

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

### **Minutes of the Meeting held in Cathays Park, Cardiff on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

#### **Present:**

Peredur Hughes	Chair
Joanna Price	
Huw Davies	
Ifan Lloyd	
David Davies	
Moss Jones	

#### **Welsh Government**

Christianne Glossop	Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales (PM only)
Arjen Brower	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Chris Hale	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Janet Perry	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)

### **Agenda Item 1 - Welcome, Apologies and Introduction**

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Group and explained that Christianne was attending a meeting in Cardiff Bay so would join them in the afternoon.
2. He explained that he thought the launch of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework (Wales AHWF) at the Royal Welsh Show (RWS) was well received and was pleased to have the support of the Deputy Minister. He commented that the children's version of the Framework had also been very well received.
3. The Chair requested brief feedback from members on work undertaken in relation to the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework since the launch.
4. Moss explained that a query had been raised with him about how the views of the poultry sector would be represented through the Group. Chris explained that in relation to the poultry sector OCVO are responsible for the National Control Plans for Salmonella as well the policy for animal welfare of kept animals. The policy for marketing poultry sits outside of OCVO. Moss will convey this back accordingly.
5. Jo mentioned that she had been in discussions with her contact in Bristol regarding the welfare of sheep and the feasibility of having a welfare scoring system. She also mentioned that she was arranging to speak with Welsh Government leads on equine policy in advance of any meeting with equine stakeholders to consider priority projects that could be taken forward in Wales. Jo was also concerned about TB pre movement testing

on cattle from outside Wales. The Chair explained that he is hoping to meet with the Auctioneers Association shortly and is actively working on the issue. The Group agreed that the pre-movement testing of cattle coming into Wales was an issue that needed to be addressed.

6. The Group agreed that a letter from the Group highlighting their concerns on pre-movement testing on cattle from outside Wales to the Deputy Minister should be issued by the Chair.
7. Ifan explained that he had represented the Framework Group at the Animal Health Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) Governance meeting in early August. This relates to a recommendation of the Surveillance 2012 working group that some form of independent surveillance group is set up. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the way forward, the structure, function and responsibilities of the group and membership. Some progress was made but there remain a number of outstanding issues. He has also had an exchange of letters with British Veterinary Association (BVA) on Antimicrobial Resistance, a topic raised at the Group's Seminar at the Royal Welsh Show. He explained that he would be representing the Group at the UK wide Antimicrobial Resistance Seminar on the 18<sup>th</sup> November.
8. Ifan explained that he had also been in discussion with BVA regarding small animal priorities and the potential of setting up of a sub group. He explained that there has been an exchange of views between BVA and BSAVA (British Small Animal Veterinary Association) on this and the Wales AHWF priority "Animals in Wales have a good quality of life".

***Action Point 1 - Secretariat to email Framework Group to seek their views on what they would like to put in their letter to the Deputy Minister on TB pre movement testing of cattle from outside Wales.***

***Action Point 2 – The Chair to draft and issue a letter to the Deputy Minister following receipt of the Group's comments (as requested above).***

### **Agenda Item 2 – Minutes And Action Points From 11 June Meeting**

9. The Chair explained that the minutes and action points from the last meeting were emailed to Group Members last month by the Secretariat. There were no issues raised.

### **Agenda Item 3 - Update From Secretariat**

10. Janet provided an update from the Secretariat.
  - **Communications** - There will be an article in the September/October edition of Gwlad about the launch of the Framework at the RWS and the appointment of the Group. Consideration is being given to future articles. Janet asked the Group to forward any suggestions for future

editions to the Secretariat.

- **Partnership Networks** – The web page which sets out how people can register an interest in being involved in the Framework has now gone live. The Secretariat will maintain a database of registered stakeholders. Work will continue to encourage people to register
- The Group commented that they find the Hot Issues Brief a valuable source of information and thanked the Secretariat for producing it.
- **Cattle Health And Welfare Group (CHAWG) And Sheep Health And Welfare Group (SHAWG)** – Janet explained that the Secretariat has been looking to see where the Group can link in with other key groups, including CHAWG and SHAWG. It has been agreed with CHAWG and SHAWG that the Group may have a seat on each of these groups respectively. Huw will represent the Group at SHAWG and Dai will attend the next meeting of CHAWG. Huw confirmed that he is also attending the Sheep Health & Welfare Conference on 26 Nov 2014
- **Meetings Of The Chair**
  - The Chair met with Deputy Director for Rural Affairs to discuss the work of the Group.
  - The Chair is having his bi annual meeting with the Deputy Minister on the 7th October. The next 4 Chairs meeting is due to take place in Northern Ireland in October/November. Final arrangements are yet to be confirmed.
  - Future engagement - The Group agreed they would like to explore the possibility of holding a Q&A session with stakeholders at the Spring Fair
  - The AHVLA Conference is scheduled to take place in November and there will be a slot to present and discuss the Wales AHWF. The Secretariat will be in touch when they have further details

