An Rialálaí Agraibhia
Agri-Food Regulator

Note of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Board of the Agri-Food Regulator which took place on 10 July 2025 at 12.15pm - Boardroom, Agri-Food Regulator's Office, Backweston Campus, Celbridge, Co Kildare, Ireland, W23 X3P

In attendance	**Board of the Agri-Food Regulator:** - Joe Healy, Chair - Karen Brosnan - John Comer - Margaret Dineen - Elaine Donohue - Grace McCullen - Angus Woods **Agri-Food Regulator:** - Niamh Lenehan, CEO - Aiden Kelly, Mel Hall, Robert Levins (Item 7) - Robert Levins (Item 9) - Lisa Evers (minute-taker)

Item 1: Opening by Chair
Apologies – Paul Brophy

Item 2: Conflict(s) of Interest
There were no conflicts of interest noted.

Item 3: Approval of Minutes of last Board Meeting Minutes of the meeting on 9 May 2025 were approved.

Item 4: Approval of Board Meeting Notes for Publishing The Board approved the note of 21 March meeting for publishing.

Item 5: Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)

The ARC agreed to provide further detail to the Board at its next meeting regarding the direction to be given to the Regulator's procured service in respect of the detail and structure of management accounts and reporting on variances.

The Board previously agreed that Crowleys DFK would provide support (as part of the services already procured by the Regulator) to the ARC for the next year in order to help the Committee further establish itself.

It was noted that the Agri-Food Regulator published a notice inviting expressions of interest for the role of independent external member on its Audit and Risk Committee on 23 June with a closing date of 31 July.

Item 6: Office Accommodation - Proposed Works

Board approval was requested for the Order of Magnitude of Cost (OMC) regarding the proposed accommodation capital work. The Board discussed the documents before it and the proposed works. It was noted that the plans take into consideration futureproofing the office accommodation in the context where additional staff resources are being sought by the Regulator.

The Board approved the OMC for submission to the Office of Public Works.

Item 7: Workforce Planning

Aiden Kelly, Mel Hall and Robert Levins attended for this item.

The draft of the Strategic Workforce Plan was provided in advance to the Board. It is the intention that the Plan will be submitted to the Department along with the Regulator's budgetary request for 2026.

The Board approved the Strategic Workforce Plan 2025 subject to inclusion of updated graphics on the proposed structure and a proof-read.

Item 8: Budgets 2025 & 2026

Aiden Kelly attended for this item.

Details were provided to the Board in advance of the meeting regarding the spend to date in 2025 in addition to projected spend to end of the year and for 2026.

There was a general discussion on a number of the line items with projected costs in 2026. The Board agreed that a note should be added to a number of the line items in respect of the budget request for 2026 in order to provide more detail for the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. It is intended that the Strategic Workforce Plan will be submitted with the budget 2026 documentation in addition to a request to the Minister for a meeting regarding the 2026 budget.

Item 9: Update from Price & Market Data Analysis team

Rob Levins attended for this item.

Mr. Levins provided an overview of work ongoing in the team with respect to a proposed data request in a primary production sector. The Board also noted that work is ongoing to leverage Power Bi for the development of interactive reports in the egg/poultry, horticulture and dairy sectors.

Item 10: Policy for Funding of Academic Fees

It was noted that the policy with associated forms presented to the Board were relatively standard across the public service.

The policy was approved by the Board.

Item 11: CEO Update

The CEO provided a summary of the written update provided to the Board in advance of the meeting.

Item 12: For Noting

The Agri-Food Regulator website analytics report was noted.

Item 13: AOB

- The Board had a discussion on the Regulator's inaugural conference in May and agreed the conference was a success overall with valuable learnings for any future events. The Board congratulated the efforts of the staff in bringing the conference to fruition.
- It was noted that further work needs to be carried out by the Board with respect to the Board evaluation exercise initiated at the Board's meeting on 19 May.
- It was noted that the Executive plans to conduct this year's primary producer survey in-house. It is intended that the survey will be live for a number of weeks in September.

The next Board meeting will occur on 5 September.

This concluded the meeting.