



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**\* THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2020  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**Present:** Mr Declan McAleer MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Philip McGuigan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Clare Bailey MLA  
Mr John Blair MLA  
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA  
Mr Harry Harvey MLA  
Mr William Irwin MLA

**Apologies:** Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA  
Mr John Dallat MLA

**In attendance:** Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk  
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Assembly Clerk  
Ms Marion Johnson, Clerical Supervisor  
Ms Marianne McGuiggan, Clerical Officer  
Mr Mark Allen, Research Officer (Agenda Item 6)

*The meeting commenced in closed session at 10.04 a.m. to receive a briefing from the Clerk on the Fisheries Bill.*

*Mr Irwin joined the meeting at 10.09 a.m.*

*The meeting moved into open session at 10.28 a.m.*

**1. Apologies**

As above.

**2. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the next meeting of the Inter-parliamentary Forum on Brexit was taking place on 19 March 2020 in the House of Lords and that Committee Chairpersons are invited to attend.

*Agreed:* Members agreed that the Chairperson would attend on behalf of the Committee.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Legislative Consent Memorandum for the UK Agriculture Bill was laid in the Business Office on 2 March 2020.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the Legislative Consent Memorandum for the Agriculture Bill and agreed to add it to the Committee webpage.

### **3. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2020.

### **4. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following:

- i. Correspondence from the British Veterinary Association (BVA) on its resources to support vets across the UK in respect of reporting suspected cases of illegal pet importation.
- ii. Correspondence from the Department in respect of issues raised at the Committee meeting on 28 January and 7 February 2020.
- iii. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance on the budget process.
- iv. Correspondence from the Examiner of Statutory Rules in respect of the Third Report which advises that there are no issues with SR 2020/20, SR 2020/21 and SR 2020/22.
- v. Correspondence from AgriSearch on its response to the Department on the Science Strategy Framework.

The Committee considered correspondence from a member of the public on the long distance transportation of livestock and the approach of the Department in its assessments of the process.

*Agreed:* The Committee to write to the correspondent to advise that it does not undertake investigations as part of its remit.

The Committee considered correspondence from Minister Poets on introduction of The Medicines and Medical Devices Bill by the UK Government.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request a written briefing from the Department on the aspects of the Bill that apply to veterinary medicines.

The Committee considered correspondence from a member of the public on the issue of Japanese knotweed.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider the issues of invasive species at its strategic planning meeting.

The Committee considered the joint correspondence from Rural Action, Rural Community Network, NI Rural Women's Network and Mid Ulster Rural Development Partnership regarding their attendance at the Committee meeting on 20 February to give evidence in respect of the Agriculture Bill.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to include the key messages from the rural groups into the Legislative Consent Motion report on the UK Government Agriculture Bill.

The Committee noted the correspondence from the Brexit Sub Committee on its Terms of Reference.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department and the Brexit Sub Committee to request clarity around their roles in respect of the Legislative Consent Memorandums and Motions on the UK Government Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Bills.

## **5. Forward Work Programme**

The clerk briefed the Committee on the draft Forward Work Programme.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme.

## **6. Oral Briefing from RaISE on the UK Fisheries Bill**

The Research Officer joined the meeting at 10.32 a.m. and briefed the Committee on the UK Fisheries Bill.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

*Mr Blair left the meeting at 11.01 a.m.*

*The Chairperson left the meeting at 11.17 a.m.*

*The Deputy Chairperson took the chair.*

The Deputy Chairperson thanked the Research Officer for his attendance.

**7. Departmental Oral Evidence Session on the UK Government Fisheries Bill**

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 11.18 a.m.

Claire Vincent, Grade 5, Acting Director Marine and Fisheries Division  
Paddy Campbell, Deputy Principal, Head of Sea Fisheries Policy  
Patrick Smith, Deputy Principal, Sea Fisheries Policy & Grants

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

*The Chairperson rejoined the meeting at 11.34 a.m. and resumed the chair.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request a written update from the Department regarding the dispute over territorial ownership of Lough Foyle alongside the issue of illegal oyster farming and the sustainable development of aquaculture.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

**8. Oral Evidence Session with Brexit and Environment Group on the UK Government Fisheries Bill.**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the agenda item has been cancelled due to the representatives from Brexit and Environment Group being unable to attend as their flights from England have been cancelled.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 11 next.

**9. Oral Briefing from Northern Ireland Fisheries Harbour Authority on the UK Government Fisheries Bill**

The following representative from Northern Ireland Fisheries Harbour Authority joined the meeting at 12.11 p.m.

Kevin Quigley, Chief Executive, NI Fisheries Harbour Authority

Mr Quigley briefed the Committee and this was followed by a question and answer session.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department on the issue of abandoned/end of life vessels and request that it works with the Northern Ireland Fisheries Harbour Authority to find a resolution to the problem.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a visit to the Northern Ireland Fisheries Harbour Authority to view the work it has been undertaking with the community and to visit a local port.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Quigley for his attendance.

*The meeting suspended at 12.46 p.m.*

*The meeting resumed at 2.06 p.m. in Room 29.*

*Present:* Mr Declan McAleer MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Philip McGuigan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Clare Bailey MLA  
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA  
Mr William Irwin MLA

**10. Oral Evidence Session with ANIFPO and NIFPO on the UK Government Fisheries Bill**

The following representatives from ANIFPO and NIFPO joined the meeting at 2.06 p.m.

Alan McCulla, Chief Executive, ANIFPO  
Harry Wick, Chief Executive, NIFPO

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

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

*Mr Blair joined the meeting at 2.30 p.m.*

*The Chairperson left the meeting at 2.54 p.m.*

*The Deputy Chairperson took the chair.*

The Deputy Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance

#### **11. Oral Evidence Session from the Northern Ireland Marine Taskforce on the UK Government Fisheries Bill**

The following representatives from the Northern Ireland Marine Taskforce joined the meeting at 3.14 p.m.

Ellen MacMahon, Marine Task Force Officer  
John Martin, Head of Policy & Advocacy, RSPB  
Rebecca Hunter, Chair of the Marine & fisheries Group, Ulster Wildlife Trust  
Dr Kenneth Bodles, Marine Policy Officer, RSPB

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

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

*The Chairperson rejoined the meeting at 3.18 p.m. and resumed the chair.*

*Mr Blair left the meeting at 3.26 p.m.*

*Mr Blair rejoined the meeting at 3.32 p.m.*

*Mr Irwin left the meeting at 3.34 p.m.*

*Mr McGuigan left the meeting at 3.35 p.m.*

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

**12. AOB**

There was no other business.

**13. Date, time and place of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will take place on Thursday 12 March 2020 at 10.00 a.m. in Room 30.

3.52 p.m. *The meeting adjourned.*

*Declan McAleer*

Declan McAleer, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

12/03/2020

Date