

## COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2020  
THE SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

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

Apologies: Patsy McGlone MLA

In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk  
Ms Barbara Love, Committee Clerk  
Ms Marion Johnson, Clerical Supervisor

*The meeting commenced at 2.24 p.m. in open session*

#### 1. Apologies

As above.

#### 2. Draft Minutes

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes for the meeting held on 22 May 2020.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the note of the informal meeting held on 28 May 2020 and that it should be published on the Committee webpage.

### **3. Departmental Briefing on the Implementation of the Protocol**

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.26 p.m.

Dr Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary  
Mr Robert Huey, Deputy Secretary, Veterinary Service & Animal Health Group  
Mr Norman Fulton, Deputy Secretary, Food & Farming Group  
Mr Mark Livingston, Director, Brexit Contingency

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 a copy of its Readiness Report and details around the costs incurred to date.

### **4. SR 2020/76: The Sea Fishing Industry (Coronavirus) (Fixed Costs) Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2020**

The Committee noted the correspondence from the Department in respect of the SR 2020/76 which advises that the Examiner of Statutory Rules has alerted the Department to an incorrect reference in the Rule and that a minor technical amendment now needs to be made by way of an amending SR. The amending SR will be considered by the Committee in due course.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider agenda items 6-10 next.

### **5. Departmental Written Briefing: Covid-19 Update**

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the written update from the Department on Covid-19 and agreed to publish it on the Committee's webpage.

*Noted:* The Committee noted the correspondence from the Department on issues raised on Covid-19 at the meetings on 21 and 28 May 2020.

### **6. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following:

- i. Correspondence from the Department on the launch of the Consultation on the Horse Racing (Northern Ireland) Order 1990.
- ii. The Eleventh Report from the Examiners of Statutory Rules in which attention is drawn to incorrect reference within SR 2020/76: The Sea Fishing Industry (Coronavirus) (Fixed Costs) Scheme (Northern Ireland) 2020.

- iii. Correspondence from the Committee for the Economy on issues raised by the Rural Community Network on rural broadband.
- iv. The ISNI Investing Activity Report for May 2020.
- v. Correspondence from NIMEA on a range of issues it was asked to comment on by the Committee.

The Committee considered copied correspondence from the Ulster Farmers' Union to the Minister on concerns it has in respect of the Northern Ireland wool market and the collapse of the global market.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Ulster Farmers' Union to request that it keeps the Committee updated with any developments with this issue.

The Committee considered correspondence from Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) on the Future Agricultural Policy and research it had commissioned to capture the views of farmers.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule an oral evidence session with NIEL in due course and as part of the Committee's own consideration of the Future Agricultural Policy.

## **7. Forward Work Programme**

The Clerk updated the Committee on the Forward Work Programme.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme 11 June – 2 July 2020 and that it should be published on the Committee's webpage.

## **8. AOB**

There was no other business.

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

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will take place on Thursday 11 June 2020 at 10.30 a.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to move into Closed Session at 3.55 p.m.

## **10. Stakeholder responses to the allocation of £25m Covid-19 Funding for the Agri Food Sector Marker Intervention**

The Committee discussed the responses received to date from stakeholders on the allocation of the £25m Covid-19 funding for the Agri Food Sector Market Intervention.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider its written response to the Minister at the meeting on 11 June 2020.

4.32 p.m. *The meeting adjourned*

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*Declan McAleer, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development*

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