

**SUMMARY OF THE CEREALS & OILSEEDS BOARD MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY 18<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2021 AT 10.00 A.M.**

**TEAMS MEETING ONLINE**

**PRESENT:**

Paul Temple (Chairman) (PT), David Bell (DB), Tony Bell (TB), Clare Bend (CB), Jane Biss (JB), Iain Davies (ID), Howard Leland (HL), Russ McKenzie (RM), James Standen (JS), Patrick Stephenson (PS), David Walston (DW), Mark Wood (MW),

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Martin Grantley-Smith (MGS), Dhan Bhandari (DB), David Eudall (DE), Haroon Jabar (HJ), Richard Meredith (RM), Don Pendergrast (DP) Caroline Burniston (notes) (CB1)

**CHAIR WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

PT welcomed the Board members to the meeting and gave an overview of the agenda.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

N/A

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

N/A

**MINUTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2021**

The Board agreed the minutes from the previous meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 as a true record and were signed off by the Chairman.

**MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION POINTS FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2021**

Key points as follows: -

MGS confirmed finance reporting process is undergoing change which is why the accounts training package is delayed.

The process for a more sophisticated webinar registration process is in the pipeline

Reserves policy covered in 4<sup>th</sup> March meeting along with Budget actions.

Skills feedback completed.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

PT reflected on how as an industry we were having to continuously adapt to the way we work, with IT skills for many being a learning curve. Growing conditions in the northern hemisphere



are under great scrutiny along with soils issues off the back of 2 poor years of weather - both prolonged periods of dry ness and very wet land. More investment in drainage is required.

Prices are high and stock is in short supply. Greater imports are required, and this is putting the focus on the differences in assurance, quality etc of imported grain. Malting sector in a very bad way – recovery will be slow. Increased waiting times and reduced availability of agri-products especially from EU, particularly agrichemicals, with some serious price inflation on some key products.

HL and JB thanked for their 6 years' service and confirmation of a 6-month extension for both members, along with TB appointment of his first term extended by 6 months.

### **SECTOR DIRECTORS REPORT**

Report highlighted the volume of work agronomists carry out. Confirmation of two new Strategic Farms on board. Issues debated around Rob Fox's farm and some financial issues in relation to it, MW confirmed he is on the steering group, and all is in hand.

### **C&O MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS / LEVY UPDATE AND DEBTORS AGE ANALYSIS**

MGS covered the key points. A discussion developed on identifying the non-operation items and the financial reasoning behind them.

### **CROP HEALTH AND PRIORITIES FOR 2021**

DP presented to the Board covering his plans for the IPM programme. This was well received. Both CB and PS offered their support to the programme to help move his work out onto farm confirming the important role of linking delivery and expectation. Improvements suggested and having more information at a glance and the benefit of more detailed behavioural insight work to support the programme. JS debated how impact was measured and enquired about the metrics and monitoring of the whole system as a priority area.

### **UPDATE ON RESEARCH PROGRAMME**

DB delivered an informative presentation covering individual research projects, grouped into those finishing, continuing and starting next year. The Board considered it a useful summary and it demonstrated the breadth and depth of work on the topic. The Board were keen to see a pipeline of information continuing to flow. A discussion developed around devising a mechanism for deciding priorities for the research programme going forward now that the R&KE Committee had ceased. PT confirmed the importance of the pros and cons of YEN work being discussed.

### **FUNDING FOR RED TRACTOR**

The Board debated in detail the ongoing contribution to RT and whether the £40k should be withdrawn or retained an option to redeploy funds for future development work. It was clear whilst the growers expressed concerns about RT becoming increasingly out of touch with the market, they do not want to be faced with a plethora of audits nor do processors want to return to an industry full of different QA schemes. The Board were keen to see RT's roadmap to self-sufficiency and understand how reliant RT is on the C&O £40K.

The Board agreed to withdraw the £40K funding but to make it available to RT for defined purposes, for example some scheme development to address current concerns or CODAP development work.

### **BUDGET SIGN OFF**



This was signed off with no issues following the meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March to familiarise themselves with the figures and changes.

### **BALLOT DISCUSSION**

MGS gave an update on the current situation on the Horticulture ballot. A discussion took place around commencing planning for the ballot within C&O in relation to finding ways to inform all levy payers of our key outputs developed with concern around the cost and practicalities of any future ballot.

### **AOB**

The Board expressed its thanks to a number of functions in AHDB for the way they have continued to deliver over the last 12 months and in particular the way they have utilised a range of communications methods to remain in touch with levy payers. The MI team was singled out for praise given the wide range of factors playing on the market be they COVID, Brexit or global weather. A continuous stream of data and analysis which has been critically important to maintaining the wellbeing of C&O businesses has grown levy payer awareness in the post-farmgate sectors.

### **CLOSE**

PT closed the meeting at 12.30pm and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Signed .....Date.....

### **Dates of future meetings: -**

Thursday 17th June 2021

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021

