

DfI Departmental Board Meeting

3 February 2026

AGENDA

	Agenda Item	Introduced by	Paper Reference
1.	Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest	Chair	Verbal
STRATEGIC ISSUES			
2.	NI Water Performance - 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report	Alison Clydesdale	DB 1/26
3.	NITHC/Translink Performance - 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report	Peter Rice	DB 2/26
5 MINUTE BREAK			
DISCUSSION PAPERS			
4.	Raising a Concern – Developments and Process Assurance	Donal Moran	DB 3/26
5.	Finance Report	Kerry Mack	DB 4/26
6.	Corporate Risk Register	Donal Moran	DB 5/26
7.	Draft Minutes and Action Points from Board Meeting held on 2 December 2025	Chair	DB (M) 6/25
8.	Forward Plan for 14 April 2026	Secretariat	DB 6/26
9.	Any Other Business and points for dissemination to wider staff team	All	
10.	Date of Next Meeting	14 April 2026	

PAPERS BY CORRESPONDENCE

11.	DfI Action Plan in response to RHI Recommendations	Donal Moran	DB 7/26
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12.	Dfl Business Plan 2025-26 Performance Monitoring Quarter 3	Kiera Lloyd	DB 8/26
13.	TRAM Inspection Regimes	Colin Sykes	DB 9/26
14.	Major Projects Committee Chair's Report – 18 November 2025	MPC Secretariat	DB 10/26
15.	RAM Operational Delivery Model	Colin Sykes	DB 11/26

Departmental Board Minutes from the meeting held on 3 February 2026 at 10am

MINUTES

Members:	Declan McGeown	Interim Permanent Secretary
	Colin Woods	Deputy Secretary, Transport & Road Asset Management
	Susan Anderson	Acting Deputy Secretary, Climate, Planning & Public Transport
	Jonathan McKee	Acting Deputy Secretary, Water & Departmental Delivery
	Donal Moran	Director of Governance, EU, Facilities & Ministerial Support
	Kerry Mack	Acting Director of Finance
	Moya Johnston	Non-Executive Board Member
	Frank Kirkland	Non-Executive Board Member
Apologies:	None	
Attendees:	Alison Clydesdale	Director of Water and Drainage Policy Division
	Peter Rice	Director of Public Transport Operations
	Ciaran Crosbie	Corporate Governance & Emergency Planning (CGEP)
	Andrew Turkington	CGEP (Board Secretariat)
Meeting quorate?	Yes	

Item	Discussion	Paper Reference	Action
1.	Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest	Verbal	
	Declan opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. He welcomed two new members of the Board: Jonathan McKee (Acting Deputy Secretary, Water and Departmental Delivery) and Kerry Mack (Acting Finance Director); and		

Item	Discussion	Paper Reference	Action
	<p>congratulated Susan Anderson on her new role as Acting Deputy Secretary for Climate, Planning and Public Transport.</p> <p>No apologies were noted and no conflicts of interest were declared.</p> <p>Prior to moving onto the first paper, the Board noted its thanks to all staff involved in the response to Storm Chandra for their hard work and dedication.</p>		
STRATEGIC ISSUES			
2.	NI Water Performance - 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report	DB 1/26	
	<p>Alison Clydesdale joined the meeting and presented a paper on NI Water's performance thus far in 2025/26.</p> <p>Alison provided an update on NI Water's financial position, highlighting that the potential resource pressure mentioned in the paper had reduced since the time of writing. The Board noted the improved financial position comparative to the previous year.</p> <p>Alison went on to update the Board on the proposed pay award for NI Water staff, as well as on the potential removal of the Statement of Regulatory Principles and Intent (SoRPI).</p> <p>Board members discussed the paper, and concern was expressed in relation to NI Water's mid-year Assurance Statement. There followed a discussion around NI Water's funding and risks and it was agreed that NI Water should be invited to the next Board meeting and asked to present on its Assurance Statement. A further action point was taken for the Board to review the situation in six months' time.</p> <p>Alison concluded by providing a short update on several Living With Water Programme (LWWP) projects. Board members also noted the progress of a Raising a Concern case currently ongoing within NI Water.</p> <p>The Board noted the paper and Alison left the meeting.</p>		<p>Action Secretariat Action Secretariat</p>
3.	NITHC/Translink Performance - 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report	DB 2/26	
	<p>Peter Rice joined the meeting and presented a paper on NITHC/Translink's performance thus far in 2025/26.</p> <p>Peter outlined the current resource and capital budget positions for NITHC/Translink, highlighting that an operating loss is forecast for the 2025/26 financial year. He added that, despite the additional allocations for NITHC/Translink following the December Monitoring Round, a low closing cash</p>		

