

19th MEETING OF THE ACCESSIBILITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ACC)
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport
Leeson Lane, Dublin 2
22nd January 2020

Attendance

Eilis O'Connor (Chair)	Dept. of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS)
Kevin Doyle	DTTAS
David Ball	DTTAS
Priscilla Wolf	DTTAS
Nigel Grogan	DTTAS
Dermot Murphy	DTTAS
Tom Kilfeather	County and City Managers Association CCMA)
Deborah Maguire	Commission for Aviation Regulation (CAR)
Annette Costello	Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG)
Elaine Howley	DSG
Tara Kerry	Fáilte Ireland
Niamh Fawl	National Disability Authority (NDA)
Naomi Rooney	National Transport Authority (NTA)
Cólleen Devine-O'Rourke	Sport Ireland
Sarah O'Donnell	Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)
Donal Minnock	TII

Apologies

Brendan Lennon	Chime
Donie O'Leary	DSG
Nóirin Clancy	Inclusion Ireland
Mairead Hayes	Irish Senior Citizens Parliament
Joan Carthy	Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA)
Geraldine Browne	Road Safety Authority (RSA)
Kevin Kelly	National Council for the Blind of Ireland (NCBI)

1. Introductory remarks and tour de table

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting including Cólleen Devine-O'Rourke representing Sport Ireland, and Donal Minnock from TII, and noted the apologies received.

2. TII presentation on Motorway Service Areas (with respect to access and services for people with disabilities)

Donal Minnock (TII) gave a [presentation](#) on TII's Motorway Service Areas - with respect to access and services for people with disabilities. The main points arising from this presentation and the subsequent discussion were

- TII's remit in relation to the Motorway Service Areas (MSAs) for which it awards contracts, and how it came to have its role.
- There are also privately operated motorway service areas which TII has no input into, e.g. it is the Local Authority which grants planning permission.
- The FuelService App (currently used by Apple Green) may be used to notify a Motorway Service Area in advance, that a person will need assistance with refuelling.
- Some of the Operators running private service areas also operate the TII MSAs (Circle K and Applegreen), so it may be the case that these companies would elect to operate to the same standard. TII however has no control or input into the management of such facilities.
- Independently sourced Mystery Shoppers are used to check on facilities. TII agreed to forward additional information to the ACC and to check whether any of the mystery shopper visits can be conducted by a person with a disability.
- Members of TII staff do spot checks, and it also has technical advisors who carry out routine audits of the MSAs performance, including monitoring and checks for accessibility requirements.
- PPP contracts include robust operational requirements and non-compliance reports may be raised under the quality and environmental management systems of the Contract.
- As well as meeting building regulations TII is exploring the possibility of implementing measures including the provision of changing facilities, where practical, at the facilities such that they would be code of practice BS 8300 compliant.
- Amenities may/may not require expansion in size to accommodate recommended compliance measures, TII are consulting with architects (including Fionnuala Rogerson) on determining practical proposals.
- It was confirmed that where touch screens are used at hot food facilities, there are always staff at counters as well, for anyone who needs assistance.
- TII is working to implement the Accessibility Audit findings based on greatest benefit.

3. Minutes and Actions from ACC Meeting on 27th November 2019

Minutes agreed as circulated beforehand by Secretariat. Actions were reported on as follows:

<u>No.</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
1	The NTA, in conjunction with IWA, to seek to identify possible solution to the issue of wheelchair spaces on the new single deck buses in Waterford and the GDA.	NTA	Carried over. See discussion below.
2	Update on access issues in new Fáilte Ireland building in Cork City.	Fáilte Ireland	Carried over. See discussion below.
3	Circulate BÉ's new policy on motorised scooters and motorised wheelchairs when finalised.	Secretariat	Carried over. See discussion below.
4	Undertake high level review to identify possible solutions to address problems in the vicinity of Connolly Station / Busáras / Luas. TII and NTA to discuss setting up of a multi-agency interchange group.	TII and NTA	Carried over. See discussion below.
5	Colours on new bus poles. NCBI to revert to NTA on further design changes.	NTA & NCBI	Carried over. See discussion below.
6	Forward ACC information from NSAI about wheelchair standards when received.	NTA	Done. See discussion below.
7	Forward the Accessibility Customer Tool Kit to CAR.	NDA	Done.

In the context of discussion on actions the following main points were discussed:

Action 1: New single deck buses

Bamford Bus Company, the new owners of Wrightbus, has been contacted in relation to potential changes to the buses manufactured by Wrightbus. This is a work in progress. NTA has engaged with the IWA on this issue.

