

Our Ref:OCE.337-2013 DC249

13th August 2013

Northern Ireland Assembly
Environment Committee
Committee Clerk,
Room 416, Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw,
Stormont,
Belfast BT4 3XX.

CARRIER BAG BILL

Dear Committee Clerk,

Council has considered the Carrier Bags Bill proposing a 10p charge for all single-use carrier bags and in addition the proposal to extend the levy to also apply the charge to the lower cost version of reusable bags.

The Council in considering the Bill has taken account of representations by the Ballymoney Chamber of Commerce on behalf of local traders. To date the bag levy has had an impact on retailers, by placing an additional administrative burden and inconvenience on small traders in collecting the levy on behalf of the Department, particularly in these difficult economic times. Retailers have also recorded their concern that the levy was extended to include paper bags.

Councillors voiced opposition to the proposed increase in the bag tax levy which it regards as very shortsighted, particularly the decision to impose the charge on paper bags, something which was not happening in other regions and now to further extend the levy to include the lower cost version of reusable bags.

Council has resolved to oppose the proposed increase in the bag tax levy, its extension to cheaper re-usable bags and its application to paper bags. Council also acknowledges and supports the concerns from local traders, as represented by Ballymoney Chamber of Commerce who have responded separately to the Environment Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Elizabeth Johnston
Head of Corporate & Development Services