

afbi

AGRI-FOOD
& BIOSCIENCES
INSTITUTE

AFBI Business Plan
2019-2020

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1.0 Preface from the Chief Executive

Advancing the local and global agri-food sectors through scientific excellence

I am pleased to present AFBI's Business Plan for 2019/20 which sets out our key work priorities for the year to deliver the second year of our Corporate Plan for 2018-22.



The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) is Northern Ireland's largest provider of agri-food science. It provides vital support to an industry which is a key economic driver within Northern Ireland while delivering wider societal benefit in areas such as environmental protection and food safety.

As a non-departmental public body (NDPB) sponsored by DAERA, AFBI science plays a crucial role in providing the underpinning statutory and analytical testing, research and development work, emergency response capability and expert scientific advice required to support the various work programmes of our sponsoring department and the wider requirements of our agri-food industry.

AFBI science plays a key role in improving agricultural production, helping protect the natural and marine environments and ensuring high standards of animal health, plant health and food safety. Our work underpins, for example, the agri-food industry's ability to trade national and international while helping improve production efficiency and environmental sustainability. In line with our Vision of "Advancing the local and global agri-food sectors through scientific excellence", AFBI collaborates extensively and increasingly with other scientific institutes national and international to ensure that our science remains visionary while seeking to meet the many local and global challenges that the agri-food sector faces.

These include the global challenges of climate change, disease emergence, antimicrobial resistance, food security and environmental protection.

AFBI's Corporate Plan for 2018-2022 sets out our aims to deliver for society, the economy and the environment, and to meet the needs of our customers and partners in an ever more efficient and effective manner. To achieve these aims, our Corporate Plan also outlines how we, with the support of sponsoring Department, plan to invest in our people and infrastructure to provide innovative, efficient and effectively service delivery.

Significant progress on our Corporate Plan aims and objectives has been made during 2018/19 including preparatory work in relation to new IT systems and the progression of a number of estates projects. This business plan sets out the key outcomes for year two of the Corporate Plan and the associated measures to allow us to monitor and report on progress.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S McDowell', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dr Stanley McDowell - CEO

2.0 Who we are

As a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) established under the Agriculture (Northern Ireland) Order, 2004, AFBI undertakes an assigned work programme on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). AFBI science plays a crucial role in providing the underpinning statutory and analytical testing, research and development work, emergency response capability and expert scientific advice required to support the various work programmes of our sponsoring department. Our work also underpins a number of DAERA policy initiatives through the provision of scientific evidence, socio-economic analyses and the provision of specialist scientific advice across the range of agri-food and associated disciplines. A number of other government departments and agencies also utilise AFBI scientific services to fulfil their statutory and other science responsibilities.

At a wider level, AFBI plays a significant role in helping Northern Ireland achieve a number of the Executive's draft Programme for Government (PfG) outcomes. Our work to improve the efficiency and sustainability of agri-food production contributes to having a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy while our work on the natural and marine environments contributes to the outcome on living and working sustainably while protecting the environment. Animal health and human health are inextricably linked and our work in this area and on the microbiological and chemical safety of our food contributes to ensuring that we can all enjoy food that is safe and which contributes to the PfG outcome on enjoying long, healthy and active lives.

In addition to our work for government, AFBI also delivers a portfolio of scientific work to a wide range of local, national and international research funders and other customers. As part of such projects and programmes, AFBI engages with the international research community in providing scientific solutions to global challenges such as disease control, climate change, food security, and environmental protection. In May 2018, we announced a strategic alliance with Queen's University Belfast which has further strengthened our local, national and international science linkages. To help ensure that our science has real impact on the agri-food industry, AFBI collaborates closely with DAERA's College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) in transferring science and technology to the local agri-food industry; strengthening and maximising this collaboration is one of the key objectives of our current Corporate Plan.

Globalisation, potential changes in subsidy support mechanisms and a new generation of consumers with very diverse and conflicting demands will continue to drive changes in how we produce food. The opportunities for the local agri-food sector to respond by producing healthy, versatile and safe food, requires on-going investment in science to generate the evidence base to improve competitiveness and drive innovation while helping ensure that we meet our environmental obligations. As Northern Ireland's largest provider of agri-food science, AFBI is committed to providing internationally competitive science of local relevance and impact to meet both the needs of agri-food industry while delivering wider societal benefit in areas such as environmental protection and food safety.

What we do

AFBI's main work areas are to lead improvements in the agri-food industry; protecting animal, plant and human health and enhancing the natural and marine environments.

Science across these areas falls under either research and development or statutory analysis activities to DAERA, other government departments and industry bodies. As a NDPB AFBI plays a key role, in particular with regard to the environment and animal and plant health, informing DAERA policy enabling future regulation and legislation to be scientifically evidenced based.

With regard to leading improvement in the Agri-food industry, AFBI's work focuses on bringing forward and testing new strategies and ways of working across land and animal based agri-food enterprises. Such activity includes AFBI's grass breeding programmes, research into soil health, strategies to optimise grass growth, quality and utilisation as well as animal performance within sustainable systems. In partnership with the Centre of Innovation and Excellence for Livestock, the AFBI Hillsborough farm is now highly instrumented to look to the future of strategically integrating precision technologies with livestock farming.

To complement the supply chain approach of AFBI's expertise, AFBI also provides cutting-edge expertise in food quality research and novel food processing procedures. Our extensive food sensory evaluation facilities and knowledge base benefits Northern Ireland producers and assists in product development and in enhancing consumer choice.

Within AFBI's activities to enhance the natural and marine environment, key areas of focus include research to improve the water quality of rivers and loughs across NI as well as air quality. Work on the bio-circular economy is also of importance as it valorises on farm waste streams for the benefit of the environment. AFBI's marine science program is concentrated on the Irish Sea and its extensive fish stocks. Management of fish stocks involves close collaboration between all the EU countries engaged in the Irish Sea area. Our research vessel is an excellent platform to study fisheries and the wider marine ecosystem.

AFBI's integrated work programmes are underpinned by expert economists and statisticians. These programmes provide critical support to ensure that Northern Ireland's agri-food industry remains highly competitive.

With regard to protecting animal, plant and public health, AFBI provides an animal disease surveillance and diagnostic service for government, private veterinary practitioners and farmers. This surveillance underpins the development of DAERA policy on disease control, and helps to protect the high health status of Northern Ireland livestock.

The high plant health status of Northern Ireland is underpinned by AFBI's plant scientists. They support the Northern Ireland agri-food sector by providing statutory testing, breeding and specialist advice in pasture, horticultural and agricultural crops.

The Institute also contributes to improved animal health and welfare and public protection through its internationally acclaimed research and development into animal diseases and food-borne pathogens.

