

PE1595/PPP

Minister for Transport and Islands Letter of 14 December 2016

I can confirm that my officials have been in active discussions with the Transport Research Institute at Napier University as they seek to set up a seminar on shared space. The seminar will aim to bring together local authorities, disabled people and organisations such as Sustrans, Transport Scotland and the Equality and Human Rights Commission to learn lessons from shared space scheme implementation to date and to potentially develop further guidance for the future.

I intimated when I appeared before the Committee that it would be useful to await the formal response from the Department for Transport (DfT) to the Lord Holmes of Richmond Report into shared schemes. DfT have been working together with the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) to develop guidance and I stated at Committee that this was anticipated before the end of the year. Since then my officials have been in touch with their counterparts in DfT who advise that the timescale for the output of the work they have been doing with CIHT has slipped and is not expected until early next year. Irrespective of when the guidance is produced I want our plans for the seminar to be developed and publicised and ensure that all with an interest in the area can attend. Together with Napier my officials have agreed that a date in Spring 2017 will allow time to plan, develop and publicise the seminar with the aim of ensuring that all those with an interest in the area can participate.

I have asked my officials to consider your suggestion to allow participants to visit a shared space scheme and they will take that into account when planning the seminar with Napier University and other interested parties.

In relation to the collation of casualty data, my officials have been working to try and identify, agree and pinpoint appropriate shared space schemes where casualty data could be analysed and will now work directly with the relevant local authorities to gather the necessary evidence. I anticipate being able to provide you with an update on their findings in the new year.

I also undertook to liaise with Sustrans on its understanding of shared space schemes and whether a controlled crossing could form part of such a scheme. Sustrans have accepted that on reflection, they acknowledge that a street can be designed under the principles of shared space while having standard traffic features such as controlled crossings. They have indicated that they are going to write to the Committee directly to address this issue and clarify their position in relation to controlled crossings.

I will revert to you in the new year with further details on the seminar once a date has been fixed and to provide you with an update on any casualty data officials have been able to collate on shared space schemes.