



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2016

ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Caoimhe Archibald MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
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
Mr Robin Swann MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Stella McArdle (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Christopher McNickle (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Oliver Bellew (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)
Miss Zoe Rogers (Bursary Student)

Apologies: None

The meeting opened in **public** session at **10.02 am**

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2016 were agreed.

10.04 am The meeting moved to closed session

3. Oral evidence from TB Strategic Partnership Group – Bovine TB Eradication Strategy for Northern Ireland

10.04 a.m. The following witnesses joined the meeting:

Mr Sean Hogan, Chairperson, TB Strategic Partnership Group

Mr Campbell Tweed, Member, TB Strategic Partnership Group

Mr John Thompson, Member, TB Strategic Partnership Group

Dr Cecil H McMurray, Member, TB Strategic Partnership Group

Dr George McIlroy, Member, TB Strategic Partnership Group

The witnesses briefed the Committee on the Bovine TB Eradication Strategy for Northern Ireland.

10.06 a.m. Mr Patsy McGlone MLA joined the meeting.

10.07 a.m. Mr Oliver McMullan MLA joined the meeting.

10.12 a.m. Mr Maurice Bradley MLA joined the meeting.

Mr William Irwin MLA declared an interest as a dairy farmer.

Mr David Ford MLA declared an interest as the part owner of cattle farm with a badger sett.

11.30 a.m. Mr William Irwin MLA left the meeting.

11.30 a.m. Mr Oliver McMullan MLA left the meeting.

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

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

11.43 a.m. Mr Patsy McGlone MLA left the meeting.

11.44 a.m. Mr William Irwin MLA returned to the meeting.

11.48 a.m. Mr Edwin Poots MLA returned to the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request oral evidence, at its earliest convenience, to discuss the recommendations in the Strategy and to seek information on how the application of data protection legislation could affect the informed purchasing of cattle in Northern Ireland.

11.51 a.m. The witnesses left the meeting.

11.51 a.m. The meeting moved to open session.

4. Oral evidence from DAERA – Areas of Natural Constraint

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

Mr Paul Caskie, DAERA

Mr Mark McLean, DAERA

The officials briefed the Committee on Areas of Natural Constraint.

11.55 a.m. Mr Oliver McMullan returned to the meeting.

Mr David Ford MLA declared an interest as the owner of land in a Severely Disadvantaged Area.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to reiterate its concern that it did not receive adequate prior notice of the Minister's intentions in relation to the ANC scheme and to express dissatisfaction that oral evidence was being provided on the matter eight days after the press release was issued. The Committee also agreed to seek a response to concerns raised in correspondence received from NIAPA; the Belfast Hills Partnership; and the UFU.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to request that consideration be given to extending the ANC scheme by at least one additional year and to express concern over the Department's intention to cease the re-designation of ANCs. The Committee also agreed to request clarity on how reference to the broader welfare regime affected the Minister's considerations on these matters.

12.04 p.m. Mr Patsy McGlone MLA returned to the meeting.

12.04 p.m. Mr Sydney Anderson MLA returned to the meeting.

12.05 p.m. The officials left the meeting.

12.05 p.m. The meeting moved to closed session.

5. Strategic Priorities

The Committee considered its strategic priorities.

12.08 p.m. Mr Sydney Anderson MLA left the meeting.

12.14 p.m. Mr Sydney Anderson MLA returned to the meeting.

12.17 p.m. Mr Patsy McGlone left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to explore the issue of waste infrastructure further.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a briefing from the Department in relation to waste infrastructure.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an Assembly Research briefing paper on waste infrastructure.

6. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that its next meeting will be held at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 12th January 2017 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

12.20 p.m. The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Caoimhe Archibald MLA

Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

12th January 2017