

## COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2013  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Paul Frew MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Joe Byrne (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA  
Mr William Irwin MLA  
Mr Declan McAleer MLA  
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA  
Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Mr Robin Swann MLA

Apologies: Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA  
Mr Oliver McMullan 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 Mark Allen, Research Officer (agenda item 7)

*1.30 p.m. The meeting commenced in Closed Session*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to a request for a letter of endorsement.

*1.34 p.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session*

The Chairperson welcomed Michelle McIlveen to the Committee and advised that her declaration of interests is contained in the tabled papers pack.

## **1. Apologies**

Apologies are noted above.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 5.

## **2. Ministerial Briefing: CAP, RDP, TB and Agri-Food**

The Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development and the following departmental officials joined the meeting at 1.35 p.m.

Gerry Lavery, Deputy Secretary  
Bert Houston, Chief Veterinary Officer  
John Speers, Acting Deputy Secretary  
Kate Davey, Acting Assistant Secretary  
Andrew Elliott, Director of Rural Payments  
Rosemary Agnew, Principal Officer

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

*1.40 p.m. Mr Swann joined the meeting.*

*1.54 p.m. Mr McCarthy left the meeting.*

*1.56 p.m. Mr Buchanan and Mr Swann left the meeting.*

*Mr Irwin declared an interest as recipient of Single Farm Payment.*

*2.16 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.*

*2.23 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.*

*2.30 p.m. Mr Irwin re-joined the meeting.*

*2.47 p.m. Mr Buchanan re-joined the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to request that Ministerial briefing papers are forwarded to the Committee prior to her attendance at a committee meeting.

## **3. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Public Accounts Committee will begin to take evidence from the DARD Accounting Officer on the NI Audit Office report "Scientific Services delivered by the Agri-Food and Bio-Sciences Institute" on 25 September 2013.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that confirmation of Members' attendance figures should be returned to the clerk by 18 September 2013.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft press release regarding the meeting with the Groceries Code Adjudicator on Monday 30 September 2013.

#### **4. Minutes of the meeting 10 September 2013**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2013.

#### **5. Matters arising**

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

#### **6. Bovine Viral Disease: Oral Briefing DARD**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.05 p.m.

Kate Davey, Acting Assistant Secretary  
Carol McKibben, Head of Animal Health Strategy & TSE Health  
Seamus Kelly, Deputy Principal

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

*3.15 p.m. Mr Byrne left the meeting.*

*3.20 p.m. Mr Swann re-joined the meeting.*

#### **7. Oral briefing RaISe: Agri-Food Strategy**

The Assembly Research Officer, Mark Allen, briefed the Committee on the Agri-Food Strategy. This was followed by a question and answer session.

*3.26 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.*

*3.27 p.m. Ms McIlveen left the meeting.*

*3.47 p.m. The meeting was suspended.*

*3.58 p.m. The meeting resumed with the following Members present;*

*Mr Buchanan, Mr Frew, Mr McAleer, Mr McCarthy and Mr Swann.*

## **8. Correspondence**

- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 3 September 2013 from the UFU regarding the Rural Development Programme – Farm Diversification 3.1. The Committee noted that the UFU have also written to the Minister on this issue and agreed to request that the Committee is copied into the reply from the Minister. The Committee also agreed to write to the Minister to urge that more immediate action needs to be taken.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the UFU correspondence to the ETI and Environment Committees for information and to ask for their views on the Farm Diversification 3.1 measure.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the invitation from the North of Ireland Veterinary Association to an Animal Welfare Seminar on 25 September 2013.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure (CAL) asking when the Reservoirs Bill will be introduced. The Committee agreed to write to CAL to advise that the Bill has been delayed.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure requesting the names of a number of stakeholders to invite to a lunch in Derry/Londonderry on 3 October 2013 to mark the city's year as UK City of Culture. The Committee agreed the list of names to be forwarded.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the invitation to a reception hosted by the Chairperson of the Culture, Arts and Leisure to an evening reception on 2 October 2013 in the "Shirt Factory".
- Noted:* The Committee noted the invitation to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson from the Attorney General to a colloquium on 3 October 2013.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the invitation from Tesco to the Taste NI Food Festival opening ceremony on 20 September 2013.

## **9. Forward Work Programme**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request research and take evidence from the Farm Safety Partnership and DARD and a farm visit in relation to its review on Farm Safety. It was agreed to defer the issue of Farmer Welfare to post Reservoir Bill.

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

## **10. AOB**

There was no other business.

## **11. Date, time and place of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 24 September 2013 at 1.00 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*The meeting adjourned at 4.11 p.m.*

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Paul Frew, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

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Date