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WALES ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE FRAMEWORK GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting held in Cathays Park, Cardiff on 3rd December 2014

Present:

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

Welsh Government

Christianne Glossop	Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales
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)

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome, Apologies and Introduction

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the Group.

Agenda Item 2 – Update from CVO Wales on Avian Influenza

2. The Chair explained that the Group were all aware of the confirmed case of avian flu in England. Christianne provided an update on the current position, including actions that had been taken regards the recent Winter Fair.

Action Point 1 – Secretariat to circulate details of the measures put in place regards the Winter Fair.

Agenda Item 3 - Minutes And Action Points From 11 June Meeting

3. 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.
4. The Group discussed communications issues and the need to raise awareness. The Chair explained that he had done a number of radio and press interviews. In addition articles had also been published in GWLAD magazine and on-line. It was suggested that a more formal communications plan would need to be developed. Other suggestions included, regular tweets, press notices on key issues, events etc.

Action Point 2 – Secretariat to contact Communications colleagues to develop a formal communications plan for the Group.

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5. Huw expressed some concern that the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food would not be able to attend a meeting until June.
6. The minutes of the meeting were agreed.

Agenda Item 4 - Update From Chair

Rural Development Plan For Wales (RDP Wales)

7. The Chair explained that on 1st October, he and Chris attended an industry workshop on the RDP Wales and he had also chaired another industry workshop on 24th October. Chris explained that the workshops had been useful and it was evident that industry was very keen to work together on the strategic development of proposals and projects.
8. The Chair explained that a letter from the representatives at this workshop has now been sent to the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food.
9. He also mentioned that Carol attended a Rural Development Plan workshop with the Deputy Minister on 9th October and that all the slides and feedback were circulated to the Group for information and comment.

Action Point 3 – Chair to forward the letter to the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food to the Secretariat for circulation

10. Ifan asked whether proposals such as capital funding for handling facilities were still under consideration. Chris explained that at this point nothing had been agreed and that the RDP Wales submitted to the Commission had been at a very high level with no scheme detail included. Ifan explained that health and safety was becoming an increasing issue now on farms. Moss explained that it was important for this to be linked to biosecurity.
11. Christianne stated that it was excellent that the Chair had been asked to lead the workshops and that it was vital for the Group to continue to promote animal health and welfare through the RDP Wales. She also explained the importance of the Review of Farming Connect and the recommendations made.

Agricultural Strategy

12. The Chair asked Carol to provide an update on the development of the Agriculture Strategy. Carol explained that the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food had included reference to the development of the Agriculture Strategy in her speech at the HCC breakfast at the Royal Welsh Show. The Strategy will set out the vision for the agricultural industry and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework will need to feed into this. Work on the Strategy will be taken forward in the new year and it will be important for the Group to be engaged in its development.

4 Chairs Meeting

13. The Chair said that he had attended the 4 Chairs meeting in Belfast on the 10th November and explained that the purpose of the bi-annual meetings is to meet with counterparts in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland to discuss key priorities and cross cutting issues. The focus of the meeting had been bovine TB and bovine viral diarrhoea. Michael Seals, Chair of Animal Health and Welfare Board England had agreed to check latest position on the overarching principles for Great Britain.

Chairs Meeting With The Deputy Minister For Farming and Food

14. The Chair commented that he had a very useful meeting with the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food on the 7th October where he discussed BVD, Sheep Scab, TB, 6 Day Standstill and links to food policy.
15. He explained that he had invited her to this meeting but unfortunately she was unable to attend. The Secretariat confirmed that the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food will now attend the meeting scheduled for June which ties in with the proposed publication of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Implementation Plan for 2015-16. He also explained that it was agreed that he will continue to meet with her every 6 months and more often, if required.

Cattle And Sheep Health And Welfare Groups (CHAWG and SHAWG)

16. The Chair explained that along with Christianne and Chris, he met with Tim Brigstock and Peter Baber chairs of CHAWG and SHAWG respectively on 9th November. He explained that this had been a very useful meeting. He also explained that Huw and Dai had attended CHAWG and SHAWG meetings in October and the notes of these meetings had been circulated.
17. The key issue discussed was the funding of the Secretariat support for CHAWG and SHAWG. The Chair explained that Tim Brigstock had written to HCC in this respect.
18. Following discussion, it was agreed that a representative from the Framework Group would continue to attend the SHAWG and CHAWG meetings.
19. Jo asked whether it would be possible to pull together map of how the Group link into other group's such as CHAWG and SHAWG.

Action Point 4 > Group members to consider links with other organisations within and outside of Wales and forward to Secretariat. The Secretariat will develop a diagram on this basis.

Animal Health and Welfare Board England

20. The Chair explained that he and Chris will be attending the next Animal Health & Welfare Board England meeting on the 9th December.

Agenda Item 5 – Update from Group members

21. **Welfare** - Ifan explained that he had been in discussions with the Head of Welfare Policy within the Welsh Government about key priorities going forwards including legislation, updating Codes of Practice, tail docking etc. A key requirement is to set up a structure of key partners to consider priorities in this area and take actions forward where appropriate. Ifan explained that this was closely linked with the work that Jo is considering on equines. Jo delivered a short presentation on possible structure. She explained that she had been in discussion with the equine policy lead within the Welsh Government and other key partners. Carol explained that the approach being taken fitted well with the principles and ways of working set out in the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework document. Jo and Ifan agreed to work together and liaise with the Secretariat to commence work in this area in the new year and to provide a further update at the March meeting.

