Secretary General and State Body (Coillte) Meeting

12th June 2024
16.30pm in Agriculture House

Attendees:

DAFM: Brendan Gleeson SG, Paul Savage ASG, Patricia Kelly PO

Coillte: Vivienne Jupp Chair, Imelda Hurley CEO

The SG opened the meeting by welcoming Ms. Jupp and Ms. Hurley and outlining that he conducts a yearly meeting with all State Bodies to establish that corporate governance is observed and to be updated on strategic planning and other pertinent matters. He congratulated Ms. Jupp on her recent appointment as Chair of Coillte. She thanked him and said she was very much looking forward to the role.

The meeting then proceeded as follows:

1. **Matters Arising / Action Points from last meeting**
   There were no matter arising.

2. **Corporate Governance & Strategic Planning**
   - Code of Practice
     - Coillte confirmed compliance with the Code of Practice.
   - Anti-fraud policy
     - Coillte confirmed that an anti-fraud policy is in place with no significant incidents to report. They are reviewing the policy on foot of an incident where fraud was attempted but prevented by bank.
   - Strategic Implementation Plan for Forest Estate Strategic Land Use Plan
     - Coillte's FESLUP (Forest Estate Strategic Land Use Plan) was launched in December 2023; it built on their Strategic Vision (launched in April 2022) and focuses on a 25 year time horizon to 2050. An extensive SEA / AA environmental assessment was carried out, along with further public consultation.
     - Coillte are now developing a SIP (Strategic Implementation Plan), which will further build on the FESLUP focusing on a 10 year time horizon, and will also start to break the plan down on a geographic basis. Again, a SEA & AA environmental assessment will be carried out, which will probably happen in early 2025.
     - Following the SIP, a series of BAU (regional) Forest Management Plans will be developed over a 5 – 10 year period, which are required to satisfy FSC/PEFC certification requirements and which are also used for further public consultation.
     - Following the BAU Forest Management Plans, a 3 Year Tactical Plan, which is a rolling plan (i.e. an additional year is added every year) that

identifies specific operational activities (roads, harvesting, reforestation, etc), which forms the basis of Licence Applications to DAFM.
    - Following the 3 Year Tactical Plan, Coillte will have an annual Operational Plan, which develops a more detailed production plan, determining the time of operation, contractor, environmental and safety controls, etc.
- Afforestation
    - Coillte advised that land availability and suitability for afforestation is a challenge – referred to the Department's ongoing Land Use Review.
    - DAFM noted that under the current Forestry Programme Coillte has access to both grants and 15 year premiums, as is the case for all public bodies.
    - Coillte advised that The Nature Trust and ISFF are their primary vehicles for delivering afforestation, and acknowledged that the ambitious targets in FESLUP – 100,000 ha by 2050, will be difficult to achieve.
    - Coillte have reached out to the farm bodies and co-ops but will little success.

3. **Shareholder Letter of Expectations (SLOE)**
    - New SLOE for 2024
        - DAFM will draft a new SLOE for 2024, in consultation with DPENDR.
    - Dividend policy
        - Coillte will advise the shareholders in the near future of the final dividend amount for 2023, noting that an interim dividend of €10m has been paid.

4. **Finance & Related Issues**
    - Financial Performance year to date 2024 and outlook to 2027
        - The financial performance of the company to date in 2024 is good [redacted]
- Special Dividend
    - [redacted]

5. **HR**
    - Board Vacancies 2024
        - DAFM are awaiting the draft Specification booklet from NewEra to progress the recruitment process for the vacancy left by [redacted]
        - DAFM will progress two upcoming vacancies [redacted] July and [redacted] December), whom Coillte have asked be reappointed, on receipt of a report from NewERA.

6. **Update from State Body**
   - Coillte Nature Projects
     - **The Nature Trust** [redacted]
     - **The Wild Western Peatlands** project for 560 ha in Derryclare, Co. Galway was refused planning permission. Coillte do not intend to appeal this decision, [redacted]
     - The **Midlands Native Woodlands** project is a collaboration with Bord na Mona to establish native woodland cover on cutaway bogs which are not possible to re-wet. Coillte have submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and afforestation consent application to DAFM. covering an initial area of 338ha of cutaway peatlands in the Littleton Bog complex, Co. Kilkenny. The DAFM EIAR Review Team are currently reviewing this application.
   - [redacted]
   - FutureEnergy Ireland
     - [redacted]

7. **Sustainability**

   Progress with implementation of Climate Action Framework (Action 55 Framework)
   - NewERA produce an implementation Update Report on the Framework and the Q -1 of 2024 report is due shortly.

8. **AOB**

   Setback conditions
   - Coillte raised setback conditions and the impact on productive forestry, while recognising the need to protect environmental areas. DAFM are reviewing felling licence conditions.

   END