



# Bwyd a Diod Cymru Food & Drink Wales

FDWIB (18) M14

## MINUTES OF THE FOOD AND DRINK WALES INDUSTRY BOARD

### MEETING

7 June 2018

#### Item 1: Welcome, introductions.

- The Chair welcomed the members to the meeting.

#### Item 2: Action Plan 2

A review of the Food and Drink Wales Action Plan 2014 – 2020 highlighting that good progress is being made and the action to increase the food and drink economy in Wales by 30% was on target. With regard to the other actions, delivery was mostly achieved however, some actions were not SMART enough which has made evidencing progress and success difficult. Similarly some actions are not owned by Food Division who can not directly influence progress.

Welsh Government (WG) informed the group that work to create a successor Action Plan is in progress and that this will be developed in collaboration with the board.

The WG Economic Action Plan has been published and identifies 4 foundation sectors which includes Food as well as Retail, Tourism and Care. Action Plan 2 should be in sync with the wider strategic plans.

The Board discussed and made the following comments;

NS posed a series of questions for discussion with the Board. The information collated from this discussion can be found in Annex 1.

#### Item 3: Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting on 08/03/2018 FDWIB(18) M13

- The minutes were noted and agreed.
- The outstanding actions on the action log were reviewed and updated.
- NB suggested further exploration of the London market. to grow trade for Wales' food/ drink businesses

#### Item 4: Delivery Dashboard – Key Milestones

- The Board noted the delivery dashboard document and progress made against each area of work.

#### Item 5: People and Skills Work Stream Update



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The Board were given a Skills pledge update. Following more than 30 initial pledges at the skills conference in Feb 2018, companies are now able to pledge online. They will then receive an information pack automatically. Follow-up action is underway with companies who have already taken the pledge.

The board were informed about progress on the schools challenge which is part of the board's skills plan. This will be delivered via the Welsh Baccalaureate and the WJEC have agreed that this will launch from September 2018 with finalists showcasing their products at Blas Cymru 2019. It was noted that discussions were taking place with WG officials to include food education in the School Holiday Enrichment Program (SHEP). Some pilot work will take place during the summer 2018 scheme with increased participation in 2019.

The Board were updated on the pilot work taking place as part of the WG valleys initiative (Our Valleys:Our Future) This work aims to develop the infrastructure and systems to help up-skills local people to enable them to work in the food industry. Board members suggested that collaborating with local housing associations could help identify those individuals seeking local employment.

## **Item 6: Customers and Markets Work Streams**

The Board updated on the recent 'Tuck-In' event held in North Wales in May 2018 and led by the work stream. It was a great success. The event was a marketing master class with a strong focus on branding. Attending businesses received branding and marketing advice from world class experts. It was agreed that the format of Tuck-In event was excellent.

## **Item 7: Business and Investment Work Stream**

The work stream reported that since the Finance and Investment conference in November 2016 further work has taken place in delivering on the actions identified. two investor ready workshops have run and further work has been commissioned to identify next steps.

The Chair updated the Board on the recent meetings of the newly formed UK Food Council. It was noted that Wales are leading in terms of developing work relating to productivity, skills, nutrition and logistics.

JF has joined the councils sub group on skills development for the sector and presented the boards skills strategy for Wales. The work already undertaken in Wales is being used to form the guiding principles of the council skills work.

## **Item 9: Follow up on Brexit Workshop**

The Chair updated the Board on the content and progress of the Brexit workshop and outlined the following actions which arose:

1. Short paper on outputs was received for Board meeting 7 June.
2. Consider industry engagement, clusters/food company database. Arrange two events, North and South Wales for autumn 2018.



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3. “Re-engineer” Welsh food sector, look at all inputs and markets for outputs with possible changes to trade costs – tariffs and NTBs.
4. Get ahead of the game. Analyse emerging trends, foster innovation in new products. Grow skills and provide support for import/exporting companies.
5. Engage with UK multiples. How are they preparing, are they concerned about continuity of supply, product ranges, additional costs?
6. Find out “Westminster trading priorities” and consider if these agree/conflict with the priorities for Wales.
7. Food packaging. What are the possible Brexit impacts – risks and opportunities?

