

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**MONDAY 14 DECEMBER 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr William Irwin MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mr Robin Swann MLA
- Apologies: Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA
Mr Edwin Poots MLA
- In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Lynda Conlon, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor
Ms Marion Johnson, Clerical Officer
Mr Jonathan McMillen, Acting Head of Legal Services (Agenda Item 2)

- 11.07 a.m. The meeting commenced in Closed Session.*
11.12 a.m. Mr Swann joined the meeting.
11.29 a.m. Mrs Dobson joined the meeting.
11.45 a.m. Mr McCrea joined the meeting.
11.48 .m. The meeting moved into Open Session.

4. Rural Needs Bill: Informal Clause by Clause

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 11.50 a.m. to discuss issues in relation to the informal clause by clause of the Rural Needs Bill.

Colette McMaster, Assistant Secretary, Director of Food, Farm and Rural Policy
Astrid Stuart, Head of Rural Proofing Branch

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

- Agreed:* The Committee discussed Clause 1 and agreed that it is content with the DARD position in connection to "due regard".

EXTRACT

- Agreed:* The Committee discussed Clause 1 and agreed to that it is content with the DARD position on the addition of the word “budgets” to Clause 1(1)(a).
- Agreed:* The Committee discussed Clause 1 and agreed that it is content with the advice that DARD received and its subsequent decision not to include a provision to mitigate against adverse impact.
- Agreed:* The Committee discussed Clause 1 and agreed that it is content with the DARD position to include a list of public bodies, as laid out in *The Draft Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016*, on the face of the Bill.
- Agreed:* The Committee discussed Clause 1 and agreed that it is content with the DARD position to include a provision to review the list of public bodies included on the face of the Bill within an agreed timescale.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with Clause 1, as per the proposed amendments, with the proviso that the Committee has yet to see the actual amendments.
- Agreed:* The Committee discussed Clause 2 and agreed that it is content with the DARD amendment to replace the word “may” with “must”.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with Clause 2, as per the proposed amendments, with the proviso that the Committee has yet to see the actual amendments.
- Agreed:* The Committee discussed Clause 3 and agreed that it is content with the DARD position to require the publication of the annual report and a statement by the Minister to the Assembly on that report.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with Clause 3, as per the proposed amendments, with the proviso that the Committee has yet to see the actual amendment.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with Clause 4 as Introduced.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with Clause 5 as Introduced.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with the DARD Letter of Intent with regard to providing further clarification of definitions in guidance.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with Clause 6 as Introduced.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it is content with Clause 7 as Introduced.