



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**THURSDAY 13 JUNE 2013,  
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

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

*The meeting began in public session at 10:05am.*

**1. Apologies**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 2.  
Apologies were indicated as above.

Members noted that Mr McElduff was representing the Committee at the EU East Border Region conference.

*Mr Milne joined the meeting at 10:07am*

**2. Minutes**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 3.

The minutes from the meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013 were agreed.

### **3. Chairperson's business**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 4.

The Chairperson informed the Committee of an informal meeting held with representatives from NILGA in relation to the Waste Strategy Consultation.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to arrange a briefing with NILGA on this issue at a future Committee meeting.*

The Chairperson advised members of a request from NI Meat Exporters Association and Dairy UK to meet with the Chairperson to discuss implications of the proposed NI Climate Change legislation for the meat and dairy processing industries in Northern Ireland.

*Agreed: The Committee was content for the Chairperson to meet with the group.*

### **4. Matters arising**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 5.

4.1 The Committee noted an update from the Department on post project evaluations.

4.2 The Committee noted correspondence from Belfast City Airport in relation to on-going dialogue with Belfast City Airport Watch.

4.3 The Committee noted a reply from the Department in relation to road safety.

4.4 The Committee noted a reply from the Department in relation to the Dereliction Improvement Scheme.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request information on the byelaws available for use by councils for the removal of asbestos and if the byelaws differ across council areas.*

4.5 The Committee noted a reply from the Department in relation to issues raised by Re-gen Waste.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the Departmental response to Re-gen for their information.*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request regular updates on the issues raised.*

4.6 The Committee noted an Assembly Research paper on a possible inquiry into water quality in Lough Neagh.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to give further consideration to the paper at a future meeting.*

## **5. Synopsis of responses to consultation on mutual recognition of penalty points**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 6.

*Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed in making the policy.*

## **6. Synopsis of responses to consultation on Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 7.

*Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed in bringing forward these Regulations.*

## **7. Proposal for secondary legislation**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 8.

*Mr Anderson declared an interest as a member of Craigavon Borough Council.  
Lord Morrow declared an interest as a member of Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council.  
Mr Weir declared an interest as a member of North Down Borough Council.*

SL1 – Local Government (Statutory Transition Committees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

*Agreed: The Committee were content for the Department to make the Statutory Rule.*

## **8. Statutory Rule**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 9.

SR 2013/151 The Quality of Bathing Water (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

*Question put and agreed: The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2013/151 – The Quality of Bathing Water (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the next report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules.*

## **9. Carrier Bags Bill**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 10.

The Committee considered a motion to extend the Committee stage of the Bill until 30 November 2013. The Committee also noted a letter from the Department to representative groups asking for views on the Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee was content with the motion to extend the Committee stage and agreed to write to the representative groups requesting a written submission to the Committee's call for evidence. The Committee also agreed to issue a press release requesting written submissions on the Bill.*

## **10. Correspondence**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 12.

The Committee considered a letter of complaint from Millar, McCall, and Wylie LLP on behalf of the Strangford Lough Fishermen's Association regarding the management of Strangford Lough.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the letter to the Department asking if they wish to respond directly to the Association on any issues raised.*

The Committee considered a letter from Lisnahaney Area Residents Group regarding a planning application for 14 wind turbines in the area.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the group advising of the visit to Omagh on 27 June and also advising of the Committee policy on individual planning applications.*

### The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Copy of letter sent directly to the Department by the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment seeking sight of the consultation document in relation to the Best Practice Guidance for PPS18.

Article 31 – letter advising of the Minister's intention to refuse planning application X/2010/0819/F – redevelopment (retail) of former Scrabo High School site, Newtownards.

Article 31 – letter advising of the Minister's intention to approve planning application Y/2010/0087/O – retail store, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast.

Copy of letter sent directly to the Department by the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment requesting information on actions being taken to facilitate economic development at sub-regional level post RPA.

Letter from the Department regarding the local government reform programme.

Letter from the Department to advise the Committee of the delay in the issuing of a number of consultations in relation to further European changes to Driving Licences and Driving Test requirements.

## **11. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 13.

Members noted the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold a Committee planning day at the Lough Neagh Conference Centre, Oxford Island.*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a visit to Rathlin Island during recess.*

## **12. Any other business**

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 14.

The Committee discussed the recent win at the EcoUnseco Young Environmentalist Awards by Drumcree College and St. Mary's Primary School, Derrytrasna.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to congratulate both schools on their success.*

The Committee discussed the publication of its report on the Planning Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Report should be made available on the Assembly website in advance of the hard-copy publication.*

*The meeting went into closed session at 10:40am*

## **13. Ministerial briefing on the closure of North West waste facility**

The Committee returned to agenda item 1.

The Minister, Mr Alex Atwood, Mr Terry A'Hearn (Chief Executive, NIEA) Ms Anne Blacker (Head of NIEA Environmental Crime Unit) and Mr Dave Foster (NIEA Environmental Crime Unit) briefed the Committee in closed session on the North West waste facility closure.

*Mr Elliott joined the meeting at 10:41am*

*Mr Weir left the meeting at 11:03am*

*Mr Elliott left the meeting at 11:48am*

*Lord Morrow left the meeting at 11:53am*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward email correspondence from Faughan Anglers to the Department for comment.*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Finance and Personnel in support of the Department's bid for additional resources for its Environmental Crime Unit.*

*The meeting continued in public session at 12:10pm*

## **14. Departmental briefing on the implementation of the Taxis Act**

The Committee returned to agenda item 11.

Ian Greenway (Principal Officer, Road Safety and Vehicle Regulations Division) and Susan Stewart (Road Safety and Vehicle Regulations Division) briefed the Committee on the implementation of the Taxis Act

The main areas of discussion were an update on the implementation process and the communication strategy that will be applied to inform the public of changes once the policy is fully implemented.

**15. Date, time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013 at 10:00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:43pm.*

**Anna Lo, MLA  
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment  
20<sup>th</sup> June 2013**