

TEAGASC
419th Meeting of the Authority, 07 June 2023

Members present were: Mr Liam Herlihy, Chairman, Ms Martina Donnelly, Mr John Buckley, Professor Ger Fitzgerald, Mr Brian Rushe (by zoom), Professor Thia Hennessy, Mr Donald Scully, Ms Louise Byrne, and Ms Elizabeth Reynolds.

Apologies: Mr Liam Woulfe, Mr Pat Duffy

Executives present were: Professor Frank O'Mara, Director; Mr Alan Phelan, Chief Operations Officer and Secretary to the Authority

Mr John Spink, Head of Crops, Environment and Land Use Programme for Item 4
Dr Ewen Mullins, Head of Crops Research Programme, Oak Park for Item 4
Ms Susan Kearney for Item 5.1

Ms Lorraine Ryan facilitated

Welcome and CELUP Crops Research Programme Overview

Mr Spink welcomed the Authority to the Crops Research Centre, Carlow. He presented an overview of the Programme which includes crops, environment, horticulture and forestry. He expanded on the current staff resource within each section noting that farm and administrative staff are a key element of support to the Programme. Other metrics presented included: programme income and expenditure, and land-use at Oak Park. Mr Spink addressed the challenges faced by the Tillage sector and highlighted in particular the lack of scale and the high cost of land. Dr. Mullins expanded on the research programme in crop production at Oak Park.

The meeting agreed on the importance of adding value to crops through, for example, increased use as product ingredients rather than animal feed. The Director noted the requirement for additional Forestry staffing if the ambitions of DAFM's new Forestry Strategy were to be realised. It was his intention to include a request for additional forestry staffing in the Workforce Plan that was currently being drafted for submission to DAFM. In response to Ms Byrne regarding the need for more metrics in the horticulture sector, he noted the difficulty in obtaining such information given the concern of producers around providing commercially sensitive information.

The Chairman complimented the Director on the Teagasc exhibit at Bloom and asked that the Authority's comments be passed to the organisers.

The Authority thanked Mr Spink and Dr Mullins for their informative overview and were very impressed by the overall quality of the Crops Programme at Oak Park.

0. Declaration(s) of Interest(s)

Referring to Item 5.4.1 the Chairman advised the members that he would leave the meeting for this item and asked Professor Fitzgerald to take the chair for it.

1. Agenda

2. Minutes

2.1 Draft Minutes of Authority Meeting of 03 May 2023

The minutes of 05 April 2023 were approved with two minor amendments, on the proposition of Ms Byrne and seconded by Mr Scully.

2.2 Matters Arising from Minutes of 03 May 2023

Referring to Item 4 of the minutes, the Chairman informed the meeting he recently attended a Signpost Advisory Programme event and wished to record the very high level of engagement and positivity of attendees.

3. Director's Report

The Director in his report to the Authority noted:

- Recent media commentary on Teagasc Report on Nitrates Banding. He stressed that scientific independence is of paramount importance and the timing and content of a report is a matter for Teagasc.
- Huge work completed by advisory and support staff who completed about 40k applications for clients for BISS. He indicated there were concerns in relation to the IT system which will be brought to DAFM's attention. He hoped it will not have resulted in errors given the pressure on staff responding to a tight timeline.
- Teagasc must vacate IDA land rented in Athenry to facilitate the new Dexcom plant. Teagasc is actively seeking an alternative facility for the Newford Herd.
- Approval from DAFM to recruit up to 90 temporary staff in the Teagasc Advisory Service to support work related to supporting clients in the context of the New CAP.
- Ms Ellen Vaughan is the Teagasc/FBD Student of the Year for 2022 and Mr Diarmaid Fitzgerald Overall Winner of the Grassland Farmer of the Year 2022. He congratulated the winners and nominees and thanked FBD and DAFM for their generous sponsorship of the awards.

3.1 Corporate Risk Register 2023

The 2023 Corporate Risk Register was noted.

3.2 Health and Safety Report

The Director presented the report which was noted.

4. Strategic Item

CELUP Crops Research Programme: Visit to National Centre for Brewing and Distilling, Apple Research Orchard, Pest and Disease research programme.

5. Routine Items

5.1 Management Accounts at 30.04.23

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There were no current

cash-flow concerns.

The Authority approved the extension of the increased stipend to externally funded Walsh Scholars.

The Authority thanked Ms Kearney for her briefing, and approved the accounts.

5.2 Industrial Relations Report

Mr Phelan noted that an additional submission had been supplied to the Labour Court in relation to one case and dates for a WRC Hearing were awaited in relation to two other cases.

5.3 Staff Appointments

(a) Items for Approval

[REDACTED]

Approved by Ms Donnelly and seconded by Prof Fitzgerald.

(b) Items for Notification

The Authority noted the appointment of:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Temporary Appointments:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

5.4 Property Approvals

5.4.1 Sustainable Animal and Grassland Research Centre

The proposal to address the lack of modern facilities in the current laboratory and metabolism house was welcomed by the Authority. The proposed development was considered of critical importance in supporting the development of innovative solutions to improve the environmental sustainability of pasture-based systems, and improve the efficiency of Ireland's ruminant sector.

Ms Reynolds requested that the detailed design should include provision for any expansion of the Centre that may be required in future years. On the proposal of Prof Hennessey it was agreed that Teagasc should consider the development of a policy on endowments and sponsorships.

The Business Case was approved on the nomination of Mr Scully and seconded by Mr Buckley.

The Chairman who had left the room for this item rejoined the meeting on its conclusion.

6 Report(s) of Committee(s) Meetings

6.1 Draft Minutes of Advisory & Education Committee Meeting of 03.05.23

Mr Buckley reported on the meeting. The Committee Chairman noted the Committee had approved the proposed TAMS charging as presented at Item 7.3 of the Authority meeting.

7. Items for Decision

7.1 Draft Chairperson's Report 2022

The Authority approved the Chairman's Report for Year 2022

7.2 Knowledge Transfer Professional Indemnity Settlement

The Authority approved the proposed settlement of the claim.
Proposed by Prof Hennessey and seconded by Prof Fitzgerald.

7.3 TAMS Charging 2023

The Authority approved the charging levels as presented.

8. Items for Consideration

None.

9 Items for Information

9.1 Corporate Communications Report

Mr Donald outlined the upcoming Teagasc events highlighting the Sheep 2023 Open Day on 17th June and the Crops Open Day on the 21st June.

9.2 MTL Chairperson's Report 2022

The Authority noted the MTL Chairman's report.

9.3 MTL Financial Statements 2022 + C&AG Report

The MTL Financial Statements and C&AG Report were noted.

9.4 Draft MTL Board Minutes of 17.05.2023

Professor Fitzgerald reported on the meeting.

9.5 MTL Management Accounts at 31.03.2023

9.6 Audit & Risk Committee Annual Authority Report 2022

The meeting accepted the report with thanks to Professor Hennessey and the Committee.

10. AOB

None.

11. Next Meeting: Wednesday 05 July 2023, National Food Innovation Hub Boardroom, Moorepark

13.00 Lunch in Conference room 1, Moorepark

14.00 Audit & Risk Committee Meeting, National Food Innovation Hub Boardroom, Moorepark

Signed:

Date: 07 June 2023