

Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee

Minutes EPC(2) 07-06

Meeting date: 11 May 2006

Meeting time: 9.15am – 12.30pm

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
Jocelyn Davies	South Wales East
Tamsin Dunwoody	Preseli Pembrokeshire
Carwyn Jones, Minister	Bridgend
Elin Jones	Ceredigion

Officials in Attendance

Name	Job title
Christianne Glossop	Chief Veterinary Officer
Tony Joss	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer
Mark Alexander	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer
Jo Glenn	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer
Bob Evans	Planning Division

Jill Thomas	Environment – Conservation & Management Division
Glyn Perryman	Environment – Conservation & Management Division

Witnesses

Name	Job title
Tim Jones	Countryside Council for Wales
Hilary Miller	Countryside Council for Wales
Dr Tim Stowe	RSPB Cymru
Jeff Davies	RSPB Cymru

Committee Service

Name	Job title
Kathryn Jenkins	Committee Clerk
Liz Wilkinson	Deputy Committee Clerk

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 Brynle Williams.

1.3 The Clerk confirmed the correct procedure regarding the declaration of interests during Committee proceedings in accordance with Standing Order 4.6.

Item 2: Minutes of the last meetings

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

2.1 The Committee ratified the minutes of the 5 April meeting.

Item 3: Report of Committee visit to Ireland

Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p1)

3.1 The Committee noted the report.

Item 4: Committee Strategic Forward Work Programme
Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p2)

4.1 The Committee agreed its Strategic Forward Work Programme for May 2006-April 2007.

Action point

The Committee agreed to invite representatives of the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research and Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council to one of its June meetings to discuss the future of agricultural and environmental research.

Item 5: Committee Annual Report to Plenary 2005-06
Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p3)

5.1 The Committee agreed its Annual Report to Plenary 2005-06.

Item 6: Minister's report
Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p4)

In addition to his written report, the Minister provided a further update on Avian Influenza and advised the Committee on the latest position regarding the future of the Institute for Grassland and Environmental Research.

Action points

The Minister agreed to provide a note confirming the holding time for imported poultry and the number of inspection visits carried out by the State Veterinary Service during this holding period.

The Minister agreed to circulate advice on the requirements for the reporting and treatment of sheep scab.

The Minister agreed to bring a paper to the Committee at the first meeting of the autumn term on the report on Badger Found Dead Survey.

Item 7: Consultation on the draft Marine Bill
Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p5)

7.1 The Committee noted the Minister's paper. The Committee would take evidence from a number of interested parties on the proposals as set out in Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs'

consultation at its 24 May meeting.

Item 8: Subordinate legislation
Avian Influenza (Vaccination)(Wales) Regulations 2006
Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p6)

The Committee considered the Avian Influenza (Vaccination)(Wales) Regulations 2006.

Members sought clarification on:

- the procedure for agreeing emergency and preventative vaccination;
- the current Welsh Assembly Government policy on preventative vaccination;
- the vaccination of rare and endangered species of captive birds in UK zoos; and
- the private purchasing of vaccine.

In response the Minister made the following points:

- If a decision were made by the Assembly to introduce emergency and preventative vaccination, representations would need to be made by to the European Commission by the UK Government, as the Member State.
- At present vaccination was not considered the most effective defence against avian influenza and did not form part of the UK avian influenza control strategy.
- The decision to vaccinate rare and endangered species of captive birds had been made by the Animal Disease Policy Group on which the Welsh Assembly Government had representation.
- The vaccines against avian influenza did not have marketing authorisation and were therefore not available for private purchasing. 2.3 million doses of vaccine had been purchased at a UK level for the vaccination of birds in zoos.

The Committee recommended approval of the Avian Influenza (Vaccination)(Wales) Regulations 2006 without amendment. Its report would be laid before the Assembly shortly.

The Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Compensation (Wales) Regulations 2006
Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p7)

The Committee considered The Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Compensation (Wales) Regulations 2006.

Some Members expressed concern regarding the proposed tabular compensation system based on average market prices was fundamentally unfair since animals of poorer quality would be over-compensated and those of a higher quality under-compensated.

The Committee recommended approval of the legislation without amendment. Its report would be laid

before the Assembly shortly.

The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) (Sheep and Goats) Compensation (Wales) Regulations 2006

Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p8)

The Committee considered The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) (Sheep and Goats) Compensation (Wales) Regulations 2006 and recommended approval without amendment. Its report would be laid before the Assembly shortly.

Members raised the same concern regarding the proposed tabular compensation system as in its previous discussion.

Code of Practice to Prevent and Control the Spread of Ragwort

Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p9)

The Committee endorsed the draft Code. Its report would be laid before the Assembly shortly.

The Sea Fishing (Northern Hake Stock)(Wales) Order 2006

Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p10)

The Committee considered The Sea Fishing (Northern Hake Stock)(Wales) Order 2006 and recommended approval without amendment. Its report would be laid before the Assembly shortly.

Item 9: Biomass and bio-fuels

Paper: EPC (2) 07-06(p11) and EPC (2) 05-06(p12)

9.1 The Chair welcomed Tim Jones and Hilary Miller of the Countryside Council for Wales, and Dr Tim Stowe and Jeff Davies of RSPB Cymru to the meeting. Representatives outlined the key points in their respective papers.

9.2 Members questioned representatives on their respective papers

9.3 A report summarising the key issues raised in today's evidence session and that held on 23 March would be brought to the 15 June meeting.

Members' Research and Committee Services May 2006