



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

09 July 2026

Meeting Location: Room 30

Present:

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Steve Aiken MLA

Philip McGuigan MLA¹

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Ciara Ferguson MLA (Chairperson)

Padraig Delargy MLA

Peter Martin MLA

Kate Nicholl MLA

¹ Cathal Boylan MLA appointed Philip McGuigan MLA as a substitute Member for this meeting.

Apologies:

Eóin Tennyson MLA

Cathal Boylan MLA

Jonathan Buckley MLA

In Attendance:

Marie Austin, Clerk

Chris Dickison, Senior Assistant Clerk

Oliver Bellew, Assistant Clerk

Carla Campbell, Clerical Supervisor

Damien Brown, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 10.05am 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 10.05am.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

The Deputy Chairperson declared an interest under Agenda item 11.

Steve Aiken MLA declared interests under Agenda item 11.

Kate Nicholl MLA declared an interest under Agenda item 11.

3. Regulation (EU) 2026/1388 on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their products, and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/625 - Legal Advice

Julie Byers, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 10.06am.

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

Regulation (EU) 2026/1388 on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their products, and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (Article 37 only).

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.

Pádraig Delargy MLA and Kate Nicholl MLA joined the meeting at 10.07am.

A question and answer session followed.

The Legal Adviser left the meeting at 10.21am.

4. Regulation (EU) 2026/1392 on the production and marketing of forest reproductive material, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031 and (EU) 2017/625 and repealing Council Directive 1999/105/EC (FRM Regulation) - Legal Advice

Caroline Byers, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 10.21am.

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

Regulation (EU) 2026/1392 on the production and marketing of forest reproductive material, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031 and (EU) 2017/625 and repealing Council Directive 1999/105/EC (FRM Regulation).

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.

The Legal Adviser left the meeting at 10.35am.

The Committee moved into public session at 10.35am.

5. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2026.

6. Matters Arising

None.

7. Regulation (EU) 2026/1388 on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their products, and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/625 - Departmental Oral Evidence

The Committee continued its consideration of Regulation (EU) 2026/1388 on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their products, and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/625.

The Committee considered an assessment of impact from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and an Explanatory Memorandum from the UK Government (UKG) on the published replacement EU act.

The Deputy Chairperson reminded Members that only Article 37 of the Regulation qualifies as replacement legislation and would therefore be the only Article under consideration.

The following official joined the meeting at 10.38am:

Fiona Dickson

Deputy Director; Natural Environment Policy Division;
DAERA

The official gave oral evidence on the published replacement EU act.

A question and answer session followed.

The official agreed to provide information on a range of issues raised during the briefing.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The officials left the meeting at 10.55am.

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.

Peter Martin MLA proposed that the Committee hold an inquiry into Article 37 of Regulation (EU) 2026/1388.

The Deputy Chairperson put the question on Peter Martin MLA's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 3; Noes 4.

Ayes

David Brooks, MLA

Steve Aiken, MLA

Peter Martin, MLA

Noes

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Pádraig Delargy, MLA

Philip McGuigan, MLA

Kate Nicholl, MLA

Agreed: The Committee agreed not to hold an inquiry into the published 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.

8. Regulation (EU) 2026/1392 on the production and marketing of forest reproductive material, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031 and (EU) 2017/625 and repealing Council Directive 1999/105/EC (FRM Regulation) - Departmental Oral Evidence

The Committee continued its consideration of Regulation (EU) 2026/1392 on the production and marketing of forest reproductive material, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031 and (EU) 2017/625 and repealing Council Directive 1999/105/EC (FRM Regulation).

The Committee considered an assessment of impact from DAERA and an Explanatory Memorandum from UKG on the published replacement EU act.

The following officials joined the meeting at 11.00am:

John Joe O'Boyle	Chief Executive; Forest Service, DAERA
Charmaine Beer	Head of Plant Health Division; DAERA

The officials gave oral evidence on the published replacement EU act.

A question and answer session followed.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The officials left the meeting at 11.16am.

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.

Peter Martin MLA proposed that the Committee hold an inquiry into Regulation (EU) 2026/1392.

The Deputy Chairperson put the question on Peter Martin MLA's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 2; Noes 5.

Ayes

David Brooks, MLA

Peter Martin, MLA

Noes

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Steve Aiken, MLA

Pádraig Delargy, MLA

Philip McGuigan, MLA

Kate Nicholl, MLA

Agreed: The Committee agreed not to hold an inquiry into the published 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.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to draw its attention to the publication of the replacement EU act.

9. Committee Travel

The Senior Assistant Clerk briefed the Committee on the proposed visit to Brussels.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that any formal travel proposal for the visit to Brussels could be considered and agreed by the Committee via correspondence if required during the summer recess period.

