

## COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 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 Jo-Anne Dobson MLA  
Mr Tom Elliott MLA  
Mr Ian Milne MLA  
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA  
Mr Edwin Poots MLA
- Apologies: Mr Declan McAleer MLA
- In attendance: Mr Peter McCallion, Committee Clerk  
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk  
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor  
Ms Dagmar Walgraeve, Clerical Officer  
Mr Mark Allen, Research Officer (agenda item 9)

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

#### **1. Apologies**

The apologies are noted above.

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

The Chairperson advised the Committee that an Effective Questioning Technique session has been scheduled for the 24 February 2015.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that he has accepted an invitation from the Northern Ireland Meat Exporters Association to a networking dinner on 23 February 2015.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2015**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2015.

### **4. Matters Arising**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 6 February 2015 from the Department on the Fisheries Taskforce and agreed to schedule an oral briefing post Easter.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 9 February 2015 on issues raised at the committee meeting on 25 November 2014. The Committee agreed to forward the information to the Financial Scrutiny Unit.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 11 February 2015 from the Department on issues raised at the committee meeting on 27 January 2015. The Committee agreed to forward an extract of the correspondence on Cross Compliance to the UFU for comment.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 11 February 2015 from the Department on the DARD HQ Relocation Business Case. The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on this as soon as practicable and before Easter 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 12 February 2015 from the Department on the Reservoirs Bill. The Committee agreed to include the information in the Addendum to the Reservoirs Bill Report.

### **5. Oral Briefing DARD & AFBI: AFBI Strategic Plan and Estate**

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

Professor Seamus Kennedy, AFBI Chief Executive  
Dr Sinclair Mayne, Departmental Scientific Officer  
Dr Stanley McDowell, AFBI Senior Veterinary Research Officer

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

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

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

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

*2.23 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to outline its concerns in respect of the proposed cuts to the AFBI budget. The Committee also agreed that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson would sign off the letter for immediate issue.

## **6. Committee Discussion on EU Priorities**

*Agreed:* The Committee discussed and agreed the EU Priorities template for inclusion in the OFMDFM Committee's report to the European Commission.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from the Department on its EU Programme, other than CAP Reform.

## **7. Commission Review - TRPSI Position Paper**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the TRPSI Position Paper to the Minister for her consideration.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft Press Release.

## **8. Written brief: Outcome of the joint DARD/DCAL consultation on policy proposals for a Fisheries Bill**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the written brief on the outcome of the joint DARD/DCAL consultation on policy proposals for a Fisheries Bill; and agreed to seek an oral briefing from the Department post Easter.

## **9. Oral briefing RaISe: Update on Remote Sensing**

The Assembly Research Officer joined the meeting at 2.42 and briefing the Committee on Remote Sensing.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

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

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

## **10. Correspondence**

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence dated 12 February 2015 from the OFMDFM Committee in respect of the Committee Stage of

the Children's Services Co-operation Bill. The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment.

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

*Noted:* The Committee noted the two items which have been deferred in the Forward Work Programme at the request of the Department.

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

### **12. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 24 February 2015 at 2.45 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*2.59 p.m. the meeting moved into closed session.*

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

### **14. Oral Briefing DARD: Remote Sensing**

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.00 p.m.:

Richard Crowe, Head of Countryside Management Unit  
Manus McHenry, Agricultural Inspector Grade 1  
Alan Galbraith, Agricultural Inspector Grade 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

*3.57 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.*

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

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

*4.25 p.m. The meeting adjourned.*

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William Irwin, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

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Date