

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

Minutes of the meeting of the Farm Strategy Committee held on 23 May 2019 at 10.00 in the Boardroom.

Present:	Dr D Llewellyn Mr S Kirby Dr J Donaldson Mr R Hooper Prof P Mills Mr C Ellis Dr G Milburn Mr C Bailey Mrs R Reeves Mrs L Furey Mr C Bailey Mr M Roach	Chairman
In attendance:	Dr C E Baxter Mr R Heath Mrs S Vinall	Clerk to the Governors Minute Secretary
Apologies:	Dr A Wilcox Mrs C Snell	

Members were reminded to update their entry in the Register of Interests as necessary.

18/22 Minutes

Approved: the minutes of the Farm Strategy Committee Meeting held on 6 February 2019 (18/12/18/21)

18/23 Matters Arising

Received: a report from the University Secretary.

- Noted:
- i) that Carwyn Ellis would meet with Mark Rutter and update the Committee on the impact of the Agri-Epi Smart Dairy Project at the next meeting; **CAE**
 - ii) that Richard Hooper and Scott Kirby would meet to discuss the possibility of for local farmers collecting disposed slurry; **RH/SK**
 - iii) that a meeting was to be arranged to discuss the current farm forecast; **DGL, LF, SK, SF**
 - iv) that good press coverage had been received for the Hands Free Farm Project ;

18/24 Risk Management

Considered: a report from the University Secretary on risk items monitored by the Committee.

- Noted:
- i) that H1N1 actions were in place;
 - ii) that plans to manage asbestos panels in the Farm Workshop had been agreed ;
 - iii) that Vet led training for Dairy Unit staff was taking place on a regular basis;

- iv) that appropriate signage around the farm continued to be maintained;
- v) that there were currently two vacancies to be filled on the Farm and Facebook advertisements were to be considered; **CEB/JG**
- vi) that the issue of water was to be added to the risk register combined under the slurry item.

18/25 **Farm Management Accounts (Grass and Arable)**

Considered:

- i) the Farm Management accounts (Grass and Arable) for the period to 30th April 2019;
- ii) a progress report on the Annual Operating Plans for the University Farm: Dairy Unit, Young Stock/Sheep and Arable Enterprises.

Noted:

- i) that the April 2019 farm accounts reported a loss of £39k versus a budgeted contribution for the year to date of £5k giving an adverse variance of £44k;
- ii) that non-commercial income less costs were favourable to budget due to slightly higher rents compared to budget;
- iii) that commercial income is £63k ahead of budget;
- iv) that maize sold in April totalled £52k which was not budgeted with the farm capitalising on good prices at the time;
- vii) that milk sales are £10k favourable to budget;
- viii) that the quarterly stock take had taken place in April confirming 56k more stock than at the start of the year;
- ix) that commercial other operating expenses were £123k adverse to budget for the year to date;
- x) that contracting charges of £53k had not been budgeted for;
- xi) that repairs and renewals costs were adverse to budget by £34k due to increased maintenance needs in the milking parlour;
- xii) that depreciation was adverse to budget by £58k due to increased capital budget carry forward from 2017/18;
- xiii) that the main dairy conception rate was 34%
- xiv) that the Vice-Chancellor thanked the Farm team for their hard work during a time of staffing challenges;

18/26 **Pig Unit**

Considered:

- i) the Pig Unit accounts for the period to 30 April 2019;
- ii) a Pig Unit update;
- iii) a progress report on the annual operating plan for the Pig Unit.

Noted:

- i) that the Pig Unit accounts to 30th April 2019 showed a contribution before slurry management charges of £24k for the first 9 months of the year. Slurry charges were £12.k resulting in a net contribution of £12k;
- ii) that income for the first 9 months was ahead of budget by £19k;
- iii) that other operating expenditure for the year to date was £18k driven by higher feed cost prices as a result of price fluctuations reflecting uncertain trade conditions;

- iv) that pig sales were higher than budgeted at 4,725 vs 3,718.

18/27 Animal Production Welfare and Veterinary Science/Crop and Environmental Science Departments - Operating Plans 2018/19

Received: a progress report on the Annual Operating Plans for the APWVS Sheep Unit, APWVS Beef Unit and CERC.

- Noted:
- i) that the Sheep Unit had once again been well used by students for both teaching and research with production of meat for sale being a secondary consideration;
 - ii) that production rates for the Sheep Unit had been 1.5 lambs per ewe;
 - iii) that ewe mortality stood at 2.9% against a target of 5%;
 - iv) that there had recently been some staff changes within the Beef Unit. Discussions for a replacement Reader were in hand with ABP;
 - v) that production targets continued to exceed performance targets;
 - vi) that calf mortality was 6% which is below the national average of 8%;
 - vii) that a meeting to agree land area was due to take place next week;
 - viii) that a new trials management platform was now being used;

18/28 Research Projects

Received: an oral report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on new/current research projects involving the Farm.

- Noted:
- i) that a large number of bids had been received with £5.6m awaiting decision;
 - ii) that confidential discussions about possible collaboration with another HEI was ongoing;
 - iii) that accommodating the Hands Free Farm was a key strategic imperative. It was recognised that this would be challenging and that there was a need for the Farm Manager to ensure he kept in touch with the HFF team;
 - iv) that Oaklands are reviewing their use of the FACCO building due to colony production changes. At this point it was not yet known if they intended to re-stock or continue to use the building for other purposes. In the meantime a reduced rental had been agreed as the separate barn facility had already been returned to the University for use as a storage area, replacing the Porter's Store.

18/29 Any Other Business

- Noted:
- i) that a meeting was to be held to discuss Vet provision for the farm including Home Office requirements. **DGL/CEB/SK/CAE**
 - ii) that a report on the work of the APWVS Poultry Research Group would be required for the next meeting and would thereafter be a standing item. **CAE**

18/30 Date of Next Meeting: 11 October 2019 at 10.00am