

Office of the Mayor



2 October 2013

Mr Sam Robin
Chairman
AgResearch Board
Email: sam.robinson@agresearch.co.nz

Dear Mr Robinson

Thank you for meeting with us in the lead up to your announcement last Thursday.

The Dunedin City Council is profoundly disappointed with your decision, which by and large remains unchanged from the original proposal. We have yet to see your business case, which we believe as a stakeholder we should have been privy to. At the very least it would have been helpful to have a copy made available to us once you made your public announcement. Since we have still not seen the business case we now formally request a copy of it, along with a copy of the change proposal.

As a leadership team you seem reluctant to outline the basis of your decision making to the public. We find that extraordinary given that you are a publicly funded research institution and your decision has national implications.

On a personal note you told us that through the public consultation process the proposal was likely to change, but nothing has changed. During this process you have been deficient in your engagement with stakeholders and you have failed to supply the business case or the change proposal. That leaves us in a poor position to have informed and meaningful discussion about your appraisal when we meet on 10 October.

When we read in the media that you have gone against the advice of your own Change Management Team, we are even more convinced that your decision is misguided. We believe it will result in the loss of considerable synergistic expertise in the genetics field to New Zealand and cuts across your own economic aims. It also cuts across your CEO's assertion that developing the proposed hub at Lincoln is in the national interest to increase outputs in the genetics field. As we have already pointed out both to you and Minister Steven Joyce, the last time AgResearch tried to move staff (Wallaceville) it was a spectacular failure.

Was your board aware the Change Management Team up set up to review the AgResearch proposal rejected four of the main proposals in the animal genomics teams and that the Executive Team chose to ignore them? All four of these recommendations favoured the genomics, genomz, reproductive technologies and the reproductive and developmental biology teams being collocated at Invermay.

We have a number of questions that we will be forwarding to you. We would like all of these questions answered when we meet in a fortnight. We will be presenting our case, which directly addresses the science based approach of our business case.

As a courtesy to you we attach our case. We would have liked to have shared it with your Board earlier, but you declined our invitation. I am sure you are aware the information has already been shared with Minister Joyce. We look forward to the opportunity of presenting our alternative case when we meet on 10 October.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Cull". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dave" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Cull".

Dave Cull
Mayor of Dunedin