

COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2016
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Mr William Irwin MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Seán Rogers MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mrs Joanne Dobson MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Mr Robin Swann MLA
- Apologies: Mr Edwin Poots MLA
- In attendance: Ms Stella McArdle, Committee Clerk
Ms Lynda Conlon, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Mr Mark O'Hare, Clerical Supervisor
Ms Marion Johnson, Clerical Officer
Mr Mark Allen, Research Officer (Agenda Item 6)

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

1. Apologies

The apologies are recorded above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Chairpersons Liaison Group has agreed to introduce a pilot scheme permitting the use of electronic devices in Committee meetings by journalists and members of the public.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the text of a letter highlighting outstanding issues identified as part of the Inquiry into Better Regulation to be forwarded to the Minister.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that several Members travelled to Toome to view the Lough Neagh sluice gates on Thursday, 18 February 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the following issues for the attention of the incoming Committee in the End of Mandate Report: Fishing Industry; Supply Chain and Farmgate Prices; Young Farmer's Scheme; takeup of Digital Services; and the implementation of rural proofing.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2016

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2016.

4. Matters Arising

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department, dated 15 February 2016, updating Members on the recent outbreak of Avian Influenza in Scotland.

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department, dated 17 February 2016, addressing the comments made by the Examiner of Statutory Rules in relation to SR 2015/408 The Common Agricultural Policy (Review of SCMO Decisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department, dated 17 February 2016, advising Members that, due to issues of commercial sensitivity, details of the revised resource and capital budgets for NIFAIS cannot be provided until the contract is awarded.

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department, dated 17 February 2016, advising Members that, as DARD continues to engage with DFP and DOE in relation to the emergency payment scheme for non-domestic properties affected by flooding, no agreement on the scheme has been reached to date.

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Department, dated 18 February 2016, advising Members that the Final Report of the Review of the Implementation of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 will be published on 29 February 2016 and inviting them to the launch of the Review.

Agreed The Committee agreed that those Members who wished to attend the launch should inform Committee Staff.

5. Oral Briefing NISRA: Rural Deprivation Measures

The following representatives joined the meeting at 1.45 p.m.

Brian Green, Senior Principal Statistician, NISRA
Tracy Power, Director of Analysis, NISRA

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

1.46 p.m. *Mr Milne joined the meeting.*
1.47 p.m. *Mr Anderson joined the meeting.*
1.51 p.m. *Mrs Dobson joined the meeting.*
1.55 p.m. *Mrs Dobson left the meeting.*
1.59 p.m. *Mr Milne left the meeting.*
2.02 p.m. *Mr McAleer joined the meeting.*
2.06 p.m. *Mrs Dobson rejoined the meeting.*
2.21 p.m. *Mr Swann left the meeting.*
2.22 p.m. *Mr McCrea joined the meeting.*
2.23 p.m. *Mr McAleer left the meeting.*

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

6. Oral Briefing RaISe: Update on the Outturn of the 2007-2013 RDP

The following official joined the meeting at 2.25 p.m.

Mark Allen, Research Officer, RaISe

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

2.26 p.m. *Mr McMullan left the meeting.*

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request further details of the underspend incurred by other UK regions and the Republic of Ireland as revealed by their respective mid-term evaluations.

2.41 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.

2.41 p.m. Mr McAleer left the meeting.

2.43 p.m. The official left the meeting.

2.43 p.m. The meeting was suspended.

3.36 p.m. The meeting resumed with the following Members in attendance: Mr Irwin; Mrs Dobson; Mr McCrea; Mr Rogers and Mr Swann.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an urgent briefing from the Department on the creation of a new legal entity to manage the shoreline and the legal coverage that will be afforded to those who agree to serve on that body.

3.37 p.m. Mrs Dobson left the meeting.

7. Oral Briefing DARD: Update on the Outturn of the 2007-2013 RDP

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.37 p.m.

Colette McMaster, Central Policy

Lorraine Lynas, Rural Development Programme Management

Richard Leeman, Rural Development Programme Management

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

3.41 p.m. Mr Milne rejoined the meeting.

3.47 p.m. Mr McMullan rejoined the meeting.

3.52 p.m. Mr Anderson rejoined the meeting.

3.53 p.m. Mr McAleer rejoined the meeting.

4.00 p.m. The officials left the meeting.

8. Written Briefing DARD: The Zoonoses (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the SL1 moves to the next legislative stage.

9. Written Briefing DARD: The Registration of Buyers and Sellers and Designation of Fish Auction Sites (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the SL1 moves to the next legislative stage.

10. Correspondence

Noted: The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee of Employment and Learning advising Members of the launch of its Inquiry into post Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities in Northern Ireland Report on Tuesday, 01 March 2016.

11. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme.

12. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development will take place on Tuesday 01 March 2016 at 1.30 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

4.03 p.m. The meeting adjourned.

William Irwin, Chairperson, Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

01/03/2016

Date