



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

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

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2016**

**CONFERENCE ROOM, EBRINGTON**

Present: Ms Linda Dillon MLA (Chairperson)  
Ms Caoimhe Archibald MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA  
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA  
Mr David Ford MLA  
Mr William Irwin MLA  
Mr Patsy McGlone MLA  
Mr Harold McKee MLA  
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA  
Mr Edwin Poots MLA  
Mr Robin Swann MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Stella McArdle (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Christopher McNickle (Assistant Clerk)  
Mr Oliver Bellew (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)  
Miss Zoe Rogers (Bursary Student)

Apologies: None

The meeting opened in **public** session at **10.06 am**

**1. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

## **2. Chairperson's business**

The Chairperson invited Mr Harold McKee to update the Committee on his visit to the Ballykelly site where the Department Headquarters will be relocated.

The Chairperson informed the Committee of a planned meeting with NILGA and SOLACE on 6 December in relation to local government's key priorities for waste management. The Chairperson asked that any member interested in attending the meeting with her and the Deputy Chairperson should advise the Committee Office.

The Chairperson informed the Committee of a meeting she and the Deputy Chairperson had with Professor Ian Garner from WRAP, to explore the issue of resource efficiency.

The Chairperson informed the Committee of a meeting the Deputy Chair had with officials from the Department of Finance to discuss the Review of Carrier Bags levy.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to ask the Department when it will have sight of the Report on the Review of Carrier Bags levy.

**10.09a.m.** Mr Anderson and Mr Bradley joined the meeting.

The Chairperson informed the Committee of an invitation she had received to attend a breakfast at the Winter Fair on 8<sup>th</sup> December.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to hold its usual meeting in the morning to allow Members to attend the Winter Fair.

The Chairperson informed members of a press release relating to Farm Aid Relief which had been issued by the Minister.

*Agreed:* The Committee expressed its discontent at not being informed of the matter before the press release was issued and agreed to write to the Minister to ask why it had not been formally informed in advance.

The Chairperson informed Members that she was stepping down as Chairperson, that Ms Archibald would be taking the position of Chairperson with Mr McMullan as Deputy Chairperson. Members expressed their thanks to Ms Dillon for her role as Chairperson since the inception of the Committee.

## **3. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meetings held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2016 were agreed.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

*Agreed:* In relation to global milk prices and its impact on Northern Ireland farmers, the Committee agreed to write to Dale Farm to acknowledge its invitation to visit its site and to advise that it will be considered as a potential visit.

#### **5. Oral briefing from DAERA – DAERA HQ Relocation**

**10.16 a.m.** The following officials joined the meeting:

Ms Louise Warde Hunter, Head of Central Services and Rural Affairs Group

Mr Tom Kennedy, Central Services and Rural Affairs Group

Ms Pauline Rooney, Central Services and Rural Affairs Group

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request further information from the Department on a range of issues in relation to the relocation of departmental headquarters to Ballykelly.

**10.48 a.m.** Mr Poots joined the meeting.

**10.50 a.m.** Mr Irwin left the meeting.

**10.57 a.m.** Mr Irwin returned to the meeting.

**10.58 a.m.** The officials left the meeting.

#### **6. Oral evidence from DAERA - Mid-year progress report on the 2016/17 Business Plan**

**10.59 a.m.** The following officials joined the meeting:

Mr Graeme Wilkinson, Director of Finance. DAERA

Ms Janet Liggett, Rural Affairs Division, DAERA

Mr Eric Long, Inspector Food and Farming Group, DAERA

Mr David Foster, Director of Regulatory and Natural Resources Policy, DAERA

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request further information from the Department on a range of issues in relation to the Mid-year progress report.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request an additional oral evidence session on the strategic target of completing the scoping stage of the Brexit Programme by 31 December 2016. The Committee agreed to request

the briefing by early February 2017 and that the Minister should attend the briefing.

**11.49 a.m.** The officials left the meeting.

**7. SR 2016/401: The Waste (Fees and Charges) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2016**

*Agreed:* The Committee considered S.R. 2016/401 The Waste (Fees and Charges) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2016 and had no objection to the rule.

**8. Written briefing from DAERA – Public Consultation**

The Committee considered a written briefing by the Department in relation to the public consultation on the draft Zoonoses (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2017.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request a written briefing from the Department on the outcome of the consultation.

**9. Written briefing from DAERA - 2017 Review of Bathing Waters in Northern Ireland**

The Committee considered a pre-notification letter and a copy of a draft consultation in relation to new sites being added to the list of identified bathing waters in 2017.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a written briefing on the outcome of the consultation before it is made public.

**10. Correspondence**

The Committee considered an invitation from Mr Jim Shannon MP to visit Movilla Trout Fishery in Newtownards.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to Mr Shannon to acknowledge the invitation and indicate that it would include the invitation in its list of potential visits.

The Committee noted an invitation to submit written evidence to the Committee for Justice's review of the need for stalking legislation.

The Committee noted correspondence from Planet Earth.

The Committee considered an invitation from the Chair of the TBSPG to its launch of the bTB Eradication Strategy for Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* Members should rsvp as per details on the invitation or inform the clerk of their intention to do so.

The Committee noted correspondence between the Committee for Education and the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in relation to Educational Underachievement.

The Committee noted the eighth Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

The Committee considered a request for information from the Ulster Angling Federation.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for direct response.

The Committee considered a request for information from the Dogs Trust.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for direct response.

## **11. Forward Work Programme**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to arrange a meeting with the Agriculture Liaison Group of the Fermanagh and Omagh Council area on Thursday 19 January.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request a written briefing on the Dog Breeding Establishment secondary legislation including the outcome of the Review on the Welfare of Animals Act and any updates or reports which the Department may have in relation to local government implementation of the legislation.

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme.

## **12. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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

The Committee noted that its next meeting will be held at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

**12.04 p.m.** The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

**Caoimhe Archibald MLA**

Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

8<sup>th</sup> December 2016