



An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk



FOREST SERVICE



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

Business Plan

2018/2019



Forest Service Business Plan 2018/2019

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Foreword

By the Chief Executive



I am delighted to have this opportunity as the recently appointed Chief Executive to lead the work of Forest Service and I am pleased to present the Business Plan for 2018/19. This Business Plan sets out the activities that I believe are important in the year ahead and has been prepared for consideration and approval by an incoming Minister and will remain as a Draft until then.

This continues to be an exciting time for the Agency as we strive to provide the best possible service to our customers. Over the next year our focus must be to ensure we are prepared for EU exit. We will continue to develop our thinking with colleagues in GB and Ireland, in the wider Department and across Departments to ensure that we maximise the opportunities for trade in forest and plant products, and manage the challenges of a changed regulatory environment. We shall develop our resourcing plans and identify the skill sets needed to both prepare for EU exit and implement delivery opportunities thereafter.

We remain committed to providing public goods and services through managing our natural capital asset of 75,000 hectares of productive forest and green space. Our aim is to increase the natural capital represented by all forests and woodlands, and develop this to deliver a balanced mix of ecosystem services under sustainable management. We are particularly conscious of our responsibilities for safeguarding plant and tree health in the evolving context of preparing to leave the EU and we will strive to develop further our safeguarding plant health partnerships with professional operators and the wider public.

Forest expansion will continue to be supported through the Rural Development Programme, and we will invest in our forests where this improves their environmental quality, public access and the supply of timber.

We will assess existing and emerging risks that plant pests present, and take action to safeguard forests, farms and the wider environment. We will manage our forests in compliance with established and verifiable standards to help us achieve our key Programme for Government outcome that *'we live and work sustainably – protecting the environment'*. To achieve this we will work collaboratively with our partners: with industry to improve bio-security in agriculture, horticulture and forestry, to ensure that timber from our forests supplies the wood processing industry in NI without causing environmental damage; with local government to provide opportunities for people to enjoy the diversity of our forests for walking, cycling and holidays; and with environmental organisations to monitor and improve biodiversity and water quality. In this way Forest Service will play its role towards achieving the strategic objectives in the draft Programme for Government including building a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy and providing places for activities that improve our health and wellbeing where we can respect our diversity.

We recognise that our land can be used for purposes other than forestry in ways that are consistent with our obligations under the Forestry Act. We will support the work of the Strategic Investment Board in delivering a public sector energy strategy and the Department for the Economy on energy policy within which forests may have the potential for development for wind energy projects. We are considering opportunities for habitat restoration which will improve the environment and support the development of the economy.

Forest Service has strong administrative, technical and professional capability and I am committed to developing and investing in our people to deliver high quality outcomes. I am keen to improve our staff engagement to ensure that staff are properly consulted, informed and contribute to key decisions. I want Forest Service to be valued as a great place to work.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff for their continued hard work and dedication that ultimately contributes to our key Departmental vision of supporting *'a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone'*.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Joe O'Boyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Joe O'Boyle

Chief Executive



1 Introduction

1.1 **Status**

Forestry and Plant Health functions (inclusive of those relating to farming and horticulture as well as trees) are delivered by Forest Service, an Agency within the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). Forest Service became an Executive Agency on 1 April 1998 and the broad framework within which it operates is set out in the Framework Document. The Agency is subject to the overall direction of the Minister¹, who determines the policy framework, the scope of Agency activities, and the resources available for the Agency's work. This draft Business Plan, sets the key performance targets and forms the basis for monitoring the Agency's performance; and remains subject to the Minister's agreement when appointed.

1.2 **Vision and Aims**

Forest Service works to realise the Department's Vision and the Strategic Outcomes assigned to DAERA within the context of the draft [Programme for Government](#) (PfG).

