

AGRI-FOOD AND BIOSCIENCES INSTITUTE

CORPORATE PLAN
2018-2022





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) is Northern Ireland's largest provider of agri-food science. It provides vital and unrivalled support to an industry which is a key economic driver within Northern Ireland.

However, the world around us is changing quickly and the execution of this corporate plan will set the future course for AFBI to be a leading provider of agri-food science in NI, the UK and beyond. It will enable AFBI to respond to the many future global and local developments and challenges that are expected.

Particularly important issues are;

- global population growth;
- safe and healthy food; and
- the need for an environmentally sustainable and resilient agri-food industry.

External developments will also affect AFBI's course, such as the UK's exit from the European Union, Shifts in research funding and the growing need to build effective and strategic alliances to deliver cutting edge, integrated scientific solutions.

In response, this Corporate Plan outlines AFBI's ambitions for the period 2018 to 2022. It sets out the three strategic outcomes AFBI aims to deliver for society, the economy and the environment, as well as industry and our customers in an ever more efficient and effective manner. The plan demonstrates the unique multi-disciplinary strength of AFBI and how AFBI will work with partners from science, government, industry and farmers to deliver a positive impact. These achievements will be underpinned by attracting and developing excellent staff and building fit for purpose physical infrastructure.



INTRODUCTION

As a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) established under the Agriculture (Northern Ireland) Order, 2004, AFBI contributes significantly to the achievement of the Northern Ireland Executive's strategic goals by successfully delivering an assigned programme of statutory, diagnostic and surveillance testing, research and development and emergency response for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

AFBI science underpins DAERA policy by providing specialist advice across a wide range of agri-food and biosciences disciplines. Other government departments and agencies also depend on AFBI scientific services to fulfil their responsibilities. Furthermore, AFBI also delivers a portfolio of scientific work to a wide range of local, national and international customers. To ensure impact, AFBI collaborates

closely with DAERA's advisory service (CAFRE) and industry levy bodies, in transferring the benefits of science and technology to the local agri-food industry.

In order to best serve Northern Ireland, AFBI is heavily engaged with the international research community in providing scientific solutions to common global challenges such as disease control, climate change and food security. AFBI are involved in many international networks of research and knowledge exchange.

Indeed our success as a leading international agri-food science provider has been built on the globally and locally recognised expertise of AFBI staff, leading on several key areas of excellent translational research and diagnostics for the industry, and in providing a scientific evidence base for government policy development.



AFBI delivers a wide range of statutory and diagnostic testing through its extensive analytical laboratories.





STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT **MEETING THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Globalisation, changes in subsidy support, the need to protect the environment and a new generation of consumers with very diverse and conflicting demands presents the agri-food industry in Northern Ireland with both opportunities and challenges. AFBI is well placed to generate the science to drive innovation and ultimately improve the competitiveness of our local agri-food industry.



AFBI helps protect the industry from animal and plant diseases, and food chain and environmental threats through the provision of rapid, effective, local emergency responses.

GLOBAL CHALLENGES

The world's population is expected to grow to 7.5 billion by 2020 and to 9 billion by 2050. In a resource constrained environment, with the global challenges of climate change and energy security, providing enough food to meet demand in 2050 presents a real and significant challenge. Increasing globalisation and the impact of climate change also present challenges in relation to the introduction of new, and changing patterns of existing, animal

and plant diseases. Antimicrobial resistance in pathogens affecting humans and animals is recognised as a global threat requiring improved methods of disease control and the development of strategies to minimise antimicrobial usage.

AFBI will continue to provide the technical expertise and research to develop technologies and science which will enable the industry to fully respond to these challenges,

for example through increasing resource use efficiency and boosting the productivity of agricultural production in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Furthermore, AFBI's statutory testing programme will continue to develop its expertise to protect Northern Ireland's high quality food reputation and export of NI produce to new markets.



LOCAL CHALLENGES

The agriculture and food processing sector is already Northern Ireland's largest industry, employing 25,000 people in primary production and 15,000 in food and drink processing.

From the most recently available statistics, this collectively accounts for around 70,000 jobs and 3.25% of Northern Ireland's Gross Value Added (GVA) which equates to £1.1bn at basic prices. The agri-food sector has also been identified as a key future driver for the economic development of Northern Ireland with total gross turnover of the local Food and Drinks processing sector worth £4.5 bn.

AFBI, working in partnership with government and the private sector, strives to further enhance the globally competitive position of NI's agriculture and food sectors.

“ THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR HAS ALSO BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A KEY FUTURE DRIVER FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN IRELAND ”

This will ensure resilience in NI food production under future environmental conditions and moves towards:

- resource-smart;
- climate-smart and
- “eco-healthy” production and consumption.

Increased investment in scientific innovation is critical to achieving this resilience and developing the technologies required to improve agricultural efficiency, productivity and competitiveness, and thereby develop the rural economy. AFBI and DAERA are agreed that continued investment in a strong scientific and research base is essential to support a competitive, environmentally sustainable agri-food industry in NI. Furthermore it is acknowledged that innovation will play a key role in achieving the challenging expansion targets outlined in the Agri-Food Strategy Board's (AFSB) 'Going for Growth' Strategic Action Plan for the Northern Ireland agri-food industry and also the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment's 'Innovation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2013-2025.' As such, AFBI science will contribute towards achievement of the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy, the Northern Ireland Executive's draft Programme for Government targets, and implementing the Agri-Food Strategy Board's 'Going for Growth' recommendations and the 'Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Strategy' for Northern Ireland.

