

Consultation Schedule – Council Meeting 4 March 2025

	RECEIVED FROM	TITLE	SUBMISSION BY
1.	Department of Justice	Consultation on Proposals to increase Legal Aid Remuneration	27th March 2025
	<p>The Department of Justice is seeking views on proposals to increase fees paid to solicitors and barristers for legal aid services.</p> <p>The proposals are one of the first steps in the Enabling Access to Justice Reform Programme, which aims to improve justice delivery and ensure everyone – particularly the most vulnerable – has access to tailored systems, support, advice and representation.</p> <p>Everyone is being encouraged to have their say</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Public Consultation on proposals for enhanced remuneration for providers of legal services - NI Direct - Citizen Space</u> 		
2.	Health and Safety Executive NI	Consultation on Proposals for Amendments to Gas Safety (Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997	14th April 2025
	<p>This consultation relates to proposals by HSENI on amendments to the Gas Safety (Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 (S.R. 997 No.195) (GSMR).</p> <p>The GSMR apply to the conveyance of natural gas (methane) through pipes to domestic and other consumers.</p>		

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	<p>The Regulations cover four main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the safe management of gas flow through a network, particularly those parts supplying domestic consumers, and a duty to minimise the risk of a gas supply emergency - arrangements for dealing with supply emergencies - arrangements for dealing with reported gas escapes and gas incidents - gas composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Consultation on proposals for amendments to the Gas Safety (Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland</u> 		
3.	Department of Finance	Consultation on Strategic Roadmark for Rating Policy	24th April 2025
	<p>In November 2023 the Department of Finance consulted on seven rates proposals: four in the non-domestic sector and three in the domestic sector. That consultation process was advertised in the local press and attracted a significant amount of coverage in local and national media, and social media; it launched on 7 November 2023 and the associated summary consultation report was published on 10 September 2024. A supplementary consultation has been launched this week that now builds on that prior process and the feedback provided to the Department. This supplementary consultation also forms part of the Finance Minister’s work on the Strategic</p>		

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	<p>Roadmap for Rating Policy which was laid out at the Assembly on 9 December 2024. A link to the Minister’s statement is attached below for ease of reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/news/archibald-sets-out-roadmap-rates <p>The two domestic rating proposals being looked at by the Department in this supplementary consultation are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing the maximum capital value cap (“the cap” or “max cap”) within the domestic rating system from £400,000 to £485,000 2. Reduction in the Early Payment Discount from 4% to 2% <p>A copy of the consultation paper is attached for ease of reference, and the consultation as well as equality and rural impact assessments can be accessed at the following link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/consultations/supplementary-consultation-domestic-rating-measures 	

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4.	Department for Economy	Views on Changes to Electricity Reinforcement Connection Charges	24 April 2025
	<p>Consultation on the Department for Economy proposal that a higher proportion of the cost to reinforce new connections to the electricity grid will be spread across all customers and paid for over a longer period. This is known as ‘socialisation of connection costs’.</p> <p>Under the current system, adding a new low carbon connection such as a heat pump or EV charger may require reinforcement to the electricity grid. The cost of this initial reinforcement is currently charged to the householder or business requiring the upgrade. However, other electricity customers who share the line can potentially add a low carbon technology at a later time without having contributed to the initial cost of the upgrade. This is known as ‘first mover disadvantage’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.economy-ni.gov.uk/consultations/increased-socialisation-connection-costs-electricity-distribution-network 		
5.	Health and Safety Executive	Consultation on Shaping the Planning of the Electricity Distribution Network in Northern Ireland	n/a
	<p>Please accept this invitation to join Northern Ireland Electricity Networks (NIE Networks) and Regen in our upcoming consultation event providing an opportunity to help shape the planning of the electricity distribution network in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Regen is working with NIE Networks to develop distribution network planning scenarios that enable a better understanding of how the use of the electricity network is likely to change up to 2050. These will form an input into NIE Networks’ future network investment plans.</p>		

