



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

21 March 2024

Meeting Location: Room 30

Present:

Philip McGuigan MLA (Chairperson)

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Patrick Brown MLA

Jonathan Buckley MLA

Joanne Bunting MLA

Sorcha Eastwood MLA

Declan Kearney MLA

Emma Sheerin MLA

Apologies:

Steve Aiken MLA

In Attendance: Ms Marie Austin (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Sinead Kelly (Senior Assistant Clerk)
Mr Oliver Bellew (Assistant Clerk)
Ms Marion Johnson (Assistant Clerk)
Ms Suzanne Patton (Clerical Officer)
Ms Shelley Garner (Clerical Officer)

In Attendance by Video:

Ms Leigh Gibson (Senior Assistant Clerk)

The meeting commenced at 10:50am in private session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

**3. The Mechanisms under the Windsor Framework (Democratic Scrutiny)
Regulations 2024 [Oral Briefing – EU Affairs Officer]**

The following officials joined the meeting at 10.52am:

Shauna Mageean EU Affairs Manager

Jessica Jacques EU Affairs Officer

The EU Affairs Officer briefed the Committee on the mechanisms under the Windsor Framework.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The officials left the meeting at 11.04am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the flow charts and supplementary papers produced by the EU Affairs team on the Committee webpage.

The Committee moved into public session at 11.06am

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2024.

5. Matters Arising

The Committee considered further evidence provided by the British Dental Association in relation to the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the evidence.

6. Regulation (EU) 2023/2419: Published New EU Act on the labelling of organic pet food

The Committee considered correspondence from the Cabinet Office to the Clerk in relation to Regulation (EU) 2023/2419: a published new EU act on the labelling of organic pet food.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to conduct an initial examination of the act to inform a possible plenary debate on any applicability motion brought before the Assembly.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a departmental assessment of impact, and to schedule an oral evidence session for 11 April 2024.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask RaISe to provide a short, focussed list of key representatives of businesses and civil society affected by the act, or who would be affected if the act enters into force.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the assessment of impact on the Committee webpage and to circulate a link to the Hansard to inform any applicability motion debate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk should respond to the Cabinet Office to express its desire that published new EU acts, that the EU Commission intends to seek to add to Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework via the UK-EU Joint Committee under the process set out in Article 13(4) of the Windsor Framework, should be brought to its attention in advance of any notification under paragraph 19(2) of Schedule 6B of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that future correspondence from the Cabinet Office in relation to the work of the Committee should be sent from a Minister to the Chairperson, rather than official to official.

7. Draft Committee Engagement/Education Programme

The Committee considered a draft Committee Engagement/Education Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft programme.

8. Correspondence

8.1. The Committee considered correspondence from the World Alliance for Mercury-Free Dentistry, providing a copy of its position paper on COM (2023)395: Proposal to amend Regulation (EU) 2017/852 on Mercury.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite representatives of the World Alliance for Mercury-Free Dentistry, as part of its evidence gathering exercise, to give oral evidence on COM (2023)395: Proposal to amend Regulation (EU) 2017/852 on mercury.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the correspondence on its webpage as evidence received.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the relevant departments, their respective Committees and the Joint Consultative Working Group.

9. Chairperson's Business

No business was raised.

10. Any Other Business

No business was raised.

11. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 11 April 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.24 am.

Philip McGuigan, MLA

Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee