

**From:** [Hepper, Fiona](#)  
**To:** [Private Office DETI](#)  
**Cc:** [Sterling, David](#); [Thomson, David](#); [McCutcheon, Joanne](#); [Baxter, Clare](#); [McCune, David](#); [Hutchinson, Peter](#); [Aiken, Glynis](#); [Neth Energy](#); [Press Office](#); [Ross, Alastair](#)  
**Subject:** COR 1284/11 : Biodiesel from Waste Oil  
**Date:** 26 October 2011 14:07:13  
**Attachments:** [COR 128 11 Biodiesel from waste oil.DOC](#)

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Private Office

Please see attached

Fiona

**Fiona Hepper**

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**From:** Fiona Hepper

**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> October 2011

1. Andrew Crawford
2. Arlene Foster MLA

**COR 1284/11: BIODIESEL FROM WASTE OIL**

**Issue:** Minister Attwood has written to you seeking information on biodiesel for both Sandra Overend MLA and Sean Lynch MLA, following a recent Oral question time.

**Timing:** Routine

**Need for referral to the Executive:** Not applicable.

**Presentational Issues:** None.

**Freedom of Information:** This submission is fully disclosable.

**Financial Implications:** None.

**Legislation Implications:** None at present.

**PSA/PFG Implications:** None at present.

**Statutory Equality Obligations:** Not applicable.

**Recommendation:** That you write to both Sandra Overend MLA and Sean Lynch MLA (cc Minister Atwood) using the attached draft at **Annex A**.

## Background

During questions to the Minister of the Environment on 13 September 2011, Sandra Overend MLA asked Minister Attwood a question relating to the disposal of waste oil. Following this question, Sean Lynch MLA asked a supplementary question on financial incentives for the production of biodiesel to which Minister Attwood directed the member to DETI for response.

2. The Hansard record of the exchange is below for your information;

### **Waste Oil**

**4. Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the facilities currently in place that are capable of disposing of waste oil.  
(AQO 297/11-15)

**Mr Attwood:** *I am curious about where this question will go. I was about to read the answer to Mr McNarry's question. The answer in respect of waste oil is that, under current regulation, five facilities are entitled to accept, process and store waste oil up to a limit of 10 tonnes a day.*

*Three of them are entitled to process the waste oil, with a limit of 29,000 tons per annum. The NIEA monitors the impact of those facilities on air and water quality. Civil amenity sites also have the capacity, under licence, to store up to a limit of 1,000 litres of waste oil. I assure the Member that the NIEA has regulatory authority for those five sites currently under regulation and the civic amenity centres that have that capacity. I am advised that the NIEA is attentive to that matter.*

2.45 pm

**Mrs Overend:** *I thank the Minister for his response. Disposing of waste oil is very difficult, particularly for those working in the agriculture industry, which amasses a considerable amount of the product. Will the Minister detail how easy it is, or is not, to recycle the waste product?*

**Mr Attwood:** *As I said in answer to the previous question, it is my practice to rely on best scientific advice. Therefore, I will have to seek the best scientific advice from the NIEA about the appropriate waste disposal models and mechanisms. I do not deny that that is beyond my knowledge and competence. Nevertheless, if the Member has concerns about the issue, will she bring them to my attention? I am in conversation with the NIEA with regard to its monitoring, compliance and enforcement regimes to ensure that any waste disposal, whether it is tyres in a depot somewhere in the North, a waste disposal plant in the hills of the Black Mountain or the disposal of waste oil, has the right enforcement and, if necessary, more enforcements, compliance and monitoring in order to ensure that waste, especially waste*

*that is volatile or a threat, is properly managed. I am anxious and attentive to that need.*

**Mr Lynch:** *Go raibh maith agat, a LeasCheann Comhairle. What financial incentives are in place to encourage the production of biodiesel from waste oil?*

**Mr Attwood:** *I suggest that the Member refers the matter to the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, whose remit covers the detail to answer that question. I will bring it to her attention and ask her to reply to the Member.*

3. Minister Attwood has now written to you seeking a response to both Mrs Overend and Mr Lynch. Minister Attwood's letter is attached at **Annex A**.

### **Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive**

4. Whilst DETI does not currently offer incentives for the production of biodiesel, the recent consultation on the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) did include proposals to incentivise the uptake of bioliquids/biofuels for heating purposes. The inclusion of bioliquids differed from the GB RHI and is largely due to the high number of oil users in Northern Ireland and the fact that various restrictions could result in bioliquids being the only alternative fuel source to many consumers.
5. Bioliquids are developed through a blend of kerosene and other sustainable sources such as FAME Acid Methyl Ester (FAME) sourced from used cooking oil. The Northern Ireland Oil Federation has been involved in some trials of this technology locally.
6. The proposed incentive for bioliquids will only be eligible for heating purposes and would not cover the production of the liquid for transport. If the member wishes further information on the production of biodiesel for transport he may wish to contact the Department for Regional Development.

### **Recommendation**

7. I recommend that you write to Mrs Overend and Mr Lynch using the draft letter attached at **Annex B**.

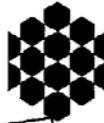
**FIONA HEPPER**  
**Energy Division**  
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Press Office  
Assembly Liaison Unit  
Alistair Ross MLA, APS

## Annex A

From the office of the  
Minister of the Environment



Department of the  
**Environment**

www.doeni.gov.uk

Arlene Foster MLA  
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Your reference:

Our reference: AQO 4 : (AQ 297/11 - 15)

29 September 2011

At Assembly Oral Questions on 13 September 2011, I was asked by Sandra Overend MLA :- "To ask the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the facilities currently in place that are capable of disposing of waste oil?". I was further asked by Sean Lynch MLA ". What financial incentives are in place to encourage the production of biodiesel from waste oil?"

In response, I suggested that the Member referred the matter to the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, whose remit covers the issue, and I advised that I would bring it to your attention.

I would be obliged if your Department could consider the matter and copy my office in on any reply.

ALEX ATTWOOD MLA  
Minister of the Environment

**DRAFT LETTER**

1. Sandra Overend MLA  
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Belfast  
BT4 3XX
  
2. Sean Lynch MLA  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Dear

I have been informed by the Minister of the Environment that in a recent question time he attended, you enquired about the use of biodiesel in Northern Ireland and about possible incentives for the production of such a fuel. I understand that he undertook to raise this issue with me.

My Department does not currently provide any incentives, or indeed have any role in the production of biodiesel for transport purposes. However, I have recently carried out a consultation on the development of renewable heat, in which proposals for bioliquids/biofuels were included. These bioliquids are traditionally developed by blending kerosene with a sustainable feedstock such as used cooking oil.

In the consultation paper on the development of a Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), my Department proposed incentivising the uptake of bioliquids for heating purposes in place of traditional fossil fuels. At this point in time, we are considering the consultation responses with a view to developing a final policy position. For information, in the consultation a tariff of 1.5 pence per kilo watt hour was included for bioliquid installations up to 45 kilo watt in capacity. This proposed incentive is designed to motivate

consumers to switch from existing fossil fuels to this sustainable fuel source. I believe that some trials of this fuel have been carried out by the Oil Firing Technical Association and the Northern Ireland Oil Federation.

If you wish further information on incentives for biodiesel for transport purposes I suggest you contact the Minister for Regional Development.

I trust you have found this letter useful.

**ARLENE FOSTER MLA**  
**Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment**

Cc: Alex Attwood, MLA  
Minister of the Environment