

14 August 2013

Ms Sheila Mawhinney
Clerk, Environment Committee
Room 247, Parliament Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Dear Ms Mawhinney

Re: Response to Carrier Bags Bill

Further to your letter dated 14 June 2013, I enclose the response by Carrickfergus Borough Council in response to the above Consultation.

If you have any queries on this response, please do not hesitate to contact me at grace.peacock@carrickfergus.org or 028 933 58004

Yours sincerely

Grace Peacock
Policy Officer

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Carrickfergus Borough

CARRICKFERGUS BOROUGH COUNCIL' S RESPONSE TO CARRIER BAGS BILL (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2013

Carrickfergus Borough Council welcomes the opportunity by the Committee for the Environment to respond to the Consultation on the proposed Carrier Bags Bill (Northern Ireland) 2013. The Council's response is as follows:

Extension of the 2008 Act to carrier bags

Carrickfergus Borough Council recognises that within the short period in which the initial levy on carrier bags has been introduced, there has been a substantial reduction in the usage of carrier bags. However, the Council does not believe that an increase in the levy on carrier bags would achieve additional environmental benefits.

Regulations under Schedule 6 to the 2008 Act

Carrickfergus Borough Council does not support proposals to increase the levy charged on carrier bags. The levy of 5p per bag is regarded as being adequate to encourage re-use of said carrier bags whilst not adding to inflation. Council is of the view that an increase in the levy would be regarded by local consumers as a back door taxation which would not be beneficial to the people living in Carrickfergus Borough Council or the wider Northern Ireland population.

Carrier bags defined by price

Following reports of a disparity in costs of single use carrier bags on the criteria of their weight ranging from 15 pence for lighter single use carrier bags to £1 for heavier single use carrier bags; Carrickfergus Borough Council welcomes the recommendation that a uniform levy be applied across all businesses for single use carrier bag types of 5p.