

Minutes
Strategic Waste Board meeting
29th August 2008
PDSU Offices, Lesley Studios, May Street, Belfast, BT1 4NN

Present:

Sammy Wilson MP, MLA	Minister of the Environment (Chair)
Councillor Shaun Gallagher	Chair of NILGA Waste Working Group, Derry City Council (Vice Chair)
Paul Simpson	Deputy Secretary Local Government and Planning and Environmental Policy Department of the Environment
Wesley Shannon	Director Climate Change and Waste Management Division Planning Service
Anthony McKay	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Joyce Rutherford	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Ann Blacker	Policy Director, arc21
Ricky Burnett	Chairman, arc21 Joint Committee, Ballymena Borough Council
Alderman Hubert Nicholl	Deputy Chairman, arc21 Joint Committee, Larne Borough Council
Councillor Winston Fulton	Director, Programme Delivery Support Unit
Alan McVicker	Chairman, Technical Advisers Group
Tim Walker	Development Officer, North West Region Waste Management Group (NWRWMG)
Eamon Molloy	Coleraine Borough Council, NWRWMG
Councillor Robert McPherson	Magherafelt District Council, NWRWMG
Councillor Patrick Groogan	Vice Chair of NILGA Waste Working Group
Councillor Sean McGuigan	Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
Professor Sue Christie	Director, Northern Ireland Environment Link
Patrick Durkan	Managing Director, Urban Forest Ltd

In Attendance:

Stuart McDougall	Private Office, Department of the Environment
Graham Craig	Minister's Special Advisor

Secretariat:

Heather Moorhead, NILGA
Andy McClenaghan, NILGA
Clare Bradley, NILGA
Ivan Gregg, Department of the Environment
Helen Anderson, Department of the Environment

1) Welcome and Introductions

The Minister welcomed Board members to the meeting, specifically welcoming June Ingram, DEL, and Cynthia Smith, Planning Service as new Board members. The Minister asked members to introduce themselves in a 'round-table' fashion.

2) Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Ronnie Jordan, DARD
Doreen Brown, DRD;
David Sterling, DETI;
Cllr John Campbell, SWaMP;
John Briggs, SWaMP;
Graham Byrne, SWaMP;
John Quinn, Arc21.
Wendy Reid, DE
Martin Darcy, SIB

3) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

4) Matters Arising

4.1) Programme Governance – Elected members on the Waste Programme Steering Group

The Minister explained that the paper outlines the role of the Waste Programme Steering Group (WPSG) and the membership of the group. Alderman Nicholl proposed the new members to the WPSG. The Minister wished the group success in implementing the Waste Management Strategy.

4.2) 'On Board' training – amendment to Board Terms of Reference

In the discussion it was noted that the table outlining the membership of the SWB requires alteration to include Stephen Peover, Permanent Secretary DOE, who will now attend SWB meetings as chair of the WPSG.

Members agreed the paper conditional upon this change.

4.3) Waste Infrastructure application process – Ministerial letter

The Minister noted that he had written to his colleagues on the NI Executive requesting their full cooperation and engagement in the pre-application and consultation processes for critical waste infrastructure projects to help NI meet its waste management targets.

Secretariat to amend table of SWB members to include Stephen Peover.

Cllr Gallagher thanked the Minister for his letter to the NI Executive.

5) Strategy Delivery Programme – Process Update /Report Templates

The Minister noted:

- i. The report templates will use a traffic light system to provide a visual representation of progress across the project strands.
- ii. The report templates will be updated on a regular basis and project strand reports were provided in the meeting papers, noting progress against the “Recycling and Recovery” and “Waste Planning” project strands.

During the discussion the following points were made:

- i. Members discussed whether or not it would be useful for the SWB to receive the six Strand Progress Reports the WPSG will receive, in addition to the Strategy Progress Report ahead of each SWB meeting.
- ii. Local Government elected members stressed the additional information would be useful in providing a more detailed picture of strategy delivery progress.

The Minister agreed SWB members should receive the six Strand Progress Reports in addition to the Strategy Progress Report.

Secretariat to circulate project strand reports and Strategy Progress Report ahead of each SWB meeting.

6) Update report on Learning and Communications

During the discussion the following points were made:

- i. The Board welcomed the appointment of a Senior Information Officer.
- ii. Elected members highlighted concerns regarding resources and staffing for the Learning and Communications strand of the strategy. Without adequate resources the SIO would be unable to deliver an effective communications strategy and it will be unlikely members of the public will undertake behavioural changes and accept development of infrastructure necessary to ensure waste management targets are met.
- iii. It was suggested that the Learning and Communications strand of the Strategy requires immediate funding and resources if the necessary progress is to be made, whereas under the DOE’s current funding arrangements progress will not be made until the end of next year
- iv. Cllr Gallagher stressed that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the SWB would be held responsible if NI fails to meet its Waste Management targets. Cllr Gallagher also highlighted the success of “Wake Up to Waste” campaign explaining Derry City Council has seen a 7% rise in the use of recycling facilities following the campaign.
- v. The public need to be informed of European targets and potential infraction fines; Central government needs to get this message across. If Central Government effectively communicate the right messages to

<p>the general public, this will assist the Regional Waste Management Groups to meet their waste management targets.</p> <p>vi. Work carried out by NGOs funded by the Community Waste Innovation Fund proved significant in raising public awareness of waste management issues. Members questioned the potential for money from the Landfill Tax Credits Scheme and the Landfill Tax being used to fund the Learning and Communications.</p> <p>vii. DOE explained that funds raised by the Landfill Tax are not ‘ring fenced’ for any particular purpose and that these already form part of the financial allocation to NI and have been allocated by the NI Executive as part of its Programme for Government budget. However, the DOE explained they have a strong case to make for additional funding in light of the risk of EU Waste management infraction fines. Professor Christie suggested that money could be reallocated from the £196 million allocated for waste management infrastructure development to progress Learning and Communications. However, Local Government opposed this suggestion and stressed the importance of separate funds being made available for general Learning and Communications activities, for example, to address the ‘NIMBY’ culture, in addition to the funds for the individual capital projects.</p> <p>viii. Board members agreed it would be useful to hold an information event for MLAs at Stormont to raise awareness of Waste Management issues, specifically emphasising the need to ensure NI does not incur EU infraction fines for failing to meet landfill diversion targets.</p> <p>The Minister noted:</p> <p>i. There were a number of encouraging aspects to the update report.</p> <p>ii. The Learning and Communication Forum has been asked to examine ways in which the “Wake up to Waste” campaign could be reinvigorated.</p> <p>iii. DOE will continue to consider the Learning and Communication strand of the Waste Management Strategy in the context of priorities and business planning for 2008/09 year and beyond with a view to putting in place the necessary resources and delivery mechanisms to progress the Learning and Communication work stream as effectively as possible.</p> <p>iv. The schools’ competition considered by the previous Minister under which teenagers would be asked to design a logo for the strategy may be one means of communicating the necessary messages to the public.</p> <p>v. There is a need to inform the public that the technologies required to enable NI to meet its Waste Management targets will not have the negative impacts some people think they will have.</p> <p>The Minister agreed it would be useful to hold an information event for MLAs at Stormont to raise awareness of Waste Management issues.</p>	<p>Paul Simpson to examine potential funding options to resource implementation of the Learning and Communications strand of the Waste Management Strategy</p> <p>Secretariat to liaise with Chair and Vice-Chair to plan information event at Stormont.</p>
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7) Report from the Waste Infrastructure Programme Board

Alan McVicker, Director PDSU, provided an update report from the WIPB. In the report the following points were made:

- i. The regional Waste Management Groups' projects are progressing well.
- ii. Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform has advised DOE to submit an informal 'non-paper' to the European Commission for consideration to ensure that the Strategic Waste Infrastructure Fund avoids potential State Aid issues.
- iii. The Local Government (Contracts and Compulsory Purchase) Bill is scheduled to come into operation in July 2009.
- iv. A Gateway 0 review has been completed at Programme level. Recommendations from the review are being considered by the SRO. A combined Gateway 1 & 2 review has also been completed for the arc21 project.
- v. Waste planning applications are complex, involve many technical consultations and attract high levels of political correspondence. This latter workload has unduly delayed progress on initial Waste PAD cases. Future performance should improve sufficiently and the PDSU will seek to assist and to provide feedback on key cases in the system.
- vi. It seems increasingly likely that the majority of the £200m SWIF monies will not be drawn down in the 2008-11 budget period. Discussions have taken place with DFP regarding the re-profiling of the Fund across years 4 and 5.

