



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

## Minutes of Proceedings

**26 February 2026**

**Meeting Location:** Room 30

**Present:**

Ciara Ferguson MLA (Chairperson)

David Brooks MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Cathal Boylan MLA

Declan Kearney MLA

Peter Martin MLA

Eóin Tennyson MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Steve Aiken MLA

Jonathan Buckley MLA

Kate Nicholl MLA

**Apologies:**

None.

**In Attendance:**

Marie Austin, Clerk

Chris Dickison, Senior Assistant Clerk

Jessica Jacques, Senior Assistant Clerk

Oliver Bellew, Assistant Clerk

Carla Campbell, Clerical Supervisor

Damien Brown, Clerical Officer

**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Sean McCann, Assistant Clerk

Lisa Chestnutt, Clerical Supervisor

Shelley Garner, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 10.06am in closed session.

**1. Apologies**

None.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

None.

**3. COM/2025/780 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2018/848 as regards certain production, labelling and certification rules and certain rules on trade with third countries - Legal Advice**

Julie Byers, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 10.07am.

The Committee considered a notification from the Cabinet Office in relation to the following proposed replacement EU act:

COM/2025/780 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2018/848 as regards certain production, labelling and certification rules and certain rules on trade with third countries.

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

Kate Nicholl MLA joined the meeting at 10.08am.

Declan Kearney MLA joined the meeting at 10.10am.

The Committee noted that further consideration of the proposed replacement EU act would take place in public session.

The Legal Adviser remained in the meeting for agenda item 4.

**4. COM/2025/1023 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) 2017/745 and (EU) 2017/746 as regards simplifying and reducing the burden of the rules on medical devices and in vitro diagnostic medical devices, and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/123 as regards the support of the European Medicines Agency for the expert panels on medical devices and Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 as regards the list of Union harmonisation legislation referred to in its Annex I - Legal Advice**

The Committee considered a notification from the Cabinet Office in relation to the following proposed replacement EU act:

COM/2025/1023 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) 2017/745 and (EU) 2017/746 as regards simplifying and reducing the burden of the rules on medical

devices and in vitro diagnostic medical devices, and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/123 as regards the support of the European Medicines Agency for the expert panels on medical devices and Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 as regards the list of Union harmonisation legislation referred to in its Annex I.

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

Peter Martin MLA joined the meeting at 10.20am.

Eóin Tennyson MLA joined the meeting at 10.23am.

The Committee noted that further consideration of the proposed replacement EU act would take place in public session.

The Legal Adviser left the meeting at 10.30am.

#### **5. COM/2025/1020 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 as regards the extension of certain data protection periods - Legal Advice**

Caroline Byers, Legal Adviser, Assembly Legal Services, joined the meeting at 10.30am.

The Committee considered a notification from the Cabinet Office in relation to the following proposed replacement EU act:

COM/2025/1020 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 as regards the extension of certain data protection periods.

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

The Committee noted that further consideration of the proposed replacement EU act would take place in public session.

The Legal Adviser left the meeting at 10.36am.

The Committee moved into public session at 10.37am.

## 6. Draft Minutes

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2026.

## 7. Matters Arising

None.

## 8. COM/2025/780 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2018/848 as regards certain production, labelling and certification rules and certain rules on trade with third countries - Departmental Oral Evidence

The Committee continued its consideration of the following proposed replacement EU act:  
COM/2025/780 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2018/848 as regards certain production, labelling and certification rules and certain rules on trade with third countries.

The Committee considered an assessment of impact and written answers from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs on the proposed replacement EU act.

The following officials joined the meeting at 10.39am:

Brian Ervine	Head of Environmental Farming Branch, DAERA
Leanne McGrath	Deputy Principal, Environmental Farming Branch, DAERA

The officials gave oral evidence on the proposed replacement EU act.

A question and answer session followed.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The officials left the meeting at 10.50am.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to monitor the progress of the proposed replacement EU act, pursuant to paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Ulster Farmers' Union, in particular its poultry sector, to seek views on the proposed shorter conversion period for quail meat production; the changes to veterinary medicine withdrawal periods; the loosening of rules around unfeathered birds requiring daytime open-air access; and, adjustments to total usable surface area of fattening poultry.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that the Department provides a revised assessment of impact if any changes are proposed by the Council of the European Union or the European Parliament, which would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that RalSe monitors the progress of the proposed replacement EU act, including negotiations in the European Parliament and Council of the European Union, and submits quarterly updates, or more often as appropriate, to the Committee.