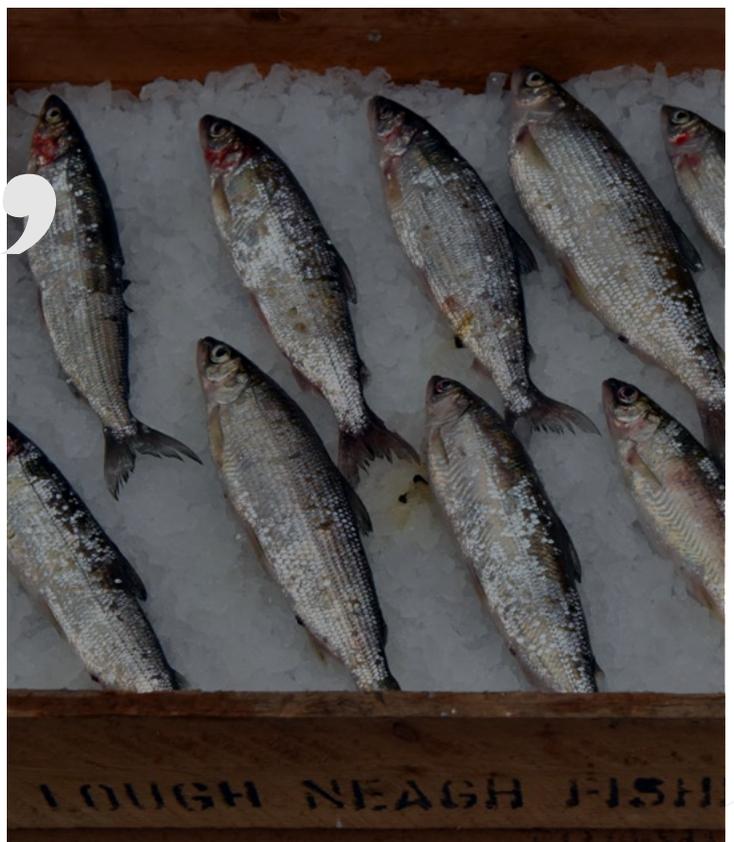
AFBI will continue to rise to this challenge and, as one of the leading international research institutes specialising in agri-food and fisheries

R&D, sustainable production systems and protecting the environment, it is pioneering cutting edge public and private sponsored research into many aspects of agriculture, animal production, food, and environmental protection. AFBI's specialist advice carried out in partnership with CAFRE and industry, ensures AFBI's research has impact within the industry it serves. This supports DAERA in delivering the strategic outcomes of sustainable agri-food and marine sectors whilst supporting the need to further reduce their impact on the environment.

Alongside harnessing the many opportunities, AFBI also plays a key role addressing Northern Ireland's challenge and threats to the agri-food industry, especially in terms of protecting Northern Ireland's animal and plant health, through surveillance and the provision of rapid and effective emergency response services. This is key to keeping Northern Ireland PLC's export markets open for business and competitive on the global platform.



NORTHERN IRELAND'S INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED RESEARCH EXPERTISE HAS BEEN A KEY DRIVER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION AND IN PRODUCING NEW IDEAS THAT ARE CHANGING THE WORLD.



UK EXIT FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION – OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Within the lifetime of this corporate plan the UK's exit from the EU presents Northern Ireland with both its most significant challenge for a generation but also a major opportunity. AFBI is ideally placed to provide the science and expertise to enable farmers and agri-food businesses and organisations achieve the necessary increases in efficiency which will be needed to develop an ever increasingly sustainable and resilient Agri-food industry.

AFBI has already led the UK's devolved administrations in analysing

the potential impacts of exiting the EU on UK Agriculture and AFBI expertise is currently assisting local food businesses to secure inward investment through trade facilitation in terms of food quality and safety.

Furthermore AFBI is in a strong position, through its highly applicable work streams and its major involvement in providing evidence to government, to provide scientific input to policy customers on the future structure of farming, environmental and fisheries management legislation.



DAERA SCIENCE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME & AFBI REVIEW

AFBI are a pivotal provider of science-based evidence to inform and design government policy. Following the creation of DAERA in 2016, which incorporated a number of other science providers, a review (DAERA Science Transformation Programme) to establish and consider the provision of science in the new Department is currently underway. This is designed to ensure a coherent approach to commissioning, management and evaluation of science across the Department.

The review will consider the Department's science needs, delivery mechanisms, and gaps in provision, policies and processes to provide an assurance of relevant, effective and efficient provision. AFBI, as one of DAERA's key science providers, has a key role to play in this review and this transformation programme will shape AFBI's future strategic direction.

All UK public bodies are subject to periodic review to ensure they remain efficient, effective and accountable.

In this context DAERA commissioned a 'tailored review' of AFBI in 2017 based on Cabinet Office guidance. The Review aims to provide a robust challenge to, and assurance on, the continuing need for AFBI – both its functions and form. This review forms part of the aforementioned DAERA Science Transformation programme. The implementation of recommendations arising from the AFBI Review will be a key priority during the period of the current Corporate Strategy.



AFBI helps protect the industry from animal and plant diseases, and food chain and environmental threats through the provision of rapid, effective, local emergency responses.



