



An Rialálaí Agraibhia Agri-Food Regulator

(Ref ARA/N7/4)

Note of the fifth meeting of the Board of the Agri-Food Regulator which took place on 17 May at 11a.m. in the Boardroom, Agri-Food Regulator's Office, Backweston Campus, Celbridge, Co Kildare, Ireland, W23 X3PH

In attendance

Board of the Agri-Food Regulator:

- Joe Healy, Chair
- Paul Brophy
- Karen Brosnan
- John Comer
- Margaret Dineen
- Grace McCullen
- Angus Woods

Agri-Food Regulator

- Niamh Lenehan, CEO
- Robert Levins (11.20 to 12.15)
- Aiden Kelly (13.13 to 13.35)
- Beckie Reynolds (minute-taker)

Item 1: Opening by Chair

Apologies: Elaine Donohoe

Item 2: Conflict(s) of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest noted.

Item 3: Approval of Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of meeting on 27 March 2024 were agreed.

Item 4: Approval of previous Board meeting notes for publishing

The Board approved the meeting notes for Board Meetings held in December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024.



An Rialálaí Agraibhia Agri-Food Regulator

Item 5: Proposed Data Request - Horticulture Sector

Robert Levins, Head of Price & Market Data Analysis, presented a report outlining the public data available regarding the horticulture sector in Ireland. While EU Market Transparency requirements mandate reporting for certain production volumes, most horticulture products in Ireland fall below these thresholds. The mushroom industry, a major exporter to Britain, is the sole exception with regular price reporting. CSO indices from the agriculture industry and consumer price categories become the primary public resources for the sector. An overview of the proposed data request template for the horticultural industry was presented to the Board. A list of the produce proposed for inclusion in the request was agreed by the Board.

Item 6: Policy Development

The Agri-Food Regulator's Anti-fraud Policy was approved by the Board.

Item 7: Audit & Risk Committee

A breakdown of the Regulator's expenditure for the three previous months was provided. Processes are in train for the procurement of financial reporting, data protection, human resources and legal services. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will remain the liaison between the Regulator and the National Shared Services Office (NSSO) in respect of payroll. It was noted that the Regulator expects to have its own bank account in place in the coming weeks.

Item 8: Unfair Trading Practices – Complaint Investigation

Aiden Kelly presented an overview of an ongoing investigation into a complaint as the authorised officer involved. The Board granted approval to issue legal proceedings.

Item 9: Governance Documents

The following documents were discussed by the Board:

- Strategy Statement 2024-2026
- 2024 Annual Work Programme



An Rialálaí Agraibhia Agri-Food Regulator

- Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreement
- 2023 Annual Report

The Chair and CEO hope to present the Strategy Statement to the Minister soon. The Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreement document was presented to the Board for discussion. The CEO noted that the sections regarding the Regulator's Service Level Agreement with DAFM and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are still a work in progress.

Item 10: High-Level Communications Programme

The CEO presented a brief overview of communications work noting the ongoing 'Compliance Reporting Buyer' campaign. Further communications opportunities are under consideration.

Item 11: Indemnity

The Regulator, in pursuance of its power under section 32 of the Agricultural and Food Supply Chain Act 2023 is in consultation with the Minister and/or his servants or agents in order to determine the manner, extent, terms and conditions of any indemnity to be provided to a person against actions and claims of any kind in respect of the performance of functions in good faith as—

- (a) a member of the regulator,
- (b) a member of a committee of the regulator,
- (c) chief executive or other member of staff,
- (d) a person providing services to the regulator, or
- (e) an authorised officer.

Item 12: CEO Report

The CEO provided a brief overview of the main workstreams ongoing. The publishing of the Strategy Statement is a priority in the coming period in addition to further recruitment.



An Rialálaí Agraibhia Agri-Food Regulator

Item 13: For Noting

- (i) The www.agrifoodregulator.ie website report was noted.
- (ii) Board training proposal - Governance training for Board Members is scheduled for 4 July in advance of the next Board Meeting.

Item 10: AOB

No other business.

Next Board meeting

The Board noted that the next Board meeting would take place on 4 July 2024 at 13.30.

The Chairperson thanked everyone for their participation and contributions.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING