



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

7 August 2025

Meeting Location: Room 30

Present:

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Jonathan Buckley MLA

Eóin Tennyson MLA

Present by Video:

Ciara Ferguson MLA (Chairperson)

Peter Martin MLA

Apologies:

Steve Aiken MLA

Declan Kearney MLA

Kate Nicholl MLA

Emma Sheerin MLA

In Attendance:

Christopher Dickison (Senior Assistant Clerk)

Jessica Jacques (Senior Assistant Clerk)

Oliver Bellew (Assistant Clerk)

Carla Campbell (Clerical Supervisor)

Shelley Garner (Clerical Officer)

In Attendance by Video:

Victoria Bourquin (Assistant Clerk)

Suzanne Walsh (Clerical Supervisor)

Damien Brown (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 10.00am in closed session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Deputy Chairperson would assume the Chair as the Chairperson was attending the meeting remotely.

The Deputy Chairperson assumed the Chair at 10.00am.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Members' Interest

None.

3. Regulation (EU) 2025/1561 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 as regards obligations of economic operators concerning battery due diligence policies - Legal Advice

Simon Kelly, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 10.02am.

The Committee considered a notification from the Cabinet Office in relation to the following published replacement EU act:

Regulation (EU) 2025/1561 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 as regards obligations of economic operators concerning battery due diligence policies.

The Legal Adviser provided advice on whether it appears likely that the published replacement act differs significantly (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU act it is amending/replacing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to continue its consideration of the published replacement EU act in public session.

The Legal Adviser left the meeting at 10.10am.

The Committee moved into public session at 10.10am.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2025.

5. Matters Arising

None.

6. Regulation (EU) 2025/1561 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 as regards obligations of economic operators concerning battery due diligence policies - Departmental Oral Evidence

The Committee continued its consideration of Regulation (EU) 2025/1561 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 as regards obligations of economic operators concerning battery due diligence policies.

The following officials joined the meeting at 10.11am:

Tommy McNamara	Policy Lead for ELV, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
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Catherine O'Hara	Policy Advisor, Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
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The officials gave oral evidence on Regulation (EU) 2025/1561.

A question and answer session followed.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The officials left the meeting at 10.19am.

The Committee noted that, in order to meet its statutory requirements, it must decide whether or not to hold an inquiry into the published replacement EU act.

The Committee had regard to:

(i) the legal advice on whether it appears likely that the replacement act significantly differs (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU instrument which it amends or replaces, and

(ii) the departmental assessment on whether it appears likely that the replacement act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

Agreed: The Committee agreed not to hold an inquiry into the replacement EU act, pursuant to paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The Committee noted that its decision will be published on the Committee webpage.

7. **COM/2025/386 Proposal for a Regulation on the European Chemicals Agency and amending Regulations (EC) No 1907/2006, (EU) No 528/2012, (EU) No 649/2012 and (EU) 2019/1021**
8. **COM/2025/526 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2024/2865 as regards dates of application and transitional provisions**
9. **COM/2025/531 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 1272/2008, (EC) No 1223/2009 and (EU) 2019/1009 as regards simplification of certain requirements and procedures for chemical products**

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider agenda items 7, 8, and 9 together.

The Committee considered the proposed replacement EU act: COM/2025/386 Proposal for a Regulation on the European Chemicals Agency and amending Regulations (EC) No 1907/2006, (EU) No 528/2012, (EU) No 649/2012 and (EU) 2019/1021

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request legal advice and an initial departmental assessment of impact to help inform its decision on whether to monitor the proposed EU act.

The Committee considered the proposed replacement EU act: COM/2025/526 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2024/2865 as regards dates of application and transitional provisions.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request legal advice and an initial departmental assessment of impact to help inform its decision on whether to monitor the proposed EU act.

The Committee considered the proposed replacement EU act: COM/2025/531 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 1272/2008, (EC) No 1223/2009 and (EU) 2019/1009 as regards simplification of certain requirements and procedures for chemical products.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request legal advice and an initial departmental assessment of impact to help inform its decision on whether to monitor the proposed EU act.

10. Correspondence

10.1 The Committee noted an update from the Executive Office regarding current proposed EU legislation relevant to Northern Ireland.

10.2 The Committee noted a quarterly update from RaISe on COM/2024/561 Proposal for a Directive amending Directive 2014/32/EU as regards electric vehicle supply equipment, compressed gas dispensers, and electricity, gas and thermal energy meters.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the update on its webpage.

10.3 The Committee noted a quarterly update from RaISe on COM/2023/769 Proposal for a Regulation on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the update on its webpage.

10.4 The Committee noted correspondence from the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in relation to Regulation (EU) 2024/2865 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, and the Health and Safety Executive's consultation on proposals to reform chemicals policy in Great Britain.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the correspondence to the Committee for Economy, Committee for Health and the Committee for Justice.

10.5 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee (NISC) to the UK Government regarding its Explanatory Memorandum on the European Commission Work Programme 2025.

10.6 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the UK Government to the NISC regarding its Explanatory Memorandum on the European Commission Work Programme 2025.

10.7 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the UK Government to the NISC regarding veterinary medicines and the Windsor Framework.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Paymaster General to request an update on the timeline for the negotiation and implementation of a UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement.

10.8 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to the UK Government regarding Regulation (EU) 2024/1860 as regards a gradual roll-out of Eudamed.

10.9 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to the UK Government regarding COM/2023/769 Proposal for a Regulation on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability.

10.10 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to the UK Government regarding C/2024/0661 Commission Delegated Regulation on the effective and safe use of veterinary medicinal products.

10.11 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to the UK Government regarding Regulation (EU) 2024/1143 on geographical indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products.

10.12 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to the UK Government regarding Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products.

10.13 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to the UK Government regarding COM/2025/137 Proposal for a Regulation as regards certain market rules and sectoral support measures in the wine sector.

10.14 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to the UK Government regarding Regulation (EU) 2024/1252 establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials.

10.15 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the UK Government to the House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee regarding the EU-UK summit and the Joint Committee's exchange of views on the EU Artificial Intelligence Act and EU Cyber Resilience Act.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a copy of the UK Government's letter to the NISC dated 12 June, which was referred to in the correspondence.

10.16 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the UK Government to the NISC following its oral evidence session at the Committee.

10.17 The Committee noted correspondence from KME Steelworks Ltd regarding EU customs duty on raw sheet aluminium.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for the Economy, the NISC, and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to respond to KME Steelworks Ltd, advising them of the specific role of the Committee; the steps taken by the Committee to share the correspondence; and that the Committee is gathering evidence on COM/2023/258 Proposal for a Regulation establishing the Union Customs Code and the European Union Customs Authority.

11. Chairperson's Business

None.

12. Any other business

None.

13. Date, time, and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 11 September 2025 at 10:00am in Room 30.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.40am.

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee