

**MINUTES OF A REMOTE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION HELD ON MONDAY 29
JUNE 2020 AT 10.00AM BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**

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
Miss S Blain

2020/5/1 Apologies

None.

2020/5/2 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.

2020/5/3 Minutes of Commission Meeting Held on 1 June 2020

The minutes of a meeting, held on 1 June 2020, were approved by the Commission and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed: Mr J Lennon
Seconded: Mrs O Chesney

2020/5/4 Matters Arising

- **FQAS Inspections**

The Chief Executive reported that feedback from farmers had been positive on the re-commencing of on-farm inspections. Over 250 inspections had been carried out in the first week. Alternative arrangements had been made for farmers who were flagged up as being in the vulnerable category.

Signed _____
Chairman

- **Conflict of Interest Declarations**

Action Point: All Board members were reminded to forward their annual conflict of interest declaration forms to the Chief Executive.

2020/5/5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported on a number of teleconferences and zoom calls which he had participated in since the last meeting.

The meetings covered a range of topics including Covid-19 Developments, PGI and Lissue House. These issues will reported in more detail later in the Board meeting.

The Chairman advised the Board that the recruitment for a new Board member to replace Mr McElroy had restarted, with interviews planned to take place in September 2020.

2020/5/6 Chief Executive's Report

In advance of the meeting the Chief Executive had circulated a report relating to this section of the meeting.

- **Covid-19 Developments**

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the current office arrangements including the completion of updated risk assessments for office based working. Technology has enabled more engagement with stakeholders as it is easier to arrange meetings quickly and with more people. As previously noted on-farm inspections have recommenced for FQAS.

- **Red Tractor**

The Chief Executive advised that LMC is working with its Welsh and Scottish colleagues to get mutual recognition for each other's assurance schemes. There has been good progress on valid points and on the finance issue as well.

- **Quarterly Accountability Meeting with Sponsor Branch**

- The Chief Executive reported that he and the Chairman had had a very useful and comprehensive accountability meeting with Sponsor Branch on 9 June 2020. It was advised by DAERA at the meeting that the review of LMC is currently on hold pending

Signed _____
Chairman

clarity on the review of Arm's Length Bodies which was referenced in the New Decade New Approach agreement. Since the meeting LMC has got feedback on the Business Plan 2020-21 which is being worked through, as well as approval for the extension of the certification services contract to March 2020. *Withheld – commercially sensitive.*

- **Financials**

Withheld – commercially sensitive.

LMC was successful in a bid of £180k in the June Monitoring round. This will enable a more effective level of promotional activity for the remainder of the financial year.

2020/5/7 *Withheld – commercially sensitive*

2020/5/8 Covid-19 Support Package for Agriculture & Horticulture

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the proposed Covid-19 package. A formal announcement is due by the Minister on 30 June 2020. LMC's work with Michael Haverty has proved to be very beneficial in securing the support package for the red meat sector.

Action Point: LMC will issue a press release on the back of the Minister's announcement welcoming the support and highlighting LMC's part in securing it.

2020/5/9 PGI for Irish Grass Fed Beef

The Chief Executive reported on the current discussions within the red meat industry and DAERA on Bord Bia's application for PGI status. The NI red meat industry want to be a part of it from the start. DAERA's opinion is similar, advising that it is easier to be involved at the outset rather than trying to join later on. The Chief Executive has asked DAERA to approach their colleagues in ROI. LMC is very willing to provide a briefing for the Minister if required.

Action Point: The Board noted the current position and will wait to see Bord Bia's response.

2020/5/10 Suckler Beef and Sheep Policy Framework Study

The Chairman and Chief Executive have been attending meetings as the study has been progressing. At the latest meeting, held on 17 June 2020, the report was nearing completion. A draft should be available this week. Once UFU and

Signed _____
Chairman

NIMEA have been given a couple of weeks to endorse the report it will be submitted directly to the Minister with a covering letter.

The Board commented that this has been a timely and useful piece of work with which to inform the future direction of the beef/sheepmeat industry in Northern Ireland.

2020/5/11 Risk Management / Health and Safety

- **Risk Assessment**

The Chief Executive advised that a review of the Covid-19 Risk Assessment of the office workplace had been completed. This will be regularly reviewed as government guidance is updated. The Corporate Governance Manager had also circulated home working guidance and risk assessment to staff.

- **Insurance Cover**

Action Point: LMC will enquire of its insurance providers if there is any impact on public/employers liability cover in regard to Covid-19.

2020/5/12 Any Other Business

None.

2020/5/13 Date of Next Meetings

A joint DAERA/LMC Board Meeting will be held on Thurs 9 July 2020 at 10am.

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Mon 7 September 2020 at 10am.

The Board meeting ended at 11.45 am.

Signed _____
Chairman