

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE NINETIETH MEETING OF THE
AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
HELD ON TUESDAY 24 JANUARY 2023 AT 8.30 A.M.
IN THE BOARD ROOM, AHDB, STONELEIGH PARK & MS TEAMS**

PRESENT:

Nicholas Saphir (NS) (Chair), Colin Bateman (CB), Stephen Briggs (SB), Lyndon Edwards (LE), Mike Sheldon (MS), Janet Swadling (JS), Tim Mordan (TM), Catherine MacKenzie (CM), Sarah Pumfrett (SP), Fred Sworder (FS) (Board Apprentice)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Tim Rycroft (TR), Ken Boyns (KB), Will Jackson (WJ), Tony Holmes (TH), Jackie Kay (JK), Ian Ascroft (IA), Darren Sharp (DS), Katie Davies (KD), Rob Clayton (RC) (Item 5.5), Angela Christison (AC) (Item 5.6), Chris Gooderham (CG) (Item 7.2), Davie Eudall (DE) (Item 7.4)

AGENDA ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
No apologies received. NS welcomed FS for his year as board apprentice.
AGENDA ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
JS declared that she is currently interim chief executive of TIAH while a permanent CEO is recruited.
AGENDA ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2022
The minutes of the board meeting held on 22 November 2022 were accepted as a correct record.
AGENDA ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2022
All items had either been actioned or were on the agenda for discussion.
Action: IA/JK: H&S training certificates for the board to be kept on file.
AGENDA ITEM 5 –OPERATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT
5.1 CEO REPORT
CEO Report taken as read.
WJ gave update on the new communications team following restructuring.
Action: WJ to circulate a current team organisation chart to the board
5.2 ON FARM MEETING UPDATE
WJ presented an update on follow up to the 10 November Shape the Future of Farming event. He commented that at some of the follow up meetings with levy payers, many present admitted to not voting. SP requested follow up to find out why they didn't vote to correct any barriers to voting in the future. WJ stated this was in hand.
5.3. LIVESTOCK AUCTIONEERS ASSOCIATION UPDATE
Report taken as read. WJ has a meeting with LAA at Stoneleigh on Wednesday 25 January; he and the team will try and keep the relationship open with LAA. WJ commented that he believes the LAA do not fully grasp how much work goes into getting their market data published in magazines and on websites.
The board suggested the communication to farmers needs to be very clear as to why, if or when the data stops being published by AHDB.

5.4 ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Sector reports were taken as read. No further updates to note from sector chairs.

5.5 HORTICULTURE & POTATOES UPDATE

Horticulture and Potatoes update report taken as read. KB noted the transfer of EAMU/EA Services to HCP Ltd is still planned to take place by 31 March 2023. Awaiting final grant application submission approval from Defra.

Action: The board approved the recommendations made by the Horticulture Board relating to returning royalties to industry and thanked RC for all his hard work.

5.6 REVIEW OF STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

TR and AC presented slides on strategic options for discussion. Key points raised were:

- The direction of travel set out in the paper was endorsed.
- Agreed taking a bolder approach and clearer positioning.
- Tangible actions/value delivered for levy payers from this new bolder approach to be agreed.
- AHDB should actively be taking credit for what they are already doing with change of tone.
- Acknowledgment that a clearer positioning may require more robust conversations with some stakeholders.
- Sector Councils want a more collaborative/proactive approach, and this addresses that.
- Central need for AHDB staff to buy into strategy and how this can act as a 'rallying point'.
- The benefits of the strategy will need to be set out in more detail for stakeholders and staff.
- The board requested a clear statement of the strategic destination.
- The strategy needs to be able to flex to address emerging industry needs and delivered objectives – e.g., recognise when objectives are delivered and work can cease or be transferred to others.

Action: The Executive were asked to discuss and develop this further with a view to presenting again at the March board meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – DEFRA UPDATE

TM provided a verbal update on latest developments at Defra.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – SERVICES

7.1 SERVICES UPDATE

Services update report taken as read.

7.2 ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

Environment Strategy update paper taken as read. The board endorsed the direction of travel but requested a sharper, clearer AHDB position on environmental sustainability.

7.3 LIVESTOCK INFORMATION LTD

LI Ltd update report taken as read.

The Board discussed the reappointment of the LI Limited chair, whose current term ends on 28 February 2023. Under the articles AHDB appoint the chair but only with Defra approval.

Action: NS was tasked with speaking to David Kennedy to seek the Defra views before reporting back to the board for a decision by e-mail or by further meeting if required.

The board agreed that the key objective must be effective delivery of all agreed objectives and supported management proposals regarding ownership options to be considered in March following Defra proposals.

8. FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE
8.1 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS
The management accounts were taken as read.
AHDB's domestic VAT status had created issues where invoices were issued from overseas-based companies and that this was a live issue with some companies in France.
Action: The board requested that TH produce a short paper outlining the issue and mitigation proposed.
8.2 APPROVAL OF 2023/24 LEVY RATES
Recommended Levy Rates paper taken as read. It was noted that there is an appetite within some sectors to increase levy rates.
Action: The board were in agreement with the proposed levy rates for 2023/24. These will be sent to Defra for Ministerial approval.
8.3 BUDGET PROGRAMME UPDATE
The Budget Programme update paper was taken as read. The board agreed that seeking early agreement with NAO was a priority to ensure that the 2022/23 accounts are approved and laid before Parliament according to the normal timetable.
Action: TH was tasked with liaising with both NAO and Defra to get their approval. The Executive were further tasked with providing the board with regular and comprehensive updates.
AGENDA ITEM 9 – PEOPLE
9.1 HR UPDATE
The HR report and dashboard were taken as read.
9.2 HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE
H&S report taken as read. Nothing new to report.
9.3 REMUNERATION AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE (RemNom)
RemNom meeting was held on Thursday 19 January 2023 so minutes had not yet been produced. A verbal update was given by JK.
An updated Terms of Reference was issued to the RemNom committee and would be amended following further recommendations.
EDI task group are currently reviewing AHDB company policy.
Action: JK will forward any recommended changes once this has been completed. The board will also get sight of an action plan when this is available.
AGENDA ITEM 10 – BOARD AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS
10.1 REPORT FROM AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (ARAC)
Minutes from the ARAC meeting held on 14 November 2022 were taken as read.
The Executive are currently reviewing the future role of a dedicated French office. TH was also asked to clarify costs around French payroll.
Action: TH to produce a paper outlining current costs for French payroll services. KB to provide a paper with a recommendation on the French Office for the board's March meeting.
10.2 RISK REGISTER UPDATE
Risk Register paper taken as read.

10.3 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

FOI paper taken as read.

10.4 FEEDBACK LOG

The feedback log was taken as read.

10.5 SECTOR COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE

An updated ToR paper was included for board approval. The main addition is a clause allowing SC members to take sabbaticals. JS asked if any changes to ToR are recorded in a main governance handbook which all the board can access.

Action: The board approved the adoption of the updated Sector Council ToR, these will be issued out to members shortly. The board also approved the extension of Sector Council member terms of office due to end in March 2023 to the end of the recruitment and ratification process for 2023. IA was tasked with distributing the Scheme of Delegation to the board.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**11.1 Data and Email Retention Policy**

Recommendation paper taken as read and agreed.

Action: The board agreed the recommendations.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting is Tuesday 28 March 2023 at a venue to be confirmed.

