

## COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 27 JANUARY 2015  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr William Irwin MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA  
Mr Tom Buchanan MLA  
Mr Tom Elliott MLA  
Mr Declan McAleer MLA  
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA  
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA

Apologies: Mr Ian Milne MLA

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

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

#### **1. Oral Briefing DARD Minister: DARD Budget 2015/16**

The Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development and the following officials joined the meeting at 2.00 p.m.

Noel Lavery, Permanent Secretary  
Gerry Lavery, Deputy Secretary  
David Small, Deputy Secretary

The Minister and her officials briefed the Committee on the DARD Budget 2015/16. This was followed by a question and answer session.

*2.02 p.m. Mr Anderson joined the meeting.*

*2.07 p.m. Mr Elliott joined the meeting.*

2.44 p.m. Mr Elliott left the meeting.  
2.53 p.m. Mr McCarthy joined the meeting.  
3.03 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

*Agreed:* The Minister agreed to provide further information on the progress of remote sensing inspection cases.

## **2. Apologies**

The apologies are noted above.

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

The Chairperson advised Members that an informal meeting had taken place earlier with the Joint Committee from the House of the Oireachtas for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

## **4. Minutes of the meeting held 20 January 2015**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2015.

## **5. Matters Arising**

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 31 December 2014 from the First Trust Bank on the NI Dairy Market.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 19 January 2015 from the NI Farming Groups in respect of legal advice received by the Committee. The Committee agreed to respond to the correspondence subject to agreement by Legal Services.

## **6. Written briefing DARD: SL1 Less Favoured Area Compensatory Allowances (LFACA) 2015**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the requested clarification on the regulations and agreed that it was content for the policy to proceed to the next legislative stage.

## **7. Oral Briefing DARD: Cross Compliance Legislation**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.07 p.m.

Andrew Elliott, Grade 5  
Richard Crowe, Grade 5  
David Gillespie, Agricultural Inspector Grade II

Ken Laverty, Deputy Principal

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

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

*3.08 p.m. Mr Elliott rejoined the meeting.*

*3.15 p.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.*

*3.21 p.m. Mr Anderson left the meeting.*

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

*3.37 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Department should provide further written clarification on the proposed changes to penalties around cattle tags.

#### **8. Written briefing: SR 2014/295: The Seeds (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2015**

Question put and agreed:

That the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development has considered SR 2014/295: The Seeds (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2015 and has no objections to the rule.

#### **9. Written Briefing DARD: SR 2014/299: The Foyle Area (Complimentary Angling Permit) (River Finn and River Foyle) Regulations (NI) 2015**

Question put and agreed:

That the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development has considered SR 2014/299: The Foyle Area (Complimentary Angling Permit) (River Finn and River Foyle) Regulations (NI) 2015 and has no objections to the rule.

#### **10. Correspondence**

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 19 January 2015 from the ETI Committee in respect of the Agri-Food Strategy Board.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 19 January 2015 from the ETI Committee in respect of Broadband Improvement Project.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 19 January 2015 from the ETI Committee in respect of Credit Unions.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 21 January 2015 from the ETI Committee on its Inquiry into Growth and Jobs. The Committee agreed to write to the ETI Committee and suggest a number of organisations it should write to during the course of its Inquiry.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 16 January 2015 from the Committee for the Environment in respect of the relationship between farming communities and NIEA officials.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the latest edition of the EU Matters Newsletter.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the UFU Press Release on Pig Price Differential and agreed to invite the UFU to brief the Committee on this issue on 10 February 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 19 January 2015 from Mr Paul Frew MLA in respect of grievance case within DARD. The Committee agreed to write to Mr Frew to advise that it is not within its remit to investigate grievance matters.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Rural Community Development Support Service. The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask what plans it has for the retender of the Rural Support Contract.

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from Professor Chris Elliott, Queen's University, Belfast.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a visit to the Grocery Code Adjudicator.

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

### **12. AOB**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a visit to the House of Oireachtas, Joint Committee for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

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

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 3 February 2015 at 1.00 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*3.57 p.m. The meeting adjourned.*

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William Irwin, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

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Date