

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 13 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
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 Dagmar Walgraeve, Clerical Officer
Mr Mark Allen, Research Officer (for agenda item 6)

1.33 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, the Deputy Chairperson and Mr Elliott had met with Mr John Dallat to discuss attacks on the sheep belonging to one of his constituents. A note of the meeting will be included in the meeting pack for next week.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that he, the Deputy Chairperson and Mr McAleer had met with representatives from the Rural Community

Development Support Service to discuss the Committee review on TRPSI. The briefing will be placed on the Committee website.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the briefing by the Minister, scheduled for next week, may be postponed if the budget is not agreed by the Executive on 15 January 2015.

1.35 p.m. Mr McAleer joined the meeting.

3. Minutes of the meeting held 9 December 2014

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2014.

4. Matters Arising

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 19 December 2014 in respect of issues raised at the Committee meeting on 2 December 2014.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 12 December 2014 in respect of issues raised at the Committee meeting on 25 November 2014.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 5 January 2015 in respect of issues raised at the Committee meeting on 9 December 2014.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Public Health Agency which provides further statistical information on the MARA project. The Committee agreed to place the information on the website.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Department on the outcome of the December Fisheries Council.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 19 December 2014 from the Minister on the dairy industry and Single Farm Payments.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 18 December 2014 from the Minister in respect of issues raised on cross compliance penalties imposed for cattle that have lost an ear tag.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 18 December 2014 from the Minister in respect of issues raised on CAP direct payments under cross compliance regulations.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 16 December 2014 from the Department for Regional Development in respect of an incident report regarding Camlough Reservoir.

5. Oral Briefing DARD: ACM for Abolition of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides (ACP)

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 1.37 p.m.

Brian Ervine, Principal Officer
Deborah Currie, Deputy Principal

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

1.38 p.m. Mr Anderson and Mr Milne joined the meeting.

1.40 p.m. Mrs Dobson joined the meeting.

1.49 p.m. Mr Poots joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft motion which will be tabled by the Minister to seek the consent of the Assembly for the abolition of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides.

6. Oral Briefing CAFRE: The Dairy Market

The Assembly Research Officer joined the meeting at 1.52 p.m. and briefed the Committee on the Dairy Market. This was followed by a question and answer session.

1.56 p.m. Mr McCarthy left the meeting.

1.57 p.m. Mr Elliott joined the meeting.

2.03 p.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.

2.20 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

2.23 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request further research on a range of issues in connection with the Dairy industry.

7. Oral briefing DARD: The Dairy Market

The following officials joined the meeting at 2.27 p.m.

Colette McMaster, Grade 5
Steven Millar, Grade 6
Seamus McErlean, Principal Agricultural Economist

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

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

2.45 p.m. Mr McCarthy rejoined the meeting.

2.50 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.

2.51 p.m. Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.

3.01 p.m. Mr Buchanan left the meeting.

3.15 p.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.

3.21 p.m. Mr Elliott left the meeting.

3.23 p.m. Mr Elliott rejoined the meeting.

3.25 p.m. Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.

8. Correspondence

Agreed: The Committee noted the copied correspondence dated 10 December 2014 from NI Farm Groups to the Minister on the Agri-Food Strategy Board. The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to request that it is copied into the response to NI Farm Groups.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 2 January 2015 from the Minister on the Transitional Payment of Disadvantaged Area Scheme 2015.

Noted: The Committee noted the Investing Activity Report, December 2014 for the Department.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 27 November 2014 forwarded by Paul Frew MLA from Mrs and Mrs Kelly on the loss of their Single Farm Payment. The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment and to ask for an update

Agreed: The Committee noted the copied correspondence dated 10 December 2014 from Mr and Mrs Simpson to the Minister on LPS Maps. The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to request that it is copied into the response to Mr and Mrs Simpson.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 5 January 2015 from the Department on the proposed consultation on DARD's third

Disability Action Plan 2015-17. The Committee agreed to request a summary of the responses upon completion of the consultation exercise.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence date 6 January 2015 from the Department advising that due to an oversight, the Committee was not provided with a summary of the responses from the NI Inshore Fisheries Strategy public consultation. The Committee agreed to seek a written briefing on this issue.

9. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the date of 27 January 2015 for a lunch meeting with the Committee for Agriculture, Food and the Marine from the House of the Oireachtas.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme.

10. AOB

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask if opportunities exist for the Northern Ireland beef to move into the USA market, similar to that which has happened in the Republic of Ireland.

11. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 20 January 2015 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

3.32 p.m. The meeting moved into closed session.

12. Committee discussion on issues raised during the TRPSI Review and way forward for the Committee.

The Committee discussed the TRPSI review to date and agreed the key issues to be included in a position paper.

3.44 p.m. Mr Poots rejoined the meeting.

3.51 p.m. Mr Anderson left the meeting.

3.53 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

3.55 p.m. The meeting adjourned.

William Irwin, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date