

## Northern Ireland Assembly News – February 2022

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### Executive Committee Business

[Climate Change \(No. 2\) Bill: Consideration Stage \(1<sup>st</sup> February - Part 1\)](#)

[Climate Change \(No. 2\) Bill: Consideration Stage \(1<sup>st</sup> February - Part 2\)](#)

[Climate Change \(No. 2\) Bill: Consideration Stage \(1<sup>st</sup> February - Part 3\)](#)

[Climate Change \(No. 2\) Bill: Consideration Stage \(7<sup>th</sup> February - Part 1\)](#)

[Climate Change \(No. 2\) Bill: Consideration Stage \(7<sup>th</sup> February - Part 2\)](#)

NIEL's Summary of the Consideration Stage of the Bill is available [here](#)

[Climate Change \(No. 2\) Bill: Further Consideration Stage \(28<sup>th</sup> February\)](#)

[The draft Single Use Carrier Bags Charge \(Amendment and Revocation\) Regulations \(NI\) 2022](#) (Part 1)

[The draft Single Use Carrier Bags Charge \(Amendment and Revocation\) Regulations \(NI\) 2022](#) (Part 2)

[The draft Environment \(2021 Act\) \(Commencement and Saving Provision\) Order \(NI\) 2022](#) The Assembly approved the commencement of the Environment Act which establishes a framework for environmental policy and oversight and provides powers to jurisdictions in respect of a number of different areas, including water, resource efficiency, biodiversity, and air and water quality management. The commencement order will bring a broad swathe of the Act into effect locally, including provisions regarding the activities of the Office for Environmental Protection, producer responsibility requirements and provisions pertaining to DAERA's ability to bring forward regulations to set charges on single-use plastics and carrier bags.

[Budget Bill: Second Stage](#) – During the debate a member of the AERA Committee stated that while DAERA requested £600 million additional funding to support its draft green growth strategy, it has been allocated only £175 million against the green growth for the 2022-25 period. *Addressing key environmental pressures such as climate change and air and water pollution, addressing the impacts of ammonia emissions and building a more resilient natural environment are also made much more difficult without adequate and positive budgetary provision. It is understood that DAERA made a collective bid for £21.5 million for those initiatives but received only £2.8 million.*

### Ministerial Statements

[Blue-carbon Habitats: Action Plan](#) – The AERA Minister delivered a statement on the development of an action plan to protect and restore blue-carbon habitats including the work that has been completed, the work that is under way, the work that is required and the way ahead to deliver on an action plan.

[British-Irish Council: Energy](#) – The Minister for the Economy reported on the British-Irish Council ministerial meeting in energy sector format, which was held on Friday 4 February 2022. The energy work sector meeting brought together Ministers with responsibility for energy policy to discuss how the eight member Administrations can continue to work together to address shared challenges such as climate change, energy efficiency and energy security.

[Environment fund 2022-23](#) – The AERA Minister announced the award of £2.9 million in funding for the delivery of strategic environmental projects across Northern Ireland

[Public Expenditure Update on Budgetary Matters](#) – With no NI Executive in place, the Minister of Finance stated that it will be a new Executive with new Ministers that will have to agree a Budget. In that context, the current public consultation on the draft budget has been paused, he added that *a new Executive will be best placed to take further decisions on how the Budget process will proceed.*

## Members Statements

[Future Agricultural Policy](#)  
[Air Quality in Northern Ireland](#)

## Private Members' Business

[Onshore Fracking \(Prohibition\) Bill: Second Stage](#)

## Adjournment Debate

## Answers to Written Questions

### Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

[Departmental steps to reduce wildlife by-catch and entanglement](#)  
[Publication of NI Ammonia Strategy for consultation](#)  
[Action to protect against wildfires](#)  
[Air Quality Progress Reports – Non publication by councils](#)  
[Assessment – impact of not implementing climate action legislation within current mandate](#)  
[Departmental efforts to reverse the rate of biodiversity loss](#)  
[Update – Delivery of a deposit return scheme](#)  
[Articles under the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive apply to Northern Ireland](#)  
[Departmental plans to reduce coastal sea pollution](#)  
[Improving provision of access to outdoor recreation](#)

### Minister for the Economy

[Percentage of electricity generated from renewable energy](#)  
[Departmental plans to increase renewable energy power generation](#)  
[Timescale – turning principles outlined in the new Energy Strategy into policy](#)  
[Roll out of Project Stratum in AONBs](#)

### Minister of Education

[Departmental steps to reduce its carbon footprint](#)  
[Training for teachers to teach about the climate and ecological emergency](#)

### Minister for Infrastructure

[Departmental spend on cycling for each of the last 5 years and budget for 2021/2022](#)  
[Departmental steps to reduce its carbon footprint](#)  
[Update – establishment of an independent Infrastructure Commission](#)  
[Update – delivery of all-island infrastructure](#)

## Oral Answers to Questions

### Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

[Ammonia Strategy and Action Plan](#)

### Minister for the Economy

[‘The Path to Net Zero Energy’ and impact of rising energy prices](#)

### Minister for Infrastructure

[Plans to improve Planning System](#)  
[Dredging of the River Blackwater](#)  
[North-West Transport Hub: Rail Connectivity](#)  
[Belfast Rapid Transit: Ormeau Road](#)

## Assembly Committee Meetings February 2022

COMMITTEE	DATE	AGENDA
<b>AERA</b>	3 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee received a briefing from Renewable NI on the Green Economy Report</li> </ul>
	10 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee heard evidence from stakeholders on the proposed Common Frameworks for Animal Health and Welfare and Fertilisers</li> </ul>
	17 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Growth Strategy – DAERA Oral Briefing Update</li> <li>Agricultural Support Common Framework - Stakeholder Oral Evidence Session</li> <li>Chemicals and Pesticides Common Framework – Stakeholder Oral Evidence Session</li> <li>The Common Agricultural Policy (Cross Compliance Exemptions and Transitional Regulation) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2022 (AGS/004) – Written Briefing</li> </ul>
	24 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee received evidence from key stakeholders on the Plant Health and Plant Varieties and Seeds Common Frameworks.</li> <li>Written briefing on the joint work of AFBI, QUB and Teagasc on Carbon Sequestration.</li> </ul>
<b>Communities</b>	3 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Places Briefing on Participatory Budgeting</li> </ul>
	10 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department for Communities Historic Environment Division - Briefing on its Work</li> </ul>
<b>Economy</b>	16 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee discussed the Onshore Fracking (Prohibition) Bill</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	2 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Briefing from NI Water - Draft Budget Impact</li> <li>Departmental Briefing - Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2</li> </ul>
	9 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee received a Departmental briefing on the Second Cycle Flood Risk Management Plan and Reservoirs Consultation</li> </ul>
	16 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Departmental Briefing - Review of Planning Act 2011</li> </ul>
<b>Public Accounts Committee</b>	3 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<p>The purpose of the meeting was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To brief and prepare the Committee for the next Inquiry into 'Planning in NI'</li> </ul>
	10 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee received an Evidence Session from the Department on the Inquiry into Planning in NI</li> </ul>
	17 February <a href="#">Watch Again</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inquiry into Planning in Northern Ireland – Evidence Session SOLACE</li> <li>Inquiry into Planning in Northern Ireland – Discussion of Evidence Session</li> </ul>

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