

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2013
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Paul Frew MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Joe Byrne (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Trevor Lunn MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA

Apologies: Mr Robin Swann MLA

In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor
Ms Dagmar Walgraeve Clerical Officer
Mr Des McKibbin, Research Officer (for item 7)

1.31 p.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Lunn to the Committee.

1. Apologies

Apologies are noted above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised that he had met with representatives of the Young Farmers Club to discuss the future direction of the organisation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to receive a briefing from the Young Farmers Club early in the New Year.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2013

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2013.

4. Matters arising

Agreed: The Committee considered the monthly update from the Department on Schmallenberg Virus and agreed to suspend the update unless there is a significant change in circumstances.

Noted: The Committee noted the update from the Department on Ash Die-back.

1.37 p.m. Mr Buchanan joined the meeting.

5. Update on Bovine TB: Oral Briefing DARD

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 1.38 p.m.

Kate Davey, Acting Assistant Secretary
Colin Hart, Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer
Roly Harwood, Senior Veterinary Officer
Ian McKee, Principal Officer

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

1.45 p.m. Mr McAleer joined the meeting.

1.54 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.

1.58 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.

2.13 p.m. Mr Irwin rejoined the meeting.

2.15 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

2.20 p.m. Mr Buchanan left the meeting.

Mr Irwin declared an interest as a farmer.

2.33 p.m. Mr Milne joined the meeting.

2.45 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.

2.55 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.

2.58 p.m. Mr Lunn left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request information on the monies paid to the farmer for TB reactor cattle and the monies recouped from the sale of the carcass to the processor.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek an update on the progress of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Committee's report on TB. The Committee also agreed to seek an oral briefing on the progress of all the recommendations in the New Year.

6. Review of Nitrates Action Programme & Application to Renew the EC Nitrates Directive Derogation: Oral Briefing DARD

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.02 p.m.

Brian Ervine, Principal Officer
Dr Catherine Watson, Senior Principal Scientific Officer

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

3.05 p.m. Mr Irwin rejoined the meeting.

3.11 p.m. Mr Buchanan rejoined the meeting.

3.12 p.m. Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.

3.25 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

3.30 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.

3.33 p.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.

3.50 p.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request the statistics on agricultural pollution incidents and pollution from other sources.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a written update on the progress of the Sustainable Utilisation of Poultry Litter.

7. Forestry Tourism: Oral Briefing RalSe

The Assembly Research Officer joined the Committee at 3.50 p.m. and briefed the Committee on Forestry Tourism. This was followed by a question and answer session.

4.04 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

4.16 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the Research paper on Forestry Tourism to the Department and the NI Tourist Board.

4.21 p.m. Mr Byrne left the meeting.

8. Visit to NI Ploughing Championships

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Press Release for the Committee visit to the NI Ploughing Championships on 18 October 2013. The Committee noted the proposed attendance of Mr Frew, Mr Byrne and Mr McMullan at this event.

9. Correspondence

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward correspondence from the Loughs Agency regarding the finalisation of a Management Agreement to the Department for comment. The Committee further agreed to write to the Oireachtas Joint committee on Agriculture, Food and Marine to ask if the issue could be raised with Minister Coveney.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 8 October 2013 from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding Farm Safety.

Noted: The Committee noted the invitation from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to an event on 18 October to mark 40 years of the EU.

10. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

11. AOB

There was no other business.

12. Date, time and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 22 October 2013 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

Paul Frew, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date