



# Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

## Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 13 May 2021

**Meeting Location:** Room 30, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Declan McAleer MLA (Chairperson)

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Philip McGuigan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Clare Bailey MLA

Rosemary Barton MLA

John Blair MLA

Maurice Bradley MLA

Harry Harvey MLA

William Irwin MLA

Patsy McGlone MLA

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:** Nick Henry, Clerk

Kate Duffy, Clerical Officer



Suzie Cave, Research Officer (agenda item 8)

**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in Open Session

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to move into Closed Session

The meeting moved into Closed Session at 10.01 a.m.

**1. Matters arising**

The Committee discussed its inquiry into the withdrawal of DAERA and Local Authority staff from the ports.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to await the outcome of legal advice before considering any further action.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to invite the Minister to give evidence to the inquiry in to the withdrawal of DAERA and Local Authority staff from ports.

**Noted:** The Committee noted the correspondence from Mid and East Antrim Borough Council clarifying comments made in paragraph 56 and 57 of its written briefing which was provided to the Committee at the meeting on 6 May 2021.

Mr Harvey and Mr McGlone joined the meeting at 10.07 a.m.

The meeting moved into Open Session at 10.14 a.m.



## **2. Apologies**

None

## **3. Chairpersons Business**

The Chairperson advised the Committee about the establishment of a Youth Assembly which is now open for applications and encouraged Members to help promote the recruitment of young people for this opportunity.

**Noted:** The Committee noted the updated contact details for committee staff and RaISe.

## **4. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2021.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to consider to agenda items 6 and 9 next.

## **5. Departmental Written Briefing: EU Transition Update**

**Noted:** The Committee noted the departmental written briefing on EU Transition Update and were advised to forward questions for the Department to the clerk by close of play.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to move to a monthly EU Transition Update.



## 6. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following:

- i. Correspondence from the Department on the Pollution Prevention and Control District Councils Charging Scheme Northern Ireland 2021;
- ii. A Press Release from the Department which issued on 5 May 2021 announcing capital investment projects at CAFRE;
- iii. Correspondence from the Permanent Secretary to the Chairperson advising of the closure of the Major Emergency Response Plan;
- iv. Correspondence from the Department on the recent pollution incident at the Aghlisk River, County Tyrone.
- v. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance on a RaISe Research Paper on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland: Potential External Experts, which it has shared with the Committee.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding future meetings with the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee to discuss scrutiny of the Protocol.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that future discussion on the scrutiny of the Protocol could be done by way of correspondence.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister on the extension of the Committee Stage of the Horse Racing (Amendment) Bill 2021

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to advise scrutiny will be conducted as expediently as possible in line with other commitments in terms of the Committee's workload.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to seek an update from the Department in relation to the £3.5 million support package for farmers affected by floods and mudslides in 2017, which was recently announced by the Minister.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek an update on an issue it had raised previously regarding the importation of bees.



## **7. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered the Forward Work Programme and noted that the consideration of the evidence gathered to date on the Inquiry into the Withdrawal of DAERA and Local Authority staff from the ports has been deferred.

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

## **8. Oral Briefing RalSe: The Climate Change Bill**

The Research Officer joined the meeting at 10.21 a.m.

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

The oral briefing was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the Research Officer for her attendance.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to publish the RalSe briefing on the Climate Change Bill on the Committee's webpage.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask the Research Officer for details of a suitable economist with an interest in climate change to provide evidence to the Committee as part of its scrutiny of the Climate Change Bill.

## **9. Committee consideration of Legal Advice: Review Process for Area-Based Schemes**

The Committee considered the Legal Advice it requested on the Review Process for Area-Based Schemes.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to advise that it is recommending that the Department proceeds with the review of the process for



Area- Based Schemes, based on the legal advice the Committee has received and which will be summarised for the Department.

### **10. Committee consideration of the Climate Change Bill Work Plan**

The Committee considered the work-plan for the Committee Stage of the Climate Change Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the draft template, with a number of amendments, for use on Citizen Space to gather evidence for the Committee in help inform its scrutiny of the Climate Change Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the signposting ad which will be placed in the Belfast Telegraph, the Irish News and the Newsletter.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to consider placing the signposting ad in local papers subject to clarification from the Communication Office.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the Motion to extend the Committee Stage of the Climate Change Bill to 17 December 2021.

The meeting moved into Open Session at 12.09 p.m.

### **11. AOB**

None.

### **12. 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 20 May 2021 at 10.00 a.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

The meeting was adjourned at 12.10 p.m.

**Declan McAleer MLA**  
**Chairperson, Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee**