

**SUMMARY OF AHDB DAIRY BOARD MEETING  
HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019  
THE BOARD ROOM, AHDB, STONELEIGH PARK**

**PRESENT:** Gwyn Jones (Chair), David Craven, Andrew Fletcher, Oliver Hall, Liz Haines, Ian Harvey, Mary Quicke, Peter Rees, Richard Soffe, Scott Shearlaw, Joe Towers, Adam Quinney (Chair of the Beef and Lamb Board)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Sue Cleaver (minutes), Tom Hind, Paul Flanagan, Christine Watts, Susannah Bolton, Jenny Gibbons, Kate McKenzie, Rebecca Geraghty, Mary Vickers, Helen Walker

**WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair, Gwyn Jones, opened the meeting at 8:30 am and welcomed those in attendance, including the three new Board members Liz Haines, Ian Harvey and Joe Towers. There were no apologies.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no new declarations of interest.

**MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

The minutes from the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019 were examined and a change was requested. Subject to this change the minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**MATTERS ARISING**

PF presented an update on the matters arising from the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019. PR raised concerns regarding the integration with LIP for the devolved administrations. TH confirmed that AHDB was in an ongoing dialogue with the devolved administrations and the aim was for a seamless interaction, but if the Board picked up on any specific concerns they should let him know.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chair's report had been circulated by email, and was taken as read. There were no further questions.

**DIRECTOR'S AND OPERATIONAL REPORT**

The Board requested a facility in which farmers could input numbers in Farmbench in the same format as the Comparable Farm Profit (CFP) sheets. AQ noted that the comments regarding difficulty inputting data to Farmbench were similar to those raised at the B&L Board. The Board reiterated their message that Farmbench needed to be working properly before it went live. There was concern that farmers would have an initial negative experience which would put them off using it.

MQ highlighted an unresolved problem in which in order to export cheese to China, an inspection audit needed to take place costing c. £40k. The Board discussed the reputational damage not just for the Dairy industry but for other exporters if this audit did not take place. It was also important that the farms visited were fully prepared, with pre-visits, checks and thorough preparation.



The Board agreed that if necessary they would make a contribution to cover the cost of the shortfall. This was with the proviso that a precedent was not set. MQ declared an interest.

### **FINANCE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

The Board discussed the cost of LIP and the potential cost of any required add-ons. It was a major transformational project, which was regularly reviewed by the leadership team. Having attended the LIP meeting on 19 May, the Board were minded to invest (with other livestock sectors) in additionality elements, but wanted to ensure that checks and balances are in place to monitor spend.

### **LEVY PAYER SATISFACTION SURVEY AND FARM EXCELLENCE SURVEY RESULTS**

PF presented the results of the Levy Payer Satisfaction Survey, and the Farm Excellence Survey. The Board examined the results and the implications of the results of the two surveys. There were differing responses depending on herd size, and also depending on current engagement. The Board discussed the need to use appropriate language to engage with different levy payers.

CW updated the Board on a working group which included a number of Board members (including AQ) and KE officers that was looking at the implications of the survey more deeply, in order to work out how to increase engagement.

SB noted that a social science review of the literature on what drives behaviour had been commissioned, and this supported the use of farmer to farmer engagement. A motivational interviewer had also been brought in to train KE managers, and behavioural psychology was being used to drive campaigns.

### **UPDATE DAIRY INDUSTRY COMMS – CHRISTINE WATTS**

CW updated the Board with the latest developments in consumer conversations and perceptions. A stakeholder engagement group involving Dairy UK, NFU and AHDB had been looking at issues that were worrying consumers, allocate accountabilities and agree what the industry should be focusing on from a messaging perspective.

Environmental impact and animal welfare were both issues that were high on the agenda for consumers. The industry should be thinking about the language that it uses, and how this will impact on consumer perception. The industry should come together to communicate clearly its own positive messages about why people should consume dairy for planet and health reasons.

The Board discussed producing a check list for farmers with simple ways to reduce carbon. Environmental issues would be key in the future strategy.

### **DAIRY KE AND STRATEGIC DAIRY FARMS UPDATE – SUSANNAH BOLTON**

SB presented an update on Strategic Dairy Farms, and reflected on learnings from the Cereals and Oilseeds monitor and strategic farms programme. The Board felt that we need to do more to sell sufficient benefit of getting involved to potential host farmers, however they were pleased to see many high quality applications to the latest round of SDFs with 34 potential applicants coming through the process ranging from Aberdeenshire to Cornwall.

The Board were interested in the AHDB KE team staffing, and whether the turnover was higher than it should be.

### **BULL CALVES UPDATE – JENNY GIBBONS**

JG presented an update on the Bull Calves issue in Dairy. The importance of this topic to the industry is evidenced by the announcements made recently on bull calves by some processors and the discussions at the Red Tractor Dairy Board. Data results showed that the picture was



complicated, but prevalence of TB was not the sole driving force. JG updated the board on the Breed4better campaign; the increased of sexed semen was encouraging.

The Board had an in depth discussion of the potential pitfalls and solutions. The Board were in agreement of the necessity to re-align industry practises with public values.

### **OPTIMAL DAIRY SYSTEM RESOURCES – KATE MCKENZIE**

KM shared with the Board the resources that the KE team was using for block and all year round calvers. The Board were very interested in the importance of using relevant KPIs and relevant languages for the different farming systems. It was recognised that there was a challenge for pitching the messaging for farmers that were in the middle, perhaps transitioning from one system to the other.

### **EMEDICINE BOOK UPDATE – REBECCA GERAGHTY, MARY VICKERS**

RG and MV presented an update on the development of the e Medicine Book. An eMB module may be one of the value added elements of the LIP programme, and so was now linked in to the LIP delivery timescale. The Board noted the need to make sure that farmers wanted to record the use of medicines and antibiotics – so it was understood as a genuinely responsible thing to do, important for future generations. There was concern expressed surrounding data usage and the potential for the data to be used by government to create a regulatory framework. Further discussion would need to take place within AHDB and also with the Beef and Lamb Board to decide how this could be taken forward within the LIP project.

### **AOB**

The Board requested an update on CRM and Project Blue. LH volunteered to join the CRM Working group. The Chair closed the meeting at 14:10.

