



COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2020
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr Declan McAleer MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Philip McGuigan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Clare Bailey MLA
Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA
Mr John Blair MLA
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA
Mr John Dallat MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
- In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Ms Marion Johnson, Clerical Supervisor
Mr Sean O'Rawe, Clerical Officer (agenda items 7-11)
Ms Shauna Mageean, EU Affairs Manager (agenda item 1)

The meeting commenced at 10.01 a.m. in closed session.

The Clerk briefed the Committee on an urgent matter regarding Statutory Rules 2019/61 and SR 2019/65.

Mr Blair joined the meeting at 10.02 a.m.

Ms Bailey joined the meeting at 10.02 a.m.

Mr Dallat joined the meeting at 10.07 a.m.

1. Oral Briefing on EU Issues

The EU Affairs Manager joined the meeting at 10.08 a.m. and briefed the Committee. This was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr Irwin joined the meeting at 10.11 a.m.

The Chairperson thanked the EU Affairs Manager for her briefing.

The meeting moved into open session at 11.03 a.m.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Lords EU Committee would be visiting Parliament Buildings on 25 February 2020 for a series of meetings. Members will be invited to a business roundtable discussion on the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol. The Chairperson further advised that he and the Deputy Chairperson would also be attending a working lunch with the Lords EU Committee on the same date. The lunch invitation is for 2-3 Committee Members and Members were advised to inform the clerk if they wished to attend the roundtable discussion.

The Chairperson advised Members that he and the Deputy Chairperson had met with representatives from the Northern Ireland TB Eradication Partnership on 6 February 2020 regarding its position on Bovine TB. The Chairperson outlined the issues that had been discussed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an oral evidence session with the Northern Ireland TB Eradication Partnership as time permits.

The Chairperson advised Members that the date for the issue of tablet devices to access electronic committee meeting papers has been postponed. Members will be informed of a new date in due course.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Departmental briefing from Central Services and Contingency Planning Group

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 11.06 a.m.

Brian Doherty, Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services and Contingency Planning

Sean McGrade, Grade 5, Director, Corporate Services

Roger Downey, Grade 5, Finance Director

The officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the Department's budget briefing paper to the Committee for Finance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a follow-up briefing from the Department in respect of NIFAIS.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

Ms Bailey left the meeting at 11.50 a.m.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to move into closed session to consider correspondence from the Minister regarding Statutory Rule Rule 2019/61: The Sea Fish (Licensing) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019 and Statutory Rule 2019/65: The Sea Fishing (Licenses and Notices) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019, which had been tabled at the meeting.

The meeting moved into closed session at 11.54 a.m.

Ms Bailey rejoined the meeting at 12.00 p.m.

The meeting moved into open session at 12.40 p.m.

7. Oral Briefing from Brexit and the Environment Group

The following representatives from the Brexit and the Environment Group joined the meeting at 12.40 p.m.

Dr Viviane Gravey
Dr Mary Dobbs

The representatives briefed the Committee and this was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr Irwin declared an interest that he is a farmer who is in receipt of the Basic Payment Scheme.

Mr Blair left the meeting at 1.10 p.m.

Mr Blair rejoined the meeting at 1.15 p.m.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

8. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following:

- i. Correspondence from the Department in response to issues raised at the Committee meeting on 23 January 2020.
- ii. Correspondence from the Public Accounts Committee on the proposed Inquiry into the Northern Ireland Audit Office Report on Major Capital Works.
- iii. Correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding a joint visit to Belfast/Larne Port.

The Committee considered correspondence from Pivotal requesting to brief the committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add a briefing with Pivotal to its Forward Work Programme and schedule as time permits.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee for Finance requesting that departmental briefings on budgets be forwarded to them.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the departmental briefing from the meeting on 13 February 2020 on budgets to the Committee for Finance.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Northern Ireland TB Eradication Partnership following its recent informal meeting with the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add a briefing with the Northern Ireland TB Eradication Partnership to its Forward Work Programme and schedule as time permits.

The Committee considered correspondence from Mid Ulster Council offering to host a Committee meeting at one of its council locations in Mid Ulster.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider holding a future meeting at a Mid Ulster Council venue as time permits.

The Committee considered further correspondence from a member of the public on issues relating to Mobuoy Dump and the Northern Ireland Contaminated Land Regime.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the individual concerned and explain that the issues raised are for the Department to consider and not do fall under the remit of the Committee.

The Committee considered tabled correspondence from the Minister in respect of the revocation of Statutory Rule 2019/61: The Sea Fish (Licensing) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019 and Statutory Rule 2019/65: The Sea Fishing (Licenses and Notices) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the commitments made in the letter from the Minister to revoke the Statutory Rules.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Chairperson would not move the motions in Plenary on 17 February 2020.

9. Forward Work Programme

The Clerk briefed the Committee on the draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to cover the travel expenses for a witness who is coming to brief the Committee on the UK Environment Bill at the meeting on 27 February 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme up to Easter Recess.

10.AOB

There was no other business.

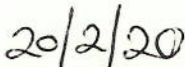
11.Date, time and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will take place on Thursday 20 February 2020 at 10.00 a.m. in Room 30.

1.25 p.m. *The meeting adjourned.*



Declan McAleer, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development



Date