

# COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2015  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr William Irwin MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA  
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA  
Mr Declan McAleer MLA  
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA  
Mr Ian McCrea MLA  
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Mr Edwin Poots MLA  
Mr Robin Swann MLA

In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk  
Ms Lynda Conlon, Assistant Clerk  
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor  
Ms Dagmar Walgraeve, Clerical Officer  
Mr Mark Allen, Research Officer  
Mr Colin Pidgeon, Research Officer

*10.11 a.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session.*

### **1. Rural Needs Bill: Written Submissions**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the written submissions received in response to the Rural Needs Bill Call for Evidence and agreed to forward these submissions to the Department for comment.

### **2. Oral Briefing RalSe: Rural Needs Bill**

The Committee received a briefing from Assembly Research Officers on the Rural Needs Bill.

*10.17 a.m. Mr Anderson joined the meeting.*  
*10.20 a.m. Mr McAleer joined the meeting.*  
*10.32 a.m. Mr Poots joined the meeting.*  
*10.33 a.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.*  
*10.35 a.m. Mr Milne joined the meeting.*  
*10.45 a.m. Mrs Dobson joined the meeting.*

EXTRACT

### **3. Oral Briefing DARD: Rural Needs Bill**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.50 a.m.

Colette McMaster, Assistant Secretary, Director of Food, Farm and Rural Policy

Astrid Stuart, Principal Officer, Head of Rural Policy Branch

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

*10.51 a.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.*

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

### **4. Oral Briefing Local Rural Support Networks: Rural Needs Bill**

The following representatives joined the meeting at 11.36 a.m.

Mary T. Conway, Omagh Forum for Rural Associations

Lorraine Griffin, Community Organisations of South Tyrone and Areas

Brendan McCann, The Armagh, Down and Antrim Network

Nicholas McCrickard, County Down Rural Community Network

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

*11.37 a.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.*

*11.45 a.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.*

*11.50 a.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.*

*11.53 a.m. Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.*

*11.59 a.m. Mr Poots left the meeting.*

*11.59 a.m. Mr Swann joined the meeting.*

*12.10 p.m. Mr Poots rejoined the meeting.*

*12.11 p.m. The Local RSN representatives left the meeting.*

*12.11 p.m. The meeting suspended.*

*12.24 p.m. The meeting resumed in Open Session with the following Members present: Mr Irwin; Mr McAleer; Mr McCarthy; and Mr McMullan.*

**5. Oral Briefing Rural Community Network and Rural Development Council:  
Rural Needs Bill**

The following representatives joined the meeting at 12.24 p.m.

Kate Clifford, Rural Community Network  
Aidan Campbell, Rural Community Network  
Teresa Canavan, Rural Development Council

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

*12.28 p.m. Mr Swann rejoined the meeting.*

*12.33 p.m. Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.*

*12.42 p.m. The RCN and RDC representatives left the meeting.*

*12.42 p.m. The meeting suspended.*