AFBI VISION, MISSION & STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

AFBI's Corporate Strategy 2018-2022 has been designed to reflect both our current position and our ambitions for the future.

It envisages a future for AFBI which builds on and maximises the potential of AFBI's wide-ranging scientific expertise to deliver key outcomes for the local agri-food and biosciences sectors. It is focused on addressing shared future challenges, delivering for government ever greater alignment with industry, strategic partnering with the University sector, closer relationships with key stakeholders and winning new customers. The strategy seeks to deliver an organisation that will provide inspiration to its staff and peer organisations, through demonstrable successes, an organisation built on strong scientific capability, resourced from a financially

sustainable position and an organisation that will instil pride amongst its staff, customers and stakeholders.

The strategic direction of AFBI over the period 2018-2022 is focused on the delivery of 3 Strategic Outcomes set out below, underpinned by AFBI's Values and associated behaviours (Appendix 1).

The following pages sets out how AFBI's strategic outcomes will be delivered, how these align with those of DAERA, AFBI's sponsor department, and how we will measure our progress in delivery.

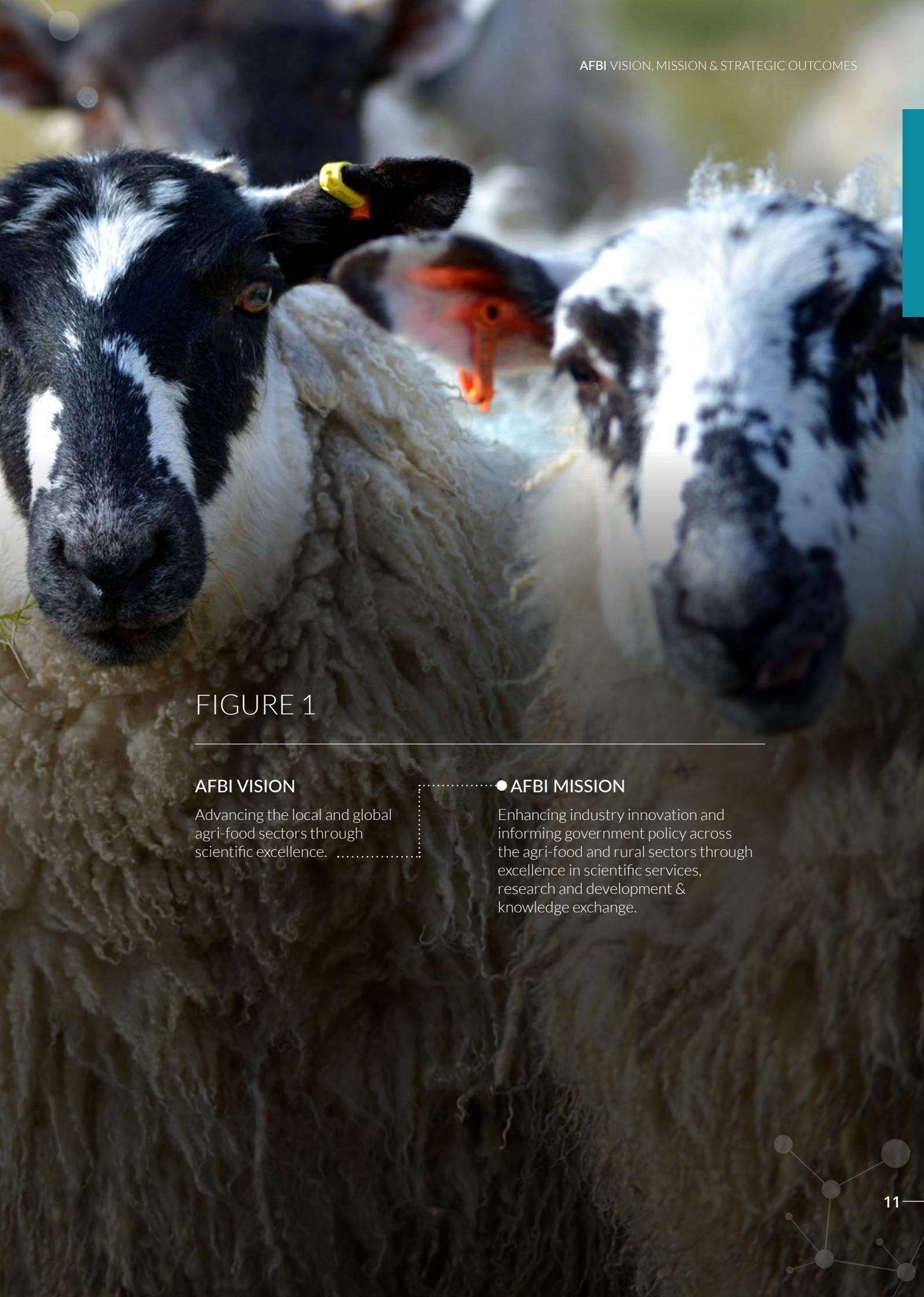


FIGURE 1

AFBI VISION

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

● AFBI MISSION

Enhancing industry innovation and informing government policy across the agri-food and rural sectors through excellence in scientific services, research and development & knowledge exchange.

