

## DAERA 2017/18 Business Plan

### Introduction

2017/18 will mark the first full financial year for DAERA, as one of the new Departments formed as a consequence of reducing the number of NICS Departments from 12 to 9. The content of this 2017/18 Business Plan has been developed in the context of the Department's Draft 2020 Strategic Plan, particularly in regard to the establishment of targets which take account of the Strategic Outcomes identified to 2020, linked, as appropriate, to the Draft Programme for Government (PfG).

The targets included in the Departmental Plan, for the most part outward facing, have been developed in conjunction with all business areas and approved by the Departmental Board.

The DAERA Business Plan is supported by a range of supporting Business Plans and Balanced Scorecards across all of the Department's business areas and these will incorporate both outward and inward facing targets to be monitored on a regular basis.

DAERA's Vision and Strategic Outcomes have been defined as follows:

**Vision:** "A thriving and sustainable economy, environment and rural community"

### **Strategic Outcomes:**

1. Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors.
2. A clean, healthy environment, benefiting people, nature and the economy.
3. A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing.

### **How we operate:**

4. A well led, high performing organisation focused on outcomes.

The most significant issue facing the Department in the year ahead is the exit from the EU. In recognition of the change in direction of the Department's work, a Brexit Division has been established. The focus, in this financial year, will be on taking forward the programme of work necessary to ensure Northern Ireland specific implications and issues are highlighted and accounted for, providing advice to the Minister on a wide range of issues which will arise following the commencement of formal negotiations and engaging with our stakeholders.

The outworkings of the Brexit negotiations and subsequent change in Government policy will shape the future of the Agri-Food and Fisheries sectors, environment around us and our rural societies.

In striving to deliver efficient and effective services, recommendations arising from Departmental initiated reviews in respect of Corporate Services, how we do inspections and our advisory and customer contact services, will be implemented. There will also be continued development of the Department's on-line services.

Having completed the relocation of Fisheries Division to Downpatrick, Forest Service to Enniskillen and Rivers Agency to Loughry (now with DfI), we will this year complete the construction of the new building at Ballykelly. We will begin the transition of staff by moving 240 staff into the new building by the end of March 2018.

## Annual Business Plan 2017/18

This section sets out the Department's business targets for the 2017/18 financial year, including timescales for delivery where appropriate. The targets link directly to projected outcomes to 2020 identified under each of the 4 Strategic Outcomes on page 5 of the Strategic Plan.

### Strategic Outcome 1 - Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors

#### Draft PfG Outcome links:

- **We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment.**
- **We prosper through a strong, competitive regionally balanced economy.**
- By 31 March 2018:
  - issue all Letters of Offer for Tier 2 of the first tranche of the Farm Business Improvement Scheme (FBIS) Capital;
  - open the second tranche of the FBIS Capital (Tiers 1 and 2); and
  - issue all Letters of Offer for Tier 1 of the second tranche of the FBIS Capital.**(SRO Colette McMaster)**
- By 31 March 2018, open the first tranche of the Food Processing Scheme, subject to the necessary approvals.  
**(SRO Colette McMaster)**
- By 31 March 2018, have completely implemented the EU Exceptional Adjustment Aid package of measures worth £4m, subject to farmer uptake.  
**(SRO Colette McMaster)**
- By 31 March 2018:
  - open phase 2 of the European Maritime Fisheries Fund for applications;

- approve the Fisheries Local Action Group sustainable development strategy; and
- commit £2 million funding to eligible projects consistent with the UK's Operational Programme priorities.

**(SRO John Speers)**

- By 31 March 2018, agree within DAERA actions for the implementation of the Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Strategy, including consideration of advisory structures.  
**(SRO Dave Foster)**
- By 30 September 2017, publish the Minister's response to TBSPG's TB Eradication Strategy and Action Plan.  
**(SRO Jackie Robinson)**
- By 31 March 2018, progress relevant actions set out in the Review of the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 Action Plan.  
**(SRO Jackie Robinson)**
- By 31 March 2018, publish an Animal Health Strategy.  
**(SRO Jackie Robinson)**
- Establish joint DAERA/InvestNI agri-food of animal origin export operating principles by March 2018.  
**(SRO Perpetua McNamee)**
- By 31 March 2018, facilitate a third country, industry priority, beef market access mission to Northern Ireland.  
**(SRO Perpetua McNamee)**
- By 31 March 2018, have (i) 3,000 farmers developing their business through benchmarking, peer learning and knowledge & technology transfer, within Business Development Groups; and (ii) 2,700 farmers receiving training in Farm Family Skills  
**(SRO Martin McKendry)**
- By 31 March 2018, have 2,200 people achieving nationally validated qualifications at Level II and above and deliver a suite of education and industry training programmes to 8,000 people.  
**(SRO Martin McKendry)**

- By 31 March 2018, have a safeguarding partnership with industry to reduce the risk that a new plant health pest will cause significant damage to the productivity of agriculture or forestry.  
**(SRO Malcolm Beatty)**
- Assist in the delivery of DAERA's strategic outcomes through the commissioning of up to £7.5 million of new R&D work by March 2018 from Northern Ireland research organisations within international collaborative projects with an overall value of up to £33 million.  
**(SRO Alistair Carson)**
- During 2017/18, direct, monitor and evaluate the assigned AFBI work programme to meet the Department's research, surveillance, diagnostic and analytical service needs within budget and on time.  
**(SRO Alistair Carson)**