***Action Point 3 - Members to forward suggestions for future editions of GWLAD to the Secretariat***

***Action Point 4 – Dai Davies and Huw Davies to attend CHAWG and SHAWG respectively and feedback to the Group.***

***Action Point 5 - Secretariat to liaise with OCVO Communications Officer regarding possibility of holding a Q & A session at the Spring Fair.***

#### **Agenda Item 4 – Presentation on Budgets**

11. Chris explained that following a Ministerial reshuffle, Carl Sargeant is now the Minister for Natural Resources and Rebecca Evans is Deputy Minister for Farming and Food.

12. He then gave a short overview of the budgets held by OCVO and explained how the budgets are split over the policy areas.

#### **Agenda Item 5 – The Link To Food Policy**

13. The Group has agreed previously, the importance of establishing links across policy areas, in particular to food policy. The Group considered the position paper on the link to food. . The Group welcomed the paper and agreed that they would like to have short presentation on the Food and Drink Action Plan at the next meeting in order to better formulate and agree their options on future engagement.

***Action Point 6 - Secretariat to liaise with Food Policy to arrange a presentation on the Food and Drink Action Plan at next meeting***

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Developing An Evidence Base.**

14. The Chair explained that one of the actions from their first meeting was for the Secretariat to commission work to consider baseline evidence on disease priorities. He welcomed Gavin Watkins who had been commissioned to take this work forward to the meeting and thanked him for the prepared paper. The Chair explained that this work remained on-going as a key priority.
15. Gavin went through the work that he had carried out and commented that he had addressed it in two parts, firstly looking at old priorities of the former Animal Health & Welfare Strategy Steering Group and secondly looking at generic animal health & welfare outcomes. He explained that there was an existing prioritisation system already in place which is currently used by the public sector called D2R2. He explained that it is a tool used to help government prioritise specific animal disease interventions based on systemic and objective analysis. He commented that the Group could use this process as a means of prioritisation when looking to agree priorities.
16. The Group agreed that the presentation was helpful but appreciated the need to have further discussions on this aspect and how they make best use of the tools at their disposal when considering outcomes in the short, medium and longer term.
17. Jo said she will send through the information on “Pathways to Impact” which is a toolkit which could be used with the outcome approach.

***Action Point 7 – Jo to send the Secretariat the “Pathways to Impact” information to circulate to Group***

***Action Point 8 - The Group to consider how they deploy the tools at their disposal in order to agree their short, medium and long term topics and objectives.***

**Agenda Item 7 – Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) – Review Of The Animal Welfare Implications Of Killing Animals On-Farm**

18. The Chair explained that the Secretariat had circulated a call for information letter from Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) who have begun a review of the animal welfare implications of killing animals on-farm. The Chair also mentioned that consideration of this request included pain relief and use of euthanasia in diseased/ injured animals an issue raised at the Group's seminar at the Royal Welsh Show.
19. The Group had a general discussion around euthanasia, comments made were whether farmers are well informed as to what stage should they intervene when an animal is in pain, at what stage should they involve their vet, should there be a scoring system that farmers could use to determine at what stage euthanasia is used, should there be better education/training to young farmers?
20. The Chair thanked members for comments already made and asked for final comments to be sent through to the Secretariat by the 19<sup>th</sup> September. The Secretariat would circulate a draft response for agreement before sending to FAWC.

***Action Point 9 – Group to send through comments to Secretariat by 19<sup>th</sup> September. Secretariat to prepare and circulate final response for agreement to send to FAWC***

**Agenda Item 8 – Control Of Dog Tapeworm Cysts In Sheep**

21. The Chair explained that the Secretariat had circulated a Position Paper on the Control of Dog Tapeworm Cysts in Sheep. This had been raised by Christianne as the estimated cost to industry per year as a consequence of this issue is estimated to be £5 million. The paper provided a short overview of the situation and asked the Group to consider whether this is an area they would wish to consider in their work plan.
22. Huw gave an overview of the Technology, Agriculture and Greater Efficiencies (TAG) Project as one of the workstreams within this project is to consider the control of dog tapeworm larvae *cysticercus tenuicollis* and *cysticercus ovis* in sheep. He explained that the project had secured additional funding from Supply Chain Efficiency Scheme to deliver on 4 workstreams up to June 2015. The work streams are directly related to the future resilience of the sheep industry in Wales. He explained the work to be taken forward under the project will include:

