

## **WALES ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE FRAMEWORK GROUP**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held in Cathays Park, Cardiff on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

#### **Present:**

Peredur Hughes	Chair
Christianne Glossop	Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales
Huw Davies	
Jo Price	
Ifan Lloyd	
David Davies	
Moss Jones	

#### **Welsh Government**

Carol Harris	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Janet Perry	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Elaine Hepple	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Gavin Watkins	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO) (Item 4&5)
Alun Streeter	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO) (Item 5)
Gareth Beili Jones	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO) (Item 5)
Jackie Price	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO) (Item 5)
Phillip Roberts	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO) (Item 5)

#### **Agenda Item 1: Welcome**

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the tenth meeting of the Group. The Chair explained that Jackie Price and Phil Roberts (TB Team) and Alun Streeter and Gareth Beili Jones (Welfare Team) would be joining the meeting to discuss their respective policy areas. The Chair also welcomed Elaine Hepple to the meeting and explained she had recently joined the Secretariat Team.

#### **Agenda Item 2: Minutes and Action Points from 12<sup>th</sup> June**

2. The Chair explained that the final minutes and updated action points from the last meeting were emailed to Group Members as part of the papers for this meeting.
3. The minutes of the meeting were agreed.

#### **Agenda Item 3: Update from Chair**

4. The Chair provided an update as follows;

##### **a) Public Appointments process**

Peredur explained the Secretariat had recently met with the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs to discuss public appointments and the Wales AHWF

Group. He confirmed that the Cabinet Secretary had agreed the public appointment plan which will now be taken forward by the Secretariat. The Group will be kept informed of developments.

**b) Meeting with Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs 23<sup>rd</sup> August**

The Chair explained he had his first formal meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August. He provided her with an update on the work of the Group, including welfare of companion animals, raising awareness amongst farmers of AMR and biosecurity. He also provided an update on progress with BVD and Sheep Scab.

He confirmed that the Cabinet Secretary had agreed to meet with him on a bi annual basis and confirmed that she would be attending part of the Group's next meeting in December.

**c) BREXIT workshops**

The Chair explained that he and other members of the Group had attended the workshops. The Group agreed it was crucial for animal health and welfare to be considered as part of these discussions. The Group recognised that this was an evolving situation with many unknowns and they will have a key role to play in developing the way forward. The Chair confirmed that he would be attending the next 2 round table meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs (3<sup>rd</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October). The Group agreed the importance of driving forward with the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework in parallel with the Brexit work. They agreed that implications of Brexit will need to be factored into future planning both in the short and longer term. The Group also recognised the importance of the EU Animal Health Regulation and the need to retain key principles and elements of this work including more consistent rules on animal disease surveillance and eradication, clearer rules on animal movement and registration and emphasising the importance of biosecurity and prevention rather than cure.

Christianne confirmed that Brexit was now a standard agenda item for the monthly UK wide Chief Veterinary Officer meetings.

**d) Forthcoming Four Chairs Meeting**

The Chair explained he is attending the Four Chairs meeting in Edinburgh on the 21<sup>st</sup> September. He explained the agenda hasn't yet been confirmed but he has asked for BREXIT to be added. The Group will be provided with feedback from this meeting.

**Agenda Item 4: Update from Christianne**

5. Christianne provided an overview of the latest International Disease Monitoring report. Two key issues included bluetongue and lumpy skin disease. Huw asked how this level of surveillance could be retained post Brexit. Gavin explained this

was an issue he had raised with the Animal Health Surveillance Governance Board (AHSGB) for their consideration.

6. Christianne provided feedback on the biosecurity demonstration run by the OCVO at the Royal Welsh Show. This had been very successful. She explained she had visited the horse area to discuss biosecurity and felt there was an opportunity to have a bigger discussion on this topic. She explained she had suggested to APHA to include equine diseases as part of their contingency planning exercises. The Group recognised the decision made to not have rabbits at this year's Royal Welsh Show due to the risk of Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease and agreed this was a good example of responsible behaviour.
7. Huw explained that a report had been published on Agricultural Societies and Shows and agreed to circulate this to the Group.

***Action Point 1> Report on Agricultural Societies and Shows to be circulated to Group members.***

8. Gavin provided an update on the Centre of Excellence for Livestock Production in Carmarthen. Christianne stated that this was a positive step for Wales and work will continue to promote the Centre. He explained there had been a conference in Bristol in July. He explained that the Conference had been very positive with a good range of stakeholders present.

**Agenda Item 5: Follow up discussion on Wales AHWF Group priorities (to include EU, partnership working, BVD, AMR, sheep scab and lameness)**

9. The Group discussed some of the key priorities being taken forward through the Wales AHWF Implementation Plan 2016/17.

### **Sheep Scab**

10. The Group considered the draft report on the results of the survey undertaken by Bristol University to consider the prevalence of sheep scab in Wales. Jo stated that the report provided clear messages as the results were very similar to a previous survey conducted in 2012. The following action points were agreed.

