



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

# Agricultural Advisory Panel Meeting: 27 April 2021

Summary of the meeting held online due to Covid-19 restrictions.

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## Present

Chair – Dr Nerys Llewellyn-Jones

Independents - Steve Hughson, Janatha Stout

Unite – Brian Troake, Ivan Monckton

FUW – Darren Williams

NFU Cymru - Will Prichard

Panel Legal Adviser - Helen Snow (Geldards)

Welsh Government - Ryan Davies (Panel Manager), Sian Hughes, Dan Ricketts (Secretariat).

**Due to a global Microsoft issue, there were issues in some people connecting to the meeting. This led to Janatha only be able to join the meeting via phone. As a result the running order of the meeting was amended slightly.**

## **Agenda Item 1 – Welcome**

A new Chair of the Panel had been appointed – Dr Nerys Llewellyn-Jones was replacing Lionel Walford.

A new independent member was also welcomed onto the Panel – Janatha Stout replacing Peter Rees.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and no new conflicts of interest were declared.

## **Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting and Action Points**

The minutes for Meeting 24 were approved with no amendments. Updates were given on the outstanding Action Points:

It was possible for definition of agriculture to be changed in the Order however

the current definition was derived from the Agriculture Sector (Wales) Act so Welsh Ministers may be unhappy with any disparity between definitions.

The Panel agreed to keep the definition as it is but to strengthen the guidance issued to cover horticulture, forestry etc (not an exhaustive list) and to ensure these sectors were included in any statements made by the Panel.

## **Agenda Item 3 – Introductions**

Introductions were made by each Panel member and WG officials as this was the first meeting since the appointment of the new Panel members.

## **Agenda Item 4 – Chairs Update**

The panel were given an update on the 2021 Order currently under consideration by Welsh Government.

Welsh Government Legal Services had raised some queries and points of clarification regarding the submitted draft Order. These were responded to by the previous Chair but it was unclear whether further clarifications were required.

It was clarified the Order was subject to any changes in the National Minimum Wage / National Living Wage so any rates which fell below the new rates from 1 April would automatically increase.

All members of the Panel expressed their extreme frustration and disappointment at the delays in the processing of the Order. They felt it devalued the efforts of the Panel in the decisions that were made. The Panel also stated they had not seen the queries from Welsh Government.

It was reiterated that agricultural wages were a Welsh Government priority and the delays were not intentional. Welsh Government would like to work more collaboratively and this had been referred to in the Agriculture White Paper.

The Panel agreed to write to the Welsh Government to express their disappointment but also to offer solutions as to working more collaboratively in the future. They also agreed the role of the Welsh Government officials in meetings should not be just in the role of an observer. However guidelines would need to be in place to ensure the independence of the Panel was not compromised.

A meeting between Welsh Government and Legal Services was due to take place and any outstanding queries would be distributed to all Panel members for discussion as soon as possible.

The Panel unanimously agreed the 2021 Order needed to be pushed through with an application made for retrospectivity to 1 April 2021. The Panel also agreed there needed to be communications sent out to the industry as soon as possible to keep them updated on the current situation and to help with budget planning for both employers and employees.

It was also agreed that a meeting with the new Minister after the Senedd elections would be very beneficial.

## **Agenda Item 5 - Agricultural Advisory Panel Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference of the Panel showed the remit went beyond the Agricultural Wages Order.

The view was the work on Skills & Training Development needed to be more visible.

The modernisation of the Order had resulted in a clear pathway to allow workers to improve themselves with the appropriate pay rewards. It was therefore important to build the SDT sub-committee work to develop people as relevantly and quickly as possible.

It was suggested the Terms of Reference are updated to a partnership

agreement between the Panel and Welsh Government.

## **Agenda Item 6 - Skills and Development Sub-Committee**

This was partly covered in the previous agenda item.

The Panel agreed the remit and objectives of the sub-committee should be set by the full Panel and they should then refer to the experts on the sub-committee for advice as and when required. It was agreed to discuss this at the meeting at the end of May.

## **Agenda Item 7 - Timetable Going Forward**

Proposed dates had been distributed for monthly two hour meetings for the remainder of the year until such time as restrictions are lifted allowing for some face-to-face meetings.

The Panel agreed to the timetable and format of future meetings whilst being flexible for additional meetings if required.

## **Agenda Item 8 - Conflicts of Interest**

The document regarding the “Seven Principles of Public Life” had been distributed to the Panel. They were commonly recognised and should be used as the operating principle of the Panel and sub-committees.

The Panel agreed that all members of the Panel worked under the principles as set out in the document and any conflicts of interest that arose needed to be highlighted as soon as practicable.

## **Agenda Item 9 - Roles / Future Participation / Presentations**

If any of the Panel would like presentations from parties regarding any aspect of the work of the Panel they were asked to raise them at the next meeting.

## **Agenda Item 10 - Any Other Business**

A proposal was made for the Panel to send letters to the previous Independent Members to thank them for their service. This was agreed.

Next meeting – Tuesday 11 May at 11am (via Microsoft Teams)

## About this document

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