

Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee

Minutes EPC(2) 06-06

Meeting date: 5 April 2006

Meeting time: 9:30am – 12:10pm

Meeting venue: Committee Room 1, Senedd

Assembly Members in Attendance

Assembly Member	Constituency
Glyn Davies, Chair	Mid and West Wales
Lorraine Barrett	Cardiff South and Penarth
Mick Bates	Montgomeryshire
Tamsin Dunwoody	Preseli Pembrokeshire
Carwyn Jones, Minister	Bridgend
Elin Jones	Ceredigion
Brynle Williams	North Wales

Officials in Attendance

Name	Job title
Gareth Jones	Director of Environment, Planning and Countryside Department
Jo Glenn	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer
Rory O'Sullivan	Countryside Policy Division
Robert Williams	Environment – Protection & Quality

Mike Dunn	Environment – Conservation & Management
Roger Thomas	Chief Executive, Countryside Council for Wales
Alison Kitchener	Business Unit
Rosemary Thomas	Head of Planning Division
Neil Hemmington	Planning Division

Witnesses

Name	Organisation
Amelia John	Disability Rights Commission
Chris Myant	Commission for Racial Equality
Prys Davies	Welsh Language Board

Committee Service

Name	Job title
Kathryn Jenkins	Committee Clerk
Liz Wilkinson	Deputy Committee Clerk
Joanest Jackson	Legal Advisor

Item 1: Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions, Quorum and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed the Committee, officials and members of the public to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies were received from Jocelyn Davies

1.3 Mick Bates declared an interest in respect of item 6 as a recipient of payment for a vodaphone mast on his land.

Item 2: Minutes of the last meetings

Papers: EPC (2) 05-06(mins)

2.1 The Committee ratified the minutes of the 23 March meeting.

Item 3: Minister's oral update

3.1 The Minister informed the Committee of:

- the Review of Tir Gofal payments and that he had resolved to accept the recommendations of the working group;
- that since legislation allowing the lifting of the beef export ban would not now be introduced in Europe until 2 May, he was disposed to partially disapply the executive procedure and table a Plenary debate on the regulations;
- a new task and finish stakeholder group which would consider long-term options for supporting sustainable farming and the countryside to 2020. The group will report by 2007.
- an Assembly Commission report published today which shows that there was no significant transfer of radioactivity from the Irish Sea to North Wales;
- the intention to bring forward legislation relating to revised rates of BSE and scrapie compensation. The legislation would be debated by Plenary on 23 May with a view to its coming into force on 25 May.

Action points

The Committee agreed to scrutinise the legislation relating to revised rates of BSE and scrapie compensation at its 11 May meeting.

The Minister agreed to provide in his next written report to the Committee details of the potential impact of avian influenza on racing pigeons, particularly that of legislation relating to the vaccination of birds.

Item 4: EU Waste Strategy

Paper: EPC (2) 06-06(p1)

4.1 The Minister introduced his paper and Members questioned him on the implications for Wales of the EU Waste Strategy.

Action point

The Minister agreed to provide a note to the Committee on the definitions of when certain waste flows cease to be waste, including the current position regarding the recycling of tyres through pyrolysis.

Item 5: Subordinate Legislation

The Tir Gofal (Wales)(Amendment) Regulations 2006

Paper: EPC (2) 06-06(p2)

5.1 The Committee sought clarification on the following:

- the one-off accommodation cost of £600,000 associated with the Tir Gofal merger; and
- the degree to which the merger would result in a loss of agricultural expertise and affect the free-flow of information between staff in the Countryside Council for Wales and those who have transferred to the Welsh Assembly Government to administer Tir Gofal.

5.2 Following discussion, the Committee recommended approval of the Regulations without amendment. Its report would be laid before the Assembly shortly.

Item 6: Planning aspects of electronic communications apparatus

Paper: EPC(2)-06-06(p3)

6.1 The Minister introduced his paper which outlined the current land use planning system policy, legislation and guidance, as it related to the development of mobile telecommunications.

6.2 Members' considered the merit of undertaking future work on planning aspects of electronic communications apparatus.

Action point

The Committee agreed to invite the Welsh Local Government Association and the Mobile Operators Association to a future meeting to discuss planning aspects of electronic communications apparatus, in particular compliance with the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Phone Network Development and other relevant guidance.

Item 7: Scrutiny of the Minister on cross-cutting issues within the Environment, Planning and Countryside portfolio

Paper: EPC(2) 06-06(p4), EPC(2) 06-06(p5), EPC(2) 06-06(p7) and EPC(2) 06-06(p8)

7.1 The Chair welcomed Amelia John of the Disability Rights Commission, Chris Myant of the Commission for Racial Equality and Prys Davies of the Welsh Language Board to the meeting.

7.2 Each representative gave a brief introduction outlining key issues contained in their respective paper followed by Members' questions.

7.3 Following this, Members questioned the Minister on progress made to date in promoting and supporting cross-cutting issues within his portfolio.

Item 8: Committee's forward work programme

Paper: EPC(2) 06-06(p9)

8.1 Subject to the additions agreed earlier in the meeting, the Committee agreed its forward work programme for the summer term.

Members' Research and Committee Services April 2006