



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Andrew Muir MLA**

Alliance Party Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly for North Down

1 November 2022

Julie Harrison  
Permanent Secretary  
Department for Infrastructure  
Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street  
BELFAST  
BT2 8GB

Dear Julie

I write further to notification received on 18 November 2022 former Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd MLA was no longer available to attend the All-Party Group (APG) on Cycling.

The APG were extremely disappointed that neither the Minister nor officials were able to attend the meeting, at short notice.

Cycling, and Active Travel more generally, are critical to delivering sustainable travel and our obligations under the Climate Change Act hence the profound frustration.

In the correspondence received it was detailed "The Minister has directed that any questions' attendees' would like to the department to answer, be submitted to his department for officials to issue a response."

Further to this please see below questions for response:

1. What measures has the Department taken to support and encourage people to cycle as a cheap, affordable means of travel in the context of Cost of Living crisis? Has consideration been given for a discount to be provided to those who don't qualify for the Cycle to Work Scheme?
2. Has consideration been given to giving greater flexibility to District Councils for funding spend as part of the Blue Green Fund?
3. What progress is being made on the 10-year Belfast Cycling Network Plan? It is noted a further consultation is happening on one small section in North Belfast.

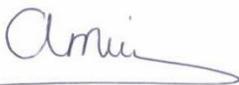
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4. It is noted poles have been erected on Comber Greenway but no lights, what are the timescales for erection of lights and completion of the scheme?
5. Further to passage of the Climate Change Act 10% of Transport Budget must be spent on walking and cycling. What progress has been made on allocating this? What has spend been in previous Financial Years in monetary terms and as percentage of Transport budgets.
6. Can an update be provided on Northern Ireland adopting the GB Highway code changes. What is the rationale for waiting till other matters such as eScooters resolved when Road Safety could be improved by swift update in the near future?
7. Are any plans afoot for an education campaign concerning Road Safety for cyclists including close pass awareness
8. In new Road Safety Strategy what is rationale for 'shared responsibility' as opposed to 'hierarchy of responsibility' which other nations use.
9. What is the latest situation concerning review of Special Events Road Closure legislation.
10. The role of the Walking & Cycling Champion within the Department is a part-time position. This time commitment is clearly inadequate. What consideration has been given to making this a full-time post, with the potential for an external appointment?
11. The Walking and Cycling Group within the Department is clearly under resourced in terms of staff and funding. Does the Department intend to review with a view to properly resourcing the Group
12. The Department set up a Walking and Cycling Advisory Group to better engage with wider community interests both individuals and organizations. This Group meets infrequently and its full, potential contribution has not been realised. Do plans exist to review the role and purpose of this group and improve communications with the Department?

We recognise some of the questions raised may be difficult in the absence of a Minister but would appreciate update from the Department where possible.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely



Andrew Muir MLA  
Chair – All Party Group on Cycling