Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Justice
Room 345
Parliament Buildings
Tel: +44 (028) 905 21033

Email: [redacted]

From: **Kathy O'Hanlon, Clerk to the Committee for Justice**
Date: **12 May 2026**
To: **Peter McCallion, Clerk to the Committee for the Economy**
Subject: **Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill**

Dear Peter,

At its meeting on 7 May 2026, the Committee for Justice considered your correspondence of 1 May 2026 regarding the Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill call for evidence.

The Committee agreed to forward a nil response.

Kind regards,

Kathy O'Hanlon

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee for Justice

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Infrastructure
Room 416
Parliament Buildings

Tel: +44 (0)28 9052 1787

To: Peter McCallion, Clerk to the Committee for the Economy

From: Michael Potter, Clerk to the Committee for Infrastructure

Date: 18 May 2026

Subject: Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill and the Utility Regulator (Support for Decarbonisation Preparation) Bill

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your memos of 1 May 2026 regarding the Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill and the Utility Regulator (Support for Decarbonisation Preparation) Bill.

At its meeting on 13 May 2026, the Committee considered the Bills and accompanying EFMs and had no comment to make on either Bill.

Best Regards

Michael Potter
Clerk to the Committee for Infrastructure

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Education
Room 428
Parliament Buildings

Tel: +44 (0)28 9052 1240

Email: committee.education@niassembly.gov.uk

To: Peter McCallion, Clerk to the Committee for the Economy

From: Aoibhinn Treanor, Clerk to the Committee for Education

Date: 18 May 2026

Subject: Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill

At its meeting of 13 May 2026, the Committee for Education considered your correspondence, dated 01 May 2026, in respect of the call for evidence for the Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill.

The Committee agreed to provide a nil response. If you require further information or clarification in respect of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Aoibhinn Treanor
Clerk to the Committee for Education

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Finance
Room 346
Parliament Buildings

Tel: +44 (0)28 9052 1799

E-mail: committee.finance@niassembly.gov.uk

To: **Peter McCallion**
Clerk to the Committee for the Economy

From: **Peter Hall**
Clerk to the Committee for Finance

Date: **29th May 2026**

Ref: **EC2026:834**

Subject: **Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill**

Dear Peter,

In order to fully inform our Members response to the Economy Committee's Call for Evidence on the above Bill, the Committee for Finance agreed to request the Department of Finance's comments on this Bill at its meeting on 6th May.

At its meeting on 27th May the Committee considered the attached response and agreed to copy it to the Economy Committee, highlighting the comments made in relation to the wider economic considerations and alignment with Executive priorities, including climate and energy policy aspects of the Bill.

I hope you find this information useful during the Committee for the Economy's deliberations on the Bill

I would be grateful if you could bring this to your Committee's attention.

Regards,

Peter Hall
Clerk to the Committee for Finance

Encs.1

REQUEST FROM: FINANCE COMMITTEE – DALO READOUT - MEETING WEDNESDAY 6 MAY 2026

Point 4 – Economy Committee: Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill: The Committee would ask the Department to consider this Bill and indicate if it has any remit or if there is any relevant policy locus within the Bill's provisions. This will inform a response to the Economy Committee.

Response –

- The Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill was agreed by the Executive on 26 February 2026 and subsequently introduced to the Assembly on 13 April 2026.

- This followed Executive agreement in December 2024 to introduce a temporary moratorium on all forms of onshore petroleum exploration and production. This approach prevented emissions from onshore petroleum and signalled a commitment to the greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets as set out in the Climate Change Act NI (2022).

- Independent research, public consultation and assessment of economic, environmental and social impacts concluded that petroleum development would not deliver meaningful economic benefit and would carry significant potential environmental and community impacts.

- In terms of financial implications, the Bill will not place any additional financial burden on the public purse, businesses or the third sector.

- This Bill will introduce a ban on all forms of onshore petroleum exploration and production in the North and will help the wider Executive to deliver against the Climate Change Act NI (2022) emission targets and the objectives outlined in the Executive's Energy Strategy.

- The Department of Finance has no direct policy remit in relation to the provisions of the Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill. However, it has an indirect interest in terms of wider economic considerations and alignment with Executive priorities, including climate and energy policy.

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Communities
Room 430
Parliament Buildings
Tel: +44 (0) 28 90521895
[redacted]

From: Emer Boyle, Clerk to the Committee for Communities

To: Peter McCallion, Clerk to the Committee for the Economy

Date: 28 May 2026

Subject: Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill

Dear Peter,

1. Thank you for your memo of 1 May 2026 seeking the views of Statutory Committees on the Petroleum Exploration and Licensing (Repeal) Bill.
2. The Committee for Communities has considered the matter and confirms a Nil Return. The reasoning supporting that position is set out below.
3. In reaching its position, the Committee for Communities considered the Bill as introduced, the accompanying Explanatory and Financial Memorandum (EFM), the oral evidence provided by Department for the Economy officials to the Committee for the Economy on 25 March 2026, and the Official Report of the Bill's Second Stage debate on 27 April 2026.
4. The Committee has examined whether any aspect of the Bill engages the statutory responsibilities of the Department for Communities (DfC). No such intersection has been identified.
5. The Committee notes the references made by several Members at Second Stage to just transition principles.
6. The Committee acknowledges that future decarbonisation policy and legislation may give rise to just transition considerations of interest to the Department for

Communities. The Committee observes, however, that those considerations do not arise in respect of this Bill, there being no industry, no workforce and no live licensee whose transition is to be supported or managed in consequence of its passage.

Yours sincerely,

Emer Boyle

Clerk to the Committee for Communities

COMMITTEE FOR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE
Room 254
Parliament Buildings
Tel: 028 9052 1928
Email: Committee.Executive@niassembly.gov.uk

FROM: Nick Mitford, Clerk to the Committee for the Executive Office

DATE: 10 September 2026

TO: Peter McCallion, Clerk to the Committee for the Economy

Petroleum Exploration & Licensing (Repeal) Bill

Dear Peter,

At its meeting on 9 September 2026, the Committee for the Executive Office considered correspondence from The Executive Office in relation to your correspondence on 1 May 2026 regarding the Petroleum Exploration & Licensing (Repeal) Bill.

The Committee agreed to forward a nil response and I would be grateful if you could bring this to the attention of your Committee.

Best regards

Nick Mitford
Clerk to the Committee for the Executive Office