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	<p>The aim of the webinar is to outline our approach to developing network planning scenarios and to understand from stakeholders like you how future energy system changes will vary at a regional level in Northern Ireland. We want to ensure that the scenarios we develop reflect the region’s plans, insights and ambitions.</p> <p>We will confirm the agenda beforehand. It is likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Vision for the future: an overview of NIE Networks’ net zero investment strategy enabling customers to decarbonise affordably - Project deep dive: how planning scenarios for the distribution network in Northern Ireland will be developed during this project - Interactive polling: an opportunity to feed into the assumptions used for Regen’s modelling on electric vehicle charging, heat electrification, and the build-out of renewables and storage technologies. - Q&A session: ask the project team questions. <p>The meeting will be held online (via MS Teams) from 10.00-11.30 on Thursday 6 March.</p> <p><u>Please register you place via this link.</u></p>	
<p>Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council</p>	<p>Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26</p>	
	<p>We are emailing to inform you that Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council have published its Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 (draft for consultation).</p> <p>As a resident, business owner, key stakeholder, or visitor to the Borough, we value your opinion and seek your views on this year’s plan.</p>	

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	<p>We have identified six objectives on which the Council will focus on this year, alongside our Statutory Performance Measures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the Health & Wellbeing of our Residents. 2. Protect our Planet’s Environment 3. Provide the Best-in-Class Customer Service Experience 4. Improve our Employee Experience 5. Encourage Economic Growth within the Borough 6. Maintain our Financial Sustainability and ensure we are a Trusted Organisation <p>You can view the 2025/26 plan on our website https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/corporateplan/</p> <p>Alternatively, if you would like a printed copy or an alternative format of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 (draft) and the consultation questions sent to you, please contact:</p> <p><i>Performance Improvement Team</i> T. 0300 123 4568 E. performance@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk</p>	

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Available to View

RECEIVED FROM	TITLE	PUBLISHED
Department of Agriculture, Environmental and Rural Affairs	Proposed new Code of Practice on Sampling and Reporting at Materials Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-proposed-new-code-practice-sampling-and-reporting-materials-facilities
Department of Agriculture, Environmental and Rural Affairs	Northern Ireland local authority collected municipal waste management statistics released	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-local-authority-collected-municipal-waste-management-statistics.

Open Consultations (previously Listed)

- Public Health Agency Consultation on the draft PHA Corporate Plan 2025-2030 submission by 28 February 2025
- Northern Ireland Policing Board Corporate Plan for 2025-30 submission by 3 March 2025
- Department for Communities Consultation on a new Fuel Poverty Strategy for Northern Ireland submission by 6 March 2025
- Department of Health Consultation re: Pathology Blueprint Programme Equality Impact Assessment submission by 18 March 2025
- Department of Health Public consultation on the draft 'Being Open Framework' submission by 21 March 2025
- Department of Health Consultation: Hospitals – Creating a Network for Better Outcomes submission by 28 February 2025
- Public Health Agency Consultation for the draft PHA Corporate Plan 2025-2030 submission by 28 February 2025
- Northern Ireland Executive Review of Trust Ports submission by 10 March 2025
- Department of Health Consultation for automatic support being provided under the Help with Health Costs scheme for Universal Credit recipients submission by 10 March 2025
- Department for the Economy Notice of Intention to Award Mineral Prospecting Licences submission by 4 April 2025

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- Department for Infrastructure Living With Water in Derry Plan submission by 7 April 2025
- Department of Finance Consultation on adjustments to employee contribution rates for the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pension Scheme submission by 7 April 2025
- Department of Health Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the Draft 2025-26 Health Budget submission by 9 April 2025
- Department for Infrastructure Consultation on changing the frequency of MOT testing submission by 16 April 2025
- Northern Health and Social Care Trust Consultation on piloting the use of Body-worn Camera Devices within the Emergency Department submission by 1 May 2025