



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**THURSDAY 20 JUNE 2013,
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Ms Anna Lo (Chairperson)
Mr Simon Hamilton (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mr Cathal Boylan
Mr Tom Elliott
Mr Barry McElduff
Mr Ian Milne
Lord Morrow
Mr Peter Weir

In Attendance: Mrs Sheila Mawhinney (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mrs Dolores Kelly

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

1. Apologies

Apologies were indicated as above.

2. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting of 13th June 2013 were agreed.

3. Matters arising

3.1 The Committee noted a Departmental response in relation to Bus Operator Licensing.

Mr Milne joined the meeting at 10:07am

3.2 The Committee noted a Departmental reply in relation to cross border road safety.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to give further consideration to this issue at its planning day scheduled after summer recess.

3.3 The Committee noted a Departmental reply in relation to an EC funding call for environmental innovation projects.

3.4 The Committee considered a Departmental reply regarding the possibility of hosting a joint fresh water summit event.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the secretariat to liaise with the Department to arrange the details of the summit.

3.5 The Committee noted a Departmental update on the progress of climate change legislation.

3.6 The Committee noted a Departmental reply in relation to The Detergents (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

3.7 The Committee considered a letter from a member of the public in relation to the decreasing availability of wheelchair accessible taxis and the increasing cost of these.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the letter to be forwarded to the Department for comment.

3.8 The Committee considered an email from the River Faughan Anglers in relation to the North West waste facility.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to respond to Faughan Anglers advising that it was still awaiting a Departmental reply on this issue and would give further consideration to the points raised once the reply was received.

3.9 The Committee noted a synopsis of responses on Arrangements for Single-Tier Taxi licensing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department stating it was not content to consider the introduction of the SL1 at the present time. The Committee requested that all elements of taxi legislation should be introduced in one block to commence in September 2014, and sought assurance from the Department on this point.

3.10 The Committee noted a letter from the Department detailing further technical amendments to the Planning Bill.

4. Consultation on draft Statutory Rule on Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases (Amendment) Regulations

Agreed: The Committee was content to write to the Department to request a copy of the synopsis of responses.

5. SR 2013/161- The Landfill (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

The Committee considered SR 2013/161, and agreed that it was content with the Rule.

Question put and agreed: The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2013 161 - The Landfill (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the next report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

6. Draft SR - The Local Government (Statutory Transition Committees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

Ian Maye (Deputy Secretary), Liz Loughran (Acting Director of Local Government Division) and Tracy Johnston (Local Government Division) briefed the Committee on the regulations for the establishment of Statutory Transition Committees.

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 and the Ards/ North Down Transition Committee.

The main areas of discussion were the appointment process, design of the new system and the safeguarding mechanisms in place

Mr Anderson left the meeting at 11:24am

Mr McElduff left the meeting at 11:25am

Question put: ‘That the Committee has considered Draft SR, The Local Government (Statutory Transition Committees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013, and recommends that it be affirmed by the Assembly?’

The Committee divided:

AYES

NOES

Ms Lo

Mr Elliott

Mr Boylan

Mr Milne

Lord Morrow

Mr Weir

Agreed: The Committee for the Environment has considered The Local Government (Statutory Transition Committees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 and recommends that it be affirmed by the Assembly.

The meeting was suspended at 11:27am for a short break.

The meeting recommenced in public session at 11:32am with the following members in attendance:

Ms Anna Lo

Mr Cathal Boylan

Mr Tom Elliott

Mr Barry McElduff

Mr Peter Weir

Mr Hamilton joined the meeting at 11:33am

7. Assembly Research briefing on Water Quality Issues in Lough Neagh

Assembly Research briefed the Committee on the Water Quality Issues in Lough Neagh.

Lord Morrow re-joined the meeting at 11:38am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the topic until after the summer recess.

8. Correspondence

The Committee considered a letter from Loughside Concerned Residents stating their opposition to Clauses 2 and 6 of the Planning Bill.

Agreed: The Committee was content to write to the group, noting their letter and explaining that the Committee completed its scrutiny of the Planning Bill on 6 June.

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Copy of Departmental response to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment request's for sight of the consultation document in relation to the Best Practice Guidance for PPS18.

Departmental update on the progress of DARD/DETI Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) competition for the sustainable utilisation of poultry litter.

Departmental letter on the work undertaken by the Department and the Department of Transport (DfT) to implement the HGV Road User Levy Scheme.

Copy of Departmental response to the Education Committee on the work the Department is undertaking in relation to the proximity of schools and fast food outlets.

Copy of Departmental response to a request from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment for information on actions being taken to facilitate economic development at sub regional level post RPA.

Copy of June edition of 'Reform Inform'.

9. Forward Work Programme

Members noted the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

Members were advised of arrangements for next week's external committee meeting.

Mr Elliott left the meeting at 11:59am

10. Any other business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a copy of the closure notice served to City Waste.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department and ask for information on the number of disused quarries in Northern Ireland and clarification on the Department's responsibilities in the management of these sites.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 27th June 2013 at 11:00am in the Silver Birch Hotel, Omagh.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:00pm.

Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
27th June 2013