

Colin Moffett
Director of Climate Change and Green Growth
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27 November 2024

Dear Mr Moffett,

Thank you for your letter dated 11 September 2024, requesting the Committee's views on the draft Northern Ireland Climate Commissioner Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, as required under section 56 of the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (the Act).

The Committee welcomes increased scrutiny of the Act and supports the Northern Ireland Executive setting up the Northern Ireland Climate Commissioner as per section 50 of the Act.

We have reviewed the draft Regulations, and we welcome that these set an annual monitoring duty for the Commissioner. As there is potential overlap with the Committee's work, the Committee will be keen to co-operate with the Commissioner, once appointed, to ensure that our respective roles work well together and that there is effective scrutiny of the Northern Ireland Executive's plans and delivery on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

While the general functions and powers listed in Regulations 4 and 6 appear appropriate, the priority should be to determine clearly the nature of the Commissioner's role, and then to ensure that the functions and powers provided for are suitable to deliver the role effectively. We recognise that the Act is limited as to what it says around the Commissioner's duties, so the draft Regulations may not be the best place for providing such detail.

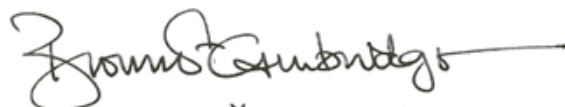
You may also wish to consider whether any transparency requirements would be desirable within the draft Regulations.

With respect to Regulation 7 (Tenure of Office) of the draft Regulations, the Committee supports the recommended length of tenure of five years. It will be important for the Executive to have robust and timely processes in place for appointments and re-appointments. The Executive might also consider including a clause allowing the Office to continue to function in the event of a vacancy or defect in appointment or re-appointment.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Piers Forster
Interim Chair, Climate Change Committee



Baroness Brown of Cambridge DBE FREng FRS
Chair, Adaptation Committee