



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2015

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 Alban Maginness MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mrs Sandra Overend MLA
- In Attendance: Mr Trevor Allen (Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Sedgewick (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)
Ms Suzie Cave (Research & Information Service)-Item18 only
- Apologies: Lord Morrow MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

The meeting began at 10.10am in public session.

- 1. Apologies**
Apologies were as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Committee discussed arrangements for a Committee visit to Edinburgh.

The Committee noted that an informal meeting with ReNEW on 24 February 2015 has been postponed and that the Committee office would notify members of revised arrangements.

The Committee discussed plans to attend and hold a meeting at a Marine Conservation Zone Workshop being organised by the Department on 12 March 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the Department to consider changing the proposed venue to accommodate a Committee meeting.

Mr Boylan joined the meeting at 10.16am.

3. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 5th February 2015 were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee discussed drafting errors in the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (S.R. 2014/307) raised in the Examiner of Statutory Rules report (NIA 228/11–16).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to ask the Department how it intended to address these errors.

The Committee noted correspondence from Dalradian Gold Limited.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding allocations for the Rates Support Grant in 2015/16.

The Committee noted correspondence from Irish Wind Energy Association regarding presentations given at the Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group Policy Workshop 2015.

The Committee noted a Departmental response on the Ethical Standards Framework.

The Committee considered a draft submission to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment on its inquiry into the potential for economic growth and job creation following reduction in corporation tax in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: the Committee agreed to send the submission to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment.

5. Synopsis of responses to the consultation on the proposed revocation and remaking of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (NI) 2006

The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the consultation to Consultation on the proposed revocation and remaking of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (NI) 2006.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to prepare the SL1 for this legislation.

6. Synopsis of responses to the consultation on transposition on the Amended Batteries Directive

The Committee noted a synopsis of responses to the consultation on transposition on the Amended Batteries Directive.

7. Synopsis of responses to the consultation on Charters Status and Draft Local Government (Transitional Incidental Consequential and Supplemental Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the consultation to Consultation on Charters Status and Draft Local Government (Transitional Incidental Consequential and Supplemental Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Department to prepare the SL1 for this legislation.

8. Synopsis of responses to the consultation on Planning Reform and Transfer to Local Government; Proposals for Subordinate Legislation – Phase 2

The Committee considered a synopsis of responses to the consultation on Planning Reform and Transfer to Local Government; Proposals for Subordinate Legislation – Phase 2.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an oral briefing on the synopsis of responses to the consultation.

Agreed: the Committee agreed to write to the Department for a written briefing on the method of selection for transfer of planning staff personnel.

9. SL1 - The Draft Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of Employment) Regulations (NI) 2015.

The Committee was briefed by:

Ms Linda MacHugh Director Local Government Policy Division,
Department of the Environment

Mr Peter Gregg Head of HR Reform and Capacity Building,
Department of the Environment

Mr McCrea left the meeting at 10.43am.

Mr Boylan left the meeting at 10.53am.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Draft Local Government Reorganisation (Compensation for Loss of Employment) Regulations (NI) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee was content for Department to make the Rule.

Mr Boylan rejoined the meeting at 10.58am.

10. SL1 - The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to make the Rule.

11. SL1 - The Snares (Northern Ireland) Order.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Snares (Northern Ireland) Order.

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to make the Rule.

12. SL1 - The Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases Regulations 2015.

Mr McElduff left the meeting at 11.00am.

The Committee considered an SL1 on the Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases Regulations 2015.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the proposed statutory instrument for the Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases Regulations 2015.

13. SR 2015/21 the Waste (Fees and Charges) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/21 the Waste (Fees and Charges) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and, subject to the report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.'

14. SR 2015/23 the Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts by Children in Front Seats) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered SR 2015/23 The Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts by Children in Front Seats) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and, subject to the report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.'

15. Statutory Rule - Local Government (Standing Orders) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Mr Eastwood joined the meeting at 11.03am.

The Committee agreed the following question:

'The Committee for the Environment has considered the Local Government (Standing Orders) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and, subject to the report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, recommends that the rule is affirmed by the Assembly.'

16. SR 2015/28 (C.3) The Local Government (2014 Act) (Commencement No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Mrs Overend left the meeting at 11.04am.

The Committee noted SR 2015/28 (C.3) The Local Government (2014 Act) (Commencement No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

17. Departmental briefing on the review of biodegradable carrier bags.

The Committee was briefed on the Departments review of biodegradable carrier bags by:

Ms Jennifer McCay Regulatory Natural Resource and Policy
Division, Department of the Environment

Mr Simon Webb Regulatory Natural Resource and Policy
Division, Department of the Environment

18. European 2013/14, 2014/15 Work Programmes.

The Committee was briefed on a Research and Information Service briefing paper on European Union initiatives.

Mr McElduff rejoined the meeting at 11.29am.

Mr Milne joined the meeting at 11.29am.

Mrs Overend rejoined the meeting at 11.44am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the briefing paper to the Department for a response to the issues raised in it.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding proposals to draw down EU finance for environmental projects.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for an update on the implementation of recommendations made in the report on its Inquiry into Used Tyre Disposal.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister seeking information on its European priorities for 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that a draft response would be prepared for its consideration at its next meeting.

19. Correspondence.

The Committee noted correspondence regarding a planning application.

The Committee noted correspondence from NI Aquaculture Representative Group regarding Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations.

The Committee noted correspondence from a member of the public regarding Infrastrata licence PL1/10.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding draft guidance for the operation of community planning.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Woodland Trust seeking a meeting with it.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Woodland Trust to brief it.

The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Committee for Culture, Arts & Leisure to the Department regarding defibrillator provision.

20. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

21. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department regarding guidance provided to taxi operators.

22. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 26th February 2015 in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.52am.

Anna Lo, MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Environment
26 February 2015