



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2014

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Tom Elliott MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian McCrea 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)
- Apologies: Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Lord Morrow MLA

The meeting began in public session at 10:13.

1. Apologies

Apologies were indicated as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised members of a recent meeting with the Rural Community Transport Partnership Network to discuss current proposals for bus operator licensing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the briefing from the Community Transport Network to the Department for comment.

Mr Weir joined the meeting at 10:19.

The Chairperson advised members that an informal meeting with the Permanent Secretary which has been arranged for Tuesday 4 March.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the secretariat should circulate a draft agenda for this meeting to members for consideration.

3. Draft minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 20th February 2014 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

4.1 The Committee noted a Departmental reply detailing legal advice on taxis at Ravenhill Rugby ground.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 10:23.

4.2 The Committee noted a Departmental response to issues raised by a church on small bus permits and bus operator licensing.

4.3 The Committee considered a draft press release on the publication of the Committee's report on the Local Government Bill.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the press release to be issued.

Mr Elliott joined the meeting at 10:28.

5. Statutory Rule: SR 2014 No. 31, The Planning (General Development) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the Statutory Rule SR 2014 No.31, The Planning (General Development) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Question put and agreed: "The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2014 No.31, The Planning (General Development) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014 and has no objection to the Rule".

6. Departmental briefing on the Consultation on the Planning Agreement between the Department of Environment and George Best Belfast City Airport

Mr Simon Kirk (Planning Manager, Strategic Planning Division, Planning and Local Government Group), Mr Scott Symington (Principal Planning Officer) and Ms Nicole Thompson (Planning Division) briefed the Committee on the current consultation on the planning agreement between the Department and George Best Belfast City Airport.

Mr Weir re-joined the meeting at 10:47.

The main areas discussed were the on-going consultation, planning issues and the enforcement of the noise cap.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a copy of the original 2008 planning agreement and the NIEA report on pollutants as soon as this is available.

The Committee also requested a copy of the synopsis of responses when the consultation has closed.

The Committee further agreed to request a briefing from Departmental officials in relation to Single Planning Policy Statement (SPSS) once the synopsis of responses to the SPSS consultation was available.

7. Correspondence

The Committee considered the OFMdfM Committee terms of reference for its inquiry into the Barroso Task Force.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to draft a response to the inquiry.

Mr Maginness left the meeting at 11:13

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Copy of NILGA's 'Developing a Northern Ireland Programme for Local Government 2015-2024'.

Copy of a letter sent to the Department by the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment in relation to the Exploris Business Case.

Copy of correspondence sent by the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Enterprise to the Department, enclosing a Draft Guidance protocol from Omagh and Strabane District Councils on community benefits derived from wind farms in West Tyrone.

Copy of Imtac October 2013 report on walking routes in Omagh Town Centre.

Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister enclosing a departmental summary of discussions at the Joint Ministerial Council (Europe) meeting held in December 2013.

Investing Activity Report for February 2014 - DOE Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Research Paper on the Reservoirs Bill forwarded by the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development.

8. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the forward work programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed to cancel its scheduled meeting on 22nd May due to European and Local Government elections on that date.

9. Any Other Business

The Committee further discussed the Departmental response enclosing legal advice on taxis at Ravenhill Rugby ground.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department on the enforcement of legal requirements for this taxi operator to keep appropriate records. Members also asked for further information on the existence of a contract for the provision of taxis between the taxi operator and Ravenhill Rugby Ground.

15. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 6th March 2014 at 10:00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11:16.

Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
6 March 2014