Action 2: Access issues in new Fáilte Ireland (FI) building in Cork City

There has been a delay due to internal procedures within Cork City Council, as the planning authority. As a result there is a three month period to complete this work. It is hoped that works will be completed by the end of May 2020. FI to send update to Secretariat, for circulation to ACC members.

Action 3: BÉ new policy on motorised scooters and motorised wheelchairs

Bus Éireann has not yet finalised its new policy.

Action 4: Undertake high level review to identify possible solutions to address problems in the vicinity of Connolly Station / Busáras / Luas. TII and NTA to discuss setting up of a multi-agency interchange group.

As noted at the previous ACC meetings, the NTA is not in a position at present to advance with this project.

TII is working on issues within its own remit and it noted that feedback from the Luas User group was useful for this.

The Clontarf to Talbot Street cycleway project (and the Amiens Street to Custom House Quay route) led by DCC was discussed and in particular the works on footpaths and crossing points. The need for such works to be included in a masterplan for the area was raised. It was noted that the Clontarf route had gone out to consultation. The need for communication between organisations in such instances was stressed.

The NTA agreed to get more information on these two schemes for circulation to the ACC.

Action 5: Colours on new bus poles

Formal response awaited from NCBI to NTA.

Action 6: Forward ACC information from NSAI about wheelchair standards

The NTA had requested information from the NSAI about wheelchair space size in public vehicles. NSAI is not in a position to direct on how to change UN Regulations.

4. Recent updates

The Chair noted how this ACC meeting was being held to align with the forthcoming NDIS Steering Group meeting on 06 February, as required under the NDIS schedule of meetings.

This meant that there were very few updates due to the short period of time since the previous ACC meeting on 27 November 2019 and intervening holiday period.

4.1 Agency Updates

NTA

Infrastructure (Actions 13-17)

- Works commenced on new overbridge and lifts at Carlow train station. Works on the overbridge and lifts at Ennis train station are currently in the tendering process. Accessibility works to Coolmine station have commenced.
- Works are expected to be awarded at bus stations in Tralee, Killarney, Waterford and Rosslare Europort in February.
- Works commenced at 6 bus stop locations in East Cork in December.

RTP/Local Link (Actions 21-25)

- A review of all tendered services has taken place to ensure that bus operators who committed to achieving the accessibility requirements of the contract within a two year period, have now met these requirements. A derogation for inaccessible roads / laneways may be required in rare cases.
- Three new (wheelchair accessible) Local Link services, have launched or are close to launching including: Wexford - Route 370 Riverchapel to Gorey, which launched in November, and Tipperary - Route 391 Thurles to University of Limerick, launched in December. Both use low floor accessible vehicles. Cork - Route 254 Bandon to Kinsale, will launch in early 2020, and has a low floor accessible vehicle on order.

Direct Award Contracts (Action 31):

Revised and enhanced operator requirements - in relation to accessibility - have been included in the three new direct award contracts, awarded in December 2019, to Irish Rail, Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann.

- The companies are required to have an Accessibility Plan.
- The NTA worked with the NDA in relation to monitoring and quarterly updates are to be provided by the companies.
- Customer facing staff will now be formally required to undertake Disability Awareness Training, eg Jam Card training, with periodic updating.
- The new Direct Award Contracts include penalties for not meeting key performance indicators on accessibility.

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) – Taxis (Action 32-34):

By the end of December 2019, 1,035 applications had been approved under the 2019 WAV Grant Scheme.

TFI website

- TFI website can be used to see where there are WAVs in each county.

- There is also a mechanism on the TFI website to complain about a booked WAV not turning up.
- In response to a query about ease-of-use, the NTA confirmed that the TFI website is being audited at present and will be improved where necessary.

Sport Ireland:

The Sport Inclusion Disability Charter was signed up to by 244 agencies and clubs (the target was 250).

TII (Luas):

TII has been working on the On-Board announcements and had hoped to go live with new system at the end of 2019. AV testing is done, however, there is some work remaining as each tram has to be altered individually.

4.2 Infrastructure Manager Multi Annual Contract or IMMAC

In December the Minister announced a new €1 billion, 5-year investment programme in Ireland's heavy rail infrastructure. The funding, up 40% on the previous investment programme, will benefit passengers across the rail network through increased service reliability and punctuality, improved journey times and ensuring continued safety of rail services. IMMAC funding will benefit all, including people with disabilities and is separate to other funding streams such as the Accessibility Retro-Fit Programme.

