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Our Ref: STOF-0074-2022  
19<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Mr Dollimore

## Cycling UK follow up letter to DfI

I refer to your letter to DfI Permanent Secretary, Julie Harrison, dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. Your letter has been passed to me to respond as the Director of Transport Policy and Planning.

I have addressed each of your 4 questions as below:

### 1. 10% spend of the transport budget on walking and cycling

The Department is progressing work to quantify the transport budget and the allocation to walking and cycling in accordance with the legislation. As such we are not currently in a position to share figures. There has been ongoing engagement with DAERA, as the lead department on climate change, including to seek clarification regarding the requirements contained within the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and in respect of Section 22. You will appreciate that the budget situation has been extremely challenging however, we expect to have a clearer understanding of how the Department will align its staff and financial resources to support active travel delivery very soon. In addition, the Department has just restructured its divisions and the Active Travel posts have yet to be finalised. However, two new senior posts have been created, with individuals expected to take up these posts in early in 2023.

### 2. Delays over multiple projects

Following feedback from the previous pop-up cycle lane proposal for Limestone / Cavehill Roads we have commissioned the design of a permanent cycle lane rather than a pop up. This is taking longer than expected to complete. Engagement with stakeholders will be programmed once the detailed design has been completed.

I can advise that the civils work for the lighting of the Comber Greenway is complete except for the length between Beersbridge Road and North Road, for which we are awaiting the delivery of columns. Eight NIE mini pillar power supplies have still to be provided and we are informed these have been programmed to take place Jan/Feb and early March 2023.

The Department is aware of the concerns raised by wheeled users regarding vehicles parking in the pop-up cycle lane in Hardcastle Street and Marcus Ward Street and following on from the pop up consultation will be developing a permanent design which will be supported by legislation. Once the detailed design is developed, the scheme will be taken forward to consultation and further progress will be dependent on completion of the legislative process.

The Department recently sought views on how to deal with pavement parking with the consultation period finishing on 18 March 2022. In response the Department received 1,209 replies to the online questionnaire and 28 written replies, the responses are currently being analysed. Seeking the public views on options to deal with pavement parking follows and complements the Department's "Think Before You Park" road safety campaign which launched on 2nd November 2021 and which is aimed at highlighting and addressing the dangers associated with pavement parking. The campaign was publicised on radio, bus rear advertising and on social media, and carries the hashtag #ThinkBeforeYouPark.

In relation to fixed penalty offence and careless driving there are two Statutory Rules are needed. Ministerial approval for these was given earlier this year and the legislation has been drafted. Departmental officials are now working with PSNI to ensure that they are operationally ready for implementation. The new arrangements are expected to be in place by Spring 2023.

### **3. Belfast Bicycle Network**

As mentioned in my response to Mr Muir, the Department is currently considering taking on a greater role in the delivery of greenways going forward and as a result, a new model for the delivery of active travel schemes across the province is currently being developed. As I mentioned two new senior posts have been created, with individuals expected to take up these posts in early in 2023. Once the new model is in place and established, I would anticipate an increase in the number of schemes being delivered across the province.

As you will be aware, Departments are currently developing sectoral plans setting out how each sector will contribute to the achievement of the targets set out in Climate Change Act. Active travel will play a critical role in this; however, plans will need to be flexible to support and align with any future transport policy changes.

Funding of this and other programmes will of course be subject to future budget settlements.

### **4. Meeting between Finance, Communities, and the Department for Infrastructure**

In the absence of Ministers and an Assembly the Department is still planning to establish a cross departmental steering group to examine a joined-up approach to active travel. We have yet to set out the terms of reference for the group. Initially, the group will include involvement from across Departments only. Other stakeholders may be invited for input as and when required.

Yours sincerely

*Claire Cockerill*

Claire Cockerill  
Director of Transport Policy