

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

Minutes of the meeting of the Farm Strategy Committee held on 17 October 2019 at 10.00 in the Temperton Room.

Present: Dr D Llewellyn Chairman
Dr J Donaldson
Mr C Ellis
Mrs L Furey
Mr R Hooper
Dr G Milburn
Prof P Mills
Mrs C Snell
Dr A Wilcox

In attendance: Dr C E Baxter Clerk to the Governors
Mr R Heath
Mrs S Vinall Minute Secretary

Apologies: Mr C Bailey
Mr S Kirby

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

19/01 Minutes

Approved: the minutes of the Farm Strategy Committee Meeting held on 23 May 2019 (18/22/18/30)

19/02 Matters Arising

Received: a report from the University Secretary.

- Noted:
- i) that Carwyn Ellis would discuss the paddock area of the Agri Epi Smart Dairy with Mark Hall; **CE/MH**
 - ii) that off-site slurry storage discussions were still ongoing and the Committee would be updated as progress was made; **RH/SK**
 - iii) that the farm forecast meeting had taken place;
 - iv) that the two farm vacancies had now been filled;
 - v) that the new veterinary arrangements had been agreed and permissions had been granted from the Home Office;

19/03 Risk Management

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

- Noted:
- i) that farm staff had been briefed on biosecurity requirements;
 - ii) that the remaining asbestos in the Farm had been covered with appropriate boarding to ensure safety. A mobile extraction unit was also in place suitable for small amounts of welding;
 - iii) that appropriate Health & Safety notices were regularly maintained;

19/04 **Farm Management Accounts (Grass and Arable)**

- Considered:
- i) the Farm Management accounts (Grass and Arable) for the period to 31st July 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 July 2019 farm accounts reported a profit of £62k versus a budgeted contribution for the year to date of £247k giving an adverse variance of £186k;
 - ii) that commercial income was £173k ahead of budget;
 - iii) that maize sold in April totalled £52k which was not budgeted with the farm capitalising on good prices at the time;
 - iv) that wheat sales were favourable by £50k due to the higher volumes sold;
 - v) that subsidy payments were favourable by £39k;
 - vi) that milk sales are £10k favourable to budget;
 - vii) that the quarterly stock take had taken place in July confirming £95k less stock than at the start of the year;
 - viii) that commercial other operating expenses were £238k adverse to budget for the year to date;
 - ix) that contracting charges of £69k had not been budgeted for;
 - x) that forage purchases of £30k were not budgeted for but required due to the dry summer in 2018;
 - xi) that commercial wages YTD were favourable by £32k;
 - xii) that repairs and renewals were adverse to budget by £45k mainly due to increased maintenance for the milking parlour;
 - xiii) that fuel costs were ahead of budget by £27k due to volume and price increases;

19/05 **Pig Unit**

- Considered:
- i) the Pig Unit accounts for the period to 31 July 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 31 July 2019 showed a contribution before slurry management charges of £86k for the full year. Slurry charges were £16.5k from Cedar Energy and £33.5k recharged from the Farm resulting in a net contribution of £36k;
 - ii) that income for the year was below budget by £20k;
 - iii) that other operating expenditure for the year to date was £30k over budget due to higher feed cost prices as a result of price fluctuations reflecting uncertain trading conditions;

- iv) that slurry charges of £34k were incurred from the Farm due to repairs to the main pump which had not been budgeted for;

19/06 **Animal Production Welfare and Veterinary Science/Crop and Environmental Science Departments - Operating Plans 2019/20**

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

- 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 1.84 lambs per ewe;
 - iii) that ewe mortality stood at 4% against a target of 5%;
 - iv) that the Beef Unit had provided resources for 2 HRP students. This was down on previous years due to the lack of a beef unit Head of Research;
 - v) that the Beef Unit continued to be used for undergraduate teaching for tutorials and short courses;
 - vi) that calf mortality was 6% which is below the national average of 8%;
 - vii) that a new Natural England strategy would be formed over the winter as crops drilled in 2019 failed to establish well;
 - viii) that all land requirements except maize had been agreed;
 - ix) that CRD (HSE) were on site in 2 weeks to carry out an audit;
 - x) that a Massey Ferguson tractor had been purchased at a significant discount;
 - xi) that 17 research papers had been published from Poultry Unit research;
 - xii) that the Poultry Unit continued to support undergraduate and PhD students.

19/07 **Research Projects**

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

Noted: that since the last meeting 14 bids had been successful totalling £710k;

19/08 **Any Other Business**

- Noted:
Climate
- i) that the NFU was hosting a symposium for universities on 27 November on Change which David Nuttall would be attending;
 - ii) that the Vice-Chancellor had met with students to discuss changes in consumer choice and behaviour. A further meeting was to be arranged:

DGL/CEB/DN

19/09 **Date of Next Meeting:** 21 May 2020 at 10.00am