In seeking to protect both the consumer and Northern Ireland's trade in food and animals, AFBI carries out a large volume of analytical work in detecting chemical residues, microbiological pathogens and toxins that pose a potential risk to human health. It encompasses international reference laboratories in several of these key areas.

United Kingdom's (UK) Exit from the European Union (EU)

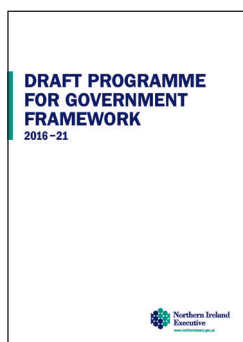
The UK's planned exit from the EU, on 29 March 2019 presents the Northern Ireland agri-food industry with its most significant challenge for a generation. Irrespective of the ultimate outcome, there is a need to increase the efficiency of production within an environmental sustainability context. AFBI can assist in providing the science and expertise to support farmers and agri-food businesses to achieve the necessary changes.

However, in advance of this, AFBI have prepared by considering the implications of the UK's exit from the EU. Continued access to supply chains is critical to ensuring service delivery to DAERA and other customers and continues to be closely monitored.

3.0 AFBI's Vision, Mission and Outcomes

AFBI's Corporate Plan for 2018-22 sets out a future which builds on and maximises the potential of AFBI's wide-ranging scientific expertise to deliver key outcomes for DAERA and the local agri food sector. It is focused on addressing shared future challenges, ever greater alignment with industry, strategic partnering with the University sector and College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) and closer relationships with key stakeholders.

AFBI's vision, mission and 3 strategic outcomes for the period 2018-22 are set out in figure 1 overleaf and are underpinned by AFBI's values and associated behaviours set out at Annex 2. This annual business plan sets out the targets and activities that will be undertaken in year two (2019/20) of this delivery period, to move AFBI towards the achievement of these strategic outcomes. This plan also sets out how performance and progress against these targets will be measured and reported through a series of Key Performance Indicators.



AFBI's strategic direction is aligned with that of DAERA and the NI Executive's overall draft Programme for Government. AFBI's outcomes are therefore aligned to the Department's four draft strategic outcomes for the period 2016-2020 and delivery of DAERA's Vision of 'A living, working, active landscape, valued by everyone.'

Through its broad range of scientific work, AFBI will support the delivery of DAERA's draft outcomes. AFBI will in turn assist in progress towards the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy, the Northern Ireland Executive's Draft Programme for Government outcomes and the Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Good business planning is at the heart of strong governance, effective management and financial viability and requires understanding and ownership by all staff across AFBI. As such, AFBI's Strategic Outcomes and business targets are effectively cascaded down through the organisation. Cascading represents translating and aligning AFBI's Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the Corporate level down to Divisional and Branch level and finally, to the individual level through the Performance Management and Appraisal Process.

Good plans need in turn to be supported by effective monitoring and reporting of performance at each level of the organisation and this is assisting in the development of a strong performance culture where everyone understands where they fit into helping to achieve AFBI's objectives.

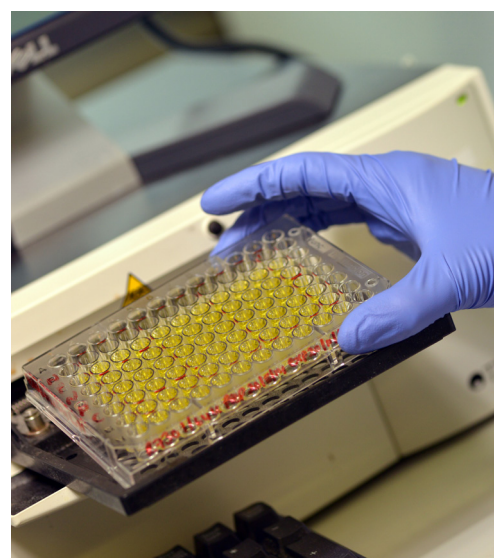
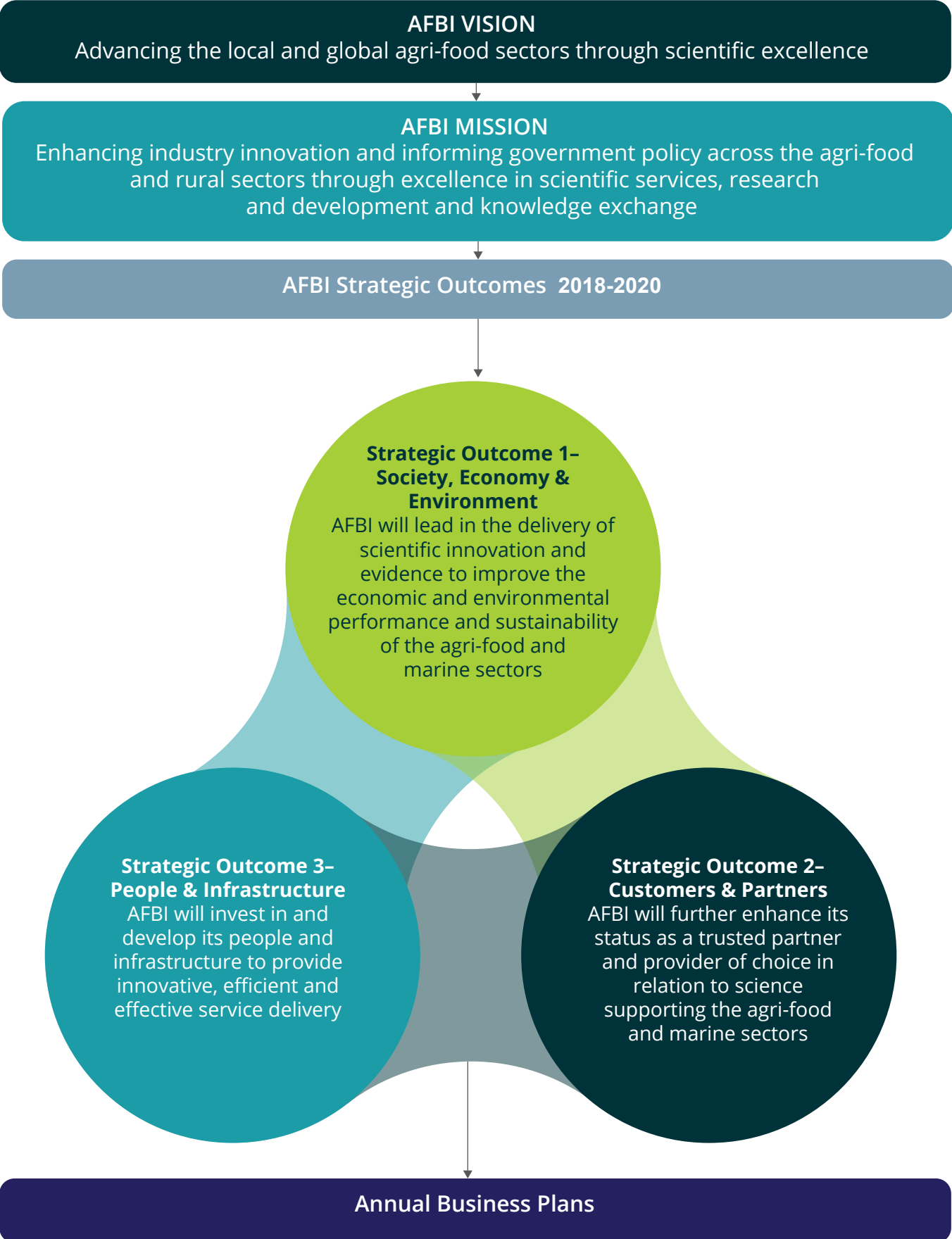


Figure 1 – AFBI Vision, Mission and Strategic Outcomes



AFBI Review

In 2018/19, DAERA completed a ‘tailored review’ of AFBI in line with Cabinet Office guidance. The outcomes of the review were positive confirming the need for the services provided by AFBI and a strong reputation with stakeholders. A joint action plan is being developed with DAERA to implement the recommendations which will be overseen by the DAERA and the AFBI Board. The recommendations have also been mapped to AFBI’s outcomes in the Corporate Plan and a number of additional actions are being taken forward and are reflected in this year’s business plan. This will include working to develop the relationship between AFBI and DAERA into a delivery partnership in line with the set of principles and standards set out in the Cabinet Office’s code of good practice guidance¹.

Progress towards delivering the Corporate Plan

AFBI’s Corporate Plan 2018-22 set out the key outcomes AFBI aims to deliver by 2022. Given that this business plan represents year 2 in the delivery of the Corporate Plan, and while AFBI will undertake a more formal review of progress at the end of year 2, it is useful to look at the progress made towards the strategic outcomes. Within the Corporate Plan AFBI set out how through working in partnership with DAERA and others we will deliver our strategic outcomes and will seek to measure and demonstrate how we have made a difference by delivering for:

Strategic Outcome	What we will have done by 2022	Progress to date
1. OUR SOCIETY, ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT	<p>We will have established strategic alliances providing interdisciplinary response and maximising impact of AFBI and NI science</p> <p>We will have supported DAERA by making a significant contribution to increase the efficiency and sustainability of the agri-food industry whilst reducing its environmental footprint.</p> <p>We will have maintained an effective Emergency Response Capability to support DAERA</p>	<p>In May 2018 we announced the establishment of a strategic alliance with QUB. A review has been undertaken of potential governance arrangements and KPIs for the alliance identified.</p> <p>An AFBI/CAFRE Strategic Overview Group has been established to allow a planned approach to increasing organisational collaboration.</p> <p>Through AFBI’s research programmes, funding by both DAERA and others, we have produced a wide range of peer review scientific papers as well as interacting with stakeholders to ensure that key messages are disseminated to the industry to drive progress. Key initiatives have included the ‘Soil Sampling and Analysis Scheme’ as well as the ‘Grasscheck’ programme which continues to assist farmers increase grass growth and utilisation.</p> <p>AFBI has continued to deliver on ERC commitments to DAERA ensuring that all ERC plans have been reviewed and tested in year.</p>

¹Cabinet Office - Partnerships with arm’s length bodies: code of good practice 2017.

Strategic Outcome	What we will have done by 2022	Progress to date
2. OUR CUSTOMERS & PARTNERS	<p>We will have contributed to protecting NI's animal and plant health status and supported DAERA in tackling Bovine TB</p> <p>We will be seen as trusted partner to government and the industry</p>	<p>To date AFBI has delivered 99.6% of tests to all customers to agreed time and quality standards.</p> <p>AFBI has also participated in the AHWNI and AHI technical working and implementation groups on endemic disease control.</p> <p>AFBI has also ensured Satisfactory outcomes from all international audits carried out in 2018/19 to facilitate new market opportunities.</p> <p>Overall AFBI's work programme from DAERA and non DAERA customers has grown over the past year which provides evidence of AFBI's status as a trusted partner. The AFBI review affirmed this and the increase in collaborative contracts demonstrates AFBI's attractiveness to work with others in industry and academia.</p>
3. OUR PEOPLE & INFRASTRUCTURE	<p>We will have invested in our staff to ensure a skilled, engaged and motivated workforce</p> <p>We will have invested to improve our systems and infrastructure to ensure we meet challenges</p>	<p>During the year AFBI achieved the NICS targets in relation to absenteeism and took forward the actions resulting from the 2017 Staff Survey and focus groups.</p> <p>Progress has been made in terms of progressing the acquisition of a Business management system to effectively support AFBI's operations.</p> <p>In terms of key infrastructure, the VSD main building project, in line with project plan milestones. DoF approval was received in year for the acquisition of a replacement for the Research Vessel Corystes. Plans have also progressed for the AFBI Hillsborough and Loughgall sites.</p>

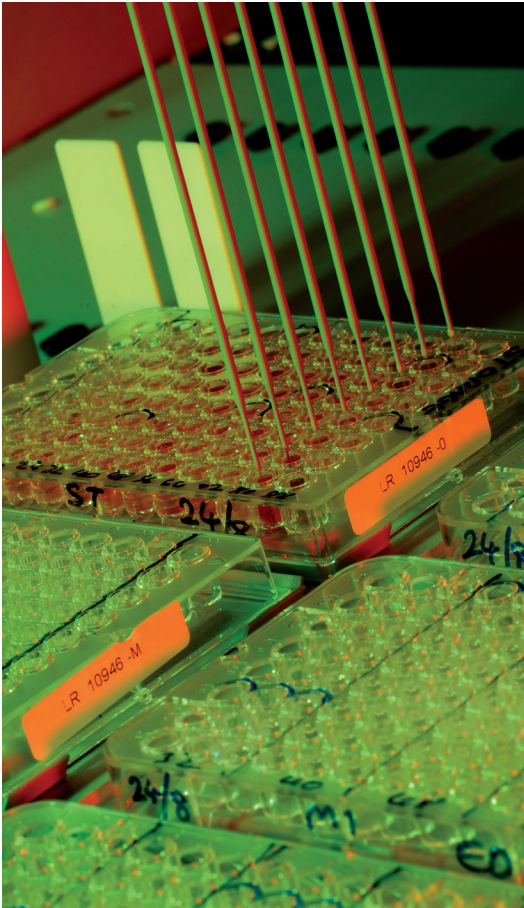
AFBI Business Targets for 2019/20

To deliver AFBI's strategic outcomes for 2018-22, annual business plans are produced setting out in detail the business targets for each year of the delivery period and in turn the key performance indicators to measure AFBI's progress towards these goals, as illustrated below:

Figure 2 – Linking Strategic Outcomes in Corporate Plan to Annual KPIs



The following pages set out the key business targets and KPIs for 2019/20 and these are summarised at Appendix 2 to illustrate alignment with DAERA’s Strategic Outcomes.