FIGURE 2 AFBI STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

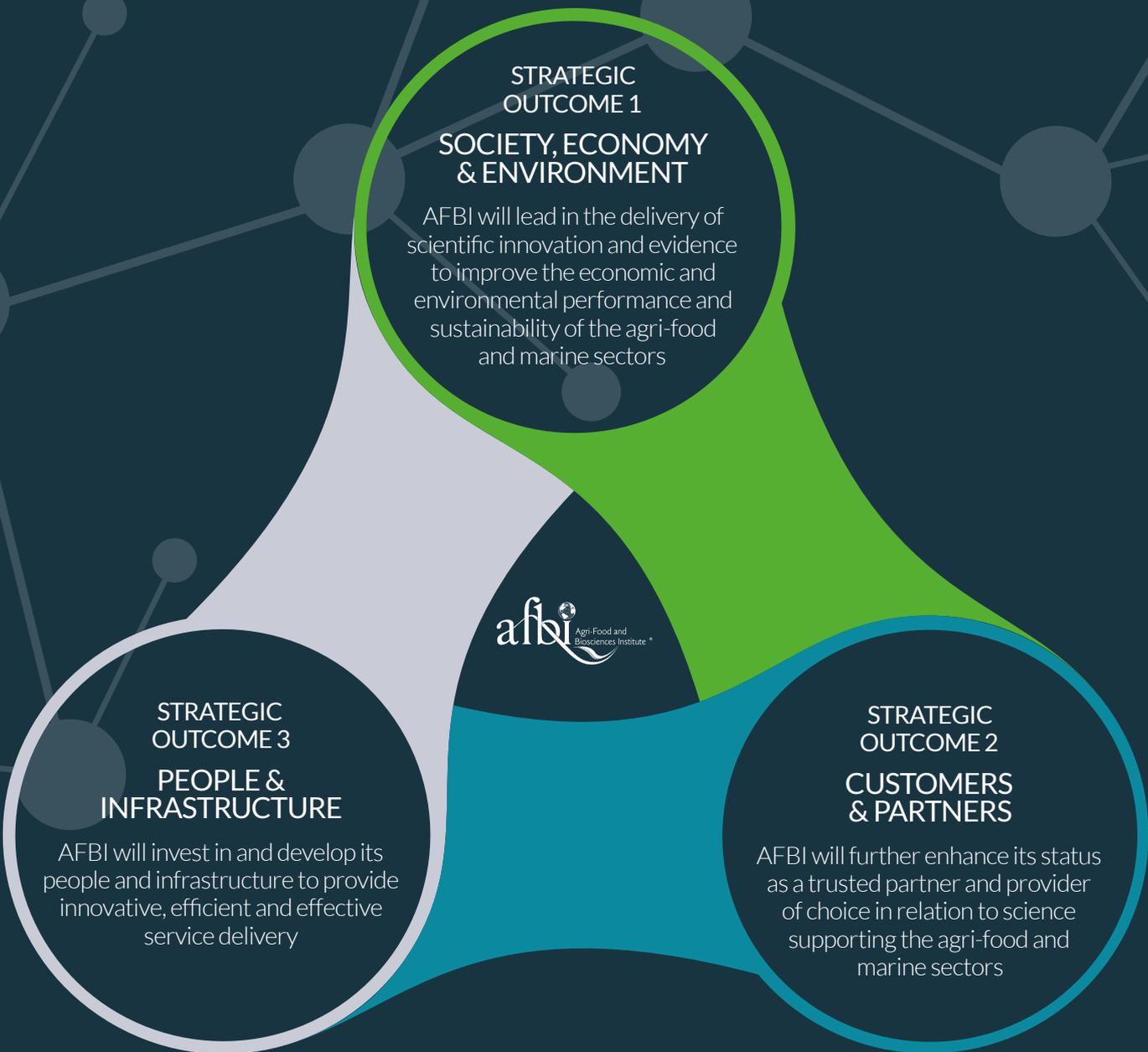
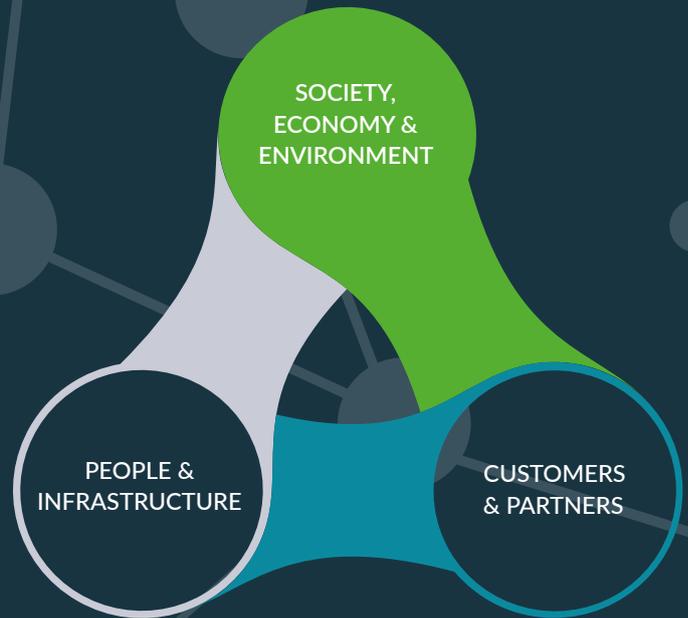


FIGURE 3
STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1
SOCIETY, ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT

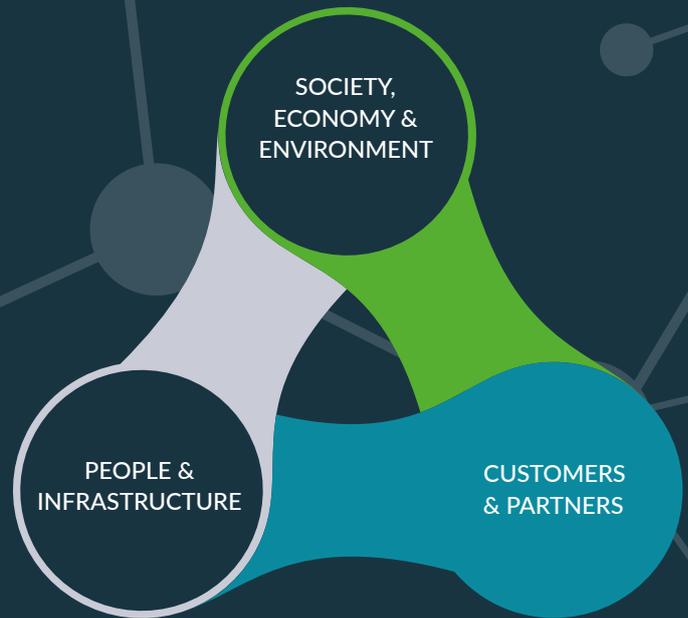
AFBI will lead in the delivery of scientific innovation and evidence to improve the economic and environmental performance and sustainability of the agri-food and marine sectors.



ALIGNED DAERA OUTCOME	AFBI OUTCOMES	AFBI OUTCOME MEASURES
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 1 Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>OM 1 Established measures in place to demonstrate impact of AFBI Science.</p>
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 2 A clean, healthy environment, benefitting people, nature and the economy.</p>	<p>Outcome 2 Strategic alliances with local universities providing interdisciplinary responses and maximising the impact of NI science on local and global challenges.</p>	<p>OM 2 Established science programmes which aim to define:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved societal benefits • Enhanced local environment • Development of sustainable livestock systems.
		<p>OM 3 Development of strategic partnerships/ alliances with local universities.</p>
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 4 A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Outcome 4 Enhanced uptake of innovation by industry and processors improving efficiency and resilience.</p>	<p>OM 4 Increased adoption of innovation and technology by industry.</p>

FIGURE 4 STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2 CUSTOMERS & 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	AFBI OUTCOME MEASURES
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 1 Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors.</p>	<p>Outcome 4 Enhanced relationships with customers and partners based on reputation of AFBI science.</p>	<p>OM 5 AFBI will deliver on commitments to DAERA as it's 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>DAERA Strategic Outcome 3 A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Outcome 5 Strengthen image of NI produced food based on AFBI science.</p>	<p>OM 7 Improved animal, fish and plant health and food safety status for NI.</p>

ALIGNED DAERA OUTCOME

AFBI OUTCOMES

AFBI OUTCOME MEASURES

Outcome 6

Grow AFBI science profile and brand both locally and globally.

OM 8

Increased staff involvement, influence and recognition in national and international committees and networks of excellence.

OM 9

Increased numbers of peer reviewed scientific papers in journals within the top 25% for their subject area.

OM 10

Increased networking and collaboration with other national and international scientific organisations including exchange of PhD and Post Doctoral scientists.

Outcome 7

Increase research contract and commercial income portfolio.

OM 11

Increased levels of collaboration evidenced through national and international research contracts.

OM 12

Annual increases in non Grant-in-Aid income.

FIGURE 5 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	AFBI OUTCOME MEASURES
<p>DAERA Strategic Outcome 1 Sustainable agri-food, fisheries, forestry and industrial sectors.</p>	<p>Outcome 8 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>DAERA Strategic Outcome 2 A clean, healthy environment, benefitting people, nature and the economy.</p>	<p>Outcome 9 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 Adoption of data management systems to harness opportunities from Big Data and new technologies.</p>

ALIGNED DAERA OUTCOME

AFBI OUTCOMES

AFBI OUTCOME MEASURES

DAERA Strategic Outcome 3

A thriving rural economy, contributing to prosperity and wellbeing.

Outcome 10

Refined benchmarking processes and efficiency targets in place and monitored.

OM 17

Annual corporate benchmarking and unit costing reports provided to DAERA.

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.

Outcome 11

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

OM 19

Delivery of new facilities as an outcome of an agreed Estates Strategy.



ALIGNMENT OF CORPORATE PLAN WITH DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT (PFG) OUTCOMES AND DRAFT DAERA STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

As a key customer and as AFBI's sponsor department, it is important that AFBI aligns its strategic direction 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.

Through its broad range of scientific work, AFBI will support the delivery of DAERA's draft objectives. AFBI will in turn assist in progress towards the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy, the Northern Ireland Executive's draft Programme for Government targets, Agri-Food Strategy Board's 'Going for Growth' recommendations and the Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Strategy for Northern Ireland.

AFBI has a significant part to play

in helping Northern Ireland achieve many of its draft PfG outcomes, namely:

O1 – “We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy”.

O2 – “We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment”.

O4 – “We enjoy long, healthy, active lives”.

O5 – “We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential”.

