



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 10 APRIL 2014

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Tom Elliott MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Lord Morrow MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Sheila Mawhinney (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Jennifer McCullough (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Barry McElduff MLA

The meeting began in public session at 10:25.

1. Apologies

Apologies were indicated as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson referred members to a short report on the recent Committee visit to Scotland prepared by Committee staff.

The Chairperson also advised members that they should switch on their tablet devices periodically over the Easter recess to enable updates to be downloaded.

3. Draft minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 3rd April 2014 were agreed.

Mr Elliott left the meeting at 10:27.

4. Synopsis of responses to consultation on the Local Government Pension Scheme

The Committee considered the synopsis of responses to the consultation on the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to bring forward the SL1.

Mr Elliott rejoined the meeting at 10.28.

5. SL1 – The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the SL1 proposal for The Controlled Waste and Duty of Care (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed in making the Statutory Rule.

6. SR 2014/77 - The Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the Statutory Rule SR 2014/ 77, The Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Question put and agreed:

That 'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2014/77 - The Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases Amendment Regulations Northern Ireland 2014 and has no objection to the Rule.'

The meeting moved into closed session at 10.32.

7. Committee Inquiry into Wind Energy

The Committee discussed how members wished to proceed with the Inquiry into Wind Energy.

Mr Eastwood joined the meeting at 10:46.

Mr Boylan joined the meeting at 10:52.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 10:53

Mr Maginness joined the meeting at 10:58.

Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 11:09.

Mr McCrea left the meeting at 11:17.

Agreed: The Committee agreed which stakeholders should be requested to provide oral briefings, and that a timetable for the inquiry should be drawn up for consideration at its next meeting. The Committee also requested further information from Assembly Research.

The meeting moved back into public session at 11:24.

Mr Maginness left the meeting at 11:25.

8. Departmental briefing on proposed subordinate legislation and guidance for the Local Government Bill

Julie Broadway (G7, Local Government Policy Division) and John Murphy (Local Government Policy Division) briefed the Committee on the subordinate legislation and guidance pertaining to the Local Government Bill.

Mr Maginness re-joined the meeting at 11:29.

Mr McCrea re-joined the meeting at 11:38.

Mr Weir re-joined the meeting at 11:41.

The main areas discussed were the timetable for introducing the legislation and details of the purpose of each piece of legislation.

9. Correspondence

The Committee considered correspondence from the Federation of Passenger Transport requesting an opportunity to brief the Committee in relation to the Review of Bus Operator Licensing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from the Federation of Transport when further progress has been made by the Department on this Review.

The Committee considered further correspondence regarding the Dalradian gold mine.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Mourne AONB Residents group inviting the Committee to attend a public meeting on the ASSI designation in the Mournes.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment and, once the response was received, to schedule an informal meeting with the group.

The Committee considered correspondence to the Minister from the Portaferry Regeneration Group Ltd regarding NIEA Listed Building Funding, copied to the Committee for information.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request that the Department should copy the Committee into any response made to the Group.

The Committee considered correspondence from a representative of Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) requesting to brief the Committee on research into technology to remove valuable materials from waste.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold an informal meeting with the representative.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister, enclosing a copy of his letter to Robert Goodwill MP, on the HGV Road User Levy Scheme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for further clarification on the current position of the implementation of the HGV Road User Levy in Northern Ireland in relation to charges and exemptions.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Justice Committee regarding alleged speed camera abuse.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Justice Committee to request a copy of the original correspondence from the member of the public who raised the issue.

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Copy of an online bulletin from NIEL.

Copy of an online bulletin from Irish Environment Online Magazine.

Copy of a Departmental reply to an Assembly question on Taxi Operator Licensing Eligibility.

Departmental letter giving advance notice of consultations and policies for equality screening by DOE.

Copy of a letter from the Regional Development Committee requesting that DOE officials brief their Committee in relation to the Inquiry into the benefits of cycling to the economy.

A press release from the Committee of the Regions pm Europe's Local Government call for reduction and ban on free plastic bags.

Correspondence from the House of Lords regarding the EU report on UK food waste prevention.

Copy of Departmental response to correspondence from the ETI Committee on DVA job losses.

Copy of Departmental response to correspondence from the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee regarding the Reservoirs Bill.

Copy of Departmental letter to the Regional Development Committee regarding the HGV Road User Levy.

The Committee also noted a number of DOE Press releases.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Chairperson advised members that the Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill had now been cleared by the Executive and was scheduled to be introduced to the Assembly immediately after the Easter recess.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Department should provide an oral briefing on the Bill at its meeting on 8 May 2014.

The Committee noted the forward work programme.

11. Any Other Business

The Committee noted a proposal from the Department detailing the requirement to lay a Statutory Rule during the Easter recess period. The Rule would govern the placing of election posters along the route of the Giro d'Italia cycle race in May. The Department indicated that election posters would be banned along the full route of the race, for the 3 days of the race only, and this was to be enforced by planning officials. Due to the urgency of this legislation, and imminence of the Easter recess period, the Rule would not be available to the Committee for scrutiny in advance of being laid in the Business Office.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 1st May 2014 at 10:00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:17.

Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
6 May 2014