

WALES ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE FRAMEWORK GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting held in Cathays Park, Cardiff on 17th September 2015

Present:

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

Welsh Government

Chris Hale	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Carol Harris	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Janet Perry	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Tony Joss	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Irene Allen	Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)

Agenda Item 1: Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the sixth meeting of the Group. He explained that Jackie Price and APHA will be joining the meeting for the TB agenda item, Dr Ruth Clements will be joining the meeting to give a presentation on sheep lameness and David Lloyd Thomas will be joining to give an update on the Agriculture Framework.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes and Action Points from 3rd June Meeting

2. The final minutes and updated action points from the last meeting were emailed to Group Members in September as part of the papers for this meeting. The majority of the actions have been completed. Some actions remain on-going whilst others have been tabled for discussion at this meeting.
3. Ifan requested an update on the Review of Electronic Shock Collars both those which are operated by remote control for training purposes and those used in conjunction with electric fencing containment systems. Christianne explained that an independent review of the evidence base was now underway. This is due to be completed in the Autumn. It was agreed that an update on this work would be provided at the next meeting.

Action Point 1 – Secretariat to commission an update on the Review of Electronic Shock Collars for the next meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Update from Chair

Royal Welsh Show (RWS)

4. Peredur thanked the Group for attending the RWS as this had been a good opportunity to meet stakeholders. The Group welcomed the response to the biosecurity survey at the RWS. Carol explained that the survey had continued to run through the summer and was due to close in early October. The next step will be for the results to be analysed and published in due course.

Surveillance Governance Board (SGB)

5. Peredur explained that the Secretariat have been in touch with the Animal Disease Surveillance Board Secretariat. It is understood that the SGB are in the process of agreeing their terms of reference and will in due course discuss reporting lines to the AHWF Group. Jo asked for a list of members of the SGB.

Action Point 2: Secretariat to circulate details of SGB membership

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD)

6. Peredur provided an update on the BVD proposals and confirmed the window for applications to the RDP Scheme on Co-operation is now open. He explained that John Griffiths had attended a workshop on the 1st September run by the Rural Development Plan Team to provide further guidance on the preparation of applications. Work will continue to develop proposals in particular the development of a database to support the scheme.

Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA)

7. Peredur explained that one of the key priorities for the Group in 2015/16 was raising awareness of antimicrobial resistance and supporting the UK 5 YR Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy. Huw and Christianne will be attending the Conference on Responsible Use of Medicines, being held in London on 3rd November. John Fitzgerald from RUMA has been invited to the next meeting on the 2nd December.

Action Point 3: Huw and Christianne to provide feedback from the RUMA conference.

8. There was a general discussion on biosecurity, in particular standards implemented at shows. Jo queried the standards of biosecurity in place for the equine sector, in particular the vaccination of animals attending shows and application of the FEI rules.

Action Point 4: Secretariat to raise issue of biosecurity for equines and application of FEI standards with the Exotic Diseases team. Exotic Diseases Team to consider and raise with the RWS Society in due course.

9. Moss agreed that he would also start a conversation with Livestock Auctioneers about biosecurity.

Action Point 5: Moss to discuss biosecurity with the Livestock Auctioneers and provide feedback to the Group.

10. Peredur confirmed that he would be meeting with Rebecca Evans, Deputy Minister for Farming and Food on 4th November.

Agenda Item 4: Update from Christianne Glossop, Chief Veterinary Officer For Wales

11. Christianne provided an update as follows;

Structural Changes within Welsh Government

12. Christianne explained that the Director General structure within Welsh Government had been streamlined. The Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer remained within Natural Resources but now reported to a Deputy Permanent Secretary. This new structure encourages flexible working across portfolios.

International Disease Monitoring Reports (IDM)

13. It was agreed that the monthly IDM reports will be shared with Framework Group members. These will be treated as in confidence and not for wider circulation.

Action Point 6: Secretariat to send Group IDM Reports on a monthly basis.

14. Christianne provided a brief overview of the BTV8 case recently identified in France and explained that the situation will be kept under review and updates provided as necessary.

Delivery Options for Animal Health Services in Wales

15. Christianne explained that a lot of work was being progressed. Chris Hale is now the Senior Reporting Officer for this work. The Group will be updated as necessary.

World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Audit

16. Christianne explained that there had been agreement by the Chief Veterinary Officers across the UK to undertake a self-assessment of the structures and services in place. Inspectors will be visiting Wales in September. It is hoped that the audit will help identify areas for improvement and change.

Royal Welsh Show Society and Contingency Planning

17. Christianne explained that she continues to meet with the RWS Society on a regular basis. She explained the importance of ensuring high standards of biosecurity at shows. For example this year's RWS coincided with the Avian Influenza outbreak in Lancashire. The RWS Society worked closely with the OCVO to ensure there were additional checks in place for birds at the RWS. She explained that there is a table top contingency planning exercise planned for February 2016. A table top exercise for Foot and Mouth disease is scheduled for November 2015. The focus of the exercise is around the decision

to vaccinate. Dai raised the point about whether retailers would be content to accept milk/ product from vaccinated animals. Christianne agreed that this should be fed into the scenario planning.

Action Point 7: Secretariat to contact Exotic Diseases team to factor in the issue of retailers accepting milk/ products from vaccinated animals.