10. Committee Work Planning

The Committee noted an update on all the proposed EU acts which it is monitoring and gathering evidence on, and on others which had been notified.

11. Correspondence

11.1 The Committee considered a response from UKG regarding Windsor Framework costs and funding.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the response to the Executive Office for information.

Steve Aiken MLA proposed that the Committee liaise with Assembly Research and Information Services to consider what research it could carry out in respect of issues being considered by the House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.

The Deputy Chairperson put the question on Steve Aiken MLA's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 3; Noes 4.

Ayes

Steve Aiken, MLA

David Brooks, MLA

Peter Martin, MLA

Noes

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Pádraig Delargy, MLA

Philip McGuigan, MLA

Kate Nicholl, MLA

11.2 The Committee noted correspondence from TEO in relation to current proposed EU legislation relevant to Northern Ireland.

11.3 The Committee noted correspondence from DAERA regarding Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010.

- 11.4 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2025/993 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 561/2006, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2019/2144 and (EU) 2024/1257 as regards the simplification of technical requirements and testing procedures for motor vehicles and repealing Council Directive 70/157/EEC and Regulation No 540/2014.
- 11.5 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2025/503 Proposal for a Directive amending Directives 2000/14/EC, 2011/65/EU, 2013/53/EU, 2014/29/EU, 2014/30/EU, 2014/31/EU, 2014/32/EU, 2014/33/EU, 2014/34/EU, 2014/35/EU, 2014/53/EU, 2014/68/EU and 2014/90/EU as regards digitalisation and common specifications.
- 11.6 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2025/503 Proposal for a Directive amending Directives 2000/14/EC, 2011/65/EU, 2013/53/EU, 2014/29/EU, 2014/30/EU, 2014/31/EU, 2014/32/EU, 2014/33/EU, 2014/34/EU, 2014/35/EU, 2014/53/EU, 2014/68/EU and 2014/90/EU as regards digitalisation and common specifications.
- 11.7 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2025/504 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) No 765/2008, (EU) 2016/424, (EU) 2016/425, (EU) 2016/426, (EU) 2023/1230, (EU) 2023/1542 and (EU) 2024/1781 as regards digitalisation and common specifications.
- 11.8 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2025/504 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) No 765/2008, (EU) 2016/424, (EU) 2016/425, (EU) 2016/426, (EU) 2023/1230, (EU) 2023/1542 and (EU) 2024/1781 as regards digitalisation and common specifications.
- 11.9 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2023/192 Proposal for a Directive on the Union code relating to medicinal products for human use, and repealing Directive 2001/83/EC and Directive 2009/35/EC; and COM/2023/193 Proposal for a Regulation laying down Union procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human use and establishing rules governing the European Medicines Agency, amending Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 536/2014 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 726/2004, Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 and Regulation (EC) No 1901/2006.

- 11.10 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on 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.
- 11.11 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2024/577 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) 2021/2116 as regards the strengthening of the position of farmers in the food supply chain.
- 11.12 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on 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.
- 11.13 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on 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.
- 11.14 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2025/747 Proposal for a Regulation on monitoring and controlling drug precursors and repealing Regulations (EC) No 273/2004 and (EC) No 111/2005.
- 11.15 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee (NISC) to UKG regarding Regulation (EU) 2026/405 on detergents and surfactants, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 648/2004.
- 11.16 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding COM/2025/747 Proposal for a Regulation on monitoring and controlling drug precursors and repealing Regulations (EC) No 273/2004 and (EC) No 111/2005.
- 11.17 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding COM/2026/100 Proposal for a Regulation establishing a framework of measures for the acceleration of industrial capacity and decarbonisation in strategic sectors and amending Regulations (EU) 2018/1724, (EU) 2024/1735 and (EU) 2024/3110.

Steve Aiken MLA declared an interest as Chairperson of the Assembly All-Party Group on Aerospace and Space.

The Deputy Chairperson declared an interest as Vice-Chairperson of the Assembly All-Party Group on Aerospace and Space.

11.18 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding COM/2026/100 Proposal for a Regulation establishing a framework of measures for the acceleration of industrial capacity and decarbonisation in strategic sectors and amending Regulations (EU) 2018/1724, (EU) 2024/1735 and (EU) 2024/3110.

11.19 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding COM/2026/100 Proposal for a Regulation establishing a framework of measures for the acceleration of industrial capacity and decarbonisation in strategic sectors and amending Regulations (EU) 2018/1724, (EU) 2024/1735 and (EU) 2024/3110.

