



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

11 July 2024

Meeting Location: Room 30

Present:

Philip McGuigan MLA (Chairperson)

Declan Kearney MLA

Eóin Tennyson MLA

Present by Video:

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Steve Aiken MLA

Joanne Bunting MLA

Stephen Dunne MLA

Emma Sheerin MLA

Apologies:

Connie Egan MLA

In Attendance:

Paul Gill (Clerk Assistant)

Jessica Jacques (Senior Assistant Clerk)

Victoria Bourquin (Assistant Clerk)

Suzanne Patton (Clerical Officer)

In Attendance by Video:

Leigh Gibson (Senior Assistant Clerk)

Oliver Bellew (Assistant Clerk)

Shelley Garner (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 10.01am in closed session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Members' Interest

No interests were declared.

3. Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for sustainable products, amending Directive (EU) 2020/1828 and Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC - Legal Advice

Caroline Byers, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services joined the meeting at 10.03am.

Members considered a notification from the Cabinet Office in relation to the following published replacement EU act:

Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for sustainable products, amending Directive (EU) 2020/1828 and Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC

The Legal Adviser provided advice on whether it appears likely that the published replacement act differs significantly (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU act it is amending/replacing.

A question and answer session followed.

Caroline Byers left the meeting at 10.24am.

The Committee noted that the Regulation makes provision for delegated acts to be brought forward under the framework, and that the Government states it will keep these under review.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Cabinet Office requesting to be kept informed about delegated acts under Regulation 2024/1781.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to continue its consideration of the replacement EU act in open session.

Agreed: Members agreed to move to open session at 10.28am.

The meeting commenced at 10.28am in open session.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2024.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for sustainable products, amending Directive (EU) 2020/1828 and Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC – Departmental oral evidence

The Committee considered Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for sustainable products, amending Directive (EU) 2020/1828 and Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC.

The following officials joined the meeting at 10.29am:

Dr Victoria Trimble	Economic Policy Group, Department for the Economy
Shane Doris	Environmental Resources Policy Branch, Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Anthony Miller	Director, Post EU-Exit Coordination, Executive Office

The officials gave oral evidence on Regulation (EU) 2024/1781.

The Committee lost quorum at 10.35am due to a technical issue. The meeting was suspended and resumed on Microsoft Teams at 11.17am.

On resumption the following members were present by video:

Philip McGuigan MLA (Chairperson)

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Joanne Bunting MLA

Stephen Dunne MLA

Declan Kearney MLA

Emma Sheerin MLA

Eóin Tennyson MLA

The Committee agreed that the meeting should be in closed session as it was not possible for a meeting on Microsoft Teams to be carried out in public session.

Officials continued to give evidence on Regulation (EU) 2024/1781.

A question and answer session followed.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The officials left the meeting at 11.41am.

Members noted that, in order to meet its statutory requirements, the Committee must decide whether or not to hold an inquiry into the published replacement EU act.

The Committee had regard to:

- (i) the legal advice on whether it appears likely that the replacement EU act significantly differs (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU instrument which it replaces, and
- (ii) the departmental initial assessment on whether it appears likely that the replacement act would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

The Deputy Chairperson proposed that the Committee hold an inquiry into Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for sustainable products, amending Directive (EU) 2020/1828 and Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 and repealing Directive 2009/125/EC.

The Committee divided: Ayes 3; Noes 4; Abstain 0.

AYES

Mr David Brooks

Ms Joanne Bunting

Mr Stephen Dunne

NOES

Mr Philip McGuigan

Mr Declan Kearney

Ms Emma Sheerin

Mr Eóin Tennyson

The proposal was not carried.

Agreed: The Committee agreed not to hold an inquiry into the replacement EU act, pursuant to paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The Committee noted that its decision will be published on the Committee webpage.

7. Correspondence

7.1 The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office regarding departments supporting the DSC in discharging its statutory duties.

7.2 The Committee considered correspondence dated 20 June 2024 from the British Dental Association regarding the financial impact of COM 2023/395: Proposal to amend Regulation (EU) 2017/852 on Mercury.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the correspondence on the Committee webpage as part of the evidence received in relation to the EU Act.

7.3 The Committee considered a response from the Cabinet Office in relation to Regulation (EU) 2024/1257 (Euro 7).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the correspondence on the Committee webpage as part of the evidence received in relation to the EU Act.

7.4 The Committee considered correspondence dated 28 June 2024 from the Executive Office in relation to current proposed EU Legislation relevant to Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider the update further following summer recess.

8. Chairperson's Business

No business was raised.

9. Any Other Business

No business was raised.

10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 18 July 2024 at 10:00am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.54am.

Philip McGuigan, MLA

Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee