

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 13 MAY 2014
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr Paul Frew MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA
Ms Judith Cochrane MLA
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
Mr Robin Swann MLA
- Apologies: Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor
Ms Alison Ferguson, Clerical Officer

1. 33 p.m. *The meeting commenced in Open Session.*

1. Apologies

The apologies are recorded above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised the Committee that invitations to the DARD breakfast at the Balmoral Show have now issued by email and Members are required to print it and produce it to gain admittance to the event.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2014

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2014.

4. Matters Arising

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence from Edenkennedy Agricultural Consultancy and agreed to schedule an informal meeting in Autumn 2014.

5. Findings from LocFood project: Oral Briefing from Ulster Business School

The following representatives joined the meeting at 1.36 p.m.

Lynsey McKitterick, University of Ulster
Professor Barry Quinn, University of Ulster
David Patterson, Down District Council
Professor Rodney McAdam, University of Ulster

The representatives briefed the Committee and this was followed by a question and answer session.

1.36 p.m. Mr Swann joined the meeting.
1.37 p.m. Mr McAleer joined the meeting.
1.39 p.m. Mr Irwin joined the meeting.
1.59 p.m. Mr Milne joined the meeting.
2.13 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.
2.20 p.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the briefing paper from the Ulster Business School to the ETI Committee and DARD Minister for information.

6. SR 2014/107: The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

Question put and agreed:

That the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development has considered SR 2014/107: The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 and, subject to comment from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objections to the rule.

7. Reservoirs Bill – Informal Clause by Clause and consideration

The following Rivers Agency officials joined the meeting at 2.23 p.m. to discuss issues in relation to the informal clause by clause of the Reservoirs Bill.

Mr David Porter, Director of Development
Kieran Brazier, Head of Bill Team

The officials briefed the Committee on its revised proposals regarding a Reservoirs Risk Matrix.

The officials also advised the Committee that they had recently met with the Minister in respect of the Reservoirs Bill; discussions had been on a proposal bringing forward a provision in the Budget Bill to provide financial assistance for the initial implementation of the Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it required a letter from the Minister on this issue ASAP

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it needed to examine proposed amendments to the clauses ASAP.

2.46 p.m. Ms Cochrane joined the meeting.

2.50 p.m. Mr Dobson left the meeting.

3.08 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting,

3.11 p.m. Mr Buchanan left the meeting.

3.14 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.

The Committee discussed Clauses 28-51 and no issues were raised.

The Committee discussed Clause 52 and queried the order of subsection 2(c) and (d) and what constitutes an incident.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request examples of what constitutes an “incident”.

3.33 p.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.

3.34 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

The Committee discussed Clauses 53-86 and no issues were raised.

3.38 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

3.55 p.m. Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.

3.57 p.m. Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee discussed Clause 87 and agreed to write to Rivers Agency to seek clarification on the justification for the clause.

3.59 p.m. Mrs Dobson and Ms McIlveen left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee discussed Clause 88 and 89 and agreed to write to Rivers Agency to seek clarification on the powers of entry and warrants authorising entry.

The Committee discussed Clauses 90-95 and no issues were raised.

Agreed: The Committee discussed Clause 96 and agreed to write to Rivers Agency to seek clarification on the whether the Secretary of State has a role within the clause and what constitutes “other body”.

4.16 p.m. Mr Swann rejoined the meeting.

The Committee discussed Clauses 97-104 and no issues were raised.

4.21 p.m. Ms Cochrane left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee discussed Clause 105 and agreed that Rivers Agency would bring the Business Case for the initial grant to the Committee.

The Committee discussed Clause 106 and no issues were raised.

Agreed: The Committee discussed Clause 107 and agreed to write to Rivers Agency to seek clarification on the resignation of a supervising engineer.

4.28 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.

The Committee discussed Clause 108-112 and no issues were raised.

Agreed: The Committee discussed Clause 113 and agreed to write to Rivers Agency to seek clarification on why the clause is included in the Bill.

The Committee discussed Clause 114 and no issues were raised.

Agreed: The Committee discussed Clause 115 and agreed to write to Rivers Agency to seek clarification.

The Committee discussed Clause 116-121 and no issues were raised.

The Committee discussed Schedules 1-4 and no issues were raised.

4.51 p.m. Ms McIlveen rejoined the meeting.

4.52 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

8. Correspondence

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 7 May 2014 from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment on the Impact of Ground-Based Solar PV on Single Farm Payments; the Committee agreed to forward it to the Department for comment.

Agreed: The Committee noted the copied correspondence from Lough Foyle Oyster Sub-Committee to the Minister agreed to request that the Committee is copied into the response.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 29 April 2014 from Rural Network NI in respect of its report "Virtual Rurality: A Snapshot of Telecommunications in Rural Northern Ireland".

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Education Committee inviting Members to an event it is hosting with the British Council on 27 May 2014.

9. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer a visit to Creggan Country Park.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

10. AOB

There was no other business.

11. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 27 May 2014 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 4.55 p.m.

Paul Frew, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date