18. Christianne explained that she will be presenting at the Food Symposium Event on 29th September, covering the role of the veterinary surgeon in food production. She explained that she will also be presenting at the next Poultry Keepers meeting in Wales. It was agreed that the Group would feed in their thoughts to Christianne on key messages for the poultry sector. It was also agreed that consideration be given to the pig sector. The Group agreed that it would be useful to have a presentation at a future meeting.

Action Point 8: Group members to send their thoughts on key messages for the poultry industry to Secretariat.

Action Point 9: Secretariat to arrange presentations for future meetings on the key welfare issues relating to the pig and poultry sector.

Agenda Item 5: Presentation on TB Dashboard & Cymorth TB

19. Peredur welcomed Jackie Price, Head of TB Team and Paul Schroeder (APHA). Paul delivered a presentation on the new TB dashboard. It was explained that the dashboard would be published on line shortly.
20. The Group felt that the TB Dashboard was a very positive step towards presenting the TB picture in Wales. Peredur suggested that the presentation is also delivered to the TB Eradication boards.

Action Point 10: Secretariat to contact TB Team to arrange presentation on TB Dashboard at the TB Eradication Boards.

Agenda Item 6: Animal Health & Welfare Framework Implementation Plan for 2015/16

21. Carol explained that there is a commitment within the Wales AHWF document to publish a mid-year review of the implementation plan for 2015/16. She explained that the process to review progress was underway and that the update would be published in early 2016. She explained that work was progressing to consider the new Well-Being of Future Generations (WBFG) Act and aligning the AHWF with the proposed Strategic Framework For Agriculture. The Group agreed that it would be useful to have a presentation on the WBFG Act and its implications.

Action Point 11: Secretariat to arrange a presentation on the WBFG Act for a future meeting.

Agenda Item 7: Presentation and discussion on sheep lameness - Dr Ruth Clements

22. Peredur welcomed Dr Ruth Clements Head of Veterinary Programmes, FAI Farms Ltd to the meeting. Ruth provided an update on her methodology and approach on sheep lameness and discussed with the Group the possibility of developing an on-line training module on sheep lameness. The Group welcomed the presentation and acknowledged the work that Ruth and her team are taking forward. Chris explained that there could be an opportunity to consider submitting an Expression of Interest for funding through the Rural Development Plan for Wales but this would need to be done in partnership with key industry stakeholders in Wales.

Agenda Item 8: Update on the Strategic Framework for Agriculture in Wales

23. Peredur welcomed David Lloyd Thomas who provided an update on the work to develop the Strategic framework for Agriculture in Wales. He thanked the Group for their response to the consultation. He explained that all responses to the consultation were currently being analysed and once this was completed a formal response would be published. He explained that a lot of work would need to be done to establish a new way of working with industry. He acknowledged the interest of the Group and potential role they could play in taking this work forward.

Agenda Item 9: Welfare Sector Priorities

24. Peredur explained that one of the actions from the last meeting was for Jo and Ifan to progress work on the engagement with the equine and companion animal welfare sector. He invited Jo and Huw to give an update on the Animal Welfare Network Wales meeting which was held on the 9th September. He also welcomed Irene Allen, head of Animal Welfare Policy to the meeting. Jo explained that the meeting with the AWW had been very positive, generating a lot of discussion about priorities and ways of working. She explained that some key themes had emerged where work could be taken forward. These were "Education, high quality data, effective enforcement, and effective legislation. She also explained that effective communication and engagement were crucial. She explained that there remained a lot of work to do but the meeting had been a positive first step. There will be another meeting with the AWW on 23rd October. Jo and Ifan agreed that they would now work with Irene and the Secretariat to prepare for this meeting.

Action Point 12: Jo and Ifan to work with Irene and the Secretariat team to prepare for the next AWW meeting on 23rd October.

Agenda Item 10: Any Other Business

25. Moss raised the issue of proposals for regulations to be introduced to enable

quarantine units to be used as alternatives to the 6 day standstill provisions. He explained that biosecurity was the cornerstone of everything that we do and there was also the opportunity of bidding for funding through the RDP Wales. Moss explained that he had two key concerns. The first of these was that he would like there to be provisions within the proposed regulations for farmers to use both indoor and outdoor quarantine units at the same time. He also explained that he was concerned that the minimum spend under the RDP was £40,000 and that to implement the quarantine unit systems would not cost this much for the majority of farmers who would be interested. Tony explained that officials were working with stakeholders on different scenarios including the possibility of having two locations for quarantine units on the same holding but them being managed as one. He explained that this option remained live but a lot of work will need to be done with stakeholders to ensure its viability. Tony explained that in principal the use of indoor and outdoor facilities at the same time could be used provided they were contained within one QU, with a single CPH reference. This work will be taken forward in workshops with stakeholders. Tony asked the Group for their suggestions on possible scenarios that could be used to test this option. The Group thanked Tony. Following discussion, Peredur, Moss, Ifan, Dai, Jo and Huw supported Moss's proposal that farmers should be able to use indoor and outdoor quarantine units at the same time as an alternative to the 6 day standstill restrictions. Christianne explained that in her capacity as Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, she was not in a position to endorse this approach at this point in time and would need to have a risk assessment prepared to evaluate the implications of such a policy as well as awaiting the outcome of the workshops.

Action Point 13: Group members to forward scenarios to Secretariat.

Action Point 14: Tony to incorporate scenarios into the workshop planning and provide an update to the Group once the findings of the workshops have been collated and analysed.

26. The next meeting is on Thursday 2nd December 2015 in Cathays Park. As you know the Secretariat have blocked booked meetings so we have a meeting on Thursday 3rd March 2016.

