Statement of Reasons by Mike Pringle MSP

In relation to my draft proposal for an Environmental Levy Bill, I do not consider that further consultation on the draft is required for the following reasons:

A consultation paper on an Environmental Levy was published by me in February 2004 with a submission deadline 12 weeks later of 14 May 2004. The main areas of consultation were: enforcement and collection, exemption of certain types of bags and businesses, the amount of the levy and the use of any monies raised.

Over 128 copies of the consultation paper were sent in hard copy to various groups and individuals, including those from the business sector, the voluntary sector, trade unions and other representative organisations, ethnic minority groups, faith groups, political groups and individual politicians, equality groups and members of the public. The consultation paper is available on my website from which 125 copies have been downloaded during the course of the consultation period. A press statement was also issued regarding the proposal.

A total of 126 substantive responses have been received from a range of organisations and individuals. A summary of responses and copies of all responses (excluding any made in confidence) will be placed in SPICe with my final proposal and will be made available to the lead committee.

Given that a recent consultation exercise has been undertaken, I consider that there is no need to carry out a further consultation. There has been adequate opportunity for the public to comment on what is being proposed and this in turn has helped to test, develop and refine my proposal.

I therefore request the Committee to consider the above statement and confirm that it is satisfied with the reasons for not consulting further on the draft proposal.