4.3 Lifts

It was noted that "Out of order" lifts have a daily and ongoing effect on people's ability to move around independently. The Irish Rail programme of works on lifts was circulated recently to the ACC. Secretariat will ask Irish Rail for an update.

4.4 Comprehensive Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (CES)

The [CES – Second Action Plan](#) was published on 3rd December by the Minister for Disabilities, Finian McGrath. Secretariat circulated details to the ACC of where it is available on the Department of Justice and Equalities (DJE) website.

4.5 NDIS Mid-Term Review (MTR)

DJE is conducting the MTR of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS). A number of stakeholder events are being held as part of the Review. DTTAS fed into the review process. It is expected that the Review will be published shortly.

4.6 DTTAS Sustainable Mobility Public Consultation

A presentation was made by DTTAS on this public consultation at the previous ACC meeting. ACC members were invited to the Stakeholder Event held on 21 November. A note of the discussion at the Stakeholder Event was sent to

attendees. The deadline for submissions to the consultation has been extended to 28th February 2019.

5. DTTAS Work Programme - Quarters 3 and 4 2019

Publication of the NDIS Mid Term Review (MTR) by the Department of Justice and Equality is due shortly. It was decided to retain the existing format of the Work Programme for this ACC meeting. Once the MTR has been published, the Work Programme will be updated incorporating the revised CES and NDIS actions, in the new thematic format as outlined at the 27 November ACC meeting.

The Chair reviewed each of the actions in [the work programme](#) in detail. This will be a regular feature of ACC meetings from now on.

Comments made in the course of this discussion included:

(Action 8) **DART Passenger Information System**. Target is to award contract for 17x4 car sets in 2020, with a view to installation in 2021. This had previously been stated to be one of the key public transport projects for people with disabilities.

(Action 36) **Step free journey facility** on the TFI website. NTA explained that this is a work in progress, with improvements expected.

(Action 29) **LUAS Tram Emergency Help button**. A view was expressed that this is not the ideal situation. TII stated that it had considered other options including on board announcements, a speaker in the ticket unit, using a fob or an app on a phone, however all had drawbacks. It also reported that the LUAS User group gave positive feedback on the current system.

6. User Group Referrals

None were received.

7. Any Other Business

Dates of ACC meetings in 2020

- Next meeting is currently scheduled for 11.00 hrs on 29th April 2020.
- DTTAS noted that the scheduled dates for the remainder of the year may change following the General Election and the formation of a new Government. In addition, it may not be practical to hold an ACC meeting in August.

National Transport Training Centre

- It was reported that NCBI gave a recent presentation on this proposal to disability representatives and organisations and that the response was negative. The presentation was facilitated by the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI).
- The concerns expressed included: lack of consultation by NCBI with disability organisations; its role as a service provider; lack of market research; no identified need for the Centre, and how it relates to the NDIS.
- DTTAS agreed to reflect these concerns to the NTA, which has statutory responsibility for promoting the development of an integrated, accessible public transport network and which has agreed in principle to provide funding for this development, subject to certain conditions being met by NCBI.

Actions agreed at meeting/carry over actions

<u>No.</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
1	The NTA, in conjunction with IWA, to seek to identify possible solution to the issue of wheelchair spaces on the new single deck buses in Waterford and the GDA.	NTA
2	Fáilte Ireland to provide update on works to be carried out on office in Cork City, for circulation to the ACC.	Fáilte Ireland & Secretariat
3	Circulate BÉ's new policy on motorised scooters and motorised wheelchairs when finalised.	BÉ & Secretariat
4	Undertake high level review to identify possible solutions to address problems in the vicinity of Connolly Station / Busáras / Luas. TII and NTA to discuss setting up of a multi-agency interchange group.	TII and NTA
5	Colours on new bus poles. NCBI to revert to NTA on further design changes.	NTA and NCBI
6	Obtain more information about a. DCC Clontarf to Talbot Street, and b. Amiens Street to Custom House Quay cycleway (and related works), for circulation to ACC.	NTA
7	Get update from IE about programme of works on lifts, including information on which are now fully functional and imminent works.	Secretariat
8	Reflect to NTA views reported from the information session on the NCBI training centre.	DTTAS

9	TII to forward information about mystery shoppers including whether they include persons with disabilities, in relation to the Motorway Service Areas, for circulation to ACC.	TII & Secretariat
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