

FROM: LIZ KIMMINS MLA DR CAOIMHE ARCHIBALD MLA
Minister for Infrastructure Minister for the Economy

DATE: 08 AUGUST 2025

TO: EXECUTIVE COLLEAGUES

REF: DfI/SUB/0533/2025

PROPOSAL FOR COLLABORATIVE FUNDING OF THE NIGHTMOVER SERVICE

We have been working together alongside Belfast City Council, Translink and other interested stakeholders to respond to the increased calls for the extension of night-time public transport services.

Providing this extended late-night weekend public transport service will provide a range of both economic and societal benefits, including:

- Improved connectivity to communities outside of the City Centre, facilitating people to get home safely.
- Improved access to cultural activities in the City Centre.
- Reduced potential for public order issues in the City Centre on Friday and Saturday evenings, leading to reduced policing costs and reduced pressure on health services.
- Reduced potential for violence against women and girls.

Late night public transport services are not currently provided for within DfI's Public Service Agreement with Translink; and are not covered within the Department's current budget allocation. Translink have previously provided a Night Mover service in advance of Christmas on a commercial basis, meaning higher costs for users and the absence of concessionary travel.

We believe, with the necessary funding arrangements in place, extended nighttime public transport services could commence during November 2025, when the traditional pre-Christmas Night Movers service would normally begin. The service would then be extended beyond the normal festive period, on a 1-year pilot basis, on select Metro routes as well as four key Ulsterbus corridors that have no rail alternative.

As the extension of late night public transport services has the potential to deliver benefits for a number of Executive Departments, we are seeking your support for a joint cross-departmental/Council funding approach on the basis set out below:

- DfI 14.6% (c.£94.9k) – as the Executive Department with responsibility for public transport.
- DfE 14.6% (c.£94.9k) – as the Executive Department with responsibility for developing the night-time economy.
- DfC 14.2% (c.£92.3k) – as the Executive Department with responsibility for developing local communities and our culture & arts sector.
- DoJ 14.2% (c.£92.3k) – as the Executive Department with responsibility for public order and policing.
- DoH 14.2% (c.£92.3k) – as the Executive Department with responsibility for health services.
- TEO 14.2% (c.£92.3k) – as the Executive Department with responsibility for our Strategy on preventing violence against women and girls.
- Belfast City Council 14.2% (c.£92.3k).

The resource funding would be required on a pro rata basis as the pilot scheme would span both the 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years, with an anticipated start date of November 2025.

We would appreciate your support in backing this venture in the spirit of our agreed Programme for Government as it seeks to not only provide economic growth and provide safe transport to vulnerable groups, but also further advances our move to greener more sustainable travel.

We would be happy to meet you should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Is mise le meas

The image shows two handwritten signatures in dark ink. On the left is the signature of Liz Kimmins, which is stylized and cursive. On the right is the signature of Dr Caoimhe Archibald, which is also cursive and includes the name 'Archibald' clearly.

LIZ KIMMINS MLA
Minister for Infrastructure

DR CAOIMHE ARCHIBALD MLA
Minister for the Economy