Draft PfG outcome for which DAERA has lead responsibility:

'We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment'

DAERA Vision

'A living, working, active landscape valued by everyone'

To achieve our vision, we will:

- **Work collaboratively within the DAERA family and with others to set the direction for, and foster the conditions to achieve, the following strategic outcomes:**

Strategic Outcomes

- *Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors (Strategic Outcome 1)*
- *A clean, healthy environment, benefitting people, nature and the economy (Strategic Outcome 2)*
- *A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing (Strategic Outcome 3)*

¹ This plan is informed by the draft Programme for Government pending its finalisation by an incoming Executive and/or a Minister.

- **further develop our capability and improve our systems to ensure we are a well led, high performing organisation focused on outcomes through:**
 - *strong leadership and decision making across the Agency*
 - *an engaged, motivated, flexible and highly skilled workforce*
 - *valuing individuals and diversity*
 - *strong and effective communication and cooperation with the Department*
 - *innovative, accessible and responsive systems and processes for customers and delivery partners*

Forest policy² is to steadily expand tree cover and to manage woods and forests sustainably. The aim is to increase the area of forest to 12% of land area by the middle of the century, and to manage forests to provide a wide range of ecosystem services consistent with national forestry standards³.

The Agency is responsible for policies informed by research and evidence to protect the plant health status of our land-based, horticultural and forestry industries as well as the wider environment. To deliver this we work in partnership with key internal and external stakeholders. During this plan as we prepare for EU exit we will implement EU legislation based on International Standards for phytosanitary measures that are supported by modern diagnostic capabilities.

We shall manage costs and maximise income and increase our focus on business intelligence to manage risk and horizon scan for new and emerging threats in trade.

1.3 **Functions**

The purpose of Forest Service is set out at section 1 of the [Agency Framework Document](#). Forest Service fulfils DAERA's legal obligations⁴ in the areas of forestry, plant and bee health, reproductive materials and horticulture marketing standards.

Our key tasks are:

- 1) To promote forest expansion through grant aid under the Rural Development Programme;

² <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/ni-forestry-strategy-sustainable-growth>

³ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs>

⁴ Forestry Act (NI) 2010, the Plant Health Act (NI) 1967, the Seeds Act (NI) 1965, the Bees (NI) Order 1980, and secondary legislation made under these and the European Communities Act 1972.

- 2) To promote the arrangements for partnership working on forestry lands by formalising agreements to supply timber, provide access and enhance biodiversity;
- 3) To provide a regulatory framework as part of the UK Plant Health Service and processes to encourage compliance with forestry, plant and bee health legislation, aid scheme rules and potato seed certification and forest reproductive material schemes;
- 4) Monitor compliance and enforce legislation through inspection programmes, and protect the productive capacity of agriculture and forestry lands by monitoring for organisms harmful to plants;
- 5) To manage the Department's forests so as to:
 - Supply timber, regenerate and protect forests;
 - Promote public access by maintaining and improving facilities and visitor services through partnership arrangements;
 - Verify sustainable management performance through a process of independent audit against the UK Woodland Assurance Standard⁵; and
 - Release land from forestry for renewable energy generation and environmental improvement.

2 Strategic Context / EU Exit

The Agency Framework Document sets out the context for our work on forestry and plant health consistent with the vision and strategic outcomes set out in the DAERA 2020 Strategic Plan. Increasingly, we are working with partners to deliver services because they are often better placed to do so than ourselves, and this allows us to focus on regulation, strategic planning and the technical aspects and control of forest management.

Forest Service is responsible for delivering statutory services for forestry, plant and bee health, and seed potato certification. It provides official inspection services that aim to balance effective regulation with minimising the regulatory burden on industry and trade. It plays a role in facilitating trade by advising industry on best practice and international standards. It manages forests, and provides advice and financial support to the forest industry.

⁵ <http://ukwas.org.uk>

As the UK Government prepares to leave the EU, we will continue to plan as part of the UK Plant Health Service for the effective delivery of plant health controls to facilitate trade in regulated goods, and protect our plant health status. When the UK leaves the EU there may be an impact on our work because timber, crops, plants and plant products are traded and move freely across the Irish border. We have a common interest in plant health matters with our colleagues in the Republic of Ireland.

Within the EU, the rate of forest expansion has been strongly influenced by the arrangements for agriculture. There is scope for forestry to make a greater contribution to wealth formation, economic development and service provision in Northern Ireland post-EU exit. Accordingly, we shall look to inform land use studies and economic modelling that create options that can support changes in agriculture and communicate policy clearly to industry so that the optimum amount of investment can take place to extract value from past investments in forests.

Where the policy environment supports intervention in a post-EU economy we would wish to consider a programme of public sector land use and forest expansion to develop the forestry and wood processing industry; to contribute to flood alleviation, public access and other non-timber eco-system services; and to provide a pathway for those wishing to exit farming. Our stocks of growing timber can support industry restructuring, and resilience against supply shortages arising from EU exit.

It is in this context that we will:

- Protect and promote forestry, to increase the stock of natural capital represented by forests to deliver a sustainable programme of forest ecosystem services;
- Strengthen our approach to forest planning so that we are better able to identify the potential for forestry to contribute to land-use change in a post-EU membership economy, predict forest growth, and mitigate the effects of changing climate and other external impacts on forestry;
- Maintain independent certification of state forests;
- Safeguard the plant health status of our land-based industries through continuing to plan for implementation of the new EU Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 while new trade relationships emerge. Through this period we will mitigate the most important risks to plant health, and promote the adoption of better bio-security principles by professional operators and the general public;
- Support the work of the Strategic Investment Board in delivering a public sector energy strategy and the Department for the Economy on energy policy within which forests

may have the potential for development for wind energy projects;

- Invest in science, technologies and in our people to develop new, more efficient and more effective means of delivering our services and achieving our objectives.

The strategic aims are:

- Increased horizon scanning and risk assessment capability to improve preparedness;
- Effective control of plant pest and disease outbreaks locally and plan for responsiveness including on a trans-boundary basis;
- Improved agricultural and forestry economy;
- Healthier people, plants and environments;
- Increased forest cover;
- Profitable and sustainable forestry and land management; and
- Improved policy making.

These priorities are reflected in the Agency key targets: to safeguard plant health status; to plant 200 hectares (ha) of new woodland and supply at least 400,000 cubic metres (m³) of sustainable timber to industry; to earn over £9 million from forestry resources; and support the work of the Strategic Investment Board in delivering a public sector energy strategy and the Department for the Economy on energy policy within which forests may have the potential for development for wind energy projects. The Agency will continue to safeguard its staff while maintaining productivity by reducing absenteeism and accidents. We will seek out opportunities for investment to improve and extend the life of assets.

We will engage in partnership working on forestry land to supply timber to wood processors, to develop public access with councils and other organisations to improve recreation. We will safeguard plant health and enhance the environment through partnership working with environmental NGOs, trade representative bodies, and the public. We will maintain the knowledge base about forestry and plant health by working with the academic community. This plan also contains supporting targets to provide greater clarity about how the key targets are to be achieved, and to support progress in future years.

3 Performance Measures

Measurement criteria are set for the Agency's targets to facilitate audits so we can monitor progress and measure success. These will generally be refinements of the following general metrics:

Operational

- Plantations established in hectares (ha);
- Volume of timber produced cubic metres (m³);
- Forest visitor surveys⁶;
- Area of woodland qualifying for UK Forestry Standard in hectares (ha);
- Plant health partnerships, awareness, inspections, sampling, survey and enforcement programmes.

Customer Service

- Performance against prescribed standards of service to the public⁷.

Value for money

- Net annual cost of the forestry and plant health programmes;
- Maintain income and expenditure within agreed limits.

4 Corporate Governance

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Minister for the Agency's operations and performance, and is the Agency Accounting Officer. He is advised by a Management Board comprising 3 Executive Directors and 2 Non-Executive Board Members. The latter are currently a Senior Civil Servant working in another part of the Department and a senior SIB official.

The Chief Executive is also advised by an Audit Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC), established as a Sub-Committee of the Board, about business risks, internal control and governance of the Agency. The Sub-Committee is currently chaired by a Non-Executive Board Member and has two additional members independent of Agency executive functions.

