



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2017

ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA
Mr David Ford MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Patsy McGlone MLA
Mr Harold McKee MLA
Mr Edwin Poots MLA
- In Attendance: Mrs Stella McArdle (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Christopher McNickle (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Oliver Bellew (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Ms Caoimhe Archibald MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Robin Swann MLA

10:01 a.m. In the absence of the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson, the Clerk took the Chair for the election of a temporary Chairperson.

Mr Edwin Poots MLA proposed that Mr William Irwin be the temporary chair of the Committee and this was seconded by Mr Sydney Anderson MLA. As no other nominations were made the Committee agreed that Mr William Irwin should take the chair for the duration of the meeting.

10:03 a.m. Mr William Irwin MLA assumed the Chair.

The meeting opened in **public** session at **10.04 am**

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's Business.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2016 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure in relation to planning applications by young farmers.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department in relation to matters arising from the meeting on 10 November 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to Assembly Research as it contained a response to budgetary questions which were contained in a previous research paper.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister in relation to the Loughs Agency's Management Agreement.

The Committee noted correspondence from the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to the Loughs Agency's Management Agreement.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Finance in relation to a delay in the issuing of financial guidance to the Loughs Agency.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in relation to matters arising from the meeting on 10 November 2016.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in relation to matters arising from the meeting on 15 November 2016.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in relation to matters arising from the meeting on 24 November 2016.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department in relation to matters arising from the meeting on 1 December 2016.

Agreed: The Committee noted that FAPRI is currently carrying out economic modelling in relation to the UK's withdrawal from the EU. The Committee agreed to request the full terms of reference, and information on whether the modelling will be specific to Northern Ireland. The Committee also agreed to request a briefing on the analysis as soon as it available.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in relation to matters arising from the meeting on 15 December 2016.

The Committee considered its draft response to the Committee for the Executive Office in relation to its draft EU Priorities for 2017.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its response to the Committee for the Executive Office in relation to its draft EU Priorities for 2017.

The Committee considered its draft response to the Committee for the Executive Office in relation to the draft Programme for Government.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its response to the Committee for the Executive Office in relation to the draft programme for Government.

5. Oral evidence from DAERA – Dilapidated/Dangerous Buildings and Neglected Sites

10.10 a.m. The following officials joined the meeting:

Mr Simon Webb, Environmental Reform Branch, DAERA

Mr Karl Beattie, Environmental Reform Branch, DAERA

Mr David Foster, Environmental Reform Branch, DAERA

The officials briefed the Committee on the outcome of the policy consultation on Dilapidated/Dangerous Buildings and Neglected Sites.

10.50 a.m. Mr Edwin Poots MLA left the meeting.

10.54 a.m. Mr Sydney Anderson MLA left the meeting.

11.04 a.m. The officials left the meeting.

6. Written briefing from Tourism NI – Environmental and Sustainable Tourism

The Committee considered a written briefing from Tourism NI in relation to Environmental and Sustainable Tourism.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Tourism NI indicating that the Committee considered and noted the correspondence and agreed that if and when appropriate, the Committee would seek to meet with Tourism NI on this matter.

7. Written briefing from DAERA – Environmental Impact Assessment – Joint technical consultation

The Committee considered the consultation on proposals to transpose Directive 2014/52/EU (the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive) in respect of marine works projects.

Agreed: The Committee noted the geographical scope of the proposals and further noted that the only aspect of the EU Directive which will apply to Northern Ireland is the marine works. The Committee agreed to seek an explanation of why the forestry, agricultural, water resources, land drainage and fin-fish farming aspects do not apply to Northern Ireland. The Committee also agreed to request a written briefing following the conclusion of the consultation.

8. Written briefing from DAERA – Consultation on proposals to ban the use of plastic microbeads in cosmetics

The Committee noted a written briefing from the Department in relation to its consultation on proposals to ban the use of plastic microbeads in cosmetics.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a written briefing following the conclusion of the consultation.

9. Correspondence

The Committee noted an invitation to the 2017 Northern Ireland Food and Drink Awards.

The Committee noted an invitation from the Becon Consortium to visit an ‘Energy from Waste’ plant in County Meath.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Executive Office in relation to its Report on the Draft Programme for Government 2016-21.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs regarding the outcome of the December Fisheries Council meeting.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in relation to Area Based Schemes.

The Committee noted departmental correspondence in relation to Avian Influenza – Prevention Zone.

The Committee noted departmental correspondence in relation to the Collaborative Research Programme.

The Committee noted the Ninth Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

The Committee noted the Report on the British Wool Marketing Board Agricultural Marketing Scheme 2014-15.

The Committee noted correspondence relating to a consultation on the Zoonoses Regulations 2017.

The Committee noted a final consultation document relating to the 2017 Review of Bathing Waters in Northern Ireland.

The Committee noted correspondence from the NIEA in relation to Drinking Water Quality in Northern Ireland 2015.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Consumer Council in relation to the consultation on its draft Forward Work Programme 2017-18.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Consumer Council to request that it is informed on the outcome of the consultation.

The Committee noted departmental correspondence in relation to the Gangmasters Licensing Authority Annual Report and Accounts.

The Committee noted the House of Lords EU Committee 8th Report of Session 2016-17 Brexit: Fisheries.

10. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to revisit the arrangements for its visit to Dublin, scheduled for 02 March, at a future meeting.

11.09 a.m. Mr Edwin Poots re-joined the meeting.

11. Any Other Business

The Committee considered what impact an Assembly election would have on financial matters such as payments to farmers, the drawdown of EU funds, the FBIS scheme and the Areas of Natural Constraint scheme.

Mr David Ford MLA declared an interest in relation the Areas of Natural Constraint scheme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an urgent written briefing, for the meeting 19th January, on any potential risk to departmental funding and budgets, including the drawdown of EU Funding, as a result of the current political situation.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that its next meeting will be held at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 19th January 2017 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

11.12 a.m. The temporary Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Caoimhe Archibald MLA

Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

19th January 2017