4.0 AFBI Business Targets and KPIs for 2019/20

AFBI STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1- SOCIETY, ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT

AFBI will lead in the delivery of scientific innovation and evidence to improve the economic and environmental performance and sustainability of the agri-food and marine sectors

Quantifying and communicating the impact of AFBI science

In order to identify and evaluate the outcomes of AFBI science, it is fundamental that the Institute can demonstrate to stakeholders the value and impact of the science delivered by AFBI, in terms of the benefits to the agri-food industry and policy makers both locally and globally. It is also key that AFBI effectively communicates and show cases these impacts to sustain and grow the Institute. In 2019/20, AFBI will continue to communicate the key impacts of AFBI's science both locally and globally, while further strengthening our measurement and assessment of science impact through revised science support functions.

AFBI will also work closely with CAFRE and industry bodies to seek enhanced uptake of innovation, by the industry and improve efficiency, resilience and sustainability.

Scientific Delivery

In 2019/20, AFBI will embed a programme-based approach to science within an updated divisional and branch structure. These revised approaches and structures will aim to maximise the effectiveness of science delivery, while increasing the emphasis on forward planning and future science strategy. Such an approach will also provide a greater ability to develop a co-ordinated response to address local and global challenges while maximising our multidisciplinary capability

We will seek increase stakeholder input to achieve better alignment of AFBI's science with stakeholder priorities and to ensure that AFBI has sufficient 'critical mass' to make an impact.

Progressing Strategic Alliances

AFBI recognises the need for formal strategic alliances to develop enhanced interdisciplinary science programmes. Alliances between a research institute and an academic university have been shown to greatly enhance the capacity and capability of both parties and has resulted in highly competitive organisations. In order to harness this opportunity AFBI aims to create globally competitive alliances in Northern Ireland to support solutions to the complex problem of delivering safe, nutritious, sustainable and authentic food supplies to the world's growing population against a backdrop of climate change. Development of these alliances will enable AFBI and local universities to reconnect the research and innovation pipeline from basic discovery science through to applied and translational research.

An important step was taken towards this delivery approach, with the launch of a Strategic Alliance with Queens University Belfast in May 2018. To ensure that effective governance arrangements are in place for this alliance, a range of KPIs to measure the impact and outcomes of this alliance have been established and will be monitored and reported to the respective Boards of both organisations in 2019/20.

Closer Collaboration and Partnership

In line with the findings of the DAERA Review of AFBI, an AFBI/CAFRE Strategic Overview Group has been established and further work will be taken forward in 2019/20 to maximise the potential synergies through a closer and more planned approach to partnership and collaboration.

AFBI Strategic Outcome 1 – Society, Economy & Environment

AFBI will lead in the delivery of scientific innovation and evidence to improve the economic and environmental performance and sustainability of the agri-food and marine sectors

Delivering Outcomes - What we will do in 2019/20

Outcome 1

Through scientific innovation and development of new technologies AFBI will improve the economic and environmental performance of the agri-food and marine sectors, thereby informing and protecting society.

Outcome 2

Strategic alliances providing interdisciplinary response and maximising impact of NI science on local and global challenges.

Outcome 3

Enhanced uptake of innovation by industry and processors improving efficiency and resilience.

KPI 1

AFBI will publish a Research / Science Impact Publication which will profile the impact and benefit of AFBI science by 31 March 2020

KPI 2

Progress the AFBI Organisational Design to include implementation of science programmes.

KPI 3

Implement agreed governance arrangements and deliver on agreed 2019/20 AFBI/QUB strategic alliance KPIs by 31 March 2020

KPI 4

Following establishment of AFBI/CAFRE Strategic Overview group progress the AFBI/CAFRE collaboration.

AFBI STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2- CUSTOMERS & PARTNERS

AFBI will further enhance its status as a trusted supplier and provider of choice in relation to science in supporting the agri-food and marine sectors

Delivering for DAERA and other customers

AFBI scientists operate to internationally recognised standards and have a track record of providing evidence-based scientific advice to government policy makers. AFBI is the partner/ contractor of choice for DAERA and many local, national and international bodies. A major aim is to support industry by providing a centre for diverse specialist advice and facilities in agri-food.

AFBI will continue to give priority to the delivery of the Assigned Work Programme (AWP) for DAERA in accordance with agreed budget, time and quality standards. Performance indicators have been set and agreed for the delivery of statutory, diagnostic/surveillance and analytical testing, as well as Evidence & Innovation (E&I) and other R&D projects. AFBI will also monitor the level of customer satisfaction expressed by the relevant DAERA policy areas and respond where required improvements to service delivery are identified.

AFBI will also maintain agreed emergency response capability and respond to emergency situations in support of DAERA and other government departments with which it has service level agreements, ensuring that its contingency plans are up to date and tested. AFBI will also further develop and improve its business continuity arrangements to increase resilience and mitigate the impact on customers should an interruption occur.

Growing AFBI's profile locally and globally

AFBI will maintain its profile as a world-leading provider of scientific research through sustained participation in international research consortia and collaborative partnerships with research organisations in many countries and a high output of internationally recognised peer-reviewed scientific publications.

During 2019/20, AFBI will continue to build on the positive results achieved from the peer review process to date and implement the recommendations made by the peer review panel. Quality is also key to AFBI science and to maintaining our standing. We will continue to actively manage this through our Quality Management Systems to retain our ISO 17025 accreditation and ISO 9001 certification while expanding coverage of the accreditation to other work areas within AFBI.

Strengthening the image and reputation of NI produced food

In seeking to protect both the consumer and Northern Ireland's trade in food and animals, AFBI carries out a large volume of analytical work in detecting chemical residues, microbiological pathogens and toxins that pose a potential risk to human health. In 2019/20 AFBI will target successful outcomes from all international audits carried out to facilitate new market opportunities for NI Industry.

AFBI will continue to provide cutting-edge expertise in food quality research and novel food processing procedures. Our extensive food sensory evaluation facilities and knowledge base benefit Northern Ireland producers and assist in product development and in enhancing consumer choices.

Delivering on our research contract commitments and commercial income portfolio

AFBI's NDPB status allows the organisation to undertake work for research funders other than DAERA and for commercial organisations. Such work is complimentary and synergistic to our DAERA work programme and is critical to maintaining scientific capacity in many areas and enhances our overall delivery for DAERA, the agri-food industry and wider society.