- a literature review to better understand transmission of the parasites from dogs and other canines/wildlife to sheep
  - design of a questionnaire on dog and sheep management plus distribution of up to 1000 questionnaires to Welsh sheep farmers
  - in depth interviews with a number of producers to understand the interactions between control measures, farming systems and other non-agricultural sources of infection.
  - visits to 15 selected TAG farms (Dunbia suppliers) to discuss sheep and dog management
  - collection and analysis of dog faecal samples from all dogs on the farm
  - consideration of how parasites might be affecting lamb performance by examining abattoir feedback and lamb growth rates
  - a review of the effects of dog tapeworms in the sheep meat supply chain and production of a fact sheet on best management practices on farm that can be adopted to reduce infection
  - an interim report on specific case study farms and activity reports and project finding reports
23. Arjen explained that one option for the Group to consider is to ask abattoirs to identify disease in livers in order to establish a more robust evidence base.
24. The Group agreed that this as a way forward and asked Arjen to draft a specification for this project.

***Action Point 10 – Arjen to write a specification for the Group’s consideration, comment and agreement.***

***Action point 11 – On receipt of specification to agree and submit a proposal for financial support.***

### **Agenda Item 9 – Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)**

25. The Chair explained that the Group had agreed previously that BVD was a key priority with a lot of work already being undertaken in Wales to scope out the potential for eradicating BVD in Wales. The Group noted the current position as set out in the Position Paper on BVD tabled for this meeting.
26. The Chair explained that one of the strands being taken forward is the work of the BVD Sub Group . The Chair welcomed John Griffiths and Neil Paton to the meeting to present the Sub Group’s proposals for eradicating BVD in Wales.
27. John and Neil went through the key points relating to the development of their report and the recommendations that will be submitted for

consideration to Welsh Government. They also asked the Group to consider the report and recommendations. The Chair thanked John and Neil for providing a very informative presentation and said that the Group will consider the report and provide them with their comments shortly.

28. The Group discussed on the issues identified during the presentation and options for taking forward.
29. It was agreed that the Chair should write to John and Neil to endorse the approach being proposed. In addition they should seek their agreement to take forward to the next stage. The letter should provide a steer on the issues that still needed to be addressed and some indicative timescale for action.
30. The Chair suggested that BVD is added to the agenda for the next meeting in December to retain an overview of progress and also determine if any support or intervention is required. It would also give an opportunity to ensure that the parallel work streams such as cost benefit analysis on options is drawn together as a single aligned proposal. The Chair said he would update the Deputy Minister when he meets her on the 7<sup>th</sup> October.

***Action Point 11 – Chair to issue a letter to the BVD Sub Group in response to their report***

***Action Point 12 – Secretariat to add BVD to the next meeting agenda***

#### **Agenda Item 10 – Work Priorities Going Forward**

31. The Chair explained that as well as issues raised at this meeting the Group should now be agreeing their work priorities for the coming months.
32. It was agreed that BVD was a top priority for the Framework Group. Other priorities going forward should include;
  - non farmed animals
  - equines (December meeting)
  - Small kept animals (March meeting)
33. It was also agreed that biosecurity should be a cross-cutting priority. These matters to be featured as part of a forward look plan for the Group.
34. Christianne agreed that the OCVO veterinary team would review a their paper on biosecurity for circulation to the Group.

***Action Point 13 – Secretariat to add equine to the next meeting agenda and small animals to the March meeting***

***Action Point 14 – OCVO Vets to re-visit paper on biosecurity which will be circulated to Group***

**Agenda Item 11 – Any Other Business**

35. The Chair explained that he would be attending a Rural Development Plan For Wales implementation design phase workshop on 1st October. It was agreed that an update on the development of the RDP would be circulated prior to the next meeting. Linked to this work, the Chair explained that he and Chris Hale had met with Lantra to discuss Lantra's online learning and assessment tool for the food and drink sector. Chris explained that discussion focussed on how animal health and welfare could be integrated into the system with the potential to be used as a tool to convey messages such as biosecurity and deliver online learning. It was agreed that the outline proposal would be circulated to the Group.
36. Christianne said a paper on veterinary provision which could include surveillance, tendering for vet services for TB testing and the process for getting policies developed through AHVLA could be provided to the Group for information.
37. Ifan mentioned that he has received correspondence from BVA regarding Antimicrobial Resistance as they have published literature for farmers. It was agreed that he would give an update at next meeting.
38. The next meeting of the Group will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

***Action Point 15 - Secretariat to commission a written update on RDP from the policy leads***

***Action Point 16 - Secretariat to commission a written update on veterinary provision.***

***Action Point 17 - Secretariat to circulate Lantra slides to Group***

***Action Point 18 – Ifan to give short update on Antimicrobial Resistance at next meeting***

**CLOSE**