

Draft Note of AFSB Meeting 29 – 17 June 2016

Time	14.00 – 17.00	
Venue	Dundonald House, Stormont Estate	
Present	Tony O'Neill (Chair)	
	Norman Fulton Brian Dolaghan Declan Billington Eugene Rooney	John Thompson Trevor Lockhart David Dobbin Owen Brennan
Apologies	Jim Dobson Francis Martin	David Small Ian Marshall
Guests	Hilary Kinney Dr Mike Johnston Dr Gillian Anderson	Martin McKendry Sam Kennedy
Observers/Officials	Paul Brush, DfE	Colette McMaster, DAERA
Support Team	John Hood Dan Cartland Karen Wilson	Peter McArdle Fiona McCausland

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Norman Fulton, DAERA's new Head of Food and Farming Group, as a new member of the Agri-Food Strategy Board, replacing Louise Warde Hunter as one of the *ex officio* DAERA members. He also welcomed DfE's Paul Brush who joined the DfE team.

2. Marketing Organisation

Hilary Kinney, Kappa Consulting, gave a presentation to the Board of her work and findings in developing a Marketing Strategy for the proposed agri-food marketing organisation

She presented an analysis of existing provision of marketing support to the NI agri-food sector followed by an overview of arrangements in Scotland and the Republic of Ireland. She explained that Scotland Food & Drink was originally established as a Leadership Body, rather than a Marketing Body, which has now moved to provide company specific functions. It has a relatively small budget, but through its 21 Partner Organisations, influences a marketing budget of approximately £25-30m.

She outlined structural proposals for the new Marketing Organisation based on the Scotland Food & Drink model and an associated budgetary requirement.

Action: Convene AFSB meeting to focus solely on draft findings of Hilary Kinney's report.

3. Agri-Food Business Development Programme

Dr Mike Johnston, accompanied by Dr Gillian Anderson, UU and Sam Kennedy, CAFRE, outlined a proposal for an agri-food business development programme. The programme followed extensive industry consultation which identified the need for enhanced business development and market analysis competencies within the sector.

He outlined a proposed Agri-Food & Drinks Business Development Academy which would initially aim to provide recent graduates with sector specific training and also upskill existing employees.

The Board outlined its broad support for the proposal.

4. Rural Development Update

Martin McKendry, CAFRE, provided the Board with an update on the Rural Development Programme's Business Development Groups (BDGs) and Farm Family Key Skills (FFKS) Programme. Together, these make up the Knowledge Transfer element of the Farm Business Improvement Scheme.

He advised that the BDGs had attracted over 3000 applicants which were spread across Northern Ireland and across all sectors of the agri-food industry. Following this, 154 BDGs had been formed with over 300 training events held to date.

He updated the Board on FFKS, which included the commencement of Pig Health Training in May 2016, with Health & Safety, Business Planning & Mentoring, ICT and Animal Health in other sectors among those to follow in the future.

5. AFSB Priorities Moving Forward

It was agreed to pass this agenda item over to a future meeting.

6. Date of Next meeting

The next scheduled meeting will take place on 23 September 2016.