**MINUTES OF DAERA STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2020**

**ROOM 106, DUNDONALD HOUSE & ABLLYKELY HOUSE VIA VC**

**Members:**

Brian Doherty (Chair) Deputy Secretary, Central Services and Contingency Planning Group (via VC from Ballykelly)

David Small Deputy Secretary, Environment, Marine and Fisheries Group

Fiona McCandless Deputy Secretary, Rural Affairs, Forest Service and Estates Transformation Group

Norman Fulton Deputy Secretary, Food and Farming Group

Robert Huey Deputy Secretary, Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group

Tracey Teague Deputy Secretary, Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Alistair Carson Director of Science, Evidence and Innovation Policy

Roger Downey Director of Finance

Seamus McErlean Chief Agricultural Economist

**In Attendance:**

Dave Foster Director of Regulatory and Natural Resources

Laura Bouma Agri Environment Policy Development

Briege Lafferty Deputy Finance Director (via VC from Ballykelly)

William Peel Head of Strategic Planning Branch

**Secretariat:** Hugh Quinn, Strategic Planning Branch (via VC from Ballykelly)

Ronan Gunn, Strategic Planning Branch

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| **Item** | **Description** | **Action Owner** |
| **1.0** | **Conflict of Interest** |  |
|  | No conflicts of interest were declared. |  |
| **2.0** | **Minutes of Previous Meeting** |  |
|  | The minutes of the meeting held on 05 December 2019 were agreed. |  |
| **3.0** | **Action Points from Previous Meeting** |  |
|  | The Committee noted that Action Points from the December meeting and Alastair Carson provided an update on his horizon scanning piece.  Members were once again reminded to provide nominations to sit on the SABI Pilots Groups. |  |
| **4.0** | **Decision Log from Previous Meeting** |  |
|  | The decision log was noted and the Committee was content. |  |
| **5.0** | **Agri-Environment Policy Framework** |  |
|  | Dave Foster presented the Agri-Environment Policy Framework and introduced Laura Bouma who was taking the lead on it.  Dave advised that the Framework sits within the wider Future Agriculture Policy framework. He detailed that four long-term themes identified were:   * increased productivity in international terms; * improved resilience to external shocks; * an agriculture industry that is environmentally sustainable; and * an industry which operates within an integrated, efficient, sustainable, competitive and responsive supply chain.   Dave explained this Framework sets out some broad principles and they are seeking Strategy Committee endorsement of the principles ahead of formal stakeholder engagement.  Members noted that the Framework didn’t include any reference to the Green Growth Framework and it also needs to include New Decade, New Approach.  Fiona McCandless also asked that a reference be included to increasing the level of woodland planting and forest cover.  Members also suggested that any references to current PfG are revised with new PfG once published by Executive.  Dave Foster agreed to produce a tracked change version and clear it with the Committee via correspondence.  **Action Points:**  Framework to be updated to include reference to Green Growth Framework and New Decade, New Approach.  Include references to increasing level of woodland planting and forest cover.  Produce tracked change version and clear with Committee via correspondence. | **Dave Foster/Laura Bouma**  **Dave Foster/Laura Bouma** |
| **6.0** | **Data Strategy** |  |
|  | Paul McGurnaghan presented the DAERA’s Data Strategy and advised that this is the first one by NI Department and is being developed with the assistance of Deloitte.  The vision of the Strategy is to ‘create an insight-driven organisation, placing data at the heart of all decision-making’.  Paul reported that there has been extensive stakeholder engagement with 17 workshops held with business areas and well over 100 attendees. The workshops assessed the current and desired position within business areas in relation to data management and resulted in a desired end state with 8 outcomes identified:   * Insight-driven organisation; * Geospatial alignment; * Strategic alignment of data; * Future-proofed architecture; * Open and published data; * Protected and secure data; * Single version of truth; and * Data proficient workforce.   Paul advised that a significant element of human capital had been invested in this and having the right people to interpret data is key.  There are six separate work streams being taken forward:   * Commence data discovery across the Department; * Identify and rapidly prototype quick-win analytics use cases; * Move towards a modern data architecture; * Implement a target operating model for future data capability; * Establish and embed new Data Governance Structures; and * Review, amend and create Data Policies and standards   Paul confirmed that a draft of the strategy is nearly complete and will be presented to March DB.  **Action Point:**  Paul to share draft Data Strategy with SCSG colleagues. | **Paul McGurnaghan** |
| **7.0** | **Strategic Priorities and Draft 2020-21 DAERA Business Plan** |  |
|  | Roger Downey presented the draft 2020-21 DAERA Business Plan and sought to finalise it ahead of submission to DB.  Round table discussion on the proposed targets followed and it was agreed that further work be done to reduce the number of targets included.  **Action Point:**  Strategic Planning Branch to write to Grade 3s requesting no more than 6 targets per Group for response by COP 12 March. | **Strategic Planning Branch** |
| **8.0** | **Papers for Discussion at Future Meetings & Next Agenda** |  |
|  | The Committee reviewed the list of potential papers and confirmed that the Environment Strategy had now become the Green Growth Framework. Dates for presentation of future papers were considered but likely change to these due to the COVID-19 crisis. |  |
| **9.0** | **AOB** |  |
|  | Question raised on the merging of SDMF into Strategy Committee – do all policies need to come to SC for consideration? – Agreed that if members believe there is a benefit in bringing a policy to the group for critique then SC will reflect as opposed to all policies being brought to SC.  Committee members expressed concern that Departmental colleagues were not bringing their Strategies to the Committee early enough in the process. Staff need to build in more time to allow consideration of comments from Strategy Committee and make changes. | **ALL** |
|  | **Date of Next Meeting** |  |
|  | The next meeting TBC. |  |