The Management Board has established a Governance Committee, an Investment Committee, an Information Systems Committee and a Finance Committee. These consider issues referred by the Board and/or its ARAC, and report back to it. This provides for a hierarchy of governance and business activity and oversight inclusive of input from Non-Executive Board Members.

Robust procedures are in place to provide for continuity of service in the event of a civil emergency. Our business continuity plan sets out the controls in place and we review the plan regularly to ensure that it provides the necessary assurance that the controls remain effective.

⁶ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dard/forest-service-visitors-survey-2014.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/our-customer-service-standards>

Forest Service adheres to standards for how we deal with customer correspondence and complaints, and for financial control. These standards are set out at [Appendix 1](#).

5 Organisation and Resources

5.1 *Operating model*

The Agency has a baseline of 215 multi-disciplinary staff (full time equivalents) located at: the Agency's headquarters in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh; DAERA Direct offices; forest offices at Castlewellan, Co. Down and Garvagh, Co. Derry/Londonderry; and at various forest locations. Our Operating Model continues to evolve as we implement better ways of working to utilise modern information and communications technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness of our workforce. The Agency shall seek to develop our capability and improve our systems in a context of reducing public sector expenditure. We shall drive forward our Information Systems (IS) strategy during the year and seek to embed a new financial management architecture on the Account NI platform to develop management information reporting as well as procurement and income transactions.

We will need to increase our organisational capability to meet the plant health requirements of trade arrangements and mitigate the risk of plant health failure in the context of meeting the unprecedented challenge of implementing the new EU Plant Health Regulation, a revised Official Control regime and to be prepared for continuity of service provision post EU exit.

Forest Service is committed to promoting the ongoing professional development of its staff. We shall promote membership of the relevant professional bodies, continuing professional development and accordingly will fund membership fees. In recognition of the challenges for plant health regulation outlined above, we have set a specific target for membership of the Royal Society of Biology Plant Health Register by March 2019.

We shall also ensure that personal development plans are developed and reviewed for all staff at all levels in line with professional, technical, operational and NICS competence frameworks.

Details of the current senior staff organisational structure and main office locations can be found at [Appendices 3](#) and [4](#).

5.2 **Staff Engagement**

The Agency is an 'Investors in People' employer and we promote the health and wellbeing of staff and provide all necessary training and equipment. We engage with staff through formal surveys at NICS, DAERA and Agency level, at staff conferences and events and encourage contributions to staff briefing and news publications through regular team briefs that cascade down from weekly senior officer meetings.

We shall fully participate in the development and roll out of a DAERA-specific Employee Engagement Implementation Plan in the context of a new NICS People Strategy. This approach shall inform our work to ensure that our culture and behaviours are centred on delivering high quality outcomes by valuing, supporting and respecting staff. We shall aim to positively contribute to a 5% increase in the DAERA Employment Engagement index score by 31 March 2019 as a measure of our success in developing an engaged, motivated, flexible and skilled workforce.

5.3 **Managing absence**

Specific action to manage absenteeism will include the strict application of absence management procedures and measures for the prevention and investigation of staff accidents. We shall work closely with our NICS HR business partners to support staff back to work. Our aim shall be to reduce sickness absence by 10% (based on average days lost per person) against our current baseline.

6 Operating environment

6.1 **Scope for forest expansion**

The changes to the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) in Northern Ireland and policy after the UK leaves the EU will be the main factor determining the rate and type of forestry expansion. There is little sign that landowners intend to change land-use from agriculture to forestry and, while they are adjusting to the CAP reforms and arrangements after EU exit take shape, we expect the demand for forestry support to remain similar to that of recent years. Consequently, we shall support new planting and sustainable management of existing woodland through 3 schemes that are run on similar lines, to complement support for small scale planting under the Department's new Environmental Farming Scheme. The fourth phase of the Forest Expansion Scheme will have two opening windows in June and August 2018. The smaller Forest Protection Scheme and the Woodland Investment Grant Scheme remain open.