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	<p>balance was also forecast. He updated the Board on the proposed pay offer for NITHC/Translink staff.</p> <p>Board members discussed NITHC/Translink's budget position and what steps were being taken to address it. Peter provided details on the longer-term financial forecast and the discussion turned to NITHC/Translink's Going Concern status. Board members felt that it would be helpful for a further discussion on the Going Concern principle to be arranged.</p> <p>With regard to non-financial performance, the Board noted NITHC/Translink's key achievements and performance against service targets. Following a discussion around passenger growth and the Concessionary Fares scheme, the Board asked that a breakdown of revenue from passengers be provided.</p> <p>Lastly, Peter advised that the Minister had agreed to extend the Public Service Agreement with NITHC/Translink for a further two years.</p> <p>The Board noted the paper and Peter left the meeting.</p>		<p>Action Secretariat</p> <p>Action Peter Rice</p>

DISCUSSION PAPERS

4.	Raising a Concern – Developments and Process Assurance	DB 3/26	
	<p>Donal introduced a paper on the Department's Raising a Concern policy.</p> <p>He outlined the background to the policy and provided an overview of the procedure and role of the Raising a Concern team. He also explained the important role the Departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (DARAC) plays in providing scrutiny and challenge in terms of the overall policy and number of cases, without getting into the detail of specific cases. Additionally, Donal advised that the outcome of a NIAO audit on the Department's Raising a Concern process had been very positive.</p> <p>Donal gave a breakdown of the Raising a Concern cases received by the Department to date and corrected an error in the figures provided in paragraph 7 of the paper (i.e. 40 completed and 9 ongoing). He highlighted that most of the cases received did not fall under the 'Raising a Concern' designation. These cases were redirected accordingly and treated via the relevant NICS policy or procedure (i.e. Grievance, Complaint etc.). Of the cases designated as a 'Raising a Concern', Board members noted that no significant fraud or wrongdoing had been detected by the subsequent investigations.</p> <p>With regard to challenges faced, Donal noted the complex, multi-faceted nature of some of the cases received. He also highlighted the resourcing of the team as an issue however he noted that discussion with management on that issue was planned, adding that further engagement work to raise awareness of the policy was a priority once the team was fully staffed.</p>		

