



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2015

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mrs Sandra Overend MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA
- In Attendance: Miss Ciara McKay (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)
Mrs Sharon Young (Clerical Officer)
Ms Suzie Cave (RAiSe – agenda item 12)
- Apologies: Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10.12am.

1. Apologies.

The apologies are noted above.

2. Chairpersons Business

The Committee noted a letter from Ulster Architectural Heritage Society outlining its concerns of the provision for built heritage; and inviting the Committee to hold a meeting at the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society office.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to accept the invitation to hold a meeting at the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society office.

The Chairperson reminded members that the Committee motion on the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference was scheduled for Monday 30 November 2015.

3. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 19th November 2015 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted a response from the Department to the Committee's queries regarding the financial and waste implications of the decision to reject planning approval for the proposed arc 21 incinerator in Newtownabbey.

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding issues raised by the Field Studies Council on outdoor learning.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to copy the Department's response to the Field Studies Council.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the Field Studies Council letter, and the Department's response, to the Committee for Education.

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding repatriation of wastes on two sites; and an invite from officials to visit the Mobouy Road waste site.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to accept the invitation to visit the Mobouy Road waste site.

Mr Milne joined the meeting at 10.20am.

The Committee noted a response from the Department on the draft Local Government Community Planning Partners Order.

The Committee noted a response from the Department the Committee's queries on the Protocol for the Care of the Government Historic Estate in Northern Ireland.

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding the turbine collapse at Screggagh Wind Farm.

The Committee noted the 6th report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules highlighting drafting defects in the Private Water Supplies (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the Examiner's report to the Department.

Mr Girvan joined the meeting at 10.24am.

The Committee noted a report on the presentation received from Bryson Recycling on Thursday 26 November 2015.

Mr Boylan joined the meeting at 10.25am

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking its views on this recycling approach.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Bryson Recycling for further information on the number of councils operating this scheme.

The Committee noted further correspondence from a member of the public regarding the monitoring of carcinogens.

Agreed: The Committee agreed a response to the additional issues raised.

The Committee noted the Department's request to withdraw its written response on hydraulic fracturing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to the Department's request to withdraw correspondence.

Mrs Cameron joined the meeting at 10.31am

5. Consultations

The Committee noted a consultation on new regulations concerning the conduct of passengers and drivers on public service vehicles.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a synopsis of responses from the Department when this became available.

The Committee noted a consultation on use of seat belts by child passengers on buses and coaches

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a synopsis of responses from the Department when this became available.

6. SL1 - The Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

The Committee considered the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to proceed with the proposed statutory rule.

Mr Maginness left the meeting at 10.33am.

7. SL1 - The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee considered the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to proceed with the proposed statutory rule.

Mr Maginness rejoined the meeting at 10.34am.

8. SL1 - The Waste Management Licensing (Amendment No 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee considered the Waste Management Licensing (Amendment No 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to proceed with the proposed statutory rule.

9. SR 2015/367 The Smoke Control Areas (Authorised Fuels) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Mr Maginness left the meeting at 10.36am.

Question put and agreed:

“The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/366 The The Smoke Control Areas (Authorised Fuels) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the Rule.”

10. Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department notifying it of the Minister’s intention to bring forward an amendment to Clause 19. The Committee noted that officials were available to brief it if required.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask officials to brief it on the amendment.

Officials joined the meeting at 10.36am

The Committee was briefed by:

Mr Donald Starritt	Road users Behaviours, policy & strategy Branch
Ms Liz Loughran	Road Safety Branch
Nicola McEvoy	Acting Director of Local Government Division

A question and answer session ensued.

Mr Maginness rejoined the meeting at 10.39am.

Officials left the meeting at 10.59am.

11. Monitoring Round and In-Year Financial Position briefing from Departmental officials

Officials joined the meeting at 10.59am

The Committee was briefed by:

Mr Anthony Carleton	Director of Finance and Business Planning Division, DOE
Ms Siobhan Lynn	Finance & Business Planning Division, DOE

A question and answer session ensued.

Officials left the meeting at 11.42am.

12. Scrap Metal Dealers Bill - Briefing from RAiSe

The Committee was briefed by Ms Suzie Cave from the Assembly Research and Information Service on a paper on the Scrap Metal Dealers Bill.

Mr Irwin left the meeting at 12.26pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the British Metals Recycling Association to give evidence on Thursday 3 December 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Northern Ireland Utilities Working Group on Metal Theft to give evidence on Thursday 10 December 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to extend the Committee Stage of the Bill to 19 February 2016; and for the Clerk to table the Motion in the Business Office.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite DOE officials to brief before Christmas.

13. Correspondence

The Committee noted a Departmental press release highlighting a reduction in the number of planning decisions since the transfer of planning powers to councils.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for further information on the statistics.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the Legislative Consent Motion restricting exit payments to Public sector employees

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment regarding planning for mobile phone masts.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for an update on this matter.

The Committee noted correspondence from BT regarding the company's economic and social impact in Northern Ireland.

The Committee noted a consultation from the Department for Agriculture & Rural Development on proposals for a successor to its Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2011-15.

The Committee noted correspondence on an individual planning matter.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Assembly's European Union Affairs Manager regarding a Meet Your MEP event.

The Committee noted a report from the Centre for Democracy and Peace Building.

The Committee noted correspondence from Climate Change NI, regarding a People's Climate Rally on 29th November at Writer's Square, Belfast.

The Committee noted correspondence regarding the Architectural Heritage Fund Annual Review 2014-15

The Committee noted correspondence regarding sentencing guidelines for taxi's refusing to carry assistance dogs.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for a response to the issues raised.

14. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted its Forward Work Programme.

The Committee discussed proposals for its review of River Pollution.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to produce a research paper to consider:

- *the pollution causes and monitoring systems in Northern Ireland;*
- *preventative measures by providing examples of methods in NI and across UK and ROI; and*
- *Identify a list of stakeholders for an event.*

Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold an event to engage with stakeholders to obtain their views of appropriate prevention measures to address these issues, using the scrutiny points of research paper to inform discussion; and with Departmental officials in attendance to make response.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to produce an issues paper based on the research paper and the discussion at the stakeholder event; and to consider tabling a motion to discuss these issues in the Assembly.

15. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

16. Date, Time and Place of next meeting.

The Committee noted that its next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 3rd December 2015 in the Council Chamber, Mid Ulster Council, Magherafelt.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.48pm.

Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
3 December 2015