



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 4 JUNE 2015

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Gary Middleton MLA
Mrs Sandra Overend MLA
- In Attendance: Miss Ciara McKay (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)
Ms Suzie Cave (Assembly Research & Information Service)
- Apologies: Lord Morrow MLA

The meeting began at 10.09am in public session.

1. Apologies

The apologies are noted above.

2. Chairpersons Business

The Committee noted an invite to RSPB's WoW centre in Belfast; and agreed to consider it as a location for a future meeting.

Mr McElduff joined the meeting at 10.12am.

The Committee noted an invitation to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to attend a Carnegie Trust event.

The Committee noted an invitation to the Chairperson to attend the Policy Forum NI Keynote Seminar on Tuesday 1st December 2015.

3. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 21st May 2015 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted a response from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council regarding its waste recycling policy.

The Committee noted a response from Causeway Coast and Glens regarding its waste recycling policy.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department providing a progress report on the implementation of the Road Safety Strategy to 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for more information regarding the measures that will be taken to reduce road fatalities.

The Committee noted a response from the Department outlining its response to the Committee's recommendations in its Inquiry report on Wind Energy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite officials to brief it on the response.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Windwatch NI to brief it on their views ahead of the Departmental briefing.

The Committee noted a report on its informal meeting on 14th May, regarding a Land Strategy and the European Union Refit Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department about the issues raised at the meeting.

The Committee noted a report from the Woodland Trust Letter regarding the setting up of a register of trees of national special interest.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to send the report to the Department seeking: its assessment of the implementation of a land strategy; outlining concerns of the environment sector regarding the review of the Birds and Habitats Directives as part of the Refit programme; seek an update from the Department in relation to the Biodiversity Strategy; and ascertain measures that the Department is taking to maximise EU funding for the protection of the environment.

The Committee noted the sixteenth report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules for session 2014/2015.

The Committee noted the Minister's statement to the Assembly on the North South Ministerial Council meeting held in Environment Sectoral format.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite officials to brief it on the draft report on the air quality research study.

5. Engaging Heritage with Community Planning – Conference Report - Briefing by RAISE

The Committee was briefed by Assembly Research and Library Service on the Engaging Heritage with Community Planning Conference.

Mr Maginness joined the meeting at 10.28am.

Mr Boylan joined the meeting at 10.31am.

The Committee noted the report.

6. Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (NI) 2015 and an Update on the Implementation of the Community Planning Foundation Programme

The Committee was briefed by:

Ms Nicola Creagh DOE official

Ms Joanne Mullen Local Government Division

Mr McCrea joined the meeting at 10.37am.

Mr Eastwood joined the meeting at 10.38am.

Mrs Cameron left the meeting at 10.45am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department expressing its concerns that government departments are not included in the Order as statutory partners in community planning.

7. Departmental update on taxi legislation.

The Committee was briefed by:

Mr Iain Greenway Director of Road Safety & Vehicle Regulation

Mr Michael O'Neill Taxis Act Implementation team

Mr Alex Boyle Head of Road Vehicle Policy

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department proceed with the Taxis (Taximeters and Fares) Regulations (NI) 2015.

Mr McCrea left the meeting at 11.34am.

Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 11.47am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department proceed with the Taxi Accessibility Regulations (NI) 2015.

8. Consultations

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department advising on the publication of its consultation on Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment No. 3) Regulations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a synopsis of responses to the consultation when this became available.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department advising on the publication of its consultation on proposals to increase the maximum construction speed and weight for tractor and tractor-trailer combinations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a synopsis of responses to the consultation when this became available.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department advising on the publication of its consultation on Proposals for Fixed Penalties for Offences Originating from the Taxis Act (NI) 2008.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a synopsis of responses to the consultation when this became available.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department advising on the publication of its consultation on the Waste Management Licensing (Amendment No 2) Regulations (NI) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a synopsis of responses to the consultation when this became available.

Mrs Overend left the meeting at 11.52am.

The Committee noted the Synopsis of Responses to a consultation on the draft Waste Management Licensing (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to prepare the SL1 for this legislation.

Mr McCrea rejoined the meeting at 11.54am.

The Committee noted the Synopsis of Responses to a consultation on the draft Local Government (Domain Names) Regulations (NI) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an oral briefing on the SL1 for this legislation.

9. SL1 - The Smoke Control Areas (Exempted Fireplaces) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015

The Committee considered the Smoke Control Areas (Exempted Fireplaces) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015.

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

10. SL1 - The Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of Employment) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015

The Committee considered the Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of Employment) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015.

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

11. SR – Local Government (2014 Act) (Commencement No. 4) Order 2015

The Committee noted the Local Government (2014 Act) (Commencement No. 4) Order 2015.

12. Draft Statutory Rule - The Marine Conservation (Fixed Monetary Penalties) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Question put and agreed:

The Committee for the Environment has considered draft Statutory Rule for the Marine Conservation (Fixed Monetary Penalties) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, recommends that the rule is affirmed by the Assembly.

13. SR 2015/ 231 The Environmental Liability (Prevention and Remediation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Question put and agreed:

The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/ 231 The Environmental Liability (Prevention and Remediation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the Rule.

14. Correspondence.

The Committee noted an invitation to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Inaugural Social Justice Lecture

The Committee noted correspondence regarding the Fees and Charges to Recover the Cost of Processing Discharge Consent Applications and the Regulation of Discharges under The Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.

The Committee noted correspondence regarding a Scheme of Fees and Charges to Recover the Costs of Processing Licence Applications under the Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006.

The Committee noted a copy correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment to the Department regarding an Inquiry into Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs in a Reduced Tax Environment.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Quarry Products Association (NI) regarding sand extraction from Lough Neagh.

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

The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Committee for Culture, Arts & Leisure to the Minister regarding the registration of defibrillators on the DHSSPS Community Resuscitation Strategy.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment legislation relating to Genetically Modified Organisms.

Mrs Overend rejoined the meeting at 12.04pm.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment proposals for the Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations.

The Committee noted the Cross Departmental Working Group on Climate Change Fourth Annual Progress Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask officials for an oral briefing on the report.

The Committee noted the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland Procurement Activity Report for May 2015.

The Committee noted the EU Matters newsletter.

15. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted its Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold its meetings on 11th and 25th June in Room 30.

16. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a written update on the planning application for the North South Interconnector.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an oral briefing on road safety issues.

17. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The Committee agreed that its next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 11th June 2015 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.11am.

Anna Lo, MLA

Chairperson, Committee for the Environment

11 June 2015