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	<p>The Board discussed the challenges, suggesting that there was a lack of clarity around the definition of what a ‘Raising a Concern’ was and noted that formal training in handling Raising a Concern cases had not been provided. An action point was taken to write to the Department of Finance on these issues.</p> <p>The Board recorded its thanks to the Raising a Concern team and asked for a further update to be provided at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>The contents of the paper were noted by the Board.</p>		<p>Action Donal Moran</p>
5.	Finance Report	DB 4/26	
	<p>Kerry introduced a paper providing the Board with an update on the Department’s current financial position, including updates on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025/26 budget including the outcome of the December Monitoring Round and subsequent allocations; • Progress on strategic business cases; • The Integr8 project; • Interim Annual Report and Accounts; • Prompt payment performance for the Department and DVA; and • Cash estimates. <p>The Department’s proposed draft budget outcome for 2026-29/30 was also discussed and the Board noted that, while the Department’s indicative opening general allocations for both resource and capital show an increase on the 2025/26 opening position across the period, they do not meet the requirements previously identified by the Department.</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of the paper.</p>		
6.	Corporate Risk Register	DB 5/26	
	<p>Donal introduced the latest Corporate Risk Register and Issues Log update to the Board. He outlined the proposed changes to risks, including several changes to risk ratings and a new element to the <i>Health and Safety – leadership, capability, controls</i> risk.</p> <p>There followed a discussion on the <i>Health and Safety – leadership, capability, controls</i> risk and the prioritisation of its mitigating actions. It was agreed that the Health and Safety Sub-Committee should further consider the risk regarding Corporate Health & Safety and provide a paper for the next Board meeting.</p> <p>The Board then discussed the wider Risk Register and the potential addition of a strategic level approach was considered. This included discussion on how strategic risks could inform and aid decision making on policy and the allocation of resource, for example in order to protect life and property.</p>		<p>Action Health and Safety Sub-Committee</p>

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	<p>It was proposed that a dedicated session should be arranged to discuss the corporate risks, mitigating actions and the Department's risk appetite, once the new Dfl Permanent Secretary was in post.</p> <p>Donal went on to present a new format for the Corporate Risk Register and Issues Log using Microsoft Excel. Board members approved the new format for use going forward.</p> <p>The Board agreed the latest version of the Corporate Risk Register.</p>		Action CGEP Branch
7.	Draft Minutes and Action Points from Board Meeting held on 2 December 2025	DB (M) 6/25	
	<p>The minutes of the previous Board meeting on 2 December were agreed.</p> <p>The progress on the action points was noted.</p>		
8.	Forward Plan for 14 April 2026	DB 6/26	
	<p>The Board noted the forward work plan for its next meeting.</p> <p>Declan advised that the Senior Leadership Team would consider additional agenda items to include for future meetings.</p>		Action SLT
9.	Any Other Business and points for dissemination to wider staff team	Verbal	
	<p>Jonathan provided an update regarding an ongoing legal case. The Board also noted that the planned external Board Effectiveness Review was underway and was anticipated to be completed by April 2026, with the final report being presented to the Board at the next possible meeting.</p> <p>Andrew indicated that he would follow up on a comment received on the RAM (Road Asset Maintenance) Operational Delivery Model correspondence paper. The response provided by the author would be circulated to all Board members by email, once received.</p> <p>There being no further business, Declan thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.</p>		Action Secretariat
10.	Date of Next Meeting		
	The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 14 April 2026 at 9.30am.		

CORRESPONDENCE PAPERS

Item	Discussion	Paper Reference	Action
11.	Dfl Action Plan in response to RHI Recommendations	DB 7/26	
	<p>This paper was issued under the correspondence arrangements and no comments were received.</p> <p>The paper was agreed by the Board.</p>		
12.	Dfl Business Plan 2025-26 Performance Monitoring Quarter 3	DB 8/26	
	<p>This paper was issued under the correspondence arrangements and no comments were received.</p> <p>The paper was agreed by the Board.</p>		
13.	TRAM Inspection Regimes	DB 9/26	
	<p>This paper was issued under correspondence arrangements. No comments were received.</p> <p>The paper was noted by the Board.</p>		
14.	Major Projects Committee Chair's Report – 18 November 2025	DB 10/26	
	<p>This paper was issued under correspondence arrangements. No comments were received.</p> <p>The paper was noted by the Board.</p>		
15.	RAM Operational Delivery Model	DB 11/26	
	<p>This paper was issued under correspondence arrangements. A comment was received asking whether the Model had been discussed in more detail at the Foundations Delivery Board.</p> <p>A written response was circulated to Board members following the meeting.</p> <p>The paper was noted by the Board.</p>		

Andrew Turkington

Secretary to the Departmental Board

9 February 2026