In 2019/20, AFBI will continue to actively manage its commercial portfolio, meeting the needs of its local, national and international research funders and other customers. Such delivery will be supported by a strengthened research support function and increased targeting of future income streams through a variety of sources including INTERREG, the EU Horizon 2020 Programme, UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies, other R&D funding organisations and a range of public sector and commercial customers.



AFBI STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2- Customers & Partners

AFBI will further enhance its status as a trusted supplier and provider of choice in relation to science in supporting the agri-food and marine sectors

Delivering Outcomes - What we will do in 2019/20

Outcome 4

Enhanced relationships with customers and partners based on reputation of AFBI science.

Outcome 5

Strengthen image (reputation) of NI produced food based on AFBI science.

Outcome 6

Grow AFBI science profile / brand both locally and globally.

Outcome 7

Increase research contract and commercial income portfolio.

KPI 5 - at least 95% of statutory and analytical tests delivered to DAERA and external customers within agreed timescales and quality standards.

KPI 9 - Overall satisfactory outcomes from all international audits carried out in 2019/20 to facilitate new market opportunities.

KPI 12 - Maintain AFBI's international scientific standing by publishing a minimum of 100 peer reviewed scientific papers.

KPI 13 - Publish staff involvement and recognition in international committees and networks of excellence.

KPI 6 - at least 90% of research projects completed for DAERA and external funders within budget tolerances.

KPI 10 - Participate in industry technical working and implementation groups on the control of endemic diseases.

KPI 7 - All Emergency Response Capability (ERC) Contingency plans reviewed, updated and tested in-year in line with DAERA requirements.

KPI 11 - Successfully retain ISO accreditation and extend remit covered under the quality standards.

KPI 14 - Deliver non GIA income in line with agreed budget tolerances.

KPI 8 - Actions from the Review of BCM delivered in line with action plan.

AFBI Outcome 3 PEOPLE & INFRASTRUCTURE

AFBI will invest in and develop its people and infrastructure to provide innovative, efficient and effective service delivery

People

Excellence in its people remains fundamental to delivering AFBI's objectives and AFBI will continue to invest in staff as the future of the organisation. AFBI will continue to develop a strong business culture for its scientists so that they are better equipped to manage the financial and governance aspects of science. AFBI's continued success is dependent on retaining and attracting the best scientists and staff in an increasingly competitive environment. This aspiration is fostered by developing individuals' careers through regular appraisal, the provision of development opportunities, excellent terms and conditions and a range of work/life balance practices.

In 2019/20, AFBI will develop a People Strategy designed to support the delivery of AFBI's Corporate Plan 2018-22 and future science ambitions.

In 2019/20 AFBI will also continue to implement an action plan to increase staff engagement following the completion of an employee survey and a series of focus groups.

The nature of science has changed enormously in recent years with a multidisciplinary approach to solving local and global problems increasingly and almost universally being required. Revised structures and the embedding of a programme based approach within the organisation will also be accompanied by an increased emphasis on encouraging cross-divisional and multidisciplinary working. This will maximise the opportunities to share scientific knowledge across AFBI and in turn enhance staff opportunities for professional development and career progression.

AFBI are on course to achieve our targeted improvement in absenteeism in 2018/19. AFBI will continue the enhanced programme of employee engagement and robust implementation of performance and absence management in 2019/20 in order to drive further reductions in absenteeism.

Delivering Efficiency & Good Governance

AFBI is committed to ensuring efficiency. Good governance is the bedrock of what we do and is rooted in the strategic direction of the organisation. The Efficiency & Finance Development Plans have been established to ensure that systems development, efficiency and good governance are brought together as a programme of work.

In addition, as part of this programme, AFBI has decided to further develop a Research Support Office by bringing together streams of work and services into a centralised unit. This unit will be responsible for assisting science divisions along with the input of the Corporate Communication team in developing impact analysis as well as reviewing core processes and systems during 19/20 ahead of the investment in new systems. This will also support scientists to secure funding from new opportunities.

In an increasingly competitive environment it is important that AFBI uses technology, systems and benchmarking to ensure that it is not only providing leading edge science but also value for money services to its customers. In terms of an efficiency strategy, as set out within AFBI's Corporate Plan, AFBI will continue to benchmark itself against other organisations delivering a report on unit costs and the benchmarking of corporate costs to DAERA in line with the agreed timelines.

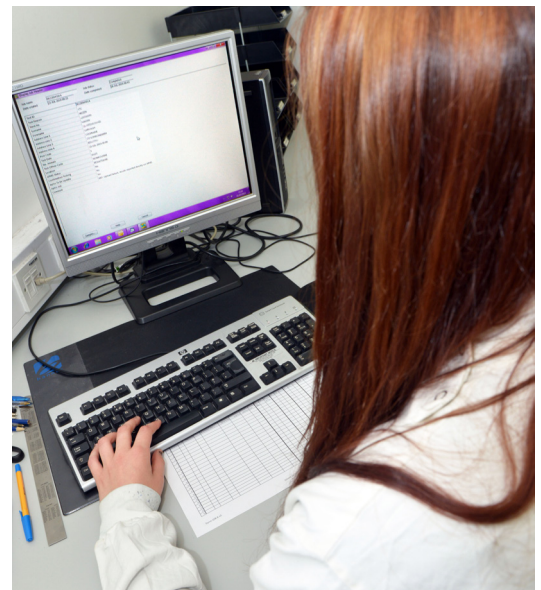
Corporate and Management Information systems

AFBI also face significant digital challenges in ensuring that we provide a technology platform that supports the scientific and corporate functions efficiently and effectively. It is also vital that AFBI has effective and fit for purpose management information systems in place to support corporate and project management within AFBI. These challenges were highlighted in the AFBI Review. In 2019/20 AFBI will continue to progress implementation of its 4 year IT Strategy aligned to the organisation’s overall corporate goals. Specifically in 2019/20 AFBI will progress the procurement of a new AFBI Business Information System and work with DAERA on the project to deliver a new integrated Laboratory Information Management system (LIMs), both of which are critical in helping to support service delivery within AFBI.

In addition, to strengthen information governance within AFBI, we will progress the project to deliver an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) solution across the Institute, with the Finance and Corporate Affairs Division completing the first phase of on-boarding during this period. This will bring AFBI in line with records management standards employed across NICS Departments and multiple public sector Arms’ Length Bodies. In 2019/20, we will progress development of AFBI’s Information Governance & Data Management Strategy, in which we will publish the steps we propose to take to ensure the effective and appropriate management of both scientific and corporate data utilised within the organisation. These will include approaches for addressing data security risks, promoting democratisation of data access, creating a more collaborative organisation and future-proofing data repositories. This will be driven by AFBI’s future science ambitions.

