

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**THURSDAY 30 JULY 2020
THE SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Declan McAleer MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Philip McGuigan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Clare Bailey MLA (via StarLeaf)
Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA
Mr John Blair MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Patsy McGlone MLA (via StarLeaf)

Apologies: Mr Maurice Bradley MLA

In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk (via StarLeaf)
Ms Marion Johnson, Clerical Supervisor

The meeting commenced at 10.31 a.m. in open session

1. Apologies

As above

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2020 were agreed.

3. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

- i. Correspondence from the Department providing a summary of responses to the consultation on the Waste Prevention Programme 2019.
- ii. A report from Pivotal on Covid-19 in Northern Ireland – A New Economic Vision.
- iii. Correspondence from the Department which provides a correction to oral evidence from NIEA at the meeting on 1 July 2020 where an incorrect figure was quoted in relation to the average turnaround time for planning applications.
- iv. Correspondence from the Department in relation to issues raised at the Committee meeting on 4 June 2020.
- v. Correspondence from Sainsbury's which clarifies that it is committed to upholding high standards for customers and would not sell either chlorinated chicken or hormone beef from the US.
- vi. Correspondence from the Department in response to Members questions arising from the Covid-19 update provided at the meeting on 24 June 2020.
- vii. Correspondence from the Department of Finance providing a correction to the July Economic Statement.
- viii. The Sixteenth Report 2019/20 from the Examiner of Statutory Rules which states that there are no issues of concern with SR 2020/105: The Direct Payments to Farmers (Controls and Checks) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.
- ix. Correspondence from Lord Teverson, Chairperson of the House of Lords EU Sub Committee which outlines the findings of its Inquiry on the Protocol and which has been sent to the UK Government for comment.
- x. Correspondence from the Department which includes the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20.
- xi. Correspondence from the Department which includes the Committee for Climate Change's Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20.
- xii. The ISNI Investing Activity Report for July 2020.
- xiii. Copied correspondence from Premier Garden Plants to the Minister on the financial support for Ornamental Horticulture Producers.
- xiv. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance on a review by the Executive of Arms' Length Bodies.
- xv. Correspondence from the Committee for Communities in respect of a

briefing paper provided by SOLACE to Executive Ministers encouraging the development of a cross-departmental strategic approach to support councils.

xvi. Copied correspondence from the Chairperson to the Committee for Communities to Executive Ministers asking that consideration is given to a request made by SOLACE regarding local council rates guarantees.

xvii. Correspondence from the Department for the Economy in response to a letter from the Committee in respect of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and the ability of DAERA and BEIS to ensure a level playing field for the carbon price in the Single Electricity Market.

4. Departmental oral briefing: Climate Change

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.33 a.m.:

Dr Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary
David Small, Deputy Secretary, Environment, Marine & Fisheries Group
Owen Lyttle, Director of Environmental Policy

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

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request the outcome of the independent review into the Department's processes against the relevant guidance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request the percentage figure for Northern Ireland's carbon emission rates.

5. Date, time and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will take place on Thursday 3 September at 10.00 a.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 12.04 p.m.

Declan McAleer, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date