11.20 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding COM/2025/836 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) 2024/1689 and (EU) 2018/1139 as regards the simplification of the implementation of harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Digital Omnibus on AI).

Kate Nicholl MLA declared an interest as the Chairperson of the Assembly All Party Group on Artificial Intelligence.

Steve Aiken MLA and declared an interest as the Secretary of the Assembly All Party Group on Artificial Intelligence.

11.21 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding Regulation (EU) 2026/1165 amending Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 as regards the extension of certain data protection periods.

11.22 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 561/2006, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2019/2144 and (EU) 2024/1257 as regards the simplification of technical requirements and testing procedures for motor vehicles and repealing Council Directive 70/157/EEC and Regulation No 540/2014.

11.23 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding Commission Directive (EU) 2026/192 amending Appendix A of Annex II to Directive 2009/48/EC on the safety of toys, as regards cobalt.

- 11.24 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding Commission Directive (EU) 2026/192 amending Appendix A of Annex II to Directive 2009/48/EC on the safety of toys, as regards cobalt.
- 11.25 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding the addition of Regulation (EU) 2024/2847 on horizontal cybersecurity requirements for products with digital elements and amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013 and (EU) 2019/1020 and Directive (EU) 2020/1828 (Cyber Resilience Act) to the Windsor Framework.
- 11.26 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding the addition of Regulation (EU) 2024/2847 on horizontal cybersecurity requirements for products with digital elements and amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013 and (EU) 2019/1020 and Directive (EU) 2020/1828 (Cyber Resilience Act) to the Windsor Framework.
- 11.27 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding the addition of Regulation (EU) 2024/2847 on horizontal cybersecurity requirements for products with digital elements and amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013 and (EU) 2019/1020 and Directive (EU) 2020/1828 (Cyber Resilience Act) to the Windsor Framework.
- 11.28 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding the Draft Chemicals (Health and Safety) (Amendment, Consequential and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2026.
- 11.29 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding the Draft Chemicals (Health and Safety) (Amendment, Consequential and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2026.
- 11.30 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding 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.
- 11.31 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding 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.

- 11.32 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding Commission Regulation (EU) 2026/361 amending Regulation (EU) No 582/2011 as regards the emissions type-approval of heavy-duty vehicles with on-board fuel and energy consumption monitoring devices and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/699 amending Regulation (EU) 2018/858 as regards the standardised access to vehicle on-board diagnostics information and repair and maintenance information, and the requirements and procedures for secure access to on-board diagnostic information.
- 11.33 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/1188 amending Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/858 as regards the environmental performance and emission requirements for vehicles produced in unlimited series and for special purpose vehicles, the automated valet parking for vehicles produced in unlimited series, the electric safety and advanced driver distraction warning requirements for vehicles produced in small series and special purpose vehicles and updating the list of alternative UN Regulations in Part II of that Annex.
- 11.34 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding COM/2025/1030 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, (EC) No 1829/2003, (EC) No 1831/2003, (EC) No 852/2004, (EC) No 853/2004, (EC) No 396/2005, (EC) No 1099/2009, (EC) No 1107/2009, (EU) No 528/2012, (EU) 2017/625 as regards the simplification and strengthening of food and feed safety requirements.
- 11.35 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding COM/2025/1030 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, (EC) No 1829/2003, (EC) No 1831/2003, (EC) No 852/2004, (EC) No 853/2004, (EC) No 396/2005, (EC) No 1099/2009, (EC) No 1107/2009, (EU) No 528/2012, (EU) 2017/625 as regards the simplification and strengthening of food and feed safety requirements.

- 11.36 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding its follow-up inquiry on Strengthening Northern Ireland's voice in context of Windsor Framework.
- 11.37 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding a Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/630 as regards the private attestation requirements of the composite products exempted from official controls at border control posts, and the inclusion of certain cereal products, prepared or preserved vegetables, fruits, nuts, sauces, condiments, seasonings, and confectionery in the list of exempted composite products.
- 11.38 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the NISC to UKG regarding Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/1073 amending and correcting Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/361 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 as regards rules for the use of certain veterinary medicinal products for the purpose of prevention and control of certain listed diseases, and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/322 amending and correcting Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 as regards rules for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases.

12. Chairperson's Business

The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the Speaker in respect of the Withdrawal Agreement (Windsor Framework and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations 2026.

The Deputy Chairperson informed the Committee that the Committee Secretariat will consider the implications of the Statutory Instrument on the Committee's processes and procedures and revert back.

13. Any Other Business

None.

14. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 23 July 2026 at 10.00am in Room 30.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.39am.

Ciara Ferguson MLA

Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

23 July 2026