# **NORTHERN IRELAND TRANSPORT HOLDING COMPANY cx**

## 16 October 2024 | 9.30am | Boardroom, 22 Great Victoria Street, Belfast

## PRESENT: Michael Wardlow (Chair)

Chris Conway (*CC*)

Mike Brown (*MB*)

Edward Wills (*EW*)

Manish Gupta *(MG)*

Don Leeson *(DL)*

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ronan Doherty, *Chief Financial Officer* (*RD*)

Jacqui Kennedy, *Chief People and Corporate Services Officer* (*JK*)

Shauna McAuley, *Senior Legal Counsel (SMcA)*

David Cowan, *Director of Commercial Operations* *(DC)*

Ian Campbell, *Director of Service Operations* *(IC)*

**APOLOGIES:** Grainne McVeigh *(GMcV)*

Priscilla Rooney, General Counsel and Company Secretary *(PR)*

John Glass, Director of Infrastructure and Projects, *(JG)*

**GROUP STATEMENT:** The Directors of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company are also the Directors of all other companies within the Group. As such they are mindful of their responsibilities and statutory duties to each. These minutes record the business of the Group meeting at which matters, factors and decisions relating to individual companies were raised and addressed.

**4373** **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting and extended a warm welcome to the new members of the Board. The Chair noted apologies from Grainne McVeigh (GMcV), John Glass (JG) Director of Infrastructure and Projects and Priscilla Rooney, General Counsel and Company Secretary (PR).

**4374** **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**4375 MINUTES AND ACTION LIST**

The minutes from the 18 September 2024 meeting were approved. Action 4308(v) was closed, the Head of Corporate Health and Safety providing a presentation to the Board later.

**4376** **SAFETY MOMENT**

IC shared a safety moment focused on the theme of keeping safety communications ‘fresh‘. He presented two contrasting examples of safety briefings: one where the message was largely ignored, and another where the presenter effectively engaged the audience. IC highlighted that the difference lay in the delivery style—one presenter gave monotonous, repetitive information, while the other connected with and actively involved the audience. The key takeaway was the importance of ensuring safety messages remain fresh and that their delivery is engaging to maintain attention and effectiveness.

**4377 CHAIR & BOARD BUSINESS**

The Chair reported that Belfast Grand Central Station is now operational, with the next milestone being the launch of an hourly Enterprise Service starting on 29 October 2024. The discussion also covered the recent Judicial Review challenge, as well as a request for Irish language signage at the station. Translink is actively collaborating with stakeholders to address these matters.

**4378 SAFETY**

The report was taken as read with JK highlighting the following salient points:

1. Board Safety Oversight Committee: EW, as Chair of the BSOC, provided an update following the meeting of the Committee. He noted the increased prevalence of SPADs in the current year and the establishment of a safety review panel to tease out any common factors. Winter preparedness has also commenced with full mitigation measures being implemented.
2. Safety Performance Indicators: JK advised that there was three major injuries in the period and 6 SPADS in the current year. The safety review panel, chaired by the GCE, has looked at trends surrounding the SPADs with most recommendations already underway. MB commended the team on the work to date and offered to continue to review and support the teams in their efforts.
3. JK and IC updated the Board on the significant incident involving the Ulsterbus at Ballyblack Road which occurred outside the reporting period. The major incident protocol was enacted and the Group have been cooperating fully with the PSNI. A formal Independent Safety Panel has also been established to undertake an investigation and will update the BSOC as the investigation progresses.

**4379 GCE REPORT**

The Board took the paper, KPIs, and Major Project Summary as read with the following matters highlighted:

1. Passenger Journeys: GCE reported that journeys were 1.2 million below budget, largely due to poor weather impacting leisure travel and the rail blockade. It is anticipated that the opening of Belfast Grand Central Station will help reduce this shortfall.
2. Service Operations: IC commented that Metro reliability fell below target. The Metro Performance Improvement team continue to develop actions to improve reliability including collaborating with DfI to mitigate to impact of road works on bus services.
3. Infrastructure and Projects: GCE noted that capital funding allocation is behind were it needs to be and measures are being put in place to reduce spend in line with budget allocation.
4. Commercial Operations: DC updated the Board on the success of Ylink cards and noted the huge uptake on the use of contactless ticketing with more than 1m credit and debit cards in use on the network. It was also noted that full booking management will be available on the Enterprise service by the end of October 2024.
5. Legal & Governance: The mid-year Assurance Statement was presented to the Board for noting.

**4380 CFO REPORT**

The CFO’s report was taken as read with the following highlighted:

Period 6: The Group’s operating loss for the year to date was adverse to budget loss. The LBE1 forecast sees a revised change in the year end cash position below the Group‘s minimum cash threshold.

**4381 CPO REPORT**

The CPO report was taken as read with the following significant matters noted:

1. Holiday Pay Claims: Judicial mediation took place in relation to the NIR cohort last week. The team have had good engagement with the Claimants and a second day of mediation is due to take place in November. The Group have continued to keep DfI fully up to date on the progress of the Claims.
2. Employee Relations: The organisation is currently exploring future approaches to modernise its engagement with employees and Trade Unions, with an update to follow in due course. In the meantime, the company has recevied a second pay claim in relation to staff in Platform grades with a request that discussions commence in November.

**4382 DFI CORRESPONDENCE**

The DfI correspondence was noted. Correspondence from Minister Ryan was specifically highlighted, expressing thanks to Translink for its valuable contribution to the All-Island Strategic Rail Review

1. **AD HOC PAPERS**

John Thompson joined the meeting and presented an update on Translink’s Climate Positive Strategy.

**4384 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Minutes of the meetings of the BARC held on 17 June 2024 and 20 August 2024 were noted. The approval of the Annual Report and Accounts were highlighted for mention together with the overall internal audit rating of ‘satisfactory’.

The POC was noted to have met on 15 October 2024. Of mention was the approval of the full business case addendum for Belfast Grand Central Station due to extraordinary inflation in the construction industry. An update was also provided on the bus engineering rationalisation.

BSOC met on 20 August and 15 October 2024. The August minutes were taken as read with focus on SPADs highlighted.

A meeting of GRPC took place on 25 September 2024. Of note, it was confirmed objective setting had been completed for all Senior Executives. A Report prepared on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion was also discussed. It was agreed that the report would be shared with the Board.

**ACTION:** JK to share Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report with the Board.

1. **AOB**

New Board member inductions will take place in advance of the next Board meeting.

The Chair issued a reminder to all Board members to update their Conflicts of Interest schedule regularly.

The Chair and GCE discussed with the new members the format of the Bi-Annual Accountability meeting which took place after the Board meeting.

**4386** **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

20 November 2024.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **DATE**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chair