

<b>Report on</b>	Consultation response to DfE on an application for a Petroleum licence to cover the area surrounding Lough Neagh
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Chris Boomer
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Chris Boomer

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Members views on the application for a Petroleum licence to cover the area surrounding Lough Neagh.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	The Department for the Economy have consulted the Council on an application for a Petroleum Licence to cover the area surrounding Lough Neagh
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	EHA Exploration Limited has applied to the Department of Economy for a Petroleum Licence. EHA are a Hydrocarbon Exploration Company who plan to investigate for potential hydrocarbon reserves which may be held deep underground. If awarded, the licence they will prospect in two stages. Firstly, they will examine soil to identify if there is microseepage of hydrocarbons from reservoirs deep below the earth surface. This will be with landowners agreement. Secondly, for a reduced area where potential has been identified, they will undertake seismic imaging to establish further what can be found below the surface.
3.2	The area which the licence would cover included parts of the district council area Antrim and Newtownabbey, Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon, Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh as well as Mid Ulster.
3.3	The area affected in Mid Ulster includes the locality of Ardboe, Coagh, Killymeal, Stewartstown, Aughnacloy, Coalisland, Lissan, The Loup, Ballysaggart, Moy, Washing Bay, Caledon, Donaghmore, Moygashel, Castlecaulfield, Killyman and Mullaghmore.
3.4	A second licence has been applied for in the Fermanagh and Omagh Council area for the South West Fermanagh Area by a company called Tamboran Resources

3.5	<p>Ltd. This licence is likely to be controversial as they are looking gas. That area has been linked to proposals for fracking.</p> <p>At present, the proposal is purely in relation to investigation and no details have been provided for extraction. If hydro carbons are located in commercial quantities, extraction would be subject to planning legislation for which an application would be needed.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	<p>Financial: None identified</p>
	<p>Human: None identified</p>
	<p>Risk Management: None identified</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	<p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: None identified</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: None identified</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	<p>That the Planning Manager be instructed to write to the Department of Economy advising that we note the application for the licence and would ask that they draw the applicant's attention to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) The need to ensure landowners permission.</li> <li>(2) The need to notify the council prior to undertaking and excavation on drilling before exercising permitted development rights.</li> <li>(3) The permitted development rights are restricted on sensitive sites such areas of Special Scientific Interest and Archaeological sites.</li> <li>(4) That the council in line with regional planning policy opposes any extraction based on none conventional measure such as fracking.</li> </ul>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>