

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMISSION HELD ON
MONDAY 23 JANUARY 2023 AT 10.00AM AT LISSUE WALK, LISBURN**

Present:

Mr G McGivern (Chairman)
Mrs O Chesney
Mr H Sinclair
Mr J Stewart
Mr J Lennon (via Teams)

In attendance:

Mr I Stevenson
Miss S Blain

2023/1/1 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Mr G Maguire.

2023/1/2 Declaration of Interests Pertaining to Agenda Items for Discussion

The Board agreed that none of the agenda items required any Board members to abstain from discussions.

**Compliance with the Management Statement & Financial Memorandum,
Sponsor Manual and Managing Public Money NI**

Confirmed.

2023/1/3 Minutes of Commission Meeting Held on 19 December 2022

The minutes of a meeting, held on 19 December 2022, were approved by the Commission and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed: Mr J Stewart
Seconded: Mrs O Chesney

2023/1/4 Matters Arising

Withheld – commercially sensitive.

Signed _____
Chairman

2023/1/5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reflected on the previous year (2022). Among the issues he highlighted were:

- High input costs during the year with no change imminent
- 30 years of FQAS, the bedrock of sustainability
- No Executive in place, a continuing challenge to the agri-food sector
- Sheep trade falling away at the year end.

He advised that the advertisement for new Board Chairman and Members was due to be launched during the week.

The Chairman noted that this was Mrs Chesney's last Board meeting. The Board members wished to put on record their thanks to Mrs Chesney for her work, wise counsel and support during her term in office.

2023/1/6 Chief Executive's Report

In advance of the meeting the Chief Executive had circulated several papers relating to this section of the meeting.

- **VAT Compliance Review** – The Chief Executive reported that representatives from HMRC had visited LMC on 16 January 2023 to carry out a VAT inspection and discuss with LMC the implications of a change in HMRC policy regarding the VAT treatment of levies. The VAT policy change was indicated as applying from April 2024 but had yet to be confirmed.

Withheld – commercially sensitive.

Action Point: The Board recommended adding the proposed change in VAT policy to the LMC Risk Register as it would have implications for LMC expenditure.

- **Carbon Project Update** – The Chief Executive updated the Board on progress with the whole farm carbon audit pilot programme.

Withheld – commercially sensitive.

- **FQAS Industry Board Meeting** –The Chief Executive reported that at a recent Meeting, the FQAS Industry Board took the decision that completion of a carbon audit will not be a “standard” for inspection but will become a “rule” for participation in FQAS.

Signed _____
Chairman

- **Meeting with DAERA Permanent Secretary**

Action Point: The Chief Executive will seek to arrange a meeting between the Board and the DAERA Permanent Secretary before most of the current Board Members' terms in office end.

- **LMC Policy Updates** – Several LMC policies have been updated by the Corporate Governance Manger:

- Clear Desk Policy
- Information Risk Management Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Rules and Procedures
- Grievance Procedure
- Harassment Policy.

Action Point: The updated policies were approved by the Board.

- **LMC Business Planning for 2023-2024**

Action Point: The Chief Executive will aim to bring a draft business plan to the next Board meeting.

2023/1/7 Risk Management / Health & Safety

- **ARAC Chairs Meeting** – A note of the ARAC Chairs Forum on 21 December had been circulated with the Board papers. The ARAC Chair advised that the Permanent Secretary had agreed to circulate DAERA's Risk Register to its ALB's and Agencies.
- **Consideration of Draft Annual Engagement Plan between DAERA and LMC**

Action Point: The ARAC Chairman and Chief Executive will arrange a meeting with DAERA officials to discuss the draft Engagement Plan.

2023/1/8 Quarterly Business Monitor for Consideration and Noting

Noted.

Signed _____
Chairman

2023/1/9 Quarterly Section Reports

Quarterly section reports from Industry Development and FQAS sections were noted.

Action Point: Quarterly reports from Marketing and Education sections will be circulated at next Board meeting.

2023/1/10 Any Other Business

- **Meeting Dates for 2023**

Action Point: Schedule of Board meeting dates to end of May 2023 was amended and agreed by the Board.

Mrs O Chesney took the opportunity to thank the Board members and LMC for their help and guidance during her time on the LMC Board and wished LMC all the best for the future.

2023/1/11 Date of Next Meeting

The next LMC Board meeting will be held on Monday 27 February 2023 at 11.00am in Lissue Walk.

The Board meeting ended at 12.05pm.

Signed _____
Chairman