Estates and Infrastructure

DAERA has an ambitious programme of capital investment in the AFBI facilities, with work well underway in relation to a new Animal Health Sciences building on the Stormont site and plans for further significant investments in replacing or upgrading facilities across other parts of the estate. These proposed large-scale capital investments will provide fit for purpose estate and ancillary research platform and improve AFBI’s competitiveness. In 2019/20, AFBI will continue to provide the required science input into the DAERA-led project for the new Animal Health Sciences building, as well as taking forward the development of new beef research and other farm research accommodation facilities at Hillsborough, a strategic outline case for the Loughgall estate and the project for the replacement of the Research Vessel Corystes.



Strategic Outcome 3 – People & Infrastructure

AFBI will invest in and develop its people and infrastructure to provide innovative, efficient and effective service delivery

Delivering Outcomes - What we will do in 2019/20

Outcome 8

Motivated, flexible and engaged staff with the skills to support delivery of AFBI's goals.

Outcome 9

Enhanced IT systems in place meeting the needs of the business.

Outcome 10

Refined benchmarking processes and efficiency targets in place and monitored.

Outcome 11

Clear and agreed AFBI Estates Strategy to provide fit-for-purpose facilities.

KPI 15

Develop the People Strategy to support delivery of Corporate Plan by 31 March 2020.

KPI 16

Achieve combined industrial and non-industrial absenteeism of 7.5 working days or less per Whole Time Equivalent (WTE).

KPI 18

Progress the project for new business and finance systems in line with the project plan milestones.

KPI 19

In conjunction with DAERA progress the project for the replacement Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), in line with project plan milestones.

KPI 21

Annual Unit Costing and Corporate benchmarking reports provided to DAERA by 31 October 2019.

KPI 22

Deliver the action plan as agreed within the finance development plan and deliver year 1 of AFBI's finance efficiency plan by 31 March 2020.

KPI 23

In conjunction with DAERA we will progress projects for :

Replacement Research Vessel

Veterinary Science Main Building

Emissions Building

KPI 17

Achieve 80% completion of performance appraisals by 30 June 2019.

KPI 20

Progress project for implementing an Electronic Document and Records Management system within AFBI in line with project plan.

KPI 23

In conjunction with DAERA we will progress projects for:

AFBI/CAFRE Beef Facilities

Hillsborough Masterplan

Loughgall plan

5.0 AFBI Budget 2019/20

AFBI's Business Plan for 2019-20 is based on a total investment of £65.2m. This includes £44.4m resources allocated by DAERA and self-generated income of £20.8m (commercial income of £14.8m and royalty income of £6m). Investment will be directly aligned to our strategic objectives.

AFBI's budget for 2019-20 is summarised in Table 1, including the DAERA GIA budget allocation.

	2019/20 Budget
EXPENDITURE	£000s
Employment Costs	28,650
Overheads (GAE)	11,980
Programme (operating) costs	12,938
Lease	6,345
Capital	2,200
Depreciation	3,100
Total Expenditure	65,213
INCOME	
Resource	21,642
Capital: Research and Development	11,112
Capital: Recurrent	2,200
Lease	6,345
Depreciation	3,100
Total funding from DAERA	44,399
Commercial income	14,814
Vaccine royalties	6,000
Total Income from other sources	20,814
Total Income	65,213
Surplus	0

5.1 Financial Context

AFBI provides the statutory and surveillance testing, emergency response capability and expertise scientific advice which underpins many of DAERA's programmes of work as well as providing the scientific evidence and innovation to shape policy direction for the agri-food sector. To that end, AFBI is funded by a grant-in-aid budget from the Department.

Further funding is derived from a range of local, national and international science funders and commercial organisations. As well as providing a very necessary source of income, this combination of DAERA and external income sources helps maintain critical scientific capacity and allows collaboration with the international scientific community, which will become increasingly important as the implications of the UK's exit from the EU start to crystallise. This mutually beneficial arrangement is to the advantage of Northern Ireland. This further strengthens our ability to provide strong scientific support to policy development and helps to ensure that any emergency response that is needed will be up to date and effective. This also provides innovation in the agri-food sector to improve production and efficiency, which has both environmental and economic benefits.

Over the last two financial years, AFBI has had success in growing external income sources including securing a number EU Horizon 2020 and Interreg funded projects. Along with the obvious financial benefits, these projects bring with them opportunities to further strengthen and nurture mutually beneficial partnerships with other public and private sector organisations.

We are committed to maintaining and where possible growing non-GIA income. We will closely monitor the funding landscape and adjust our financial forecasts accordingly taking in account any financial uncertainties at either local, national and European levels.

5.2 Budget 2019-20

We are also committed to an efficient use of the resources available to us. AFBI is conscious of its responsibilities towards the taxpayer in the current difficult financial climate and is committed to continuing to seek to become ever more efficient. Through the Efficiency and the Finance Development Plans during 2019/20, AFBI will continue to review its processes and systems to look for efficiencies in the way that we carry out our operations. It will be a challenging financial year, like many public sector bodies, while we seek to maintain services while at the same time manage increasing costs and also seek new funding opportunities.

We will also continue to work with DAERA to advance the planning for the redevelopment and reduction in the AFBI estate. This will not lead to savings in estate costs this year due to the long lead time involved in the development of major capital projects.

5.3 Non-GIA revenue streams

During 2019-20 AFBI will continue to seek R&D funding from a variety of local, national and international research funding bodies and commercial organisations. This will include maximising drawdown of EU Horizon 2020 funding through the submission of innovative scientific research proposals.

Forecasted animal vaccine royalty income accounts for £6m of AFBI's external income target. This value is based on a number of assumptions and will be closely monitored as it is subject to the vagaries of exchange rate movements and is dependent on the international sales performance of the vaccines marketed by several commercial companies, both of which are outside AFBI's control.

Annex 1: Summary of AFBI Business Targets & Key Performance Indicators 2019/2020

Strategic Outcome 1 – Society, Economy & Environment

AFBI will lead in the delivery of scientific innovation and evidence to improve the economic and environmental performance and sustainability of the agri-food and marine sectors

Aligned DAERA Outcome	AFBI Outcomes	Associated outcome measures	KPI for 2019/20
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 1</p> <p>Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors</p> <p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 2</p> <p>A clean, healthy environment, benefitting people, nature and the economy</p>	<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Through scientific innovation and development of new technologies AFBI will improve the economic and environmental performance of the agri-food and marine sectors, thereby informing and protecting society.</p>	<p>OM 1 Established measures in place to demonstrate impact of AFBI Science.</p> <p>OM 2 Established science programmes which aim to define:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved societal benefits • Enhanced local environment • Develop sustainable livestock systems 	<p>KPI 1 AFBI will publish a Research / Science Impact Publication which will profile the impact and benefit of AFBI science by 31 March 2020.</p> <p>KPI 2 Progress the AFBI Organisational Design to include Review of EMT Structure by December 2019.</p>
	<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Strategic alliances providing interdisciplinary response and maximising impact of NI science on local and global challenges.</p> <p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Enhanced uptake of innovation by industry and processors improving efficiency and resilience.</p>	<p>OM 3 Development of strategic partnerships / alliances.</p> <p>OM 4 Increased adoption of innovation and technology by industry.</p>	<p>KPI 3 Implement agreed governance arrangements and deliver on agreed 2019/20 AFBI/QUB strategic alliance KPIs by 31 March 2020.</p> <p>KPI 4 Following establishment of AFBI/CAFRE Strategic Overview group progress the AFBI/CAFRE collaboration.</p>

