



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

20 August 2026

Meeting Location: Room 30

Present:

Ciara Ferguson MLA (Chairperson)

Phillip Brett MLA¹

Eóin Tennyson MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Jonathan Buckley MLA

Sinéad Ennis MLA²

Peter Martin MLA

Emma Sheerin MLA³

Apologies:

¹ The Deputy Chairperson appointed Phillip Brett MLA as a substitute Member for this meeting.

² Cathal Boylan MLA appointed Sinéad Ennis MLA as a substitute Member for this meeting.

³ Pádraig Delargy MLA appointed Emma Sheerin MLA as a substitute Member for this meeting.

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Steve Aiken MLA

Cathal Boylan MLA

Pádraig Delargy MLA

In Attendance:

Marie Austin, Clerk

Christopher Dickison, Senior Assistant Clerk

Oliver Bellew, Assistant Clerk

Lisa Chestnutt, Clerical Supervisor

Damien Brown, Clerical Officer

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Carla Campbell, Clerical Supervisor

The meeting commenced at 10.02am in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2026.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. 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 – Consideration of Survey Responses

The Committee noted that no responses had been received to its Citizen Space survey on 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.

Eóin Tennyson MLA joined the meeting at 10.04am.

6. 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 – Consideration of Survey Responses

The Committee considered one response to its Citizen Space survey on 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.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the response to the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and request that it replies directly to the correspondent.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the response and include it in the Inquiry report.

Jonathan Buckley MLA joined the meeting at 10.06am.

7. 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) – Consideration of Survey Responses

The Committee considered one response to its public consultation on 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).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the response and include it in the Inquiry report.

8. Correspondence

8.1 The Committee considered a response from the Department for the Economy (DfE) regarding Directive (EU) 2026/706 amending Directive 2014/32/EU as regards measuring systems for electric vehicle supply equipment and compressed gas dispensers, and electricity, gas and thermal energy meters.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the response and forward it to the Committee for the Economy.

8.2 The Committee noted a RaISe Status Update on COM/2023/770 Proposal for a Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1255/97 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005.

8.3 The Committee noted a response from the Minister for the Economy regarding VAT on domestic electricity bills.

8.4 The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding the Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Health, and to advise the individual accordingly.

9. Chairperson's Business

None.

10. Any Other Business

None.

The Committee agreed to move into closed session at 10:10am.

11. 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 – Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered a submission from DAERA providing information it had received from stakeholders in relation to 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 also considered a response from the UK Government (UKG) to its letter of 6 August 2026 requesting its assessment of the impact of the replacement EU act, including details of the position in England, Scotland and Wales.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the submission from DAERA and the response from UKG and include them in the Inquiry report.

The Committee commenced its deliberations on the evidence received as part of its Inquiry into 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 and considered a draft report.

The Committee focused, in particular, on the two conditions that must be satisfied if the Stormont Brake is to be pulled.

Agreed: In relation to the legal question of whether the replacement EU act significantly differs (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU instrument which it amends or replaces, the Committee agreed that the replacement EU act does significantly differ in part from the content or scope of the EU instruments which it amends or replaces.

Agreed: In relation to the question of whether the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in the way that is liable to persist, the Committee agreed that for an act to have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist, that significant impact must be negative.

Jonathan Buckley MLA proposed a conclusion that the Committee was unable to reach a view on whether the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Chairperson put the question on Jonathan Buckley MLA's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 3; Noes 4.

Ayes

Phillip Brett, MLA

Jonathan Buckley, MLA

Peter Martin, MLA

Noes

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Sinéad Ennis, MLA

Emma Sheerin, MLA

Eóin Tennyson, MLA

The proposal was not carried.

Sinéad Ennis MLA proposed a conclusion that the act would not have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Chairperson put the question on Sinéad Ennis MLA's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 4; Noes 3.

