

INFRASTRUCTURE

**36. Promenade scheme –
Political oversight; meetings with affected businesses; senior officers**

The Hon. Member for Onchan (Mr Callister) to ask the Minister for Infrastructure:

Who has political oversight of the Promenade scheme; and what meetings they have held with (a) local businesses affected by the works and (b) senior officers in his Department to discuss delays?

The Minister for Infrastructure (Mr Harmer): The formal Political Promenade Programme Board, as well the Highways Division meetings and the Department meetings, provide political oversight of the project.

Prior to work commencing many meetings were held with trade groups, hoteliers and others explaining the details of the project.

The Department of Infrastructure also periodically updates Douglas Borough Council and will be updating the Douglas Regeneration Committee on progress.

The delivery of the project is, however, primarily an operational matter managed on a day-to-day basis by the Project Team and overseen by the officers of the Department. Members of the Project Team liaise on a daily basis with residents and businesses.

Prior to work starting in a new location on the Promenade, contact is made with the businesses in that section and ongoing communications and consultations maintained on a daily basis. The Project Team and in particular the project's Liaison Officer let people know what is planned and work with businesses to try and mitigate the impact on their business. For example, over 70 additional car parking spaces were squeezed into the northern and central end of the Promenade, additional crossing points are being created and a free shuttle bus services provided following discussions with some of the businesses that rely on passing trade. This is in addition to the 200-plus free spaces already provided on the Walkway.

There is ongoing public information via news releases, letters, Twitter, Facebook and on the project's website. All of these channels are well subscribed to and received by the business on the Promenade.

Because of this ongoing dialogue with businesses and a recognition that some businesses are suffering disproportionately, the Department has been working with the Department for Enterprise and Treasury to endeavour to support them. I am very grateful to the Minister for Enterprise for his Department's continued support and will continue to explore ways in which businesses may be helped.

Over the coming weeks further meetings with the businesses in different sections of the Promenade are planned, to both update them and to listen to them. This has always been a key feature of this project.

When finished, Douglas will have a fantastic place to spend time, a sustainable travel corridor and service infrastructure that will support our prosperity for generations to come. A shop window for the Isle of Man will have been created that speaks of its past glory and future success.