

European and External Affairs Committee

Minutes : EUR(3)-10-10 : 22 June 2010

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Time: 9.33 - 10.42

Venue: Committee Room 1, Senedd

Assembly Members in attendance

Rhodri Morgan, Cardiff West (Chair)
Jeff Cuthbert, Caerphilly
Rhodri Glyn Thomas, Carmarthen East and Dinefwr
Mike German, South Wales East
Nick Bourne, Mid and West Wales

Witnesses

Andy Klom, Head of European Commission Office in Wales (Items 1 to 4)
Derek Vaughan MEP (via video conference, Item 4)
Jill Evans MEP (via video conference, Item 4)

Committee Staff

Lara Date, Clerk
Sarita Marshall, Deputy Clerk
Gregg Jones, Head of National Assembly for Wales' EU Office (via video conference)
Gwyn Griffiths, Legal Adviser

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

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Committee Members and members of the public.
- 1.2 There were no apologies.
- 1.3 The Chair welcomed the Head of National Assembly for Wales' EU office, who was present via video link.
- 1.4 The Chair noted that this was Mike German's final European and External Affairs Committee meeting, as he will be standing down as an Assembly Member at the end of the month to become a Working Peer in House of Lords. Mike German first became a Member of the Assembly's European and External Affairs Committee in 2001, and the Chair thanked Mike for his considerable contribution to its work.

Item 2: Update on European Commission activities

- 2.1 The Committee received an update from the Head of the European Commission Office in Wales on its activities.

Item 3: Consideration of work priorities: update on forthcoming European Commission proposals via video conference

Paper: EUR(3)-10-10(p.1) - EEAC Work Programme

- 3.1 The Head of National Assembly for Wales' EU Office presented his update paper on strategic work priorities arising from the European Commission's work programme.

Action

The Head of the Assembly's EU Office to provide a note on any developments in response to the potential impact of public expenditure cuts on the availability of match-funding for structural fund programmes, including possible further relaxing of intervention rates.

The Head of the Assembly's EU Office to provide a detailed note for the Chair of the Rural Development Sub-Committee on EU proposals on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) cultivation to be published on 13 July, and procedure(s) to be adopted to reconcile the different positions of Member States on that issue.

The strategic priorities set out in the paper to be taken into account in formulating the Committee's detailed work programme.

Item 4: Updates from Welsh Members of the European Parliament in Brussels via video conference

4.1 The MEPs updated Committee on their activities in the European Parliament.

Action

The Committee to receive a note from Kay Swinburne MEP on the impact that the eurozone crisis and the varying positions of different Member States to reducing their public deficits may be having on Member State consideration of wider European issues, including negotiations on issues of importance to Wales such as the EU Budget Review, CAP reform and future Cohesion Policy.

5: Papers Noted

5.1 The Committee noted the following papers:

EUR(3)-10-10(p.2) - Action arising: Legal Advice Note: Ministerial Powers in relation to International Development

EUR(3)-10-10(p.3) - Action arising: Paper from Jill Evans MEP on Europe 2020 strategy and green jobs/climate change.

EUR(3)-09-10 - Minutes of previous meeting