



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**MARTHA MAGEE ROOM, UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER, MAGEE CAMPUS,  
LONDONDERRY**

**THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER 2013,**

- Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)  
Ms Pam Brown MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA  
Mr Tom Elliott MLA  
Mr Barry McElduff MLA  
Mr Ian McCrea MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Lord Morrow MLA
- In Attendance: Mrs Sheila Mawhinney (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA  
Mr Peter Weir MLA

*The meeting began in public session at 10:07am.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were indicated as above.

## **2. Chairperson's Business**

The Committee considered a letter from NIPSA requesting to brief the Committee on relation to the proposed closure of the Exploris Aquarium and Seal Sanctuary.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to arrange a briefing from NIPSA and also to invite the Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons from the ETI, CAL, Education and DEL Committees to attend.*

## **3. Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013 were agreed.

## **4. Correspondence**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 7.

### The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Copy of correspondence from the RSPB to the Department, detailing its concerns in relation to the Planning Bill 2013.

Copy of George Best Belfast City Airport Planning Agreement compliance figures.

September 2013 DOE Investment Activity report.

Letter of concern from NIPSA regarding the Local Government Bill in relation to the protection of staff.

## **5. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 8.

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

## **6. Any other business**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 9.

No other business was discussed.

## **7. Date, time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013 at 10:00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

## 8. Matters Arising

The Committee returned to agenda item 4.

8.1 The Committee noted a Departmental reply in relation to the Consultation on Taxi Driver Test and Periodic Testing.

8.2 The Committee noted a Departmental update in relation to the NIEA refund system under the new Transfrontier Shipment of Waste (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

8.3 The Committee noted a Departmental reply regarding the run off of nutrients from farmland into Lough Neagh.

8.4 The Committee noted a Departmental reply confirming that the Secretary of State has agreed to address an anomaly in the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962 regarding the co-option of councillors after 1 January 2014.

*Mr Elliott joined the meeting at 10:22am*

8.5 The Committee noted a Departmental letter regarding the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tranche of Guidance to Statutory Transition Committees.

8.6 The Committee considered several papers regarding the Local Government Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee was content with the proposed timeline for the Bill, with the Committee stage of the Bill being extended to 20 February 2014.*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue the draft press release under consideration.*

*Lord Morrow joined the meeting at 10:26am*

*Agreed: the Committee agreed a draft motion to extend the Committee stage of the Bill to 20 February 2014.*

*Agreed: The Committee was content with the proposed list of stakeholders to be contacted directly for their views on the Bill. Members also agreed to request submissions from NICCY, NICVA and the Older People's Commissioner and to provide details of any further stakeholders they wish to include to Committee staff.*

*Agreed: The Committee also agreed to request a further paper from Assembly Research on the forecast costs associated with the new local council structure, how this is to be funded and the impact of rates convergence.*

8.7 The Committee considered a Departmental reply and a reply from NIRIG in relation to wind energy issues.

*Agreed: The Committee was content to note these responses and discuss further when considering the draft Terms of Reference for an inquiry into wind energy.*

### **9. SR 2013/224 The Goods Vehicles (Community Licence) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013**

The Committee returned to agenda item 5.

*Question put and agreed:*

*'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR2013/224, The Goods Vehicles (Community Licence) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the next report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules.'*

### **10. Departmental briefing by the Carrier Bag Levy Administration Team**

The Committee returned to agenda item 6.

Donald Starritt (Environmental Policy Division), Janice Riddell (Environmental Policy Division) and Rory O'Boyle (Carrier Bag Levy Team) briefed the Committee on the operational aspects of the Carrier Bags Levy.

*Mr McCrea joined the meeting at 10:57am.*

The main areas discussed were the work of the team, the impact of the levy on small retailers and enforcement activities connected to the levy.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for clarification on issues not covered during the briefing.*

*The meeting moved into closed session at 11:28am.*

### **11. Development session on effective scrutiny of legislation**

The Committee received a follow up session on the effective scrutiny of legislation under the auspices of Politics Plus.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed that a note of the points raised during the discussion should be recorded for members.*

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:32pm*

**Anna Lo, MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for the Environment**  
**10 October 2013**