

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2014
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Paul Frew MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
Mr Robin Swann MLA

Apologies: Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA

In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor
Ms Michelle McDowell, Clerical Officer

1.35 p.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session

1. Apologies

The apologies are recorded above.

2. Chairperson's Business

There is no Chairperson's Business

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2014

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2014.

4. Matters Arising

- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 10 March 2014 from the Minister and her proposals for CAP. The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to advise that while sympathetic to her position on certain issues, the Committee would prefer to see the overall position on CAP being brought to the Executive.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 27 February 2014 from the Department in respect of issues raised at the meeting of 11 February 2014. The Committee agreed to forward an extract to the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding its Inquiry into Flexible working in the Public Sector in Northern Ireland.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 6 March 2014 in respect of issues raised at the meeting on 18 February 2014. The Committee noted in particular the impact of the current political situation in Libya and welfare of animal issues.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 4 March 2014 from the Minister in respect of issues raised by the Local Action Groups at the meeting on 28 January 2014.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the copied correspondence dated 5 March 2014 from the Minister to the Horticulture Forum.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the monthly update from the Department in respect of Ash Dieback.

5. SR 2014/23: the Gangmasters Licensing (Exclusions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014: Oral briefing DARD and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 1.43 p.m.

Ciaran Cunningham, DARD, Deputy Principal
Ian Japp, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, DEFRA
David Nix, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, DEFRA

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

- 1.48 p.m. Mr Milne joined the meeting.*
1.50 p.m. Mr McAleer joined the meeting.
2.10 p.m. Mr Buchanan left the meeting.

2.14 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.
2.15 p.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.

Question put and agreed:

That the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development has considered the SR: 2014/23: the Gangmasters Licensing (Exclusions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014: Oral briefing DARD and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and has no objections to the rule.

2.21 p.m. Mr Swann left the meeting.
2.22 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.

6. Reservoirs Bill: Clerk's memo on key issues

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Committee for Regional Development in respect of the Reservoirs Bill.

Noted: The Committee noted the timetable provided by the Department on the Key Stages of the Reservoirs Legislation.

7. Reservoirs Bill: Oral briefing from Antrim and District Angling Club and Armagh Fisheries Limited

The following representatives joined the meeting at 2.23 p.m.

Maurice Parkinson, Chairman Antrim and District Angling Association
Cathal Doyle, Armagh Fisheries Ltd
Aidan Donnolly Chairman, Armagh Fisheries Ltd

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

2.32 p.m. Mr Buchanan rejoined the meeting.
2.41 p.m. Mr Irwin rejoined the meeting.
2.46 p.m. Mr Byrne left the meeting.
2.56 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.
2.58 p.m. Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.
3.02 p.m. Mr Swann rejoined the meeting.
3.08 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.
3.11 p.m. Mr Byrne rejoined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek details and clarification on a range of issues raised by the Antrim and District Angling Club and Armagh Fisheries Limited.

8. Reservoirs Bill: Oral briefing Ulster Angling Federation

The following representatives joined the meeting at 3.19 p.m.

Robbie Marshall, Development Officer
Jim Haughey, Chairman

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

3.21 p.m. Mr Irwin rejoined the meeting.

3.31 p.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.

9. Suspected illegal slaughtering of cattle: Oral briefing DARD

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.50 p.m.

Michael Hatch, Grade 6, DARD
Michael Jackson, Food Standards Agency

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

4.19 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

4.28 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request details of the range of penalties applied for offences committed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to receive a further oral briefing from the Department at the meeting of 27 May 2014 and written updates as appropriate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the briefing papers and Hansard of this session to the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

10. SL1: Agriculture (Student Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2014

Agreed: The Committee considered the SL1: Agriculture (Student Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2014 and agreed that the policy should proceed to the next legislative stage.

11. Correspondence

- Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Department in respect of the deagentisation of Rivers Agency.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Minister in respect of the Forthcoming Financial Correction: 2009 Cross Compliance Audit.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Department in respect of the TB Slurry Literature Review.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel in respect of a research paper on Financial Transactions Capital.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted European Union Explanatory Memorandum EM 35810 and 35809 and agreed to forward EM 34803 to the Department for comment.

12. Forward Work Programme

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

13. AOB

- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Agriculture, Food and Marine Committee, House of the Oireachtas, to ask if it has been pursuing any issues relating to the illegal slaughter of cattle or horsemeat in the food chain.

14. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 18 March 2014 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 4.40 p.m.

Paul Frew, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date