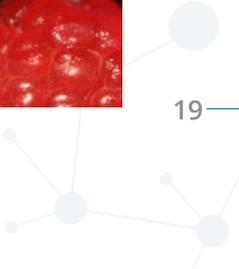
O6 – “We have more people working in better jobs”.

AFBI will contribute to this by improving the economic and

environmental performance of the agri-food and biosciences, marine and wider business sectors. This will be achieved through the transfer of the benefits of our scientific research to the agri-food sector, in collaboration with CAFRE, levy bodies such as AgriSearch and other partners, and the publication of articles that will share science, innovation and best practice in agriculture, fisheries, food production and the rural economy. AFBI also has a direct impact on the NI Economy by attracting funding from international customers which represents the equivalent of foreign direct investment in the local economy. This funding underpins a number of high quality scientific posts in AFBI which benefit the wider economy and assist in maintaining scientific capacity and excellence.



AFBI WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THIS BY IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE OF THE AGRI-FOOD AND BIOSCIENCES, MARINE AND WIDER BUSINESS SECTORS.



KEY STRATEGIC THEMES TO DELIVER **AFBI'S 2018-2022 STRATEGY**

In order to deliver the outcomes of the 2018-2022 Corporate Strategy outlined above, a number of significant developments are planned. These represent the main instruments to further develop AFBI into a modern, forward looking organisation which can proactively address the local and global challenges expected to face the agri-food industry.



STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

The global food chain is facing major challenges, arguably as great as any in the history of agriculture. Delivering on food security, locally and globally, requires interdisciplinary, multi-actor collaborations that bring together a breadth of expertise and capabilities necessary to gain traction and achieve substantive progress.

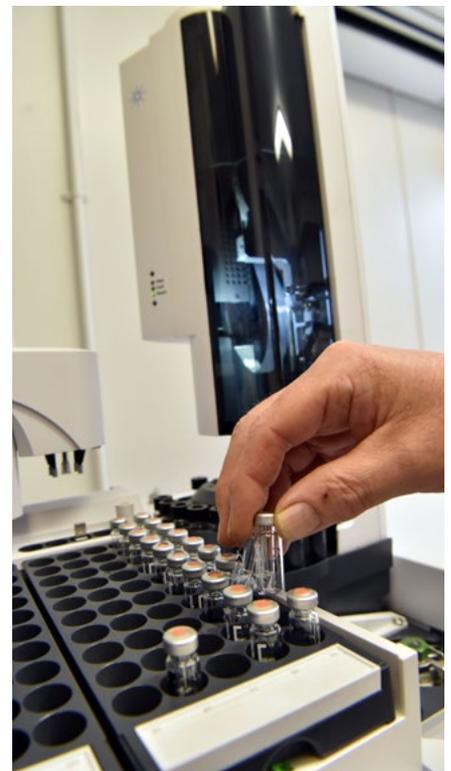
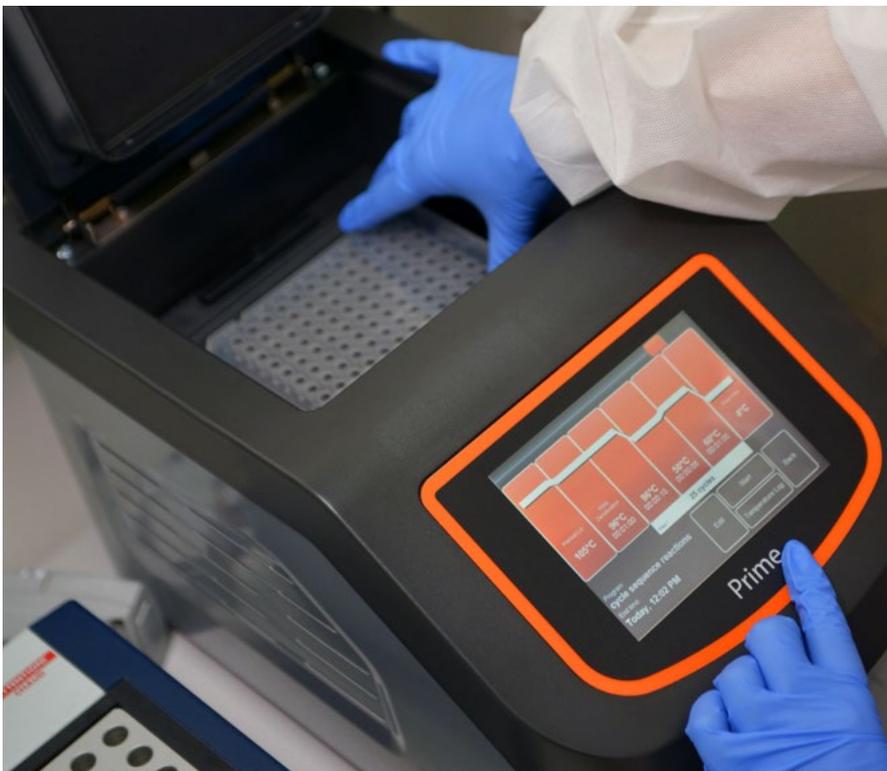
In response, the research arena in the UK and further afield is changing. This is evident through the much closer relationships between Research Council UK and Innovate UK to (1) enhance the interdisciplinary research environment and (2) help nurture the translation of science into wider societal benefits through public-private partnerships. Research establishments are also responding to the aforementioned challenges through the creation of alliances or mergers to achieve the necessary scale to address societal challenges and to be competitive.

