



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**THURSDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2013**

**SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)  
Ms Pam Brown MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA  
Mr Colum Eastwood MLA  
Mr Ian McCrea MLA  
Mr Barry McElduff MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Mr Peter Weir MLA
- In Attendance: Mrs Sheila Mawhinney (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)  
Ms Suzie Cave (Research Officer – item 10 only)
- Apologies: Mr Tom Elliott MLA  
Mr Alban Maginness MLA  
Lord Morrow MLA

*The meeting began in public session at 10:08am.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were as indicated above.

**2. Ministerial briefing**

*Mr McCrea joined the meeting at 10:10am*

*Mr Milne joined the meeting at 10:12am*

The Committee received a briefing from the Minister for the Environment, Mr Mark Durkan MLA, Mr Ian Maye (Deputy Secretary, Planning and Policy), Mr Damien Campbell (Director, Marine Division), Mr Wesley Shannon (Director, Environmental Protection Division), Mr Trevor Evans (Deputy Chief Executive,

DVLNI) and Mr Iain Greenway (Principal Officer, Road Safety and Vehicle Regulation Division).

The Minister discussed a range of issues with the Committee including the recent Ministerial statement on the withdrawal of the Planning Bill; PPS21; proposed job losses in the DVA; taxi legislation; and the future of Exploris.

The Minister agreed to provide detailed information on how the clauses of the Planning Bill are to be incorporated in the proposed SPPS or otherwise implemented.

The Minister also agreed to review issues relating to PPS21, in particular, the perceived inconsistency of planning decisions across different divisions and allowances made for small rural businesses.

The Minister assured the Committee that the proposed subordinate legislation on single tier taxi licensing will be in place by September 2014.

*Mr McCrea left the meeting at 10:44am*

*Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 11:15am*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to follow up on issues not discussed at the briefing due to time constraints.*

### **3. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson updated the Committee on her attendance at the recent ETI Committee meeting which was held at Exploris Aquarium and Seal Sanctuary. The Chairperson advised that the briefing had been recorded by Hansard.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a copy of the Hansard of this briefing from the ETI Committee once available.*

### **4. Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013 were agreed.

### **5. Matters Arising**

- 5.1 The Committee considered papers and Hansard transcript on National Parks from a previous briefing by the Mourne AONB Residents Action Group.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask what resources are being devoted to the promotion and enhancement of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs,) and a breakdown of how the resources are used.*

- 5.2 The Committee considered a copy of the Finance and Personnel Minister's statement regarding the October Monitoring Round.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask how it proposes to address the shortfall in bids which were not met.*

- 5.3 The Committee noted a Departmental response regarding issues raised by ALACE in relation to Statutory Transition Committees.

**6. Consultation on Regulations for the implementation of changes to the UK WEEE system**

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting a copy of the Synopsis of Responses.*

*The Chairperson suspended the meeting at 11:35am*

*The Committee resumed in public session at 11:43am with the following members in attendance:*

*Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)*

*Ms Pam Brown MLA (Deputy Chairperson)*

*Mr Cathal Boylan MLA*

*Mr Ian McCrea MLA*

*Mr Ian Milne MLA*

*Mr Peter Weir MLA*

**7. Synopsis of responses to a consultation on proposed improvements to the Approved Driving Instructor/Approved Motorcycle Instructor Schemes in Northern Ireland**

*Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed with implementing these changes.*

**8. SL1s: Goods Vehicles (Testing) (Amendment No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 and Motor Vehicle Testing (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013**

*Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Statutory Rules.*

*Mr McElduff re-joined the meeting at 11:46am*

**9. SR.2013/241, The Waste (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013**

Question put and agreed:

*“The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2013/241, The Waste (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013, and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the next report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules”*

**10. Committee Review into Wind Energy – Consideration of Evidence**

The Committee was briefed by a representative from Assembly Research and Information Service on international guidance on separation distances between wind turbines and buildings.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to request Assembly Research to provide information on the current location of wind turbines in Northern Ireland.*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to request Professor Geraint Ellis, QUB, to provide an oral briefing at its next meeting.*

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue a press release on its Review.*

## **11. Correspondence**

The Committee considered Departmental correspondence enclosing the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Progress report from the UK Committee on Climate Change and the final UK Government response.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed to return to this issue during the briefing with Lord Deben scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013.*

### The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Information on the Quarry Products Association NI and Woodland Trust joint initiative “Woodland for Quarries”.

Correspondence from the Quarry Products Association NI on the work of the aggregates sector in GB and the potential of what can be achieved with full stakeholder cooperation.

Article 31 letter advising of the Minister’s intention to approve redevelopment of Marm Factory site, Newtownards.

Copy of Local Government Staff Commission Records Management Policy and Retention and Disposal Schedule – June 2013.

Correspondence from the Six Mile Water Trust regarding the Six Mile Water and Antrim Angling Association conservation partnership scheme.

Departmental correspondence on Post Project Evaluations (PPEs) as at the end of September 2013.

## **12. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

*Agreed: The Committee agreed that staff should source possible venues for the proposed Local Government Bill stakeholder event*

## **13. Any other business**

No other business was discussed.

## **14. Date, time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at 10:00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:24pm*

**Anna Lo, MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for the Environment**  
**7 November 2013**