

**SUMMARY OF AHDB DAIRY BOARD MEETING 20/01
HELD ON 21st JANUARY 2020
WOODSIDE HOTEL, GLASSHOUSE LANE, KENILWORTH**

PRESENT: Gwyn Jones (Chair), David Craven, Andrew Fletcher, Oliver Hall, Liz Haines, Ian Harvey, Peter Rees, Scott Shearlaw, Richard Soffe, Joe Towers

APOLOGIES: Mary Quicke

IN ATTENDANCE: Sue Cleaver (minutes), Anna Farrell, Paul Flanagan, Rebecca Geraghty, Jane King, Delyth Lewis-Jones, Karen Lowe, Teaghan Taylor, James Wilde

WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair, Gwyn Jones, opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance. Apologies were received from Mary Quicke. There were no new declarations of interest.

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 21st NOVEMBER 2019

The minutes from the meeting held on 21st November 2019 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 21st NOVEMBER

The Board discussed keeping the conversation active between the Devolved Administrations regarding Livestock Information systems. There was a suggestion to invite the Welsh and Scottish equivalents to present to the AHDB Dairy Board/Livestock Boards.

It was agreed that a separate call would be set up regarding the Social listening slide deck, and that Kantar data would be presented at the March Board.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

PR discussed the slurry project taking place in Carmarthen that he and GJ had attended. There might be an opportunity for putting some AHDB funding that could then be matched by Welsh Government. GJ was due to have a call with John Foot (Head of Environment and Resource Management) and PF to explore environmental opportunities. The Board noted that the JF was being tasked with work load from all boards. AHDB Dairy needed to be clear on what role it would play regarding environmental work.

CEO UPDATE

JK updated the Board regarding Request for Views results. Defra are expected to be publishing the results in the near future.

The March Board meeting would be GJ's last meeting, and there was uncertainty regarding recruitment due to changes in ministers and Request for Views results. Richard Soffe agreed to step in as interim Chair, and GJ expressed his thanks.

There was still a lack of knowledge among levy payers about how AHDB spent the levy money, and what services it was providing. PR requested some information/infographics that could be used by everyone.

DIRECTOR'S AND OPERATIONAL REPORT

The Board agreed that while the focus should remain on the KPIs, a plan of action was required to move forward the “paused” Dairy Farmbench, especially as it will be rolled out for all other sectors.

FINANCE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

SS was concerned about the perception of value for money of Scottish levy payers. He proposed putting money towards some processing research, which would benefit all levy payers, but was particularly required in Scotland. It was confirmed that the levy is not hypothecated by region. A new Scottish senior KE manager had now been appointed, with an April start date.

DAIRY REPUTATION COMMS – Anna Farrell /James Wilde

AF and JW presented the latest work that had taken place regarding reputation. The discussion included the background work that the team had done in challenging misleading facts and statistics quoted in the media, for example via Ofcom. The Board appreciated that the pace of Marcomms had significantly increased over the last couple of months and that progress was being made on various activity strands.

The Board were directed to the AHDB web page which contained useful infographics and statistics: <https://ahdb.org.uk/january-assets>

The Board also proposed that a Dairy Facebook presence would be helpful.

Year 3 of the Department of Dairy Related Scrumptious Affairs will launch on 10th February. Project Q had now been fully tested and consumer feedback was very positive.

Wales Dairy Improvement Plan – Delyth Lewis-Jones and Teaghan Tayler

Delyth Lewis-Jones and Teaghan Tayler provided an update on the Dairy Improvement Programme in Wales (funded by £6.5m from Welsh Government) that is mainly focused on Animal Health and Welfare activity to lift herd profitability and performance by improving disease prevention.

The Welsh team had already met the target to recruit 500 dairy businesses. As part of the programme, the Strategic Dairy Farm model is also being replicated in Wales, with the aim to have 8 Welsh farms in place, which were being jointly delivered with Farming Connect.

Some of the learnings were that lameness was a bigger issue than first anticipated and farmers wanted more support from industry in this area. Young stock were still a challenge, and data recording was still a big barrier.

The Board encouraged the team to record economic benefits. The Chair and Board thanked the team for the excellent programme that was being delivered.

DAIRY KE ACTIVITY PLAN – Karen Lowe

Karen Lowe reported on progress with recruitment of Strategic Dairy Farms (part-funded with £1m from Volac) that is on track for England and Scotland. The breadth of the GB-wide network is planned to be up to 25 farms by this Spring, which is resulting in a smaller number of national campaigns for KE team as they focus on delivery of Strategic Dairy Farm meetings and amplification of these through the Marcomms team.

40 Discussion groups were taking place across the country, that covered technical and business performance, farmer to farmer learning and mentorship, benchmarking of KPIs and value in/value out. The Board requested that the discussion groups are shown as a map on the website so easier for levy payers to find.

Further discussion took place including monitoring effectiveness, managing KE team workload, challenges around targeting the top 25% and the middle 50%, and continued use of the Optimal Dairy System approach which was now embedded. The Chair thanked KL and the team for the progress that had been made.

DAIRY PLAN UPDATE

PF gave an update on the Dairy Strategy Plan and the timeline involved. The activity plan should be available on the 25th February for the Board to read in advance of the Board meeting on the 5th March.

DAIRY KPI TOOL – Rebecca Geraghty

Dairy is pioneering the creation of a KPI tool for farmers, based on existing Dairy KPIs that are used for Block and All Year Round calvers. The Dairy Board were happy with progress that RG and the team had made. The next step was to merge back and front end work and do some user testing and training over the next fortnight. The plan was for the tool will go live next month. The name for the tool was not yet finalised.

The Board encouraged that all the KPIs should be included in the tool right from the beginning (as it was already a simplified tool).

AOB

AF and DF volunteered to help with the LIP user testing work.

The Chair thanked the Board for their attendance, and closed the meeting at 13:15