## **Strategic Outcome 2 - A clean, healthy environment, benefiting people, nature and the economy**

### **Draft PfG Outcome links:**

- **We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment.**
- **We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest.**
- **We enjoy long, healthy, active lives.**
- By 31 March 2018, revise the Implementation Plan of the Biodiversity Strategy.  
**(SRO Dave Foster)**
- By 31 July 2017 have issued Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) agreements to all successful wider level applicants and by 31 January 2018 have issued EFS agreements to all successful higher level applicants.  
**(SRO Brian Doherty)**

- Complete input into the Cross Departmental Mitigation Action Plan on climate change by 30 June 2017, and review progress of the Plan by 31 March 2018.  
**(SRO John Mills)**
- By 31 March 2018, increase household recycling by >1% point over 2016/17 levels and ensure that no more than 250,000 tonnes of biodegradable local authority collected municipal waste is sent to landfill.  
**(SRO John Mills)**
- By 31 March 2018, consult on the draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland.  
**(SRO John Speers)**
- By 31 March 2018, have agreed a remediation strategy for the illegal waste deposits at Mobuoy Road.  
**(SRO Tracey Teague)**
- Provide effective and efficient regulation and enforcement to regulated businesses and industry by aiming for 90% compliance with all authorisations and regulatory requirements using agreed compliance assessment methodology by 31 March 2018.  
**(SRO Tracey Teague)**
- By 31 March 2018, initiate management plans for 40 terrestrial designated sites.  
**(SRO Helen Anderson)**
- By 31 March 2018, have 200ha of new woodland supplying a range of ecosystem services and supply at least 400,000m<sup>3</sup> of sustainable timber to industry.  
**(SRO Malcolm Beatty)**
- Establish a procurement strategy for the delivery of wind energy projects on the Forest Service Estate.  
**(SRO Malcolm Beatty)**
- Increase the number of water bodies achieving “good” status by delivering 80% of the actions identified for each catchment project in the 2017/18 catchment work programme.

**(SRO Tracey Teague)**

- By 31 March 2018, develop an NI Air Quality Strategy for consultation.  
**(SRO Dave Foster)**

### **Strategic Outcome 3 - A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing**

#### **Draft PfG Outcome links:**

- **We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy;**
- **We have more people working in better jobs.**
- By March 2018, in partnership with government bodies and organisations, 40,000 rural dwellers to benefit through the development and implementation of measures to tackle rural poverty and social isolation.  
**(SRO Pauline Keegan/Catherine McCallum)**
- By March 2018, create 150 full time equivalent jobs in rural areas using the LEADER component of the RDP.  
**(SRO Pauline Keegan/Catherine McCallum)**
- By 1 June 2017, develop guidance, training and reporting arrangements to support Public Authorities in fulfilling their duties under the Rural Needs Act.  
**(SRO Pauline Keegan/Catherine McCallum)**
- By 31 March 2018, have 240 DAERA staff headquartered in a new office at Ballykelly.  
**(SRO Geraldine Fee)**
- By 30 June 2017, prepare a strategy for the economic development of the equine industry in NI.  
**(SRO Robert Huey)**

## **Strategic Outcome 4 – A well led, high performing organisation focused on outcomes**

### **Draft PfG Outcome links:**

- **We connect people with opportunities through our infrastructure (Indicator: usage of online channels to access public services)**
- Make advance payments to 90% of eligible Direct Payment applicants and, by 31 December 2017, make payments in full to 95% of eligible Direct Payment applicants.  
**(SRO Brian Doherty)**
- By March 2018 the error rate for area-based schemes to be limited to 3%.  
**(SRO Brian Doherty)**
- During 2017/18:
  - 85% of annual Single Application Forms to be received on-line (including assisted digital);
  - 68% of animal births, deaths and movements notifications to be received on-line (including assisted digital); and
  - 80% of active farm businesses transacting online (directly or indirectly with DAERA).**(SRO Paul McGurnaghan)**
- By 31 March 2018, establish the DAERA Transformation Programme and deliver the first key initiatives:
  - a scoping study to consider the delivery of science across the Department;
  - the Department's review of AFBI; and
  - establishment of the project to deliver new veterinary science laboratory facilities including the design specification for the new building.**(SRO Alistair Carson)**
- Provisional Resource and Capital outturn to be between 99% and 100% of Final Budget for 2017/18.  
**(SRO David Reid)**

## **Brexit Preparations**

- Develop and represent DAERA's policy position in relation to the UK's exit from the EU as negotiations progress, providing advice and analysis to Minister to enable decisions on options to be made.  
**(SRO Graeme Wilkinson)**

DRAFT

## Business Plan Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

The Department has established monitoring and reporting arrangements in place in relation to its Business Plan targets. In the first instance, each target is assigned to a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) who will have responsibility for monitoring progress on a day to day basis.

During the course of the financial year, detailed progress against each Business Plan target will be reported to the Departmental Board for the periods ending 30 September, 31 December and 31 March and the reports to 30 September and 31 March will also be submitted to the Minister and AERA Committee.

Progress will be reported in accordance with the methodology previously adopted for the Programme for Government (PfG) Commitment reports to the Executive. This on a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) basis as follows:

**Green** - achieved or on track for delivery;

**Green/Amber** - level of progress is broadly on track with easily redeemable deviations from plans;

**Amber** - rate of progress is less than planned; and

**Red** - not achieved or not expected to be achieved.

The Department's Annual Report, published in the summer, will provide a summary of achievements under each of the four Strategic Outcomes.