

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 18 MARCH 2014
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Paul Frew MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
Mr Robin Swann MLA

Apologies: Ms Judith Cochrane MLA
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA

In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor
Ms Michelle McDowell, Clerical Officer

1.32 p.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session

1. Apologies

The apologies are recorded above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised Members that the visit pack for the visit to CAFRE on 20 March 2014 has been tabled.

The Chairperson reminded Members that the stakeholder event in connection with the Reservoirs Bill will take place at 5.30 p.m. this evening.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2014

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2014.

4. Matters Arising

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 14 March 2014 regarding the Minister's proposals for CAP.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 11 March 2014 from the Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding the Agri-Loan Scheme.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 3 March 2014 from the Minister for Finance and Personnel regarding the Agri-Loan Scheme.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 10 March 2014 from the Department regarding the Environmental Impact Assessment on the Agri-Food Strategy Board "Going for Growth" Report.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 10 March 2014 from Northern Ireland Water in respect of Camlough Reservoir and agreed to forward it to the Committee for Regional Development for information.

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence dated 13 March 2014 from the Department for Social Development regarding the maintenance costs for Springfield Pond.

1.34 p.m. Ms McIlveen joined the meeting.

1.35 p.m. Mr Milne and Mr McAleer joined the meeting.

1.36 p.m. Mr McMullan joined the meeting.

5. Reform of CAP: Oral briefing from Farmers from Severely Disadvantaged Areas.

The following representatives joined the meeting at 1.40 p.m.

Edward Adamson
John Blaney
Ian Buchanan
Peter Gallagher

Nigel McLaughlin
Oisin Murnion
Joe Parker
John Sheridan

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

1.54 p.m. Mr Byrne left the meeting.

1.57 p.m. Mr McMullan and Mr McAleer left the meeting.

Mr Irwin declared an interest as a farmer.

2.10 p.m. Mr Byrne re-joined the meeting.

2.26 p.m. Mr McMullan re-joined the meeting.

2.30 p.m. Mr Milne left the meeting.

2.35 p.m. Ms McIlveen left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to send the Hansard of the briefing with the farmers from severely disadvantaged farmers to the Minister for comment.

6. Beef Cattle Prices: Oral briefing from NI Livestock Auctioneers

The following representatives from the NI Livestock Auctioneers joined the meeting at 2.41 p.m.

Hampton Hewitt
Shaun Irvine
Harrison Boyd
Danny McAlister

2.54 p.m. Mr McAleer re-joined the meeting.

3.03 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

3.08 p.m. Ms McIlveen re-joined the meeting.

3.09 p.m. Mr Buchanan left the meeting.

3.30 p.m. Mr Milne re-joined the meeting.

3.32 p.m. Mr Buchanan re-joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the main supermarkets to express concern regarding the financial penalties imposed by abattoirs on cattle that have more than four residencies and the 30 day rule of respect of purchased cattle going to the abattoir.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Groceries Code Adjudicator regarding the 30 day rule/ 4 residency rules some supermarkets have imposed and seek her opinion.

7. SL1: The Single Common Market Organisation (Consequential Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2014

Agreed: The Committee considered the SL1: The Single Common Market Organisation (Consequential Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2014 and agreed that it should proceed to the next legislative stage.

8. Correspondence

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Committee for the Environment in respect of planning permission for slurry stores and agreed to forward it to the Department for comment.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Fisherman's Forum seeking a meeting with the Committee to discuss the fishing industry and agreed to schedule an informal meeting with the group.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Ulster Business School and agreed to schedule a briefing with them after Easter recess.

Noted: The Committee noted the invitation from Go ON UK to their launch on 15 April 2014.

Agreed: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the Measuring Wellbeing in Northern Ireland report by the Carnegie Trust. The Committee agreed to write to express concern that there are no specific references to rural or farming environments and this should be addressed.

Noted: The Committee noted the copied correspondence from the Committee for the Environment to the Department on the impact of CAP Reform on land use planning for rural dwellers.

9. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Press Release for the Committee visit to CAFRE on 20 March 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

10. AOB

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Northern Ireland Meat Exporters Association regarding the increased concerns of the Committee in respect of rules imposed by supermarkets in respect of beef.

11. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 25 March 2014 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 3.40 p.m.

Paul Frew, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date