Action Point 5 - Jo and Ifan to lead on companion animal and equine welfare and to liaise with the Secretariat with a view to commence work in the new year. A formal update will be provided at the March meeting of the Group.

22. **Control of dog tapeworm cysts** - The Chair explained that the Group had recently endorsed the specification prepared by Arjen Brouwer to add value to and enhance an existing Welsh Government Better Efficiencies Project investigating the parasitological and economical link between dogs (and other carnivores), sheep production efficiencies and abattoir rejections. The Chair then asked Huw Davies to provide an update on the C Ovis Trial. Huw explained that excellent progress was being made with 300 responses received to the questionnaire issued. He explained that 90% of the project should be completed in March with a view to completing the project in June. He agreed to provide an update on the project at the next meeting.

Action Point 6 – Huw to provide an update on the C Ovis Trial at the next meeting in March.

23. **Antimicrobial resistance** – Ifan explained that he had attended the Antimicrobial Resistance Summit on 18th November hosted by DEFRA. The Group agreed that this would continue to be a priority. It was agreed that the Group could play a key role in raising awareness of this issue in Wales. A number of options were suggested, including communication with vets and livestock keepers, feeding into Farming Connect, a

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dedicated awareness raising campaign. It was agreed that a GWLAD article could be the first step.

Action Point 7 > Group members to send potential actions to the Secretariat.

Action Point 8 > Ifan and Huw to work together to take this forward starting with a GWLAD article in the new year.

24. **Proposed development of quarantine units as an alternative to the six day standstill** – Moss explained that there had been a meeting of the Livestock Industry Advisory Group and a meeting with the Welsh Government. A number of options are under consideration, all with differing requirements, in particular with IT and the review of CPH numbers. The Group agreed that this was a complex issue and would welcome an update at their next meeting.

Action Point 9 > Secretariat to arrange for an update on the CPH Review to be added to the agenda for the March meeting.

25. **Update on Sustainability in the Food Sector** - Moss and Chris attended the Sustainability in Food meeting in November. The meeting had been useful but very focussed on specific projects. Carol explained that following discussion with food policy colleagues, an update on the Food Action Plan would be provided at the next meeting.

Action Point 10 > Secretariat to arrange for an update on the Food Action Plan for the next meeting in March.

Agenda Item 6 – Discussion on BVD

26. The Chair explained that at the Groups last meeting John Griffiths and Neil Paton from the BVD Sub Group presented the basis of their report and recommendations on eradicating BVD in Wales. Following this, the Chair wrote back to the Sub-Group to thank them for their work and outlined the key actions that the Group would wish them to consider in order to move forward. He explained that he had also attended a sub group meeting where there had been discussion about a possible launch in the Spring.
27. The Group considered the position paper on BVD and expressed their disappointment that further progress had not been made. The Group were particularly concerned about timelines and costs and agreed that it is crucial for them to see a timeline of proposed actions with costs set out against this.
28. It was agreed that the Chair would write to the BVD sub group requesting an urgent update on progress, feedback on the actions set out in the previous letter and a detailed timeline with estimated costs.

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Action Point 11 > Chair to write to BVD sub group requesting an update on progress, timelines and costings.

Agenda Item 7 – Discussion on Sheep Scab

29. The Group discussed the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group report on the eradication of sheep scab in Wales. The Chair confirmed that the chair of the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group is leaving. It was agreed that Moss and Ifan would reconvene the Group to consider the Welsh Government response to the report.

Action Point 12 > Ifan and Moss to reconvene the Sheep Scab Task and Finish Group.

Agenda Item 8 – Biosecurity Future Vision

30. Christianne delivered a presentation on biosecurity (Annex 1) highlighting the need for a bespoke protocol for each farm or livestock holding fully integrated into a health plan. She asked the Group to consider the merits of having a biosecurity campaign and how this could be taken forward. Options included biosecurity being a theme at the Royal Welsh Show in July, an improved website, case studies, links with Lantra and Farming Connect.

31. The Group agreed that this continued to be a top priority.

Action Point 13 > Group members to consider biosecurity campaign and send views to the Secretariat by the end of January.

Agenda Item 9 – Discussion around the Implementation Plan 2015/16 and the Evidence Base

32. The Chair explained that the annual planning and reporting cycle for the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework is set out on page 15 of the published document.
33. The Chair explained that Welsh Government and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group will publish each year an implementation plan covering the period April to March. The plan should be published in May/ June.
34. The Chair referred to the paper on the outline proposal for developing the Implementation Plan for 2015-16. He explained that he had already met with Christianne to discuss the proposal and was supportive of the approach. Carol explained that the approach being taken by Jo and Ifan on companion animals fitted well with the proposal. It was agreed that other members needed to submit views on the approach for sheep, beef and dairy cattle. The Group also agreed that there needed to be cross cutting themes, in particular biosecurity and anti-microbial resistance.

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Action Point 14 > Members to send views on the proposal for the implementation plan to the Secretariat.

Action Point 15 > Secretariat to co-ordinate development and production of the implementation plan.

Agenda Item 10 – A.O. B

35. The TB Eradication Plan 2015 has had conditional approval from the European Commission.
36. The Carmarthen Laboratory will be undertaking Gamma Interferon testing with training and validation starting early in the New Year. *[as this is yet to be published we will leave this out of the published minutes]*.
37. The final decision to award contracts under the Veterinary Delivery Partnership Project is currently with Ministers.
38. The next meeting of the Group will take place on 3rd March.

CLOSE