

## COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2014  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr William Irwin MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA  
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA  
Mrs Joanne Dobson MLA  
Mr Tom Elliott MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Mr Declan McAleer MLA  
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA  
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA  
Mr Edwin Poots MLA

In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk  
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk  
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor  
Ms Alison Ferguson, Clerical Officer  
Mr Colin Pidgeon, Research Officer (agenda item 14)

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

#### **1. Apologies**

There are no apologies.

#### **2. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson advised the Committee that he and the Deputy Chairperson had an informal lunch meeting with some members of the TB Strategic Partnership Group on Monday 17 November 2014.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Consideration Stage of the Reservoirs Bill will have been deferred until the New Year; therefore the Committee meeting arranged for Monday 24 November 2014 receive a briefing on the Budget 2015/16 will now move to Tuesday 25 November 2014 as normal.

The Chairperson advised that he had met with the Minister this morning to discuss the budget for 2015/16 and advised that the Minister would brief the full Committee following the close of the consultation period.

*1.41 p.m. Mr McCarthy joined the meeting.*

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held 18 November 2014**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014.

### **4. Matters Arising**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 13 November 2014 from the ETI Committee on the Going for Growth Strategy; the Committee agreed that the chairperson of both committees should meet to discuss a joint meeting or event in respect of this.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 10 November 2014 from the Department in respect of NAP – Synopsis of Responses.

### **5. Oral briefing on Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion: UFU/NIAPA**

The following representatives of UFU and NIAPA joined the meeting at 1.43 p.m.

Wesley Aston, Policy Director  
Freda Magill, UFU Rural Affairs Policy Chair  
David McConaghy, UFU Rural Affairs Policy Officer  
Michael Clarke, NIAPA Chairman  
Jim Carmichael, NIAPA Development Officer

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

*Mr Irwin declared an interest that he is a farmer.*

*1.55 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.*

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

*2.16 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.*  
*2.30 p.m. Mr Byrne rejoined the meeting.*  
*2.39 p.m. Mr Buchanan left the meeting.*  
*2.48 p.m. Mr Elliott joined the meeting.*

## **6. Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion – Stakeholder event**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft Press Release on the stakeholder event.

*Agreed:* The following Members agreed to facilitate at the stakeholder event: Mr Irwin, Mr McAleer and Mr McMullan.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek an oral briefing from representatives of the MARA project for the meeting on 25 November 2014.

## **7. Oral Briefing DARD: Relocation Programme**

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

Gerry Lavery, Deputy Secretary  
Tom Kennedy, Assistant Secretary  
Tracey Teague, Assistant Secretary

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

*3.03 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.*  
*3.06 p.m. Mr Poots joined the meeting.*  
*3.08 p.m. Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.*  
*3.11 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.*  
*3.35 p.m. Mr Elliott left the meeting.*  
*3.39 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.*  
*3.41 p.m. Mr Buchanan rejoined the meeting.*  
*3.55 p.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request information on minimal amounts.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request more detailed information on the budget for the relocation programme and to request an outline business case asap.

## **8. Oral Briefing DARD: SL1 Draft CAP Direct Payments to Farmers Under Support Schemes (Cross-Compliance) Regulations (NI) 2015**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.58 p.m.

Andrew Elliott, Assistant Secretary  
Richard Crowe, Senior Principal Officer  
Ken Laverty, Deputy Principal  
David Gillespie, Deputy Principal

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

*3.58 p.m. Mr Anderson left the meeting.*  
*4.02 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.*  
*4.03 p.m. Mr Elliott rejoined the meeting.*  
*4.09 p.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.*  
*4.13 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.*  
*4.19 p.m. Mr Anderson rejoined the meeting.*  
*4.21 p.m. Mr McCarthy left the meeting.*  
*4.33 p.m. Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.*

*Mr Irwin declared an interest that he is a farmer.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister and the Permanent Secretary to express concerns around the cross compliance requirements.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Environment Committee to express concerns around the distress caused to farmers in respect of compliance with environmental requirements.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it was content with the merits of the policy for the SL1 Draft CAP Direct Payments to Farmers Under Support Schemes (Cross-Compliance) Regulations (NI) 2015; however issues raised around the regulations will be revisited in detail next year.

## **9. SR 2014/266: The Brucellosis Control (Amendment) Order (NI) 2014**

### **Question put and agreed:**

That the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development has considered SR 2014/266: The Brucellosis Control (Amendment) order (NI) 2014 and, subject to comment from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objections to the rule.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request that Brucellosis statistics are monitored over the next six months with a view to further relaxation of controls.

*5.05 p.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.*

### **10. Correspondence**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 10 November 2014 from the Finance and Personnel Committee in respect of capital expenditure. The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for a written response.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 12 November 2014 from the Department in respect of the 2013 TB Programme Annual Report. The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing with the TB Strategic Partnership Group when it is ready to report.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the Explanatory Memorandum for the European Document 36333.

### **11. Forward Work Programme**

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the first Committee meeting following the recess period will be Tuesday 13 January 2015.

*5.07 p.m. Mr Elliott left the meeting.*

### **12. AOB**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek a written update on the steps that are being taken in respect of the outbreak of Avian Flu.

### **13. Date and time of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 25 November 2014 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*5.11 p.m. The meeting moved into Closed Session.*

### **14. Financial Scrutiny Training**

The Assembly Research Officer, Mr Pidgeon briefed the Committee on Financial Scrutiny Training. This was followed by a question and answer session.

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

*5.14 p.m. Mr Buchanan rejoined the meeting.*

*5.15 p.m. Mr Byrne rejoined the meeting.*

*5.23 p.m. Mr Poots left the meeting.*

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

*5.42 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.*

*5.46 p.m. Mr Anderson and Mr Buchanan left the meeting.*

*5.50 p.m. The meeting adjourned.*

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William Irwin, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

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Date