The Minister thanked Mr McVicker for his paper.

8) Update on Local Government (Contracts and Compulsory Purchase) Bill

During the discussion the following points we made:

- i. Local Government members expressed concern regarding the delay in issuing the consultation on the Bill.
- ii. Cllr Gallagher stressed that progressing the Local Government (Contracts and Compulsory Purchase) Bill must be at the top of DOE's priorities as delivery of the Waste Management Infrastructure programme rests on this legislation being passed.

The Minister noted:

- i. The request for approval to consult on the Bill has not yet been considered by the NI Executive.
- ii. The Minister highlighted that 2 different avenues exist for clearing the consultation paper through the Executive. The first is the 'special procedure', the second involves following normal procedure and seeking approval by the full NI Executive. An Executive meeting is scheduled for the 18th September.
- iii. Minister Wilson commented on the willingness of the Environment Committee to prioritise scrutiny of the Bill explaining it could pass the

<p>committee stage in as little as 4 weeks.</p> <p>iv. As the absence of Committee scrutiny could create additional difficulties, resulting in a potentially more contentious passage for the Bill in the Assembly, the emphasis is on working with the Environment Committee to secure prioritisation.</p> <p>v. The Minister agreed to discuss with the First Minister the possibility of issuing the consultation under 'special procedure' with the agreement of the First and Deputy First Minister rather than the entire NI Executive. He explained, however, this procedure was usually reserved for emergencies and he was not hopeful that it would be used in this instance.</p> <p>9) Update on Planning Policy Statement 18 – Consultation / Impact of NI Renewables Obligation Review</p> <p>Paul Simpson provided a verbal report on the impact of the NI Renewables Obligation Review.</p> <p>In the report the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. DETI will shortly launch their consultation paper on the review of the NI Renewables Obligation. ii. The key focus is on redefining Renewables Obligation Certificates (ROCs) and the circumstances in which they can be used. iii. DBERR is keen to move the eligibility criteria for ROCs away from traditional uses towards wind and wave renewable energy technologies. NI is behind the rest of the UK in utilising these technologies and this is recognised by DETI. iv. The DETI consultation will be cautious in moving away from the current ROCs eligibility criterion for landfill gas. <p>10) Update on Environment Protection Agency decision</p> <p>In light of the divergent political party positions of Local government SWB members, Local Government members noted the information provided regarding the creation of the NIEA. The Minister welcomed this approach.</p> <p>11) Any Other Business – Strategic Waste Board meeting schedule</p> <p>During the discussion the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Should the Minister be unable to attend a meeting of the SWB, the meeting should proceed as planned with Cllr Gallagher acting as Chair. ii. A meeting schedule for the SWB was requested. 	<p>Minister to discuss with the First Minister the possibility of issuing the consultation under 'special procedure' with the agreement of the First and Deputy-First Minister rather than the entire NI Executive.</p>
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The Minister noted he will attend all SWB meetings unless something beyond his control prevents him from attending.

The Minister agreed:

- i. Meetings should proceed as planned should he be unable to attend, with Cllr Gallagher acting as Chair.
- ii. A meeting schedule for the SWB would help ensure he is able to attend meetings. Dates for future meeting were provided as follows:
 - 19th December 2008,
 - 13th March 2009
 - 12th June 2009.

12) Date and Venue of Next meeting

The Minister announced the next meeting will take place on 19th December and it will be hosted by the North West Region Waste Management Group.

The Minister thanked members for their time and for their co-operation in finishing the meeting quickly.

Secretariat to liaise with NWRWMG to confirm venue for next meeting.