

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2013
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
Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
Mr Robin Swann MLA

Apologies: Mr Trevor Lunn MLA

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

1.34 p.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session

1. Apologies

The apologies are recorded above.

2. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's Business.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2013

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2013.

4. Matters arising

- Agreed:* The Committee agreed the contents of a letter to Farmers for Action regarding a Blue-Print for Rural Northern Ireland.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence from Farmers for Action regarding their attempts to brief both the Minister and senior departmental officials on the Blue-Print for Rural Northern Ireland.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Minister of the Environment dated 23 October 2013 regarding issues raised by NILGA regarding the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to NILGA for information and the Department for comment.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Woodland Trust dated 7 November 2013 regarding the response from the Minister to the Committee's position paper on Tree Disease. The Committee agreed to write to the Department to urge that they support the Observatree initiative.
- Agreed:* The Committee to write to all councils to ask if they are currently engaged in any schemes with the Woodlands Trust.
- Noted:* The Committee noted the weekly update from the Department on Ash-Dieback.

5. Fishing Opportunities 2014: Oral Briefing DARD

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 1.39 p.m.

Ian Humes, Acting Assistant Secretary
Paddy Campbell, Deputy Principal
Pieter-Jan Schon, Principal Scientific Officer

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

- 1.40 p.m. Mr Irwin joined the meeting.*
1.41 p.m. Mr Swann joined the meeting.
1.53 p.m. Mr Buchanan joined the meeting.
1.55 p.m. Mr Byrne joined the meeting.
1.55 p.m. Ms McIlveen left the meeting.
2.06 p.m. Ms McIlveen rejoined the meeting.

2.16 pm. Mr McMullan left the meeting.

2.20 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

Agreed: The Department agreed to provide information on how the Total Allowable Catches for Nephrops is calculated.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a briefing on CFP in the New Year.

Agreed: The Committee to request an update on the outcome of the December 2013 Fisheries Council meeting as soon as it becomes available.

6. Update on infraction regarding Strangford Lough and Horse Mussels: Oral Briefing DARD

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.32 p.m.

Ian Humes, Acting Assistant Secretary
Mark McCaughan, Chief Fisheries Officer
Matt Service, Principal Scientific Officer

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

2.33 p.m. Mr Swann left the meeting.

2.49 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

2.59 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.

3.02 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting.

3.03 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.

3.15 p.m. Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.

3.15 p.m. Ms McIlveen left the meeting.

3.20 p.m. Mr Irwin rejoined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the Hansard of this session to the Strangford Lough Fishermen's Association for information.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek comments from the Strangford Lough Fishermen's Association to the Department's response to the solicitor's letter on the complaint about the Management of Strangford Lough.

7. Correspondence

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence on the Review of the Committee System of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

8. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee discussed and agreed to host a Farm Safety Event on 14 January 2013 in conjunction with the Farm Safety Partnership. The Committee noted the risk to the event from poor weather.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

9. AOB

There was no other business.

10. Date, time and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 26 November 2013 at 1.00 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 3.30 p.m.

Paul Frew, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date