

**MINUTES OF A REMOTE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION HELD ON  
MONDAY 27 APRIL 2020 AT 10.00AM BY CONFERENCE CALL**

**Present:**

Mr G McGivern (Chairman)  
Mrs O Chesney  
Mr J Lennon  
Mr G Maguire  
Mr P McElroy  
Mr H Sinclair

**In attendance:**

Mr I Stevenson

**2020/3/1 Apologies**

Miss S Blain.

**2020/3/2 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.

**2020/3/3 Minutes of Commission Meeting Held on 24 February 2020**

The minutes of a meeting, held on 24 February 2020, were approved by the Commission and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed: Mrs O Chesney  
Seconded: Mr J Lennon

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

**2020/3/4 Matters Arising****➤ Conferences and Events**

The Board noted that some upcoming conferences and events where Board members had been due to attend had been rescheduled or cancelled due to Covid-19. These included the UFU annual dinner on 27 March 2020; the UFU corporate member ‘meet the President’ event on 3 April 2020; the LMC/IFJ/Andersons market outlook conference on 1 May 2020, and; the IMS World Meat Congress in June 2020. Mr J Lennon reported that the All Ireland meat science conference scheduled for 26 to 27 March 2020 had also been postponed. The Board discussed the rescheduled dates for Balmoral Show 2020 and whether this was likely to go ahead or not.

**2020/3/5 Chairman’s Report**

The Chairman opened up his report with a few general observations on the ongoing Covid-19 crisis. He commended the staff of LMC for the range of important LMC activities which continue to be delivered remotely. He also observed that the general improvement in the global environment from reduced travel and economic slow-down helped to show that agri-food is not the major contributor that people believe when it comes to climate change. He also noted that the import of Polish Beef by two major UK retailers during the consumer panic buying phase had fostered an unfortunate breakdown in trust in supply chains especially from farming representatives. Mrs O Chesney also commented on the excellent social media engagement being undertaken by LMC across its various platforms with quality graphics and leading the pack messages.

Mr G Maguire also reported on the unprecedented distortion to markets which had taken place with the closure of food service and catering and the huge challenge this presented for carcass balance and premiumisation of cuts which consumers were currently buying at retail. The global hide market had also collapsed and businesses were operating at new levels of production cost to accommodate social distancing. Business was continuing to operate but significant pain was being felt by supply chains and help would be needed for industry to see through this crisis.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

➤ **Board Member Recruitment**

The Chairman advised the Board that the recruitment for a new Board member with ARAC Chair responsibility had attracted 15 applications by 27 March 2020 but due to Covid-19 the process had been halted. Mr P McElroy had agreed to remain in post until the process could be completed.

➤ **Engagements**

The Chairman reported on a number of important engagements he had taken part in since the last Board meeting including:

- A very useful briefing with the AERA Committee at Parliament Buildings on 12 March 2020;
- An industry meeting on Webex with Minister Edwin Poots on 10 April 2020 to discuss the impact and consequences of Covid-19;
- *Withheld – commercially sensitive*

**2020/3/6**

**Chief Executive's Report**

➤ **Staffing Matters**

The Chief Executive updated the Board on current arrangements for staff, all of whom were working from home from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 and each of whom had been provided with appropriate technology to enable LMC work to continue.

➤ **AERA Committee Briefing**

The Chief Executive noted that the meeting at Parliament Buildings on 12 March 2020 had been an excellent opportunity to meet with the Committee, to discuss key issues for the red meat industry and LMC's role within the sector. Some follow-up correspondence with the Committee on a range of matters has also been taking place subsequent to this meeting.

➤ **Red Tractor**

The Chief Executive advised that a remote meeting of LMC, Quality Meat Scotland, Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers and Red Tractor was scheduled for Thursday 7 May 2020 when it was planned to try and bottom out issues at this meeting regarding a common recognition framework and National Devolved Scheme fees for participation in Red Tractor.

- *Withheld – commercially sensitive*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

➤ **AHDB Review**

The Board noted the findings of the AHDB Review and Government response which had recently been published.

➤ **End of Year Reports**

**Action Point:** The Chief Executive will circulate the current Board Member Register of Interests and members are to advise the Chief Executive on any amendments

**Action Point:** Board Member Self-Assessment templates to be completed and forwarded to the Chief Executive before the next meeting

**Action Point:** ARAC Chairman to finalise and submit to LMC executive his annual report on the work of ARAC for the 2019/20 financial year

**Action Point:** Chairman to draft a Foreword / Chairman's Statement for inclusion in the 2019/20 Annual Report and send to the Chief Executive.

**2020/3/7**

**Covid-19 Developments**

The Chief Executive updated the Board on a number of specific projects which LMC had been taking forward in response to Covid-19. During the month of April a study had been commissioned from the Andersons Centre to assess the impact of the Covid-19 Crisis on the Northern Irish Beef and Sheep Sector and the report from this study and a cover letter from LMC, NIMEA and UFU had been submitted to Minister Edwin Poots. LMC was also channeling much more content into its social media platforms to engage with stakeholders and consumers who were spending more time at home and online. LMC's advertising agency had also been tasked to develop and run a 5 week Steakhouse Saturday campaign to encourage consumers to bring the dining out experience into the home environment. LMC was also having more engagement with GIRA and IMS to get a clearer picture of market developments and insights from around the world.

**Action Point:** Chief Executive to circulate a copy of the Andersons Report to the Board

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

**2020/3/8 LMC Policies for Approval**

The Board approved the following updated policies with a few minor amendments:

- Child Protection Policy
- Policy for Time off from Work for Jury Service
- Policy on Mobile Telephone use While Driving
- Eye Test Policy

**2020/3/9 Business Monitor**

The Board approved the LMC Business Monitor to year end 31 March 2020 and note how useful and comprehensive the report was to the Board

**2020/3/10 Quarterly Reports**

The Board discussed and noted the detailed section reports

**2020/3/11 Risk Management / Health and Safety**

**Action Point:** With the ongoing Covid-19 lockdown the Board requested the Chief Executive to remind staff of the availability of the Inspire service to all staff if anyone is feeling in need of confidential help or advice during these challenging times.

**2020/3/12 Any Other Business****➤ NIFCC**

*Withheld – commercially sensitive*

The Chief Executive advised that a new Chief Executive for NIFCC, Dr Geoff Thompson had been appointed.

**2020/3/13 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Monday 1 June 2020 at 10am at Lissue Walk.

*The Board meeting ended at 12.30pm.*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman