



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

6 August 2026

Meeting Location: Room 30

Present:

Ciara Ferguson MLA (Chairperson)

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Steve Aiken MLA

Jonathan Buckley MLA

Eóin Tennyson MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Pádraig Delargy MLA

Peter Martin MLA

Kate Nicholl MLA

Apologies:

Cathal Boylan MLA

In Attendance:

Marie Austin, Clerk

Jessica Jacques, Senior Assistant Clerk

Oliver Bellew, Assistant Clerk

Carla Campbell, Clerical Supervisor

Lisa Chestnutt, Clerical Supervisor

Damien Brown, Clerical Officer

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

The meeting commenced at 10.01am in closed session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Regulation (EU) 2026/1738 on circularity requirements for vehicle design and on management of end-of-life vehicles, amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2019/1020 and (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directives 2000/53/EC and 2005/64/EC - Legal Advice

Simon Kelly, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 10.03am.

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

Regulation (EU) 2026/1738 on circularity requirements for vehicle design and on management of end-of-life vehicles, amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2019/1020 and (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directives 2000/53/EC and 2005/64/EC.

Pádraig Delargy MLA joined the meeting at 10.04am.

Kate Nicholl MLA joined the meeting at 10.05am.

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 Committee noted that further consideration of the published replacement EU act would take place in public session.

The Legal Adviser left the meeting at 10.12am.

4. Regulation (EU) 2026/1739 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 – Legal Advice

Caroline Byers, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 10.13am.

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

Regulation (EU) 2026/1739 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.

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.

A question and answer session followed.

The Committee noted that further consideration of the published replacement EU act would take place in public session.

The Legal Adviser remained in the meeting for agenda item 5.

5. Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 amending Regulations (EU) 2024/1689, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2023/1230 as regards the simplification of the implementation of harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Digital Omnibus on AI) (Article 3 only) – Legal Advice

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

Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 amending Regulations (EU) 2024/1689, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2023/1230 as regards the simplification of the implementation of harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Digital Omnibus on AI) (Article 3 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.

Kate Nicholl left the meeting at 10.36am.

A question and answer session followed.

The Committee noted that further consideration of the published replacement EU act would take place in public session.

The Legal Adviser left the meeting at 10.44am.

The Committee moved into public session at 10.44am.

6. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2026.

7. Matters arising

None.

8. Regulation (EU) 2026/1738 on circularity requirements for vehicle design and on management of end-of-life vehicles, amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2019/1020 and (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directives 2000/53/EC and 2005/64/EC – Departmental Oral Evidence

The Committee continued its consideration of Regulation (EU) 2026/1738 on circularity requirements for vehicle design and on management of end-of-life vehicles, amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2019/1020 and (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directives 2000/53/EC and 2005/64/EC.

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

The following officials joined the meeting at 10.46am:

Shane Doris	Director, Environmental Resources Policy Division, DAERA
Tommy McNamara	Policy Lead for end-of-life vehicles, DAERA
Roy Kennedy	Vehicle Policy Branch lead, DfI

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

A question and answer session followed.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

Pádraig Delargy left the meeting at 11.09am.

The officials left the meeting at 11.19am.

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 assessments 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 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.

The Committee considered a draft inquiry timetable.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the inquiry timetable.

The Committee noted that, in line with agreed procedures, a Citizen Space survey would launch to seek views on the impact of the replacement EU act. The survey will be promoted widely and will be open to anyone to respond.

The Committee considered a list of key representatives of businesses and civil society, identified by RalSe, who are affected by the EU act, or who would be affected if the act enters into force.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the identified key representatives of businesses and civil society to seek their views on the impact of the replacement EU act.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to UKG to ask for further information on the impact of the replacement EU act, and to ascertain the position in England, Scotland and Wales.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask DAERA to provide trade statistics on Northern Ireland businesses trading car parts and used vehicles into the EU market.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask DAERA to share the Citizen Space consultation with the stakeholders which it previously consulted.

9. Regulation (EU) 2026/1739 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 – Departmental Oral Evidence

The Committee continued its consideration of Regulation (EU) 2026/1739 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.

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

The Committee noted a response from DAERA to its previous correspondence on the proposed EU act.

The following officials joined the meeting at 11.23am:

Elaine McCrory	Head of Supply Chain Transition Branch, DAERA
Samantha Stewart	Head of Food Security, Beef, Pig and Sheep Policy, 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 11.41am.

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 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.

Pádraig Delargy rejoined the meeting at 11.43am.

The Committee considered a draft inquiry timetable.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the inquiry timetable.

The Committee noted that, in line with agreed procedures, a Citizen Space survey would launch to seek views on the impact of the replacement EU act. The survey will be promoted widely and will be open to anyone to respond.