**9. COM/2025/1023 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) 2017/745 and (EU) 2017/746 as regards simplifying and reducing the burden of the rules on medical devices and in vitro diagnostic medical devices, and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/123 as regards the support of the European Medicines Agency for the expert panels on medical devices and Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 as regards the list of Union harmonisation legislation referred to in its Annex I -  
Departmental Oral Evidence**

The Committee continued its consideration of the following proposed replacement EU act:

COM/2025/1023 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) 2017/745 and (EU) 2017/746 as regards simplifying and reducing the burden of the rules on medical devices and in vitro diagnostic medical devices, and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/123 as regards the support of the European Medicines Agency for the expert panels on medical devices and Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 as regards the list of Union harmonisation legislation referred to in its Annex I.

The Committee considered an assessment of impact and written answers from the Department of Health on the proposed replacement EU act.

The following official joined the meeting at 10.52am:

David Wilson

Senior Principal Officer, Department of Health

The official gave oral evidence on the proposed replacement EU act.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The official left the meeting at 11.03am.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to monitor the progress of the proposed replacement EU act, pursuant to paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that the Department provides a revised assessment of impact if any changes are proposed by the Council of the European Union or the European Parliament, which would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that RalSe monitors the progress of the proposed replacement EU act, including negotiations in the European Parliament and Council of the European Union, and submits quarterly updates, or more often as appropriate, to the Committee.

**10. COM/2025/1020 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 as regards the extension of certain data protection periods -  
Departmental Oral Evidence**

The Committee continued its consideration of the following proposed replacement EU act:

COM/2025/1020 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 as regards the extension of certain data protection periods.

The Committee considered an assessment of impact from the Department for the Economy.

The following official joined the meeting at 11.04am:

Mark McGregor

Head of Trade and Windsor Framework, Department  
for the Economy

The official gave oral evidence on the proposed replacement EU act.

The evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The official left the meeting at 11.09am.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to monitor the progress of the proposed replacement EU act, pursuant to paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that the Department provides a revised assessment of impact if any changes are proposed by the Council of the European Union or the European Parliament, which would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that RalSe monitors the progress of the proposed replacement EU act, including negotiations in the European Parliament and Council of the European Union, and submits quarterly updates, or more often as appropriate, to the Committee.

#### **11. COM/2023/451 Proposal for a Regulation on circularity requirements for vehicle design and on management of end-of-life vehicles, amending Regulations (EU) 2018/858 and 2019/1020 and repealing Directives 2000/53/EC and 2005/64/EC**

The Committee considered a status update from RalSe on COM/2023/451 Proposal for a Regulation on circularity requirements for vehicle design and on management of end-of-life vehicles, amending Regulations (EU) 2018/858 and 2019/1020 and repealing Directives 2000/53/EC and 2005/64/EC.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request that the relevant department(s) provide a revised assessment of impact on the provisionally agreed text, or confirmation that their initial assessment of impact is unchanged and remains valid in relation to the provisionally agreed text.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that, when confirmation is received from RalSe that the provisionally agreed text is available for proposed EU acts which the Committee is monitoring or gathering evidence on, Secretariat staff should routinely request a revised assessment of impact on the provisionally agreed text, or confirmation that the initial assessment of impact is unchanged and remains valid in relation to the provisionally agreed text.

**12. COM/2025/137 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) No 251/2014 as regards certain market rules and sectoral support measures in the wine sector and for aromatised wine products**

The Committee noted an update from the Department of Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs on the provisionally agreed text of COM/2025/137 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) No 251/2014 as regards certain market rules and sectoral support measures in the wine sector and for aromatised wine products.

The Committee noted a status update from RaISe on this proposed replacement EU act.

