

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE AHDB BEEF AND LAMB SECTOR COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28 MAY 2024 AT 08.30 A.M
BOARD ROOM, AHDB, MIDDLEMARCH BUSINESS PARK, SISKIN PARKWAY EAST,
COVENTRY CV3 4PE
(Virtually enabled)**

PRESENT: Colin Bateman (CB) (Chairman), George Fell (GF), Bryan Griffiths (BG), Anne-Marie Hamilton (AMH)v, Gama Khan (GK), James Shouler (JS), James Taylor (JT), Steve Thompson (ST), Paul Unwin (PU), Scott Donaldson (SD)v,

APOLOGIES: Isla Roebuck (IS)

IN ATTENDANCE: Samantha Charlton (SC), Tony Holmes (TH), Will Jackson (WJ), Chris Gooderham (CG) (item 9), Graham Wilkinson (GW), Tom Dracup (TD) (item 13), Gemma Standford (GS) observing, Anna Hughes (AH) (minutes)

AGENDA ITEM 1– CHAIR WELCOME/REPORT

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Graham Wilkinson, new CEO was also welcomed to the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from IS. It was noted that IS had forwarded some questions to the Chair which he would raise during the relevant agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- No new declarations of interest were made

AGENDA ITEM 4 – MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 27 FEBRUARY

The Sector Council approved the minutes on the provision the following changes are made:

- Removed the (v) from PU as he attended in-person.
- GF queried if the logic model had been changed or circulated? WJ agreed to address separately.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION POINTS FROM THE SECTOR COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 27 FEBRUARY 2024

WJ explained that most of the actions were either complete or covered in the agenda.

- GW to update the group on dashboards during meeting.
- Non-Levy lines have been added to the workstreams
- AgriLeader update to be given at a future meeting.
- Richard Hampton, Exports Director, to be invited to the September meeting.
- Meeting to discuss the direction of the AH&W workstreams and budget to be arranged prior to the September meeting. CB requested the workstream plans from CG. To be delayed slightly due to workload.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – SECTOR LEAD REPORT – WILL JACKSON / SAM CHARLTON

WJ explained that following the last meeting he and Roseanne Thomas were looking at how they can show 'value for money' in Comms. The group were told that a 'Task and Finish Group' had been set up with Graeme Jack to look at a five-point plan:

1. Communications Strategy
2. Audience Insight
3. Sector Communications
4. Benchmarking and Measurements
5. Communications delivery

There will be a series of focus groups which the Sector Council will be encouraged to attend to give their input and feedback. SC added that a piece of work looking at behavioural change and social science could be highly beneficial to AHDB. GW stressed that AHDB must be seen to be acting on the feedback they receive.

WJ explained that most of the reshaping will have started in Communications by the end of the year. JS stressed that communication must be a two-way street and that AHDB should be seen as the go-to place for information/education etc. GW told the group that in the three months that he has been at AHDB the feedback in most external meetings is the lack of understanding as to what AHDB do. WJ commented that there has been a huge amount of progress since the loss of the potatoes and horticulture sectors and the approval of the levy increase was a huge accomplishment.

WJ gave an update on the LAA. AHDB would be happy to use the data if it is priced competitively and of good quality. David Eudall and his team are looking into this before committing to purchase.

WJ explained that during the pre-election period as an arms-length Government body, AHDB must not be seen to be promoting one party over another, the only possible issue could be the marketing campaigns. AHDB are waiting confirmation from DEFRA that the marketing work can continue. GW explained that he has an e-mail to send to the entire organisation on what is covered by purdah. This will also be circulated to the Sector Councils.

CB asked all the sector council members to encourage anyone who has shown an interest in joining the B&L Sector Council to apply.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – BUSINESS PLANNING – GRAHAM WILKINSON

GW gave the group an overview of the 2024/25 essentials and objectives adding that these will feed into PDR's and objectives. GW informed the council that he had recently introduced 'Share the News'. This is a monthly update for all staff to join. The group were then shown a slide detailing the 7 essentials:

- Adding value to Pork
- Adding value to B&L
- Adding value to Dairy
- Adding value to C&O
- Winning with people and our levy payers
- Efficient and effective operations
- Demonstrating industry leadership

GW gave further clarification to 'Add Value to Beef and Lamb'. CB expressed concern that there is still a lack of clarity of the impact of the spend for the Sector Council to see.

This is part of the strategic review the sector council had requested from AH&W. PU added that a link to the workstreams would be beneficial together with a glossary of terms.

CB commented that there should be smarter targets and queried if all the KPI's are in the right place.

GW gave an overview of the pillars of success covering levy payers, leadership, expertise, culture and people. The group were shown a proposed organisation chart for the leadership team with each sector represented alongside the other functions. There will be an additional role of company secretary and corporate affairs which will work closely with Defra. GW explaining to the group that he is currently looking at the role profiles with HR.