In response AFBI recognises the need for formal strategic alliances

with universities 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 research, education, enterprise and knowledge exchange alliances in Northern Ireland to support solutions to the complex problem of delivering safe, nutritious, sustainable, 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.

Northern Ireland has many world leading scientists and many of the agri-food challenges in Northern Ireland have international relevance. Hence forming an alliance with local academics, through effective collaboration, will merge this diversity of skills, knowledge, facilities and capacity and enhance Northern Ireland's ability to compete on a global platform in the agriculture and food security arena.



AFBI's future success is dependent on attracting and retaining high calibre scientists and collaborating with others.

COLLABORATION

Working closely with our sponsor department, AFBI will also continue to develop and enhance collaboration and partnerships with international universities, other research organisations and commercial partners in the design and delivery of research projects of importance to the local agri-food sector. This will be reflected in applications for European Union (EU) funding through the Horizon 2020 (H2020) programme and other EU sources such as INTERREG to grow its income and add value to DAERA's and local industry's R&D expenditure in AFBI.

AFBI will avail of other R&D funding opportunities, as they become available, such as the UK Agricultural Technologies Strategy and the UK Industrial Strategy. AFBI is a member of the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Livestock (CIEL) Limited, a consortium of research institutes and industry organisations which have formed a company limited by guarantee to deliver agri-food research and innovation to uplift the profitability of UK livestock PLC. This collaboration of key UK academics and industry organisations presents many opportunities for AFBI going forward.



AFBI SCIENCE PROGRAMMES

Over the next four years AFBI will develop, establish and successfully launch its programme-based approach to science to maximise opportunities, for both AFBI and its stakeholders, from its multi and inter disciplinary make up. AFBI have identified three science programmes which represent both the current and future needs of the agri-food and bioscience sectors. These are highlighted in Figure 6.

A programme-based approach will provide AFBI with a greater ability to develop a co-ordinated response to address global challenges both current and future and maximise the benefits of multi-disciplinary synergies within AFBI. This will also achieve better alignment of AFBI's science with stakeholder priorities and ensure that AFBI has sufficient 'critical mass' to make an impact. In order to retain the Northern Ireland Agri-Food industry as an economically strategic sector, the generation and analysis of economic data and impact will underpin all three programmes.

AFBI's programme-based approach to science will allow AFBI to link to DAERA's own proposed programme approach to the commissioning of science, which can only be of benefit to policy makers and the wider agri-food industry. This represents a new way of working for AFBI and over the period of the Corporate Plan

we will review our systems and processes to ensure that we can maximise the benefits from this new approach.

Alongside the establishment of the science programmes, over the four year period, AFBI will regularly review future challenges

and opportunities through ongoing industry and scientific discipline wide Horizon Scanning. Outcomes of Horizon Scanning, coupled with policy developments, will inform AFBI's 2030 strategy and longer term direction and nature of science delivery.

SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS

To develop and use innovative strategies and tools which enhance the productivity, health and welfare and profitability of livestock farming in a sustainable and resilient manner.

SOCIETAL IMPACT

To inform and protect society and drive the sustainable economic growth of the agri-food biosciences and fisheries industries.

ECOSYSTEMS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

To enhance and protect the land, water and air and their associated ecosystems which have interdependencies with agri-food and fishing practices.

Figure 6



SCIENCE ENABLERS

In addition to AFBI's current expertise within these programmes a number of other enablers have already been identified to deliver a futuristic fit for purpose service to AFBI's stakeholders.

These enablers represent expertise in the implementation of precision agricultural technology on farms, the manipulation of 'Big' Data and the development of Decision Support tools.

Precision agricultural technology will have a critical role to play in helping to achieve the targets for sustainable expansion of the local agri-food industry and in securing growth in technology areas such as automated sensors, robotics, and predictive analytics for genomics.

Genomics-enabled research is another major tool to drive increased productivity and sustainability.

Genetics related research has a key role to play in animal and plant health and production as well as ensuring food safety.



GROWING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR CUSTOMERS

AFBI has a strong history of delivering quality services to local and international companies of all sizes and has a proven innovative approach to product development which has industry impact.

“ A NUMBER OF KEY INITIATIVES WILL BE ADOPTED DURING THE LIFE OF THIS CORPORATE PLAN TO GROW AFBI'S BUSINESS IN COLLABORATION WITH OUR PARTNERS. ”

In partnership with AFBI's customers, AFBI will continue to develop a customer-focused culture and will actively manage its science portfolio, through the science programme approach and strategic alliances, to meet the needs of its local, national and international partners. AFBI will continuously improve its service by seeking customer feedback on its performance and ensuring internal communication to staff to support a culture of collaboration and multi-disciplinary innovation.

Such an approach will open new scientific and research avenues, making AFBI more attractive for new collaborations providing access to funding and revenue.

Whilst DAERA is AFBI's key customer, a significant proportion of AFBI

income is currently derived from external (non-DAERA) sources. A number of key initiatives will be adopted during the life of this Corporate Plan to grow AFBI's business in collaboration with our partners. These include enhanced customer engagement, investment in new capabilities as well as investment in staff.

AFBI's engagement strategy will drive the flow of information to and from our customer base. It will enable AFBI to be more agile in our response to our partners, stakeholders and the broader industry needs. Specifically AFBI will establish an Industry Advisory Group and programme linked Stakeholder Forums to ensure AFBI maintains relevance and proactivity when addressing future needs.



