



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2015

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mrs Sandra Overend MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Sheila Mawhinney (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Lord Morrow MLA

The meeting began at 10.10am in closed session.

1. Committee Inquiry into Wind Energy

Mrs Overend joined the meeting at 10.11am.

The Committee considered a draft press release on the report on its inquiry into wind energy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the press release with a slight amendment.

The Committee moved to Public session at 10.20am

2. Apologies

Apologies were as above.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Department had requested that the briefing on the Strategic Planning Policy Statement should be held in closed session as it had not yet been considered by the Executive.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the briefing should be held in closed session, and that it should be moved to the final item on the agenda.

The Chairperson referred members to a letter from the Minister regarding Taxi Licensing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Minister to outline his plans for taxi licensing as soon as these have been determined.

Mr Eastwood joined the meeting at 10.22 am.

The Chairperson referred members to a draft programme for the Committee visit to the Indaver Waste to Energy plant, on Thursday 26 March 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the programme.

The Committee noted a programme for the Marine Conservation Zone Workshop on Thursday 12 March 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the programme.

4. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 12th February 2015 were agreed.

5. Matters Arising

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding driving licence fees.

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy.

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (NI) 2015.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 10.28am.

The Committee considered a draft response to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister on its EU Priorities for 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the response on its EU Priorities for 2015 should be forwarded to the OFMDFM Committee.

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding EU matters.

Mr McElduff left the meeting at 10.30am.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Northern Ireland Environment Link in relation to the EU Commission Refit process.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the letter to the Department seeking its views on the issues raised.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to visit the RSPB's Window on Wildlife Reserve in Belfast.

6. Report on the Committee visit to Edinburgh for Scottish Environment Week

Mr Weir rejoined the meeting at 10.31am.

The Committee considered a report on its visit to Edinburgh for Scottish Environment Week

Mr McElduff rejoined the meeting at 10.35am.

Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 10.41am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content to sponsor events connected with Northern Ireland Environment Week.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Scottish Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee to visit Parliament Buildings as part of Northern Ireland Environment Week.

7. Consultation on Guidance for Local Government Performance Improvement 2015.

The Committee considered a consultation on Guidance for Local Government Performance Improvement 2015.

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

8. Synopsis of responses to the Consultation on the Proposed Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the consultation the Proposed Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an oral briefing on synopsis of responses.

- 9. Synopsis of responses to the Consultation on Implementation of EU Regulations 1257/2013 on Ship Recycling.**
- The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the Consultation on Implementation of EU Regulations 1257/2013 on Ship Recycling.
- Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to prepare the SL1 for this legislation.*
- 10. Synopsis of responses to the Consultation on the Draft Local Government (Transferred Functions Grant) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.**
- The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the consultation on Consultation on the Draft Local Government (Transferred Functions Grant) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an oral briefing on synopsis of responses.*
- 11. Synopsis of responses to the consultation on Cost Control Arrangements for the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) and Draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.**
- The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the consultation on the Cost Control Arrangements for the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) and Draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to prepare the SL1 for this legislation.*
- 12. SL1 - The Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.**
- The Committee considered an SL1 on the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to make the Rule.*
- 13. SL1 - The Local Government (Executive Arrangements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.**
- The Committee considered an SL1 on the Local Government (Executive Arrangements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an oral briefing on the SL1.*

14. SR 2015/14 The Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 - Departmental briefing.

The Committee was briefed on the Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 by:

Mr William Dukelow Waste Strategy Branch

Ms Janice Harris Waste Strategy Branch

Mr Eastwood rejoined the meeting at 10.59am.

Departmental officials undertook to provide information on the local councils which do not currently provide food waste collections.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite representatives of waste management organisations to brief it.

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/14 The Food Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the Rule.'

15. SR 2015/2015/24. The Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 - Departmental Briefing.

The Committee was briefed by:

Mr Donald Starritt Road User's Behaviours, Policy and Strategy Branch.

Ms Pauline Moore Road User's Behaviours, Policy and Strategy Branch.

The briefing was recorded by Hansard.

Departmental officials agreed to provide details of the website that lists the makes and models of cars with ISOFIX fittings.

Mr Maginness left the meeting at 11.48am.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 11.56am.

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/2015/24. The Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and recommends that the Assembly affirms the rule.'

16. SR 2015/41 The Motor Vehicle Testing (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Mr Weir rejoined the meeting at 11.59am.

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/41 The Motor Vehicle Testing (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.'

17. SR 2015/42 The Public Service Vehicles (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Mrs Cameron left the meeting at 12.00pm.

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/42 The Public Service Vehicles (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.'

18. SR 2015/43 The Goods Vehicles (Testing) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/43 The Goods Vehicles (Testing) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.'

19. SR 2015/45 The Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances and Classification) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015.

Mrs Overend left the meeting at 12.02pm

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/45 The Water Framework Directive (Priority Substances and Classification) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.'

20. SR 2015/49 The Planning (2011 Act) (Commencement No.3) and (Transitional Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Mrs Cameron rejoined the meeting at 12.03pm.

The Committee noted a commencement order. SR 2015/49 The Planning (2011 Act) (Commencement No.3) and (Transitional Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

21. SR 2015/68 The Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/68 The Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.'

22. Correspondence.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 23.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister & deputy First Minister seeking its views on the Children's Services Co-operation Bill.

The Committee noted correspondence regarding the Executive's EU Priorities 2014-15 Mid-Year Review.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for a summary of all EU proposals impacting on it.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister & deputy First Minister regarding the operation of the Joint Ministerial Council (Europe).

The Committee noted EU Matters Issue 2.

The Committee noted correspondence from a Member of Public regarding an Infrastrata Licence.

The Committee noted a Departmental response to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister & deputy First Minister regarding the Children's Services Co-operation Bill.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister & deputy First Minister regarding the European Commission Work Programme.

The Committee noted the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland Report for March 2015.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment regarding correspondence from the Protect our North Coast group.

23. Forward Work Programme

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 24.

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

24. Any Other Business

The Committee agreed to agenda item 25.

No other business was discussed.

The meeting moved into closed session at 12.07pm.

25. Departmental briefing on the Strategic Planning Policy Statement.

The Committee was briefed on the Strategic Planning Policy Statement by:

Mr Angus Kerr	Director, Planning Policy Division
Mr Philip McGowan	Acting Principal Planner, Planning Policy Division
Ms Joy Hargie	Planning and Policy Division
Mr Simon Kirk	Planning Manager, Strategic Planning Division, Planning & Local Government Group

Mrs Overend rejoined the meeting at 12.08pm.

Mrs Overend left the meeting at 12.33pm.

Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 12.36pm.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 12.59pm.

26. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The Committee agreed that the next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 5th March 2015 in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.01pm.

Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
5 March 2015