Annex 1: Summary of AFBI Business Targets & Key Performance Indicators 2019/2020

Strategic Outcome 2 – Customers and Partners

AFBI will further enhance its status as a trusted partner and provider of choice in relation to science supporting the agri food and marine sectors

Aligned DAERA Outcome	AFBI Outcomes	Associated outcome measures	KPI for 2019/20
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 2</p> <p>A clean, healthy environment, benefitting people, nature and the economy</p> <p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 3</p> <p>A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing</p>	<p>Outcome 4</p> <p>Enhanced relationships with customers and partners based on reputation of AFBI science.</p>	<p>OM 5 AFBI will deliver on commitments to DAERA as principal customer in terms of tests delivered within agreed timescales and quality standards, Evidence & Innovation project completion and satisfaction with AWP and E&I delivery.</p> <p>OM 6 High levels of customer satisfaction through delivering a quality and timely service.</p>	<p>KPI 5 At least 95% of statutory and analytical tests delivered to DAERA and external customers within agreed timescales and quality standards.</p> <p>KPI 6 At least 90% of research projects completed for DAERA and external funders within budget tolerances.</p> <p>KPI 7 All Emergency Response Capability (ERC) Contingency plans reviewed, updated and tested in-year in line with DAERA requirements.</p> <p>KPI 8 Actions from the Review of BCM delivered in line with action plan.</p>
	<p>Outcome 5</p> <p>Strengthen image (reputation) of NI produced food based on AFBI science.</p>	<p>OM 7 Improved animal, fish and plant health and food safety and quality status for NI.</p>	<p>KPI 9 Overall satisfactory outcomes from all international audits carried out in 2019/20 to facilitate new market opportunities.</p> <p>KPI 10 Participate in Industry technical working and implementation groups on the control of endemic diseases.</p> <p>KPI 11 Successfully retain ISO accreditation and extend remit covered under the quality standards.</p>

Annex 1: Summary of AFBI Business Targets & Key Performance Indicators 2019/2020

Strategic Outcome 2 – Customers and Partners

AFBI will further enhance its status as a trusted partner and provider of choice in relation to science supporting the agri food and marine sectors

Aligned DAERA Outcome	AFBI Outcomes	Associated outcome measures	KPI for 2019/20
	Outcome 6 Grow AFBI science profile / brand both locally and globally.	<p>OM 8 Increased staff involvement, influence and recognition in national and international committees and networks of excellence.</p> <p>OM 9 Increased numbers of peer reviewed scientific papers in journals within the top 25% for their subject area.</p> <p>OM 10 Increased collaboration with other national and international scientific organisations including exchange of PhD and Post-Doctoral scientists.</p>	<p>KPI 12 Maintain AFBI's international scientific standing by publishing a minimum of 100 peer reviewed scientific papers.</p> <p>KPI 13 Grow AFBI's Science profile by increasing AFBI's membership on national and international committees from current baseline levels.</p>

Annex 1: Summary of AFBI Business Targets & Key Performance Indicators 2019/2020

Strategic Outcome 3 – People & Infrastructure

AFBI will invest in and develop its people and infrastructure to provide innovative, efficient and effective service delivery

Aligned DAERA Outcome	AFBI Outcomes	Associated outcome measures	KPI for 2019/20
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 1</p> <p>Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors</p>	<p>Outcome 8</p> <p>Motivated, flexible and engaged staff with the skills to support delivery of AFBI's goals.</p>	<p>OM 13 Increased levels of staff engagement and motivation evidenced through results of staff survey and reduced levels of absenteeism.</p> <p>OM 14 Achieve and maintain relevant HR accreditation.</p>	<p>KPI 15 Develop the People Strategy to support delivery of Corporate Plan by 31 March 2020</p> <p>KPI 16 Achieve combined industrial and non-industrial absenteeism of 7.5 working days or less per Whole Time Equivalent (WTE).</p> <p>KPI 17 Achieve 80% completion of performance appraisals by 30 June 2019.</p>
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 2</p> <p>A clean, healthy environment, benefitting people, nature and the economy</p>			
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 3</p> <p>A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing</p>	<p>Outcome 9</p> <p>Enhanced IT systems in place, meeting the needs of the business.</p>	<p>OM 15 Appropriate IT platform in place to deliver improved management and monitoring of AFBI science programmes.</p> <p>OM 16 Implementing and extending data management and data analytics capability to harness opportunities from Big Data and new technologies.</p>	<p>KPI 18 Progress the project for new business and finance systems in line with the project plan milestones.</p> <p>KPI 19 In conjunction with DAERA progress the project for the replacement Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), in line with project plan milestones;</p> <p>KPI 20 Progress the project for implementing an Electronic Document and Records Management system within AFBI in line with project plan.</p>

