

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr William Irwin MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Joe Byrne MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mr Edwin Poots MLA
- Apologies: Mr Robin Swann MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
- In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Lynda Conlon, Assistant Clerk
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor
Ms Dagmar Walgraeve, Clerical Officer

1.36 p.m. The meeting commenced in Open Session.

1. Apologies

The apologies are recorded above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised Members that Edwin Poots, Ian Milne and he attended the NI Ploughing Championship at Balmoral Park on 09 October 2015.

The Chairperson advised Members that he will be contributing to an Assembly Education Service video discussing current issues in agriculture

and a link to the video will be circulated to all Committee Members in due course.

The Chairperson advised Members that the Deputy Chair and he will be attending a dinner hosted as part of the North American-European Union Agricultural Policy Congress on 22 October 2015.

The Chairperson advised Members that he will be taking part in the Northern Ireland Assembly Business Trust event discussing the EU Referendum and the potential impact of a Brexit on the local business community on 16 November 2015.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 06 October 2015

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 06 October 2015.

4. Matters Arising

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department dated 05 October 2015 providing details of DARD's procurement of local agricultural produce.

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department dated 07 October 2015 providing (i) details of the total sum paid to successful Review of Decision appellants between 2012-2014 and (ii) an update on EU discussions regarding the revision of the Official Food and Feed Controls Regulation (882/2004).

5. Oral Briefing NIGTA: Industry Issues

The following representatives joined the meeting at 1.38 p.m.

Robin Irvine, Chief Executive, NIGTA
Keith Agnew, NIGTA

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

1.42 p.m. Mr Milne joined the meeting.
1.56 p.m. Mr McAleer joined the meeting.

1.56 p.m. *Mr Byrne left the meeting.*

1.58 p.m. *Mrs Dobson left the meeting.*

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to DARD and DEFRA for an update on the proposal for a revision of the EU legislation on medicated feed and to establish their respective positions on the proposal.

2.07 p.m. *Mr Poots joined the meeting.*

2.23 p.m. *Mr Milne left the meeting.*

2.24 p.m. *The NIGTA representatives left the meeting.*

6. Oral Briefing DARD: Plant Health Update

The following Department officials joined the meeting at 2.24 p.m.

Alistair McCracken, Principal Scientific Officer, AFBI Plant Health and Environmental Protection

Diane Stevenson, Forest Service, Policy and Legislation

Jim Crummie, Agricultural Inspector Grade I, Forest Service, Plant Health and Crop Certification Inspectorate

John Finlay, Agricultural Inspector Grade II, Forest Service, Plant Health and Horticulture Inspectorate

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

2.30 p.m. *Mr McAleer left the meeting.*

2.36 p.m. *Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.*

2.38 p.m. *Mr Byrne rejoined the meeting.*

2.54 p.m. *Mr McCrea left the meeting.*

2.55 p.m. *Mr Anderson joined the meeting.*

3.03 p.m. *Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.*

3.12 p.m. *Mrs Dobson left the meeting.*

3.24 p.m. *The officials left the meeting.*

7. Oral Briefing DARD: Nitrates Action Programme (Amendment) Regulations

The following Department officials joined the meeting at 3.25 p.m.

Brian Ervine, Head of Environmental Policy Branch

Siobhan Bowers, Deputy Principal, Environmental Policy Branch

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Nitrates Action Programme (Amendment) Regulations move to the next legislative stage.

3.31 p.m. The officials left the meeting.

8. Written Brief DARD: The Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication Scheme Order (NI) 2015

The Committee considered and noted a written update on The Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication Scheme Order (NI) 2015.

9. Committee Discussion: DOE Tractor Speed Limit Increase Proposals

3.34 p.m. Mr Poots declared an interest.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for the Environment indicating that it had no major issues with the proposal. Some Members noted that consideration should have been given to a speed limit of 50kmh rather than 40kmh.

10. Correspondence

Noted: The Committee noted the NIHRC submission to the UK's Fifth Periodic Report on compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Noted: The Committee noted the LMC's retention and disposal schedule.

11. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

12. AOB

There was no other business.

13. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 20 October 2015 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

3.38 p.m. The meeting adjourned.

William Irwin, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

Date