

AHDB Horticulture Board meeting

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HORTICULTURE BOARD HELD AT 10AM ON 22ND JUNE 2021

Teleconference

PRESENT: Hayley Campbell-Gibbons (HCG), Mark Eves (ME), Roma Gwynn (RGw), Rob James (RJ), Keston Williams (KW), Michael Barker (MB), Rob Saunders (RS), Peter Judge (PJ), Robert James (RJ)

APOLOGIES – Jamie Dewhurst (JD)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rebecca Geraghty (RG) – Chief Technical Officer, Ken Boyns (KB) – Acting CEO and Accounting Officer, Lenka Rihova (LR) - Minute taker

AGENDA ITEM 1 – Welcome & Apologies for absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 10am and welcomed those in attendance.

There were apologies from JD. Lee Abbey (NFU) did not attend, as it was a closed session.

The Board papers had been distributed prior to the meeting and been taken as read.

AGENDA ITEM 2 - Declarations of interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – Minutes from previous meeting 23rd March 2021 & 19th May 2021 (interim board meeting)

The minutes of the last meetings held on 23rd March and 19th May were accepted as a correct record and will be signed by the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Actions from previous meeting 23rd March 2021 & 19th May 2021 (interim board meeting)

HCG confirmed all actions were either completed, on the agenda or in hand. The issue with CRD is being monitored.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – Chair's report

There was no Chair's report.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – SSD update

RG reported on the Project Risk Assessment (Research and KE projects). The RAG analysis is usually completed on a 6-month cycle for each sector. The projects will be monitored more frequently for Horticulture & Potatoes as we progress through the wind down process so that issues can be caught early and managed. Various reasons have affected some of the projects. The team is actively monitoring it.

A complete list of the projects and the reasons why there might be a rating is available on request.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – Wind down update

RG presented on Horticulture Transition plan. Key points discussed:

- **Contractual liabilities in Research & contractual liabilities in KE** - who and how work is managed post 31 March 2022 is not yet agreed
- **Legacy working groups** for Horticulture and Potatoes set up
- **Communication and KE activity** - contractual requirements or emergency only
- **EAMU** work continues at full rate for 2021/22
- **Governance arrangements** agreed with AHDB Board
- **Future Model** is being discussed between DAs and Defra

The work that levy payers have paid for has to remain publicly available. The plan is to have a legacy website for Horticulture and Potatoes. AHDB is also exploring handing this over to a 3rd party in the long term. The principles of the handover work and projects will be shared with the sector board. The main AHDB Board will sign it off.

RG reported on which activities are carrying on and which are stopping.

The Board discussed the EAMU work, which is highly valued by growers. Growers need to be informed as soon as possible that an authorisation has been granted (applications & approvals).

KB reported on Governance Arrangements which were discussed and approved at the AHDB Board on 3rd June. Sector Board responsibilities and associated RACI Matrix were approved. It is proposed that Sector Boards and Panels should remain in existence, as the Minister has not made a decision yet. Meetings will only be called when there is something material to update Sector Board members on. A decision on the process and timing for the potential winding up of Sector Boards, sub-committees and panels will need to be taken once the Ministerial decision has been made. Horticulture Sector Board to be kept informed about the progress.

AHDB will not make any final commitments to winding down the Sector Board or terminating the positions until Defra has formally confirmed the next stage.

KB commented on possible steps post November in relation to Sector Boards members and appointments. We are still awaiting Defra's position.

AHDB have had permission from Defra for the reduction of headcount. The consultation process has commenced. AHDB will not issue any redundancy notices until 6th September.

KB reported on the guarantee around residual risks. A lot of debate within Defra. A meeting is planned shortly with KB, Nicholas Saphir, the Secretary of State and the Minister.

AHDB are hoping to receive clarity around the future before 6th September (the aspiration of the end of June is looking unlikely).

KB asked the Board to treat this information in confidence.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – Financial update

- Final 20/21 Year end Management Accounts
- May 21/22 Management Accounts

RG reported on the final year end accounts. Income was higher than expected and we spent less. A combination of factors led to a higher reserve and an increase in reserve in the last financial year.

RG reported on the May 21/22 accounts. There will be a major reforecast. The next set of accounts will reflect the transition and the wind down position.

A question was raised in relation to getting back the data that we asked for on the levy returns.

Signed:

Date:

Hayley Campbell-Gibbons, Chair