The Committee considered a list of key representatives of businesses and civil society, identified by RalSe, who are affected by the EU act, or who would be affected if the act enters into force.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the identified key representatives of businesses and civil society to seek their views on the impact of the replacement EU act.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to UKG to ask for further information on the impact of the replacement EU act, and to ascertain the position in England, Scotland and Wales.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request information from UKG on the scope of the amendment regarding meat-related terms, following its discussions with the European Commission.

10. Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 amending Regulations (EU) 2024/1689, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2023/1230 as regards the simplification of the implementation of harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Digital Omnibus on AI) (Article 3 only) - Departmental Oral Evidence

The Committee continued its consideration of Regulation (EU) 2026/1744 amending Regulations (EU) 2024/1689, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2023/1230 as regards the simplification of the implementation of harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (Digital Omnibus on AI) (Article 3 only).

The Committee considered an assessment of impact from the Department for the Economy (DfE) and an Explanatory Memorandum from UKG on the published replacement EU act.

The Chairperson reminded Members that only Article 3 of the Regulation qualifies as replacement legislation and would therefore be the only Article under consideration.

The following official joined the meeting at 11.46am:

Mark McGregor

Head of Trade/Windsor Framework Branch, DfE

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

A question and answer session followed.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The official left the meeting at 11.55am.

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.

Agreed: The Committee agreed 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.

The Committee considered a draft inquiry timetable.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the inquiry timetable.

The Committee noted that, in line with agreed procedures, a Citizen Space survey would launch to seek views on the impact of the replacement EU act. The survey will be promoted widely and will be open to anyone to respond.

The Committee considered a list of key representatives of businesses and civil society, identified by RalSe, who are affected by the EU act, or who would be affected if the act enters into force.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the identified key representatives of businesses and civil society to seek their views on the impact of the replacement EU act.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to UKG to ask for further information on the impact of the replacement EU act, and to ascertain the position in England, Scotland and Wales.

11. COM/2023/414 Proposal for a Regulation on the production and marketing of plant reproductive material in the Union, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031, 2017/625 and 2018/848, and repealing Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 68/193/EEC, 2002/53/EC, 2002/54/EC, 2002/55/EC, 2002/56/EC, 2002/57/EC, 2008/72/EC and 2008/90/EC (Regulation on plant reproductive material)

The Committee noted an update from DAERA on the provisionally agreed text of COM/2023/414 Proposal for a Regulation on the production and marketing of plant reproductive material in the Union, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031, 2017/625 and 2018/848, and repealing Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 68/193/EEC, 2002/53/EC, 2002/54/EC, 2002/55/EC, 2002/56/EC, 2002/57/EC, 2008/72/EC and 2008/90/EC (Regulation on plant reproductive material).

12. 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.

Pádraig Delargy MLA left the meeting at 12.01pm.

Some Members highlighted correspondence which they had received in relation to Directive 2002/46/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to food supplements. Members will forward the correspondence to the Clerk.

A Member highlighted COM/2023/258 Proposal for a Regulation establishing the Union Customs Code and EU Customs Authority, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 952/2013, and requested that this is included in discussions during the Committee's visit to Brussels.

13. Correspondence

- 13.1 The Committee noted a response from UKG regarding Regulation (EU) 2026/1388 on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their products, and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/625.
- 13.2 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2025/553 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 as regards the school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme ('EU school scheme'), sectoral interventions, the creation of a protein sector, requirements for hemp, the possibility for marketing standards for cheese, protein crops and meat, application of additional import duties, rules on the availability of supplies in time of emergencies and severe crisis and securities.
- 13.3 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2023/769 Proposal for a Regulation on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability.
- 13.4 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.
- 13.5 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on 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.

- 13.6 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee (NISC) 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.
- 13.7 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding COM/2023/414 Proposal for a Regulation on the production and marketing of plant reproductive material in the Union, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031, 2017/625 and 2018/848, and repealing Council Directives 66/401/EEC, 66/402/EEC, 68/193/EEC, 2002/53/EC, 2002/54/EC, 2002/55/EC, 2002/56/EC, 2002/57/EC, 2008/72/EC and 2008/90/EC (Regulation on plant reproductive material); and COM/2023/415 Proposal for a Regulation on the production and marketing of forest reproductive material, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/2031 and 2017/625 and repealing Council Directive 1999/105/EC (Regulation on forest reproductive material).
- 13.8 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC 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.
- 13.9 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from UKG to the NISC regarding Directive (EU) 2024/1438 amending Council Directives 2001/110/EC relating to honey, 2001/112/EC relating to fruit juices and certain similar products intended for human consumption, 2001/113/EC relating to fruit jams, jellies and marmalades and sweetened chestnut purée intended for human consumption, and 2001/114/EC relating to certain partly or wholly dehydrated preserved milk for human consumption.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Health.

14. Chairperson's Business

None.

15. Any Other Business

None.

16. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 13 August 2026 at 10.00am in Room 30.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.03pm.

Ciara Ferguson MLA, Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

13 August 2026