



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

DRAFT MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 29 MAY 2014

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Anna Lo MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Mr Colum Eastwood MLA
Mr Tom Elliott MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Lord Morrow MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Sheila Mawhinney (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr George McClelland (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA

The meeting began in public session at 10:15.

1. Apologies

Apologies were indicated as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

Mr Elliott joined the meeting at 10:16.

The Chairperson brought attention to the Committee the note of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group meeting on 13th May 2014.

The Chairperson advised Members that the 2014 Survey of Services was underway and requested that they respond to the Survey before the closing date of 6th June 2014.

3. Draft minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 19th May 2014 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

4.1 The Committee noted a Departmental reply re Human Resource and Capacity Building Issues for Local Government Reform.

4.2 The Committee considered a Departmental reply, enclosing a copy of the report on Implementation of Management Standards for Work Related Stress, carried out on its behalf by the Health and Safety Executive (HSENI) in March 2013.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the Department for information on best practices in relation to the areas identified by the HSENI, particularly as implemented across NICS departments. The Committee also agreed to request a regular update on Departmental sick absenteeism levels.

4.3 The Committee noted the Departmental Forward Work Programme up to 30 June 2014.

5. Consultation on Planning Reform and Transfer

The Committee considered the first phase of the public consultation on Planning Reform and Transfer.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a synopsis of responses from the Department and to schedule a briefing on the synopsis for 16th October 2014.

6. SL1 - Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the SL1 proposal for the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed with making the Rule.

Mr Boylan joined the meeting at 10:25.

7. SL1 – Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the SL1 proposal for the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed with making the Rule. The Committee also agreed to write to the Department to request what the financial impact of this would be at Local Government level.

8. SL1 – The Rights of Passengers in Bus and Coach Transport Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the SL1 proposal for The Rights of Passengers in Bus and Coach Transport Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed with making the Rule.

9. SL1 – The Smoke Control Areas (Exempted Fireplaces) (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the SL1 proposal for The Smoke Control Areas (Exempted Fireplaces) (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed with making the Rule. The Committee also agreed to write to the Department to request the terms of reference for an All-Ireland Air Quality Report and an update on its progress to date.

10. SR 2014/137, The Waste Management Licensing (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered the Statutory Rule SR 2014/137, The Waste Management Licensing (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Question put and agreed:

That 'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2014/137, The Waste Management Licensing (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 and, subject to the Examiner's report, has no objection to the Rule.'

11. SR 2014/142 (C.7), The Local Government (2014 Act) (Commencement No.1) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Order brings into operation certain provisions of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee was content to note the Rule.

12. Departmental Business Plans 2014-15

The Committee considered the 2014-15 Business Plans for the Department of Environment and its two agencies; the Driver and Vehicle Agency and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Agreed: The Committee was content to note the Plans.

13. The Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill

The Committee noted a synopsis of the provisions of the Bill provided by the Department of Environment.

The Committee considered a draft list of stakeholders to be contacted directly for their comments on the provisions of the Bill.

Agreed: The Committee noted the list and suggested some additional stakeholders.

Mr Eastwood left the meeting at 10:39.

The Committee considered a Memorandum of Delegated Powers provided by the Department of Environment.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the Memorandum of Delegated Powers to the Examiner of Statutory Rules for comment.

The Committee considered a draft timetable for the Committee Stage of the Bill.

Agreed: Members agreed that the Committee Stage should be extended until 27th March 2015, and a motion to reflect this should be laid in the Business Office.

14. Departmental briefing on the June Monitoring Round

Siobhan Lynn (Finance and Business Planning Division) and Kieran McMahon (Finance and Business Planning Division) briefed the Committee in relation to the June Monitoring Round and the Provisional Outturn 2013-2014.

The main areas discussed were details of the proposed bids for resource and capital funding being sought by the Department from DFP for 2014-15.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request further information on the levels of match funding anticipated by the Department for forthcoming EU funding programmes.

15. Correspondence

The Committee considered correspondence from Zero Waste North West requesting a meeting with the Committee to discuss potential renewable energy alternatives to fracking.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an informal meeting with the group.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department advising of the publication of the DOE and DVA Heavy Goods Vehicle, Taxi and Bus Compliance Surveys 2013/14.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the department to ask what type of enforcement actions the DVA has taken over the last year.

The Committee considered correspondence from Full Circle Power regarding its project to deliver Northern Ireland's first Waste to Energy facility which will be located within the Belfast Harbour Estate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to arrange a briefing from the group.

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel on the current position in relation to the completion of Post Project Evaluations by Departments.

Latest Brussels Bulletin from Invest NI from the Committee for the Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister

Correspondence from the Fermanagh Trust on the Scottish Government's Good Practice Principals for Committee Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and to include it in its Wind Energy Inquiry report.

Departmental correspondence on the publication of the Department of the Environment's Driver Vehicle Operator and Enforcement Statistics 2013-14.

16. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold its Strategic Planning Day on 18th September 2014, at the same venue as last year if possible.

17. Any Other Business

The Committee agreed to write to the Department for an update on the current position with the Taxis (Taximeters and Fares) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Committee also expressed its appreciation for the work of the previous Assistant Clerk, Sean McCann, and wished him success in his new role.

18. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 5th June 2014 at 10:00 in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11:13.

Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
5 June 2014