**13. COM/2024/561 Proposal for a Directive amending Directive 2014/32/EU as regards electric vehicle supply equipment, compressed gas dispensers, and electricity, gas and thermal energy meters**

The Committee considered an update from the Department for the Economy (DfE) on the provisionally agreed text of COM/2024/561 Proposal for a Directive amending Directive 2014/32/EU as regards electric vehicle supply equipment, compressed gas dispensers, and electricity, gas and thermal energy meters.

The Committee noted that the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) stated that it can only start detailed analysis once the final text is published. The Committee noted that UK Government officials had previously informed that its departments are expected to begin developing Explanatory Memoranda on the basis of provisionally agreed text.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed, in light of the publication of the provisionally agreed text, to write to the UK Government regarding the OPSS's stated position.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to request an updated assessment of impact from DfE (including the information awaited from the OPSS once available) and confirmation that its assessment reflects the up-to-date assessment of the Department for Infrastructure and the Utility Regulator.

The Committee noted a status update from RaISe on the proposed replacement EU act.

## 14. Committee Work Planning

The Committee noted an update on all the proposed EU acts which it is monitoring and gathering evidence on, and on others which had been notified.

## 15. Correspondence

15.1 The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister for the Economy regarding the Department's review of its support to the Committee and requesting that the Committee secretariat engage with departmental officials.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed for the Committee Secretariat to engage further with officials from the Department for the Economy in response to the Minister's request.

15.2 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2023/192 and COM/2023/193, the proposed revision of EU pharmaceutical legislation.

15.3 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2023/770 Proposal for a Regulation on the protection of animals during transport and related operations.

15.4 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2024/411 Proposal for a Regulation on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed.

15.5 The Committee noted an update from RaISe on COM/2024/577 Proposal for a Regulation as regards the strengthening of the position of farmers in the food supply chain.

15.6 The Committee noted correspondence from the Executive Office in relation to current proposed EU legislation relevant to Northern Ireland.

15.7 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Economy regarding the Northern Ireland Car Market and GB/EU Vehicle Type Approvals.

15.8 The Committee considered correspondence from an individual regarding the supply of veterinary medicines to Northern Ireland.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, and to advise the correspondent accordingly.

15.9 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee to the UK Government regarding the supply of veterinary medicines to Northern Ireland.

15.10 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee to the UK Government regarding COM/2025/553 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 as regards the school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme ('EU school scheme'), sectoral interventions, the creation of a protein sector, requirements for hemp, the possibility for marketing standards for cheese, protein crops and meat, application of additional import duties, rules on the availability of supplies in time of emergencies and severe crisis and securities.

15.11 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee to the UK Government regarding COM/2025/822 Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulations (EC) No 1907/2006, (EC) No 1272/2008, (EU) No 528/2012, (EU) 2019/1021 and (EU) 2021/697 as regards defence readiness and facilitating defence investments and conditions for defence industry.

15.12 The Committee noted copies of correspondence between the UK Government and the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee regarding COM/2025/823 Proposal for a Directive amending Directives 2009/43/EC and 2009/81/EC, as regards the simplification of intra-EU transfers of defence-related products and the simplification of security and defence procurement.

- 15.13 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee to the UK Government regarding Regulation (EU) 2025/2650 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 as regards certain obligations of operators and traders.
- 15.14 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee to the UK Government regarding Commission Regulation (EU) 2025/2052 laying down ecodesign requirements for external power supplies, wireless chargers, wireless charging pads, battery chargers for portable batteries of general use and USB Type-C cables, pursuant to Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Commission Regulation (EU) 2019/1782.
- 15.15 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee to the UK Government regarding the addition of Regulation (EU) 2025/14 on the approval and market surveillance of non-road mobile machinery circulating on public roads and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/1020, to the Windsor Framework.
- 15.16 The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the House of Lords Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regarding the Windsor Framework Independent Monitoring Panel's Report on the first reporting period for the UK Internal Market Guarantee.

## **16. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson informed Members of a request from Senator Mark Daly, Chair of the Seanad Select Committee on EU Scrutiny and Transparency, to meet with her and the Deputy Chairperson.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed for the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to meet with Senator Daly, subject to their availability, and that they should report back to the Committee.

**17. Any Other Business**

None.

**18. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 5 March 2026 at 10am in Room 30.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.18am.

**Ciara Ferguson MLA**

**Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny**

**5 March 2026**