

# COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2015  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr William Irwin MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA  
Mr Tom Buchanan MLA  
Mrs JoAnne Dobson MLA  
Mr Tom Elliott MP MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Mr Declan McAleer MLA  
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA  
Mr Edwin Poots MLA

Apologies: Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

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

*1. 42 p.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session.*

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

### **1. Oral Briefing DARD: SL1 The CAP Direct Payments and Support Schemes (Cross Compliance) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015**

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 1.43 p.m.

Alan Galbraith, Head of Integrated Controls Branch  
Ken Laverty, EU Area-Based Reform Branch  
Robin Bolton, Horticulture and Sustainability Development Branch

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

*1.44 p.m. Mr McAleer joined the meeting.*

*1.45 p.m. Mr Poots joined the meeting.*

*1.55 p.m. Mr Milne joined the meeting.*

The Chairperson advised the Committee that he had to leave the meeting at 2.00 p.m. and called for nominations for a chairperson. Mr Poots proposed Mr Sydney Anderson. Mr Buchanan seconded the proposal.

*1.56 p.m. Mr Irwin left the meeting and Mr Anderson took the chair.*

*2.05 p.m. Mr Irwin rejoined the meeting and resumed the chair.*

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek clarification on the responsibility of branch overhang on a public road.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the policy should move to the next legislative stage.

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

## **2. Apologies**

The apologies are recorded above.

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to hold a strategic planning session on the first meeting after summer recess on 8 September 2015.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 15 June 2015 from the Department in respect of the BSE case discovered in County Louth.

*2.09 p.m. Mr Anderson rejoined the meeting.*

*2.10 p.m. Mrs Dobson joined the meeting.*

## **4. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2015**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2015.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the draft minutes of the concurrent meeting with the ETI Committee on 9 June 2015 which had been agreed and signed by the Chairperson for each committee.

## **5. Matters Arising**

- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 11 June 2015 from the Department in respect of issues raised at the Committee meeting on 26 May 2015. The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a breakdown of staff in post for Full Time Equivalent staff.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek an update from the Department when it receives a letter from the Commission Audit Team in respect of cross compliance.
- Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 11 June 2015 in respect of the issues raised at the Committee meeting in Cookstown. The Committee agreed to seek an oral briefing from NISRA in Autumn 2015 regarding Rural Deprivation.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek a written update from the working group established to undertake an enhance update of the 2010 multiple deprivation indices following commencement of its work in September 2015.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request a written update in mid-autumn on the AFBI Research Work Programme.

## **6. Oral Briefing DARD: Plant Health**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.13 p.m.

Malcolm Beatty, Chief Executive, Forest Service  
Stuart Morwood, Director of Woodland Development & Strategies  
Jim Crummie, Head of Plant Health Inspection Branch  
Alistair McCracken, Principal Scientific Officer

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

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

- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek further information on the costings and uptake of the TreeCheck app.

*2.38 p.m. The meeting suspended.*

*3.33 p.m. The meeting resumed.*

*The following Members were present; Mr Anderson, Mr Buchanan, Mrs Dobson, Mr Irwin, Mr McMullan and Mr Poots.*

## **6. Written Briefing DARD: SL1 The Non-Commercial Movement of Pets (Amendment) Order (NI) 2015**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the written briefing from the Department on the Non-Commercial Movement of Pets (Amendment) Order (NI) 2015; and agreed that the policy should move to the next legislative stage.

*3.35 p.m. Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.*

## **7. Correspondence**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted EM 36814 on proposals for authorising the use of GMOs for food and feed; the Committee agreed to ask the Department for comments on how this will impact Northern Ireland and what interaction has taken place with Defra on this issue.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 11 June 2015 from the COFMDFM on the Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe) 2015.

## **8. Forward Work Programme**

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

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

## **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 23 June 2015 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

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

## **11. Inquiry into Better Regulations: Appointment of a Special Advisor**

*Agreed:* The Committee discussed the necessity of appointing a Special Advisor to help inform the Committee during its Inquiry into Better Regulation. The Committee agreed to give further consideration to this issue at the next meeting.

*3.53 p.m. The meeting adjourned.*

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William Irwin, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

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Date