SC commented on the value of defining the ways of working within the leadership team.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – B&L DASHBOARD – WILL JACKSON

Covered earlier in the agenda

AGENDA ITEM 9 – ENVIRONMENT UPDATE – CHRIS GOODERHAM

Baselining:

CG gave an update on the baselining pilot. It has now gone live with 181 sign ups, 126 being B&L farms.

CG explained that the LIDAR tenders were now live. There had been a lot of positive conversations and QMS have agreed to fund 20 farms, front loaded, in year one.

ST expressed concern that there are lots a similar schemes. CG explained that there are conversations with Comms and QMS have put in £400k. CG informed the council that there are a lot of small baselining initiatives but none at the level which AHDB is so this should give us the monopoly.

FDTP:

FDTP published their revised roadmap. The group were told that eco-labelling has been parked for now.

Climate Change Committee:

The Agriculture Advisory Group together with the Food and Trade Advisory Group have been convened by the CCC to offer a challenge and a critical review to the Committee's work for the UK's 7th Carbon Budget.

Data Custodian:

CG gave a brief overview of the data custodian work, a database that helps control the flow of environmental data and captures value. The carbon calculators feed into the data custodian automatically and once it has been updated the principle is that they talk to each other.

SC commented that there should be clear permissions on what the data can be used for. CG explained that April 18th was Environment Data Day and next steps are business case planning from now until December 2024. Kim Matthews, on the genetics slide, is helping to pull it together from the concept stage to the business case.

Roadmaps:

AMH expressed concern that there is a lack of clarity on what the roadmap is trying to achieve. CB suggested that CG produce a paper outlining this along with the aims and objectives.

ACTION: CG to present a paper at the next Sector Council meeting giving further detail on the roadmap and what it is trying to achieve.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – WE EAT BALANCED – LIAM BYRNE

To be carried over to the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – LEVY RATES – WILL JACKSON

WJ gave the group some background on the levy ceiling. AHDB need to provide Parliament oversight on permitted tax levels and the statutory instrument will need to be opened up and put before Parliament. There needs to be an increase in the maximum levy ceiling and conversations need to take place within the council and then on to the Board for approval. The proposals are:

Sector	Levy rates 2024/25	Current SI Ceiling	What a c63% increase would look like
Beef and Lamb (England)			
Cattle (excluding calves)	£ per head	£ per head	£ per head
Producer	5.06	5.25	8.25
Slaughterer/exporter of live cattle	1.69	1.75	2.75
Calves	£ per head	£ per head	£ per head
Producer	0.10	0.50	Leave as is
Slaughterer/exporter of live calves	0.10	0.50	Leave as is
Sheep	£ per head	£ per head	£ per head
Producer	0.75	0.75	1.22
Slaughterer/exporter of live sheep	0.25	0.25	0.41

JT expressed concern that conversations had taken place last year with regards to raising the ceiling and this could result in a levy increase. PU stressed that the B&L finances must be tight, the council agreed.

The Sector Council then discussed that they could request a levy increase in Autumn 2025 if necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – FINANCIAL REPORT – TONY HOLMES

PU made a request that when a change to the financial reporting is approved there should be a record of which council meeting this took place at. TH explained that his team are currently working on a timesheet analysis showing time staff spend on a particular workstream.

AGENDA ITEM 13 – ASSURANCE UPDATE – WILL JACKSON

WJ gave an overview of where we are with the Assurance explaining that cabinet approval should come this week. WJ added that five business's tendered for the secretarial programme with £900k funding with 40% from AHDB and 40% from NFU. The commission will drive it and some comms are due out next week. Levy payers will be sent a set of questions next week to feed into the review with the delivery of the final report by the end of the year and an interim report in October. This has now been handed over to the commissions for an independent review but AHDB will continue to feed into it.

<https://www.nfuonline.com/updates-and-information/red-tractor-reviews/>

TD was welcomed to the meeting. The group were told that a piece of work on the key standards, which links into the assurance work, is ongoing with the first report release in April:

<https://ahdb.org.uk/news/independent-report-on-beef-lamb-production-standards-released>

TD explained that the next set of standards review work has started looking at key EU countries. This will be reviewed with the report due to be published in July. WJ thanked TD for all his work in pulling together the reviews. CB suggested that, when the next review is released, they must brief the

NFU Livestock Board.

ACTION: TD and CB to present at the NFU Livestock Board when the review is published.

ACTION for ST and TD to discuss SA in due course.

AGENDA ITEM 14 – AOB

The main Board are asking for nominations for ARAC, CB suggested PU

The Board mentor programme is now with HR, pilot project in B&L to grow an 'industry leader' for the future

Genetics Advisory Forum for Sheep – GF explained that a plan for sheep genetics is being pulled together which should be useful for policy makers as well as those on farm.

GW explained that the Dairy sector have held two Insights Events for key stakeholders and explained that the door is open to arrange similar events for B&L.

JT will be stepping down from the B&L SC due to his new role at AHDB leading on Assurance. CB presented JT with two tumblers in way of thanks for his time on the Sector Council.

AGENDA ITEM 15 – CLOSE

The meeting closed at 12.50pm