***Action Point 2> Christianne and OCVO officials to meet with the Farming Connect team to discuss process for including key messaging on sheep scab in the Farming Connect programme.***

***Action Point 3> Moss and Ifan to reconvene the survey expert group to discuss the results of the survey and develop recommendations for action. These will then be discussed with the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group.***

***Action Point 4> Arrangements for the presentation and publication of the survey to be considered by the survey expert group and OCVO officials.***

***Action Point 5> OCVO officials to provide the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs with advice on the survey results and proposed way forward.***

## **BVD**

11. Gavin provided an update to the Group. He explained there were now bi-weekly catch up meetings in place with the BVD Sub Group. Approval of the application for funding from the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 was imminent for Phase 1. This covers elements such as setting up a governance structure, communications planning, training of vets and data collection. The Chair asked for the Group to be kept informed of progress.

***Action point 6> Secretariat to provide updates on progress.***

## **EU/ Partnership Working**

12. The Chair explained that the Secretariat had been tasked with drafting a paper on partnership working and how this can be linked into planning for the Wales AHWF and also work on Brexit. Carol explained that the draft paper would be circulated shortly and comments from the Group would be welcomed.

***Action Point 7> Secretariat to circulate paper on partnership working and Group members to provide comments.***

## **Sheep lameness**

13. The Chair thanked Huw for his update paper on sheep lameness. Huw explained that this work was now being taken forward in partnership with Farming Connect. The Group agreed the role of the vet was crucial to the success of this proposal. Huw agreed to discuss this further with Farming Connect.

***Action Point 8> Huw to discuss the role of the vet with Farming Connect.***

## **AMR**

14. Gavin provided an update on work being taken forward on AMR. This includes establishing links with Public Health colleagues and developing proposals to raise awareness. The Group agreed the 2 main audiences should be farmers and vets. They suggested that Public Health be approached to consider including key messages in their communications on pets and antibiotics. Jo explained there was increasing interest about the role of dogs in AMR with Bristol University beginning research into this.

15. Gavin explained one of the proposals he was considering was development of a “Wales Prescribing Policy”. The Group felt this was a good idea. Gavin explained another area where there was a gap was collecting data on antibiotic usage on farms. He explained he was attending the Cattle Health and Welfare

Group sub group on AMR on 15<sup>th</sup> September where this issue was being discussed. Moss explained that Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers (WLBP) had submitted an application for Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 funding to develop a process for collecting this data. This was becoming increasingly important due to pressure from retailers to know about antibiotic usage.

**Action Point 9> Moss to speak to Gavin about the WLBP proposal.**

16. Peredur thanked Gavin for his update. Gavin agreed that he would continue to liaise with Ifan on AMR issues and keep the Group informed of progress.

**Agenda Item 6: Policy updates from TB and Welfare**

**TB Update**

17. The Chair welcomed Jackie Price and Phil Roberts to the meeting.
18. Jackie provided an update on TB. She explained that as the Strategic Framework for TB ends in 2016, work had commenced to refresh the strategy. She explained the Minister would be making an oral statement on TB in the Autumn and launching a public consultation on the refreshed strategy.
19. The Chair thanked Jackie and Phil for their update and confirmed the Group would consider and respond to the public consultation.

**Welfare**

20. The Chair welcomed Gareth Beili-Jones and Alun Streeter to the meeting. The Chair thanked Gareth for the updated paper on Welfare of Animals in Transport. The Group considered the additional evidence provided in the paper. They agreed that as on average the proportion of sheep arriving dead at Welsh abattoirs was less than 1 percent of sheep slaughtered in Wales, there was no further action required. However they agreed the position needed to be monitored going forward and if incidence levels arose then they would review at that point.
21. Gareth provided an update on the work to revise the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice. He explained the pre-consultation working groups were now considering specific codes. The aim is to launch a public consultation before the end of the year.
22. Alun provided an update on Responsible Ownership. He explained the RSPCA had conducted a review of responsible dog ownership. This review is viewed as a driver for changing people's behaviour and has been broadened to Responsible Animal Ownership and not confined just to dogs. The work will need to be taken forward in partnership with Welsh Government colleagues in health and education

23. The Group agreed that animal welfare is extremely important and it is vital that these areas of work are progressed. They also agreed the work to revise the Codes was an excellent opportunity to develop a Wales wide communications plan on animal welfare to support the work to change people's behaviour and raise standards of welfare.

***Action Point 10> Welfare colleagues to consider potential for a Wales wide communications plan to promote the revised animal welfare codes and responsible ownership.***

24. The Chair thanked Gareth and Alun for their updates.

**Agenda Item 7. AOB**

25. Huw informed the Group that the Sheep Health and Welfare Group Conference was taking place on 16<sup>th</sup> November. Details will be circulated to the Group

***Action Point 11> Secretariat to forward details of Sheep Health and Welfare Group Conference.***

26. Ifan informed the Group of work to set up sheep health clubs in Wales. He explained, initial discussions were taking place and he would keep the Group updated of progress.

27. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and confirmed that the next meeting is on the 15<sup>th</sup> December in Cathays Park.

**CLOSE**