Ayes

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Sinéad Ennis, MLA

Emma Sheerin, MLA

Eóin Tennyson, MLA

Noes

Phillip Brett, MLA

Jonathan Buckley, MLA

Peter Martin, MLA

The proposal was carried.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the replacement EU act would not have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Chairperson advised Members that a final draft Inquiry report, reflecting the Committee's agreed conclusions, would be considered at the meeting on 27 August 2026.

12. 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 – Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered correspondence from DAERA in relation to the Food Standards Agency's engagement with district councils, and DAERA's own engagement with Tayto and Glens of Antrim, on the impact 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 also considered a response from UKG to its letter of 6 August 2026 requesting its assessment of the impact of the replacement EU act, including details of the

position in England, Scotland and Wales, and information about the scope of the amendment regarding meat-related terms.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the responses and include them in the Inquiry report.

The Committee commenced its deliberations on the evidence received as part of its Inquiry into 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 and considered a draft report.

The Committee focused, in particular, on the two conditions that must be satisfied if the Stormont Brake is to be pulled.

Agreed: In relation to the legal question of whether the replacement EU act significantly differs (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU instrument which it amends or replaces, the Committee agreed that the replacement EU act does not significantly differ from the content or scope of the relevant parts of the EU instruments which it amends.

Agreed: In relation to the question of whether the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in the way that is liable to persist, the Committee agreed that for an act to have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist, that significant impact must be negative.

Jonathan Buckley MLA proposed a conclusion that the Committee was unable to reach a view on whether the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

Eóin Tennyson MLA proposed a conclusion that the replacement EU act would not have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Chairperson put the question on Eóin Tennyson MLA's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 4; Noes 3.

Ayes

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Sinéad Ennis, MLA

Emma Sheerin, MLA

Eóin Tennyson, MLA

Noes

Phillip Brett, MLA

Jonathan Buckley, MLA

Peter Martin, MLA

The proposal was carried. Therefore, the question was not put on Jonathan Buckley MLA's proposal.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the replacement EU act would not have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Chairperson advised Members that a final draft Inquiry report, reflecting the Committee's agreed conclusions, would be considered at the meeting on 27 August 2026.

13. 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) – Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered a response from DfE which contained information from the Office for Product Safety and Standards in respect of the type of machinery products and businesses in Northern Ireland which would be affected by 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 also considered a response from UKG to its letter of 6 August 2026 requesting its assessment of the impact of the replacement EU act, including details of the position in England, Scotland and Wales.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the responses and include them in the Inquiry report.

The Committee commenced its deliberations on the evidence received as part of its Inquiry into 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) and considered a draft report.

The Committee focused, in particular, on the two conditions that must be satisfied if the Stormont Brake is to be pulled.

Agreed: In relation to the legal question of whether the replacement EU act significantly differs (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU instrument which it amends or replaces, the Committee agreed that the replacement EU act does not significantly differ from the content or scope of the EU instrument which it amends.

Agreed: In relation to the question of whether the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in the way that is liable to persist, the Committee agreed that for an act to have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist, that significant impact must be negative.

Peter Martin MLA proposed a conclusion that the Committee was unable to reach a view on whether the replacement EU act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

Eóin Tennyson MLA proposed a conclusion that the replacement EU act would not have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Chairperson put the question on Eóin Tennyson MLA's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 4; Noes 3.

Ayes

Ciara Ferguson, MLA

Sinéad Ennis, MLA

Emma Sheerin, MLA

Eóin Tennyson, MLA

Noes

Phillip Brett, MLA

Jonathan Buckley, MLA

Peter Martin, MLA

The proposal was carried. Therefore, the question was not put on Peter Martin MLA's proposal.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the replacement EU act would not have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Chairperson advised Members that a final draft Inquiry report, reflecting the Committee's agreed conclusions, would be considered at the meeting on 27 August 2026.

14. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 27 August 2026 at 10.00am in Room 30.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.37am.

Ciara Ferguson MLA

Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

27 August 2026