The board noted the outcomes of the workshop and discussed the need to understand the sectors trading priorities post brexit. They also suggested that further work needs to be undertaken to drive efficiencies within the sector through innovation, especially in relation to reduced/reused/recycled packaging and decreased use of plastics.

## **Item 10: Zero2Five work on identifying leading and dynamic companies**

Martin and Neil from Zero2Five and Menter a Busnes highlighted a report summary of the Fit For Market Report on Welsh Food and Drink businesses with high growth potential.

The report is confidential to Welsh Government and elements will be shared through the cluster network

## **Brexit Findings**

- Small % think there is a positive.
- The majority of businesses said there would be no impact. 10% said its negative.
- High concern about changes to government funding, but not high concern about regulatory impact.
- 32% of companies taking no steps to prepare for Brexit.

## **Summary**

Request that trusted partners such as WG / FDWIB provide more direct information on Brexit.

AR – understand how to use the work. Target the people to come to events? Leverage people who need help. Contact through clusters.

## **Item 11: Communications and Engagement**

- The Board were alerted to the PR brief to be sent out to procure communications work on behalf of the Board.

## **Item 12: Drinks Industry Strategy**



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An update on progress of the Drinks Industry Strategy was presented to the Board by Mark Grant of Levercliff.

Key issues identified thus far indicate that the complexity of the sector results in a plethora of differing requirements from business to business. Common themes emerging were that the ability for businesses to upscale and plan was limited and assistance is required in this area. The work thus far also indicates that closer links with academia would be beneficial. The strategy aims to develop a cohesive goal/mission for the sector and the drinks cluster will meet again in September to discuss. The final strategy will be presented to the board at the September meeting.

NB has been the boards Wine Ambassador but with the departure of Buster Grant, it was agreed that she would take on the role of the boards drinks representative for the time being.

## **Item 13: Lesley Griffiths, AM, Cabinet Secretary for Energy Planning and Rural Affairs**

The Cabinet Secretary thanked the Board for all their work to date on progressing the food and drink agenda in Wales, stating that the food and drink economy was going from strength to strength. The Cabinet Secretary indicated that she would like to see more businesses in Wales made aware of the Board and all its work and suggested the Board set up a twitter account.

The CS informed the board about her recent working visit to the Basque country. She was impressed with the cluster program there and indicated that she strongly supports the increased development of cluster networks in Wales. The CS would like to see stronger links between the board and clusters in Wales.

Discussion took place about having representation from the bakery sector on the Board, but it was concluded that this wasn't needed at this time as there was a great dynamic and expertise amongst current members.

## **Item 14: Innovation Strategy**

The Board were presented with the early stages of an Innovation Strategy developed by MS. The board agreed that it would be beneficial to set up a 'Kickstarter Innovation' portal, which could provide information to support businesses. It was agreed that the concept needs more thought but the Board will support this.

## **Item 15: Brand Values**

Nick Miller presented on research and work carried out to date in developing the sustainable brand values for food and drink production and manufacturing in Wales. Key points were that the scheme should showcase wider Welsh values, drive efficiency, sustainability, environmental gain and dovetail with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. It was recognised that the work must sit within the wider policy framework for Wales but be flexible as part of a feedback loop. It was noted that this is a whole supply chain approach.



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The board had a number of questions around the intended launch date, if this was part of an accreditation scheme, how the system would work for business and how this connected to the wider 'Wales' brand. The overall consensus was that there is much work still to do to fully develop the brand to ensure it is a fully connected and joined up approach which works for the benefit of all.

The board was asked to note the different structures of Food Boards across the UK. This will be discussed in the future.

## **Item 16: UK Board Structure Paper**

## **Item 17: Any Other Business**

- SP discussed Cross UK Food and Drink Boards Collaboration. A collaborative approach across industry in facing Brexit could be helpful. It is possible to promote Wales while also working with Scotland, Northern Ireland etc The board were broadly in favour of collaborative work across the UK.
- NB raised the need for a London Ambassador for Welsh Produce.
- KP discussed planning permission for egg facilities; this issue had been resolved prior to the meeting.. WG Planning and NRW are discussing concerns surrounding cumulative ammonia emissions from a multitude of new poultry enterprises in east Wales.