6.2 *Managing forests sustainably*

Our principal obligation is to ensure that forests are managed in a sustainable manner. As evidence of this, our forests are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) (Licence Code: FSC-C084232) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) (Licence Code: PEFC/16-40-1924) to ensure compliance with the requirements of the FSC® and PEFC endorsed forest management standard - UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS). This means, broadly, that forest management complies with all legal obligations and is committed to a rigorous planning process that pays proper attention to the needs of people and public values in the design of forests at all stages of development. Forest Service ensures that forest operations comply with the plans and follow good practice; that forests are properly protected and maintained; and that conservation and enhancement of biodiversity are given significant consideration. The Agency encourages community participation and supports community access.

Previous investments created a substantial timber asset which is also used to deliver public access to forests and environmental improvement. Current plans indicate that timber can be supplied at current levels for about 15 years but thereafter supply will decrease. Subject to our obligations to manage forests sustainably, we will market timber to support the timber industry and the rural economy, and we will seek to agree terms with our timber customers and recreation delivery partners to realise the benefits of the investments in growing timber and recreation infrastructure.

Extensive plantations occur in areas which are now considered unsuitable for forestry on grounds of loss of natural habitat⁸ and water quality⁹. As these plantations mature we will ensure that replacement plantations remain consistent with our forest policy obligations and, where land would be better under another use, consider how it can be restored to natural habitat or made available for renewable energy development or flood attenuation.

6.3 *Plant Health*

Outbreaks of tree diseases in recent years illustrate the increased risk faced by foresters, horticulturalists and farmers from novel plant pests and diseases. We are working with our partners in the UK Plant Health Service and the Republic of Ireland to evaluate the risks from serious pests and diseases and to prioritise these on the Northern Ireland Plant Health Risk Register. Our approach is to ensure that policy and legislation are supported by science, research and evidence. The inspection and surveillance programme, implemented by an

⁸ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dard/indicative-map-for-woodland-creation-2009.pdf>

⁹ [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/FCPG023.pdf/\\$FILE/FCPG023.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/FCPG023.pdf/$FILE/FCPG023.pdf)

accredited professional inspection service, helps us detect and make risk based decisions about where we should intervene to control disease and provide the best possible outcome for industry.

7 Outcomes and Targets

The Agency shall seek to achieve the following outcomes in the context of the DAERA 2020 strategy and the draft [Programme for Government](#):

Performance

- Lower net cost of the forestry programme.

Customer

- Stronger partnership working with industry and delivery partners;
- Wind farm sites considered in forests within a public sector energy strategy;
- Access to a sustainable supply of high value timber;
- Forests contribute to enjoyment of long, healthy, active lives.

Process

- First registration of title to forestry lands;
- Shared understanding of operating agreements over forestry lands;
- Independent certification under FSC® and PEFC that forests are managed sustainably.

Organisational Capacity

- Accreditation with continuing professional development;
- Target Operating Model delivered;
- Improved knowledge of forest condition and forestry opportunity.

Forest Service will contribute primarily to the draft [Programme for Government](#) (PfG) Outcome 2: *We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment*, protecting plants from serious pests and disease, the sustainable management of Forest Service woodland and encouraging an increase in new woodland. These activities will help protect and enhance the environment including its soil, water, landscape, cultural heritage, and biodiversity. Growing trees will help capture carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store carbon in the forest ecosystems that will mitigate climate change.

Forest Service will also contribute to a number of other PfG outcomes including:
 PfG1 - *We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy* through release of timber for wood processing and protecting plant health;
 PfG 4 - *We live long, healthy, active lives* by encouraging people to exercise in forests; and
 PfG 10 - *We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest* by improving the tourist potential of forests in partnership with local government.

Pending appointment of a Minister, we have set 5 key targets for the Agency this year and agreed these with the DAERA Board. The key and supporting targets are shown below at Table 1. Some are time bound, some are multi annual, and some are measures likely to be more relevant at the end of the current strategic programme to 2020/21. All targets are signposts for what we aim to achieve during that programme.

Table 1 - Forest Service Business Plan Balanced Scorecard - Key and Supporting Targets 2018/2019 to be achieved by 31st March 2019 unless otherwise stated.

Link to DAERA Strategic Outcomes	PfG links		Key Target	Supporting Target(s)
FINANCE				
SO 4	1+2		Achieve an income of at least £9m from all sources.	Develop an improved timber sales management system using digital technology.

Link to DAERA Strategic Outcomes	PfG links		Key Target	Supporting Target(s)
CUSTOMERS				
SO1 + SO2	1+2		Have 200ha of new woodland supplying a range of ecosystem services and supply at least 400,000m³ of sustainable timber to industry.	<p>Operate the Forest Expansion Scheme with two application windows;</p> <p>At least 5% of timber supply to come from forest thinning;</p> <p>Develop a strategy by October 2018 for delivery of a woodland register in accordance with the Forestry Act (Northern Ireland) 2010;</p> <p>Report on household based public opinion of forestry survey;</p> <p>Open new customer facing recreational facilities in at least two forests in partnership with Local Councils.</p>

Link to DAERA Strategic Outcomes	PfG links		Key Target	Supporting Target(s)
PROCESSES				
SO 2	1+2		<p>Prepare for EU Exit In partnership approach with UK Plant Health Service; and extend our partnerships and internal capability to safeguard the plant health status of our productive land based industries and our wider environment.</p>	<p>By EU exit date, have an agreed UK wide framework to deliver Plant Health controls for NI post exit;</p> <p>Implement the staff resource plan by October 2018 to prepare for the effective delivery of the plant health programme in transit and post EU exit;</p> <p>Develop two stakeholder partnership agreements to support improved biosecurity in plant and bee health by March 2019;</p> <p>Have An All-Ireland Chalara Management Plan agreed with DAFM by October 2018;</p> <p>Test A trans-boundary plant health contingency plan with DAFM by January 2018;</p> <p>To support 15 plant health staff to become professionally accredited through membership of the RSB Plant Health Professional Register, by March 2019.</p>

Link to DAERA Strategic Outcomes	PfG links		Key Target	Supporting Target(s)
ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING AND GROWTH				
SO1, SO2, SO4	1+2		Hold independent certification that the Forest Service management system meets the requirements of a well-managed forest.	<p>Implement findings from the certification audits;</p> <p>Review and publish plans for the North West, West Tyrone, Armagh and East Tyrone/East Fermanagh planning areas including updating plans on Sperrin and Antrim planning areas;</p> <p>Install an internal audit process in compliance with the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) requirements;</p> <p>Measure 1,200 inventory plots to improve precision of timber increment estimates;</p> <p>Produce an Outline Business Case for a review of the forest strategy;</p> <p>Establish silvicultural demonstration sites to illustrate effective transformation of a clear-felling system to a continuous cover forestry system.</p>

Link to DAERA Strategic Outcomes	PfG links		Key Target	Supporting Target(s)
			<p>Support the work of the Strategic Investment Board in delivering a public sector energy strategy and the Department for the Economy on energy policy.</p>	<p>Update our GIS legal summaries in relation to 6,000ha of first registered land and prepare a further 4,000ha for first registration by 31 March 2019;</p> <p>Develop a contingency planning process for localised advanced felling on Forest Service woodland with capacity to accommodate wind farm project requirements as may be identified within a public sector energy strategy.</p>

Table 2 shows the net budget allocated to the Agency to deliver the work programmes. The core Department provides support services, accommodation and standard ICT, as set out in the Agency's Framework document, charged on a notional basis.

Table 2 - Budget allocated to the Agency to deliver the work Programmes

	18/19 (opening bid) £000's
Income	
Timber Sales	(8,800)
Other	(1,530)
Total Income	(10,330)
Running Costs	
GAE & Other Current	5,006
External Consultants	0
Total Running Costs	5,006
Capital Programme	850
Staffing	7,966
Programme costs	648
Expense Total	9,464
<i>Depreciation/ impairment</i>	<i>1,515</i>
<i>Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)</i>	<i>5,100</i>
TOTAL	10,755

8 Monitoring and Reporting

The Forest Service Management Board will monitor performance against the key targets (see [Appendix 2](#)). If it appears that the achievement of key targets may be at risk due to factors outside of the Agency's control, the Chief Executive will consult with the Department and the Minister (when appointed) about options for remedial action. In these or other circumstances it may be necessary to review the Business Plan during the year and make changes in policies and/or priorities. The Business Plan is subject to in-year and year-end reviews by the Deputy Secretary reporting to the Permanent Secretary in discussion with the Agency's Board.

Following the end of the financial year the Chief Executive will publish an Annual Report and Accounts. The Report will review the Agency's activities during the year and will comment specifically on its performance against the key targets.



Appendix 1

Forest Service Standards

Customer Service standards

We will follow the published DAERA Customer Service Standards for informing the customer about our programmes and services, taking reasonable steps to make sure that our services and facilities are accessible to everyone. We will seek your views on how our service will be delivered, we will be polite and helpful, act with integrity and discretion and treat you with respect at all times. We will aim to see you and answer telephone calls promptly, and will acknowledge and respond to your correspondence within the Department's target times.

The Departments customer service standards are published at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/our-customer-service-standards> .

If you are unhappy with the quality of service you receive from us please let us know why you are unhappy as quickly as possible. We will fully and fairly investigate your complaint, keep you informed of progress, offer a full explanation of the circumstances and take appropriate action.

Our complaints procedure is published at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/how-do-i-make-complaint-if-i-am-unhappy-quality-service-i-received> .

Financial control standards

We will aim to lay our annual report and accounts before the NI Assembly by 5th July 2019.

We will aim to achieve a financial outturn that is within the Department's targets that the Provisional Capital and Resource Outturns should be between 98.5% and 100% of the Final Budget.

We will aim to pay for goods and services within 10 days of verified receipt.

Forestry Standards

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) is the official reference standard for sustainable forest management¹⁰. We will verify our own sustainable woodland management practice against the UK Woodland Assurance Standard¹¹, which is an independent certification standard recognised by the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC).

¹⁰ <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs>

¹¹ <http://ukwas.org.uk>

Appendix 2

Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

The Agency 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 ongoing monitoring throughout the year.

During the course of the financial year, progress against each Business Plan target will be reported to the Agency Board, both through Directors' reports and in overview format. The Agency's Senior Management Team will also oversee the level of progress being made towards the milestones and targets set and will approve corrective actions required, as appropriate, during the course of the year.

Progress with the Forest Service key targets that are included in the DAERA Business Plan is reported to DAERA for onward reporting to the Departmental Board, and the Minister and Departmental Assembly Committee if appointed. These detailed reports will be produced for the periods ending 30 September, 31 December and 31 March.

Progress will be reported in accordance with the methodology adopted for the [Programme for Government](#) (PfG) Commitment reports to the NI 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 Agency's Annual Report, published in the summer, will provide a summary of achievements under each of the business activities.

Appendix 3

Agency Organisational Senior Structure

MANAGEMENT BOARD

John Joe O'Boyle, Chief Forest Officer (G5)

Kevin Hegarty, Non-Executive Board Member

Vacant, Non-Executive Board Member

Vacant, Director of Forestry (G6)

Jim Crummie, Acting Director of Plant Health (G6)

Marcus McAuley, Head of Corporate Services (G7)

BUSINESS AREA HEADS

Diane Stevenson, Head of Plant Health Policy (G7)

John Finlay, Acting Head of Plant Health Inspection (Grade I)

Ian Irwin, Head of Forest Management (DFO/ UG7)

Stuart Morwood, Head of Forestry Policy, Standards and Regulation (DFO/UG7)

Appendix 4

Agency Offices

Forest Service Headquarters

Inishkeen House
Killyhevlin
ENNISKILLEN
BT74 4EJ

Phone: 028 6634 3165
e-mail: customer.forests@daera-ni.gov.uk

The Grange
Castlewellan Forest Park
CASTLEWELLAN
BT31 9BU
Phone: 028 4377 8664

Forest Office
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