SUPPORTING THE DELIVERY OF THE CORPORATE PLAN

BUSINESS PLANNING

AFBI recognises that 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. AFBI will implement this Corporate Plan

through the preparation and delivery of annual business plans. Annual business plans will set out measurable objectives and targets that will cascade to those divisions, sections and individual staff responsible for delivery.

PEOPLE

The quality, dedication and expertise of staff are pivotal to AFBI's future success. Promoting a culture of excellence, commitment and responsibility within a considerate environment is fundamental to delivering AFBI's objectives. AFBI's continued success is dependent on attracting and retaining the best scientists and supporting staff in an increasingly competitive environment. The UK exit from the EU will provide further challenge to attracting and retaining high calibre scientific staff. We will, however, continue to invest

in our staff to meet the challenges of an ever-changing scientific working environment. This aspiration is fostered by developing individuals' careers through the provision of development opportunities, regular appraisal, and a range of work-life balance practices. The development of a cross disciplinary programme approach to science within AFBI will also bring fundamental benefits to AFBI and our people. This will allow the organisation to build more flexible teams, driving staff development and engagement.

This will maximise the opportunities to share scientific knowledge across AFBI and in turn enhance staff opportunities for professional development and career progression. Successful implementation and embedding of this new approach will require the effective engagement and input from staff across AFBI and will be underpinned by AFBI's values set out at Appendix 1.

EQUALITY

AFBI is committed to providing equality of opportunity. It is our policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement on the basis of their ability, qualifications and aptitude for the work. Everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to a considerate and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all workers are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in

which no worker feels under threat or intimidated. We aim to foster a culture that encourages every member of staff to develop their full potential. Creating a working environment where individual differences are valued and respected enables all staff to give of their best and helps us to respond more effectively to the needs of the people we serve.

CORPORATE & MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS & EFFICIENCY

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. We will therefore continue to develop a strong business culture for our scientists so that they are better equipped to manage the financial and governance aspects of science.

In terms of an efficiency strategy, over the period of this plan and beyond,

AFBI will continue to benchmark itself against other organisations and improve its internal governance and reporting systems through setting efficiency targets across services.

An efficiency plan and targets for each year will be produced, monitored and reported to ensure previous efficiencies are maintained and future efficiencies are achieved.

We 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 essential that AFBI has an effective and fit for purpose IT platform and management information systems in place to support corporate and project management. We will continue to review our IT Strategy to ensure it aligns to the overall corporate goals set out within this plan. A key part of this will be the delivery of a new Management Information System which is critical in helping to support streamlined service delivery.



PROGRAMME SUPPORT

Corporate support to assist AFBI's scientists in realising opportunities for collaborative research and applications for funding is critical to ensuring that staff are enabled to deliver more effectively. Over the

period of the Corporate Plan AFBI will strengthen programme support capacity for our scientists and maximise their ability to concentrate on the delivery of excellence in science and growth for AFBI.

ESTATES & INFRASTRUCTURE

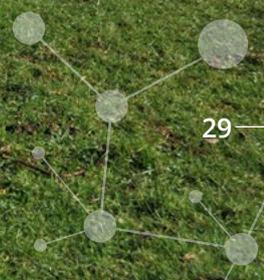
It is essential that AFBI has modern, fit-for-purpose accommodation, laboratory, field and farm research facilities if it is to fulfil its vision. AFBI staff are working closely with DAERA in reviewing and implementing AFBI's estate strategy. DAERA and AFBI have embarked on an ambitious programme of capital investment. Following outline business case approval by the Department of Finance, a project for construction of a new £32m scientific and administrative main building at the Veterinary Sciences Division-Stormont site has commenced. Other proposed significant investments

will include upgraded facilities at AFBI-Loughgall and new farm accommodation research facilities at AFBI-Hillsborough, as well as the development of plans for a new AFBI Headquarters Building. In conjunction with DAERA, plans are also underway to replace the current AFBI RV Corystes with a modern fit-for-purpose research vessel. These proposed large-scale capital investments will provide a fit-for-purpose estate and an ancillary research and administrative platform to enhance AFBI's competitiveness.

HOW WILL WE KNOW IF WE HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE?

This Corporate Plan sets out the key outcomes AFBI aims to deliver by 2022. Through working in partnership with DAERA and others to deliver their strategic outcomes we will seek to measure and demonstrate how we have made a difference by delivering for:

OUR SOCIETY, ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT	OUR CUSTOMERS & PARTNERS	OUR PEOPLE & INFRASTRUCTURE
<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>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>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>



CUSTOMER FIRST

- Seeks to understand and deliver to our customers' needs.
- Provides a professional service at all times.
- Demonstrates integrity and independence to customers
- Promotes a genuine customer care ethos.
- Provides value-for-money services.
- Communicates science to meet our customers' needs.

SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE AND INTEGRITY

- Invests in the generation and acquisition of knowledge and technology.
- Fosters creativity.
- Maximises 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

- 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.
- Generous with recognition and acknowledgment.

HONESTY AND TRUST

- 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

- Develops new channels of science.
- Receptive to new ideas.
- Adopts thinking and approaches that are flexible.
- Welcomes solutions that are different.
- Demonstrates the ability to think beyond the norm.



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