Any member wishing to attend the meeting with Minister on the 22nd October should let ML know as soon as possible.

- Action 3: Following discussion, the Committee agreed final decision about participation in the Parliament should be devolved to BB and JB in consultation with ML.**
- Action 4: ML to arrange a meeting with Dfl involving TMc, VB, JB, SB and JM. HB from the Consumer Council to also be invited.**
- Action 5: It was agreed that ML should arrange an online meeting with the NW Transport Plan Team and circulate to members.**
- Action 6: Anyone interested in being a guide should contact ML as soon as possible.**
- Action 7: HB to consider and forward any information to ML.**
- Action 8: ML to develop proposals to ensure that people with learning difficulties can participate in the project.**
- Action 9: ML to arrange a meeting for members with PfG Team.**
- Action 10: Members to feedback comments on the draft reports in the next 7 to 10 days.**
- Action 11: ML to facilitate further discussion involving lmtac, Dfl and Translink around PSVAR compliance and bus substitution services.**
- Action 12: ML and ABo to discuss progressing the Smartpass paper.**
- Action 13: PM and ML to liaise on a way forward re the VI Sector Forum**