



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2013

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Ms Pam Brown MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Tom Elliott MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Ian McCrea 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 Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mr Ian Milne MLA

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

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Alban Maginness to the Committee as a new member, and thanked Mrs Dolores Kelly for her work and dedication to the Committee over the last few years.

1. Apologies

Apologies were as indicated above.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Mr Ian Milne MLA to express its condolences on the death of his father.

2. Chairperson's Business

No business was discussed.

3. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting of 3rd October 2013 were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 The Committee noted an acknowledgement from the Department for Transport to the Committee's request for officials to brief members on the proposed closures to the DVA in Coleraine.

4.2 The Committee considered a Departmental reply to issues raised by ALACE on the process for appointment of Chief Executives to the new local councils.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the reply to ALACE for their information.

4.3 The Committee considered a response from the CAL Committee regarding the proposed meeting with NIPSA in relation to the future of Exploris.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite NIPSA to provide a briefing at its meeting scheduled for 17th October.

4.4 The Committee noted a Departmental reply reiterating the new Minister's views on the creation of national parks in Northern Ireland.

Mr McElduff joined the meeting at 10:26am.

Mr McCrea joined the meeting at 10.27 am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to reconsider previous information from stakeholders with regard to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.5 The Committee noted copies of notes from the effective scrutiny of legislation briefing held at last week's Committee meeting.

5. Consultation on draft Guidance for Part A Installations and Part A Mobile Plant - synopsis of responses

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed with issuing this guidance.

6. Consultation on the UK-Wide Draft Reach Enforcement (Amendment) Regulations 2013 - synopsis of responses

Agreed: The Committee was content to note the synopsis of responses.

7. UK-wide public consultation on the introduction of a derogation to REACH Regulations in respect of the use of dichloromethane – based paint strippers.

Agreed: The Committee was content to request a copy of the synopsis of responses once available.

Mr. Elliott joined the meeting at 10:32am

8. SR 2013/238 - The Local Government (Boundaries) (2008 Act) (Commencement, Transitional Provision and Savings) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013

Agreed: The Committee was content to note the Order.

9. Protocol for the Care of the Government Historic Estate

The Committee considered the first report from the Department on the implementation of the Protocol for the Care of the Government Historic Estate by local councils and Executive Departments.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward comments and questions on the Report to the Department for response. The Committee also highlighted its disappointment at the lack of engagement with the Protocol by local councils.

10. Committee Review into Wind Energy - Consideration of Terms of Reference

The Committee considered the issues and evidence already gathered on wind energy, and discussed how it should proceed with the Review which was agreed at its recent planning day.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to arrange a briefing from an independent expert on renewable energy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider only environmental and planning issues in its review.

Agreed: The Committee was content to write to DETI & DHSSPS for comment on the issues relevant to their Departments and to copy the relevant Committees into the correspondence.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to the following timescale for the Review:

10 October: Consideration of Terms of Reference

17 October: Consideration of Evidence

7 November: Consideration of Evidence

14 November: Consideration of Conclusions/Recommendations

21 November: Agreement of Report

Agreed: The Committee agreed Terms of Reference for the Review.

11. Carrier Bags Bill - Departmental briefing

Simon Webb (Project Manager), Donald Starritt (Head of Policy and Legislation Team) and Jennifer McCay (Policy and Legislation Team) briefed the Committee with regard to the issues raised by stakeholders throughout the Committee's consideration of the Bill.

Mr McElduff left the meeting at 11:27am

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ascertain if there may be some flexibility in the commencement of the legislation.

12. Correspondence

The Committee considered an invitation to join NIABT on a joint visit to Passive House or PassivHaus Housing in Crawfordsburn.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to attend the visit.

The Committee considered a Departmental reply regarding the Public Service Pensions Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the response to the Committee for Finance and Personnel for their information.

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Copy of NILGA briefing paper forwarded directly to the Environment Minister on Local Government Reform Programme and European funding.

Note of issues discussed at the Chairpersons' Liaison Group meeting held on 1st October 2013.

Departmental letter regarding the publication of the Banbridge, Newry & Mourne Area Plan 2015.

Departmental update regarding Article 31 planning applications.

13. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

14. Any other business

No other business was discussed.

15. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 17th October 2013 at 10:00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11:59am

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