



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**THURSDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Colum Eastwood MLA  
Mr Alban Maginness MLA  
Mr Barry McElduff MLA  
Mr Gary Middleton MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Mrs Sandra Overend MLA  
Lord Morrow MLA

In Attendance: Miss Ciara McKay (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)  
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)  
Mrs Sharon Young (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Cathal Boylan MLA  
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Ian McCrea MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10.04am.

**1. Apologies.**

The apologies are noted above.

**2. Chairpersons Business.**

The Committee noted an invitation to the Construction Excellence Awards.

*Agreed: That the Chairperson would attend the event on behalf of the Committee.*

*Mr McElduff joined the meeting at 10.07am.*

*Mr Maginness left the meeting at 10.07am.*

The Committee noted an invitation to the launch of the BiGGAR Economics Report on 13 October 2015 in the Stormont Hotel.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed that if members were unable to attend the launch a member of staff would attend and prepare a report on the event.*

The Committee noted a press release by the Minister on the establishment of an independent environment protection agency; and of recent discussions on his proposals to control bonfires.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Minister to brief it on these matters and to request additional information on: his proposals to establish an independent environment protection agency; details on a licensing regime for bonfires; and whether there are plans to consult on both issues.*

The Chairperson reminded members that an informal meeting with Kingspan regarding development rights for solar PV on non-domestic buildings was scheduled for Tuesday 29 September 2015.

**3. Minutes.**

The minutes from the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015 were agreed.

**4. Matters arising.**

The Committee noted a response from the Department to the Committee's request for information on four internal audit reports which received limited assurance

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for specific information in relation to these four reports and specific remedial action.*

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding the implementation of the taxi reform programme.

*Mrs Overend joined the meeting at 10.21am*

*The Committee agreed to write to the Department for Regional Development regarding plans to consult on permitting certain classes of taxis in bus lanes.*

**5. Consultations**

No consultations were discussed.

**6. SR 2015/327 The Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.**

*Mr McElduff left the meeting at 10.26.*

*Question put and agreed:*

*The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/327 The Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of*

*Employment) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the Rule.*

## **7. Environmental Better Regulation Bill**

*Mr McElduff rejoined the meeting at 10.28am*

*Mr Milne joined the meeting at 10.29am.*

The Committee noted the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules on the delegated powers memorandum on the Bill.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding issues raised by the Examiner.*

Following a recent development session on effective scrutiny of legislation, the Committee considered a summary report on areas which that the Committee might wish to follow up with the Department.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for clarification on certain aspects of the Bill.*

The Committee noted that its motion to extend the Committee Stage of the Bill has been scheduled for Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Oral briefing - Briefing from Northern Ireland Environment Link**

The Committee was briefed by:

Dr Stephen McCabe            Senior Policy Officer, NIEL

Mr Jim Haughey MBE        Chairman, Ulster Angling Federation Ltd

*Lord Morrow made a declaration of interest that he is a member of an angling club.*

## **8. Environmental Better Regulation Bill**

### **Oral briefing - Briefing from Northern Ireland Local Government Association**

*Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 11.37am.*

The Committee was briefed by:

Ms Karen Smyth            Head of Policy, NILGA

Alderman Mervyn Rea      NILGA Waste Management Spokesman,  
NILGA

Mr Paul McCullough        Principal Environmental Health Officer, Armagh  
City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough  
Council

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for clarification on the following issues: what impact any independent environment protection agency might have on the outworkings of the Environmental Better Regulation Bill; clarification on certain phrases used in the Bill; an overview of what regulations might be made under the Bill; what the financial*

*implications to Councils are; and what regulatory functions could be removed from Councils.*

**9. Correspondence.**

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Justice regarding Northern Ireland Environment Week.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister enclosing the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Report on UK compliance with International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister regarding a ban on the cultivation of GM crops.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding the consolidation of The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2015 by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department advising that the Northern Area Plan 2016 has been adopted.

**10. Forward Work Programme.**

The Committee noted its Forward Work Programme.

**11. Any Other Business.**

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency regarding waste on the former Brickkiln site on Electra Road, Londonderry.*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for an assessment of the financial and waste implications following the recent planning decision on a proposed recycling and incinerator plant in Newtownabbey.*

**12. Date, Time and Place of next meeting.**

The Committee agreed that its next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.19pm.*

**Anna Lo, MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee for the Environment**

**1 October 2015**