



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**THURSDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 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 Ian McCrea MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Lord Morrow MLA  
Mr Peter Weir MLA
- In Attendance: Mr Paul Gill (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mr Barry McElduff MLA  
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
- Interests declared: Ms Pam Brown – member of Antrim Borough Council  
Mr Ian McCrea – member of Cookstown District Council  
Lord Morrow – member of Dungannon and South Tyrone  
Borough Council  
Mr Peter Weir – member of North Down Borough Council,  
member of NILGA.

*The meeting began in public session at 10:14am.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were indicated as above.

## **2. Chairpersons Business**

No business was discussed.

## **3. Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> September 2013 were agreed.

## **4. Matters Arising**

4.1 The Committee noted a Departmental reply regarding funding for waste prevention.

4.2 The Committee considered a Departmental letter regarding the upcoming Freshwater Summit.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to give consideration to attending the summit at a later date as it coincides with the Committee's regular meeting day,*

4.3 The Committee considered a letter from ALACE regarding Statutory Transition Committees Regulations.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask what level of engagement it has had with ALACE on this issue.*

*Mr Elliott joined the meeting at 10:21am*

*Mr Milne joined the meeting at 10:27am*

4.4 The Committee noted a Departmental reply regarding Statutory Transition Committee membership and plans for additional Departmental guidance.

4.5 The Committee noted a Departmental letter regarding proposed amendments to the Clean Air Order and the Environment Order.

*Mr McCrea joined the meeting at 10:32am*

## **5. Consultation on recast WEEE Directive – synopsis of responses**

The Committee noted the synopsis of responses.

*Mr Weir left the meeting at 10:34am*

## **6. Consultation on proposed changes to planning fees – synopsis of responses**

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a briefing from the Department at a future meeting.*

## **7. Consultation on timetable and work programme for development of the second cycle River Basin Management Plan 2015-2021 – synopsis of responses**

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask if they are confident that no further fines will be imposed.*

## **8. Consultation on Industry Noise Action Plan – synopsis of responses**

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

## **9. Consultation on the Proposal for the revision of the NIEA Pollution Inventory reporting form.**

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

*Mr Weir re-joined the meeting at 10:42am.*

## **10. SL1 - The Waste (Fees and Charges) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013**

*Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed with the Statutory Rule.*

## **11. Departmental briefing on October Monitoring Round**

Kieran McMahon (Finance and Business Planning Division) and Siobhan Lynn (Finance and Business Planning Division) briefed the Committee in relation to the October Monitoring Round.

The main areas discussed were the areas in which the Department will place bids, the proposal to defer funding for councillor severance and IT convergence and the reasons for the shortfall in the Carrier Bag levy.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to request further information from the Department on the bid for heritage led projects as well as information on the councils that have applied for funding under the Dereliction Improvement Scheme and which councils have been successful.*

*The Committee also requested further information on the capital bid for a vessel, and if this will be used for research on Strangford Lough or wider marine research.*

*The Committee agreed to support the Department's Monitoring Round bids.*

## **12. Briefing by NIIRTA on the Carrier Bags Bill**

The Committee noted a Report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules on the Delegated Powers in the Carrier Bags Bill.

Glyn Roberts (Chief Executive) and Andrew Porter (Director) briefed the Committee in relation to the Carrier Bags Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee requested that NIIRTA keep members informed in relation to the survey on average basket spend and evidence on consumer behaviour since phase 1 of the levy was introduced.*

## **13. Briefing by NI Retail Consortium on the Carrier Bags Bill**

Aódhan Connolly (Director) and Joe McDonald (Corporate Affairs Manager, ASDA) briefed the Committee in relation to the Carrier Bags Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee requested results of the public poll on the new levy on reusable bags. The Committee also requested a breakdown of the steps needed to implement that changes and practical implications of the changes, particularly from a financial perspective.*

*Mr Elliott left the meeting at 12:11pm*

#### **14. Briefing by NI Environment Link on the Carrier Bags Bill**

Sue Christie (Chief Executive) and Jonathan Bell (Projects and Policy Officer) briefed the Committee in relation to the Carrier Bags Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee requested that NIEL source evidence on how consumer behaviour has been affected by a charge on reusable bags.*

*Mr Elliott re-joined the meeting at 12:41pm*

#### **15. Briefing by NILGA on the Carrier Bags Bill**

Karen Smyth (Policy Officer) and Councillor Shaun Gallagher (Chairperson, NILGA Waste, Health and Environment Working Group) briefed the Committee in relation to the Carrier Bags Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee requested that NILGA source evidence it has on how consumer behaviour has been affected by a charge on reusable bags.*

*Lord Morrow left the meeting at 13:14pm*

#### **16. Departmental briefing on the Local Government Bill**

Linda McHugh (Director, Local Government Policy Division), John Murphy (, Local Government Policy Division), Tommy McCormick (Local Government Policy Division) and Julie Broadway (Local Government Policy Division) briefed the Committee in relation to the Local Government Bill.

The main areas discussed were the main provisions of the Bill and the modified proposals following the consultation exercise.

*Agreed: The Committee requested that Departmental officials report back to the Committee on discussions with the Commissioner for Complaints on an appeals mechanism and on how the process operates in other jurisdictions.*

*The Committee also requested details of the subordinate legislation that will be produced along with a list of delegated powers and guidance.*

*Ms Brown left the meeting at 13:35pm*

#### **17. Correspondence**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture & Rural Development seeking the Committees opinion on capital grant funding for the construction of renewable generation installations.

*Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence and agreed to reconsider this when returning to the issue of Wind Energy.*

The Committee considered correspondence from Alex Hill requesting to brief the Committee in relation to AR5 IPCC Report on the science of climate change.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to arrange a briefing after the Committee has received the Department's written paper on the Climate Change Adaptation programme.*

#### The Committee noted the following correspondence

Letter of thanks to the Committee from the Minister for Finance and Personnel.

Departmental letter regarding the publication of the DVA first quarter Compendium of Key Statistics.

Correspondence from the OFMdfM Committee regarding the Report of the Advisory Group on Alleviating Hardship.

Correspondence from the Department of Finance and Personnel regarding the current position in relation to the completion of Post Project Evaluations.

Copy of Departmental reply to the Education Committee regarding DVA Heavy Goods Vehicles Bus and Taxi compliance surveys 2012/13.

Copy of Reform Inform - issue 13.

Copy of correspondence to the Minister from the CAL Committee regarding Archaeological Archives.

Department of the Environment Resource Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2013.

#### **18. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

#### **19. Any other business**

No business was discussed.

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

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 at 10:00am in the Martha Magee Room at the University of Ulster, Magee Campus, Londonderry.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1:39 pm.*

**Anna Lo, MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for the Environment**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013**