



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 11 JUNE 2015

ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Gary Middleton MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Lord Morrow MLA

In Attendance: Miss Ciara McKay (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mrs Sandra Overend MLA

The meeting began at 10.07am in public session with the Deputy Chairperson in the Chair.

1. Apologies

The apologies are noted above.

2. Chairpersons Business

The Committee discussed arrangements for its next meeting which will take place at the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) Conference in the La Mon Hotel.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to start its meeting at 9.45am.

3. Minutes

The minutes from the meetings held on 2nd June 2015 and 4th June 2015 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted a copy of a correspondence from KellsVOCAL to the Department regarding Solar Energy Development.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for information on policy issues relating to solar energy developments; an update on the publication of the strategic planning policy statement; and to request a copy of the Department's response to KellsVocal.

The Committee noted a response from the Department about pollution on the Six mile water river.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for information regarding pollution incidents and sources for the last 10 years; and details of other rivers polluted by Northern Ireland Water.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Departmental officials, Northern Ireland Water and local angling groups to give oral evidence on this matter.

The Committee noted a response from the Department about proposals from the Woodland trust to create a Register of Trees of National Special Interest for Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to local councils for their views on this matter.

The Committee noted a response from the Department to a petition about the name of Newry, Mourne and Down local government district.

Mr Eastwood joined the meeting at 10.22am.

5. Consultations

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department advising on the publication of its consultation on proposals for consolidated Water Framework Directive Priority Substance and Classification Regulations.

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

The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Assembly's European Union Affairs Manager regarding the publication of a European Commission consultation on New Circular Economy Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ascertain its input to the consultation.

Mr Middleton joined the meeting at 10.24am.

The Committee noted a synopsis of responses to a consultation on downloading timescales for tachographs.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Department to provide it with an oral briefing on the proposed legislation.

Agreed: The Committee request a written briefing from the PSNI seeking its views on the proposed legislation.

6. SL1 - The Planning (Development Management) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee considered the Planning (Development Management) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

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

7. Draft Statutory Rule - The Local Government (Exclusion of Non-commercial Consideration) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Question put and agreed:

The Committee for the Environment has considered draft Local Government (Exclusion of Non-commercial Consideration) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, recommends that the rule is affirmed by the Assembly.

Mr Cathal Boylan indicated to the Committee that he may wish to return at a later date to the Department's response to an Assembly Petition regarding the name of Newry, Mourne and Down district council.

8. Departmental Briefing: Report on the Programme of NIEA Prosperity Agreements: Progress and Performance

The Committee was briefed by:

Mr Wesley Shannon Acting Chief Executive, Northern Ireland
Environment Agency.

Mr Steve Aston Director of Innovation, Northern Ireland
Environment Agency.

Agreed: Officials agreed to provide to the Committee an up to date record of incidents of pollution on Six Mile Water and other rivers.

Mr McCrea joined the meeting at 10.38am.

Agreed: Officials agreed to discuss Prosperity Agreements with local Councils.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to revisit this matter, after the Prosperity Agreements were at least one year into their life span.

9. Departmental Briefing on Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and Guidance on Local Government Performance Improvement

The Committee was briefed by:

Ms Nicola Creagh	Official, Department of the Environment
Ms Susan Wilkin	Official, Department of the Environment
Mr William Dukelow	Environmental Protection Division, Department of the Environment

Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 11.14am.

Agreed: Officials agreed to provide to the Committee an explanation of how targets were set for the Economic Development Standards.

10. Correspondence.

The Committee noted a letter from Monkstown Community School regarding a School Crossing Point.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the letter to the Department for Regional Development and the Department of the Environment for response, and to provide a copy to the Committee for Regional Development for information.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment to the Department regarding its Inquiry into Growth and Jobs.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Recycling Trade Association (NIRTA) regarding proposed financial provisions legislation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to revisit this correspondence during its consideration of the Synopsis of Responses to the Financial Provisions legislation consultation.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture & Rural Development regarding its Inquiry into Better Regulation.

The Committee noted a commencement order for SR 2015 No 257 (C 20) The Taxis (2008 Act) (Commencement No 4) (Amendment) Order (NI) 2015.

11. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted its Forward Work Programme.

The Committee noted a briefing from the Department on Road Safety has been scheduled for 2nd July.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule the oral briefing with the Criminal Justice Inspectorate on its report into NIEA's Environmental Crime Unit after summer recess.

12. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

13. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The Committee agreed that its next meeting will be held at 9.45am on Thursday 18th June 2015 in the Riverview Suite, La Mon Hotel.

The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.41am.

Anna Lo, MLA

Chairperson, Committee for the Environment

18 June 2015