Annex 1: Summary of AFBI Business Targets & Key Performance Indicators 2019/2020

Strategic Outcome 3 – People & Infrastructure

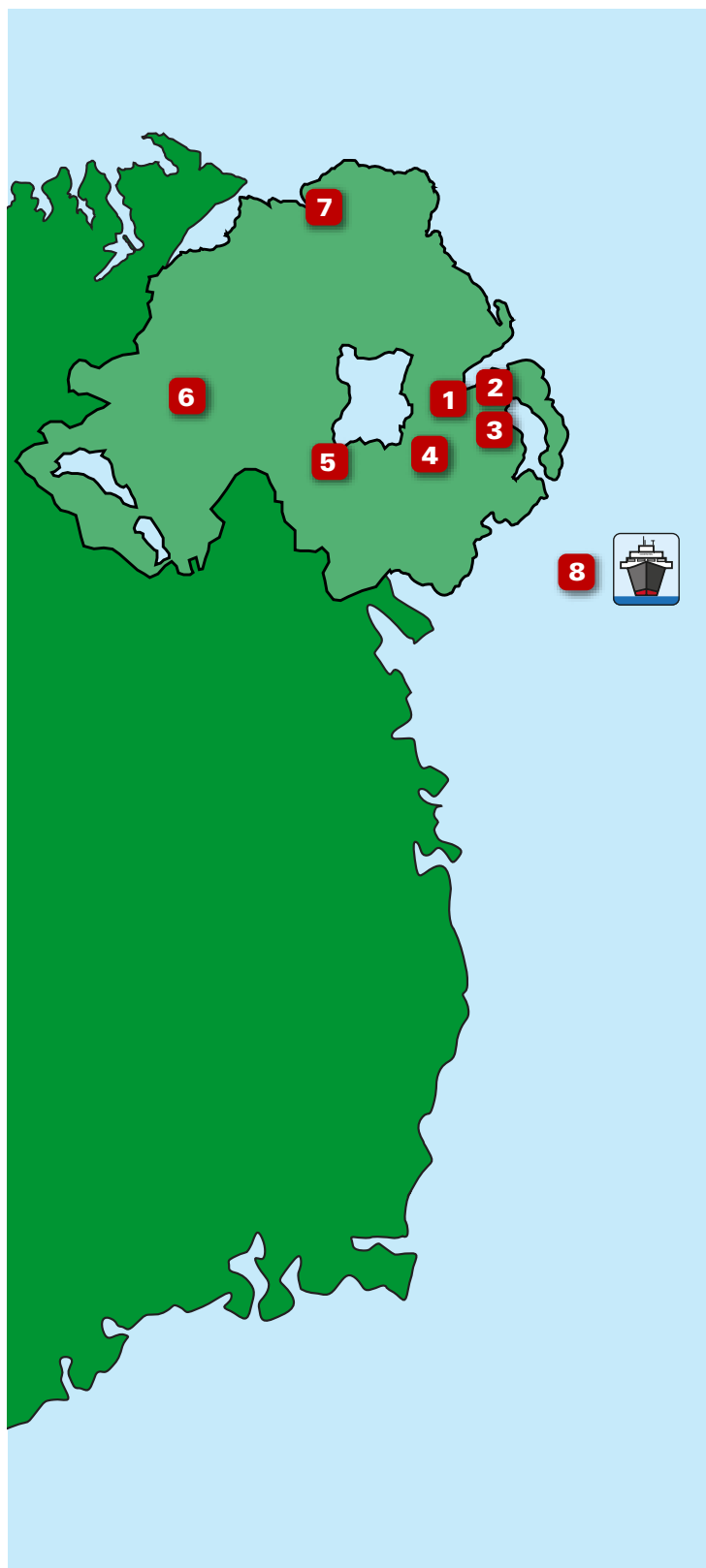
AFBI will invest in and develop its people and infrastructure to provide innovative, efficient and effective service delivery

Aligned DAERA Outcome	AFBI Outcomes	Associated outcome measures	KPI for 2019/20
	<p>Outcome 10</p> <p>Refined benchmarking processes and efficiency targets in place and monitored.</p>	<p>OM 17 Annual Corporate benchmarking and Unit Costing reports provided to DAERA.</p> <p>OM 18 AFBI will develop a series of efficiency measures and targets each year, in agreement with DAERA, as part of its Annual Business Planning Process.</p>	<p>KPI 21 Annual Unit Costing and Corporate benchmarking reports provided to DAERA by 31 October 2019.</p> <p>KPI 22 Deliver the action plan as agreed within the finance development plan and deliver year 1 of AFBI’s finance efficiency plan by 31 March 2020.</p>
	<p>Outcome 11</p> <p>Clear and agreed AFBI Estates Strategy to provide fit-for-purpose facilities.</p>	<p>OM 19 Delivery of fit for purpose facilities as an outcome of an agreed Estates Strategy</p>	<p>KPI 23 In conjunction with DAERA we will:</p> <p>Advance procurement process with CPD for replacement marine Research Vessel by 31 March 2020.</p> <p>Progress the VSD-Stormont Animal Health Sciences Building Project, in line with project plan milestones;</p> <p>Pending approval of the OBC, Progress Emissions Building at Hillsborough</p> <p>Pending approvals progress:</p> <p>AFBI-CAFRE Beef Facilities project</p> <p>the AFBI-Hillsborough Farmed Estate Master plan</p> <p>Project plan for Loughgall estate</p>

Annex 2: AFBI Core Values and Associated Behaviours

Customer First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks to understand and deliver to our customers needs • Provides a professional service at all times • Demonstrates integrity and independence to our customers • Promotes a genuine customer care ethos • Provides value-for-money services • Communicates science to meet our customers' needs
Scientific Excellence and Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invests in the generation and acquisition of knowledge and technology • Fosters creativity • Maximizes the potential of science and technology • Demonstrates scientific excellence through quality assurance and external accreditation • Ensures the integrity of scientific data • Creates confidence through scientific excellence
Respecting People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values the work and contribution of others • Respects and values diversity • Shows acceptance and understanding by being open, courteous, and considerate • Speaks about concerns with the appropriate person; does not engage in communications that diminish others • Is generous with recognition and acknowledgment • Values the work and contribution of others • Respects and values diversity • Shows acceptance and understanding by being open, courteous, and considerate • Speaks about concerns with the appropriate person; does not engage in communications that diminish others • Is generous with recognition and acknowledgment
Honesty and Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is fully accountable for our dealings • Demonstrates openness and transparency • Respects and honours confidentiality • Empowers staff to take ownership • Demonstrates consistency in dealing with others
Innovative and Forward Looking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops new channels of science • Is receptive to new ideas • Adopts thinking and approaches that are flexible • Welcomes solutions that are different • Demonstrates the ability to think beyond the norm

Annex 3: AFBI is based at seven sites in Northern Ireland and in addition operates a marine research vessel as follows



1. **Newforge Lane, Belfast;** corporate headquarters, food science, agricultural and food economics, freshwater and marine fisheries, environment, agricultural and rural economics, biometrics and information systems, and plant science (including plant pathology).
2. **Stormont, Belfast;** animal health diagnostic laboratory and research, and food safety (chemical and microbiological), modern laboratory accommodation incorporating animal biocontainment category 3 laboratories.
3. **Crossnacreevy, Co. Down;** plant variety trials, herbage distinctiveness and uniformity testing and official seed certification, on a 46 ha land platform.
4. **Hillsborough, Co. Down;** sustainable livestock systems (dairy, heifer rearing, beef, sheep, pigs and poultry research), modern dairy and anaerobic digestion units, biomass production, long term environmental monitoring sites, environment and renewable energy centre, 315 ha farm platform.
5. **Loughgall, Co. Armagh;** grass breeding, mushroom, apple, and agro-forestry research and biomass production on a total land area of 120 ha.
6. **Omagh, Co. Tyrone;** animal health diagnostic laboratory.
7. **Bushmills, Co. Antrim;** salmon population research, fish river trap and rearing tanks.
8. **Research Vessel Corystes;** AFBI also operates a 53m marine research vessel which is used to carry out a comprehensive programme of fish stock assessment, ecosystem research and commercial contract work, including seabed mapping, in the Irish Sea.