



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2014

**ENVIRONMENTAL SKILLS CENTRE, SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL
COLLEGE, NEWTOWNARDS**

Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Lord Morrow MLA
Mrs Sandra Overend MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

In Attendance: Ms Sheila Mawhinney (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark O'Hare (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Peadar Ó Lamnha (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA

The meeting began in public session at 10:04am.

1. Apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised members of the death of the father of Mr Mark McQuade, the Assistant Assembly Clerk to the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Mr McQuade to express its condolences.

The Chairperson reminded members that the meeting would be followed by a tour of the Environmental Skills Centre.

The Chairperson referred members to a memo from the Culture Arts & Leisure Committee regarding the joint visit to the Ulster Museum and the Heron Road storage facility, scheduled for 8th January 2015.

The Chairperson advised members of correspondence she had received from Community Places, regarding committed funding from the Department which has now been withdrawn.

Mrs Overend joined the meeting at 10:11am.

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

3. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 4th December 2014 were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 The Committee noted a Department response regarding the synopsis of responses to Draft Guidance for the operation of Community Planning.

4.2 The Committee considered correspondence from DOE Marine Division providing information on the next MCZ workshop scheduled for 12 March 2015.

Agreed: The Committee provisionally agreed to attend the MCZ workshop.

4.3 The Committee noted further information from the Department on the SL1 – The Planning (Trees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

4.4 The Committee noted a Departmental update on the North – South research project on air pollution from residential heating.

4.5 The Committee considered a report from Assembly research on a recent Horizon 2020 workshop.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to receive a briefing on Horizon 2020.

4.6 The Committee considered a consultation on proposals to extend the validity period of medically restricted driving licences.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a copy of the synopsis of responses from the Department.

5. Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill – Report on key findings of survey on driving licensing law changes.

The Committee considered an Assembly Research report on the key findings of a survey carried out on proposed changes to driving licensing laws.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to receive a briefing from Assembly Research on the report.

6. Synopsis of Responses to public consultation on the Draft Guidance on Application of the Councillors Code of Conduct with regard to Planning Matters

The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the consultation on the draft Guidance on Application of the Councillors Code of Conduct with regard to Planning Matters.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a briefing from the Department on this issue.

7. January Monitoring Round 2015 – Departmental briefing

The Committee was briefed on the January Monitoring Round proposals by:

Mr Anthony Carlton Director of Finance

Mr Kieran McMahon Finance & Business Planning Division

Ms Siobhan Lynn Finance & Business Planning Division

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session, and was recorded by Hansard.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to support the Department's January Monitoring Round proposals.

8. SL1 – The Planning (2011 Act) (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

9. SL1 – The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

10. SL1 – The Planning (Development Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

11. SL1 – The Planning General Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee was briefed by Departmental officials on the above SL1s which all relate to planning issues and the transfer of planning decisions to local councils. The officials also remained in attendance for agenda items 12 to 15.

The Committee was briefed by:

Mr Angus Kerr	Director of Planning Policy
Mr Simon Kirk	Planning Manager, Strategic Planning Division
Ms Irene Kennedy	Principal Officer, Planning Service
Mr Brian Gorman	Principal Officer, Planning Service

The session was recorded by Hansard.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to make the Rules

12. SL1. The Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee was content for Department to make the Rule.

13. SL1. The Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee was content for Department to make the Rule.

14. SL1. The Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee was content for Department to make the Rule.

15. SL1. The Local Government (Standing Order) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Local Government (Standing Order) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee was content for Department to make the Rule.

16. SL1. The Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances and Classification) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances and Classification) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee was content for Department to make the Rule.

17. SR. The Taxis (2008 Act) (Commencement No. 4) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Committee considered a The Taxis (2008 Act) (Commencement No. 4) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee noted the Order and agreed to write to the Department to confirm that none of the provisions commenced under this order relate to single tier licensing.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 11:46am.

18. SR 2014/292, The Local Government (Disqualification) (Prescribed Offices and Employments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the Statutory Rule SR 2014/292, The Local Government (Disqualification) (Prescribed Offices and Employments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Question put and agreed:

“The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2014/292 The Local Government (Disqualification) (Prescribed Offices and Employments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014, and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.”

19. Correspondence.

The Committee noted correspondence from the ETI Committee regarding the Electricity Policy Review Part 3 – Grid Connections.

The Committee noted an email from First Flight Wind Ltd notifying of the cessation of development of a Co. Down offshore wind project.

The Committee note the latest EU Matters newsletter from the Assembly’s EU Affairs Manager.

The Committee noted the latest NIEL E-bulletin.

The Committee noted the latest Irish Environment newsletter.

The Committee noted Departmental press releases received.

20. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

21. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

22. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 15th January 2015 in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.50am.

**Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
15 January 2015**