



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Bovine TB Technical Advisory Group for Wales: 17 June 2024

Bovine TB Technical Advisory Group for Wales: meeting 17 June 2024.

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Attendance

Glyn Hewinson, chair
Dai Grove-White, member
Gareth Edwards, member
Gareth Enticott, member
Gwenllian Rees, member
Keith Cutler, member
Robert Smith, member
Sarah Tomlinson, member
Sarah Woollatt, member
Richard Irvine, chief Veterinary Officer for Wales
Secretariat, secretariat

Guest speakers/observers

Head of bTB Eradication Programme, Welsh Government
bTB Policy and Statistics, Welsh Government
Animal and Plant Health Agency representative

1. Welcome from chair and housekeeping

Chair welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for giving up their time, expertise and their timely and valuable work on the on-farm slaughter policy advice.

Chair conveyed apologies from Ifan Lloyd and introduced the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) observer who will be attending future meetings to advise on the delivery of any policy advice considered.

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Chair reminded the group of:

- confidentiality
- the independent nature of the group.

Chair confirmed minutes from previous meetings agreed.

Chair updated on actions from the previous meeting.

TAG members declared conflicts of interest.

Future meetings confirmed as follows:

- Wednesday 9th October 2024
- Thursday 23rd January 2025
- Thursday 10th April 2025
- Thursday 10th July 2025
- Thursday 16th October 2025

TAG members were encouraged to identify topics for future focus.

2. Presentation and talk from vets and farmers involved in the Pembrokeshire project

The Pembrokeshire project attendees (including vets and farmers) introduced themselves and delivered a presentation covering the following:

- the reality of TB in Pembrokeshire with facts and figures
- reversing fatalism
- case Studies
- use of data from the Wales Badgers Found Dead project
- assessment of biosecurity and use of 'farm scores'

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- engagement
- secondary effects of the Pembrokeshire Project
- proactive vs Reactive approaches to TB control
- ideas on how to accelerate TB eradication in Wales

Members had the opportunity to ask questions throughout the presentation.

Chair thanked the Pembrokeshire project and emphasised the importance of the Technical Advisory Group hearing farmer and veterinary perspectives.

The Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales thanked the Technical Advisory Group for their work on on-farm slaughter and provided an update on their accepted advice and recent policy decisions. APHA provided an update on the on-farm slaughter policy changes from an implementation and delivery perspective.

3. TB Data presentation from Welsh Government

An overview of TB data was presented to the TAG covering:

- herd demographics
- herd incidence
- herd prevalence
- herd persistence
- herd recurrence
- England and Wales comparative data

Members had the opportunity for a questions and answer session following the presentation.

Chair offered thanks for the clear and valuable presentation, and the TAG's engagement with complex data.

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4. Cymorth TB presentation from Welsh Government

An update on Cymorth TB was presented by Welsh Government followed by a question and answer session with members of theTAG..

The update covered:

- background on Cymorth
- current activities and uptake
- links with other projects and programmes
- initial work with stakeholders to review Cymorth.

TAG members discussed short- and longer-term considerations with regard to Cymorth and its intended outcomes. It was suggested that a number of building blocks need to be put in place, comprising:

- Welsh Government should in the first instance assess the feasibility of changing the scope of Cymorth TB
- the value of farmers and vets working together to determine herd-level actions and health planning was strongly emphasised. TAG advised this was relevant to herds without TB, as well as those experiencing a herd breakdown
- for the latter, the utility of TB skin test data to inform decision-making and disease risk management, including when buying-in stock, was emphasised
- TAG members advised that both Veterinary Delivery Partners in Wales should be asked to identify gaps in current training for Vets and ATTs relating to bovine TB

Chair thanked the policy lead and emphasised the importance of ensuring feedback and further engagement with the TAG and relevant stakeholders.

5. APHA presentation

APHA representative delivered a presentation to members covering:

- what APHA do
- who they are
- types and volumes of TB related work delivered by APHA
- relationships between policy and delivery, including change.

TAG members had the opportunity for a questions and answer session following the presentation.

Chair thanked the APHA representative for their presentation and emphasised the importance of always considering delivery implications when the Technical Advisory Group develop their advice.

6. Policy Presentation Welsh Government

Due to technical difficulties this item was removed from the agenda and will be presented at the next TAG meeting.

7. Any other business

TAG members were asked to confirm their views and advice on the accessibility to farmers of TB skin test data on request.

Members unanimously agreed that TB skin test data should be available to farmers on request. Welsh Government and APHA were asked by the Chair to identify and resolve barriers to this being possible and provide feedback at the

next TAG meeting.

8. Thank you and closing remarks

The Chair and Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales thanked members and speakers and closed the meeting.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 9 October 2024

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