

**SUMMARY OF THE PORK SECTOR COUNCIL MEETING
ON MONDAY 4TH DECEMBER 2023
VIRTUAL**

PRESENT: Mike Sheldon (MS) – Chair, Jodie Bolland (JB), Mark Haighton (MH), William De Klein (WDK), Hugh Crabtree (HC), Tim Bradshaw (TB), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Charlotte Duggleby (CD), Mark Westgarth (MW), Mike Wijnberg (MWi)

APOLOGIES: Robin Thompson (RT), Chris Aldersley (CA)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Angela Christison (AC)
Charlotte Evans (CE)
Ken Boyns (KB) – specific item
Will Jackson (WJ) – specific item
Tony Holmes (TH) – specific item
Liam Byrne (LB) – specific item
Tom Dracup (TD) – specific item
Chris Gooderham (CG) - specific item
Mandy Nevel (MN) – specific item
Ray Keatinge (RK) – specific item
Kim Matthews (KM) – specific item
Caroline Burniston (CB) – minute taker

Apologies for absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 8.30am and welcomed those in attendance.

Apologies were received from Robin Thompson and Chris Aldersley (late attendance confirmed for Tim Bradshaw)

Declarations of Interest

No declarations. MS referred to the importance of declaring concerns around Competition Law

Minutes from the meeting held on 21st September 2023.

The minutes from the meeting held on the 21st September 2023 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising.

AC confirmed all actions were complete or within today's agenda. AC referred particularly to the following two points of interest: -

- AC and MS to meet with the CIM team regrading surveys with levy payers to try and increase the number of Pork responses for future surveys. Meeting scheduled.
- Defra unable to enhance the China vacancy remuneration, other options are being considered to make the package more attractive.

Pork Dashboard

AC gave an update. Council were keen to see communications with levy payers on progress to increase.

Management Accounts



TH presented the accounts and highlighted all areas of under and overspend.

Budgets

AC and TH confirmed that the purpose of this session was to review the 'direction of travel' for spend on each of the workstreams. Feedback would then be given to teams to guide them as a more detailed budget was prepared for the February 2024 council meeting. AC presented the associated slides confirming impact on income if the levy increase was granted and likely pattern of income and expenditure over the coming three years – if a change in strategic direction were not implemented.

The council agreed that the direction of travel on spend for each workstream was understandable. It was noted that although it was indicated export spend could decrease this was due to persistent underspends rather than a lack of enthusiasm about this workstream.

On all workstreams the council wanted to consider any positive ideas from the teams that could add value for levy payers.

Levy Increase

The Council were asked for their support to move the process to the next stage, which would be for the AHDB Board to consider, on the 13th of December, prior to any proposal being made to the Minister.

The council agreed that the levy increase proposals should be progressed. The Council recognised that levy payers have questions and comments about AHDBs ability to deliver value for money, but on balance most had given their conditional support for a levy increase.

Engagement

CE delivered an update on the following key areas: -

- **Alternative Farrowing systems** – CE/HC referred to the paper requesting approval from the Council that they were satisfied with the current plans. The Council thanked the team for the work to date and gave approval for the current plans.
- **Building Survey update** - Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) and the NPA have sent out questionnaires to producers asking about the current state of farrowing accommodation. As such it is no longer necessary for AHDB to renew its building survey.
- **PigProGram** – The council were reminded of the objectives of this work that finished in September. A summary report will be circulated to the council, this would include a request for a small amount of additional data to be collected (within budget) to make the information more useful to levy payers. Council members are asked to let us know quickly if they object to the spend, otherwise the extra data will be commissioned.
- **Red Tractor, Greener Farms Commitment** – CE explained AHDB were gathering evidence on standards (not just RT) in Beef and Lamb and Cereals & Oilseeds. CE asked whether this was important to the pig sector. The Council concluded that it would not a priority. However, accepted that there may be a need for a contribution from this sector for a wider review (cross sector) of UK assurance. More details are likely to be available on this for the February meeting.

Animal Health and Welfare

CG/MN and RK gave the following updates: -

- **ASF** – An initial meeting has been arranged in January between AHDB, NPA and BPA to plan a review of the industry plan. Defra are also reviewing their plans and so the aim is to collaborate with government and stakeholders to review learnings on prevention, containment and recovery from an incidence.
- **Primo report** – RK gave a background to this report that Defra commissioned. We are still awaiting sight of Defra's formal response. Once this is seen consideration will be given to

housing the report and response on our website, but it must be presented as a Defra initiative not an AHDB one as that is the case.

- **Payment by Results** – CG confirmed Minister approval is awaited. Staff changes within Defra have led to delays.

Isotope Testing

The council wish to see the current system maintained but speeded up.

Council members who are also BMPA members agreed to encourage BMPA to review their processes/speed up responses.

Economics & Analysis

TD made a verbal request to the Council to cease the GB weaner price survey in its current form, due to lack of data/data sources, making the survey unsustainable.

The Council agreed to cease the survey and to review this decision every 6 months, while confirming the need to provide an explanation to ensure all parties understand the drivers for the decision.

Pork Marketing

The AHDB Pork Marketing Subgroup recommend shifting from pork medallions to 5% pork mince as the hero cut for next year as new materials are developed for campaigns. This would mean that current healthy claims could still be made and the product would have a greater appeal to younger consumers and those of any age concerned by the increase in the cost of living.

The Council supported these changes.

CCIR

AC summarised discussions between AHDB and FSA. The Council agreed that accuracy on recording needed to be the focus. Ouafa Doxon was commended for her excellent work and the improvements that have been made so far.

AOB

AOB topics were as follows: -

- Charlotte Duggleby volunteered to join the PHWC Welfare Subgroup and Mike Wijnberg likewise will join the PHWC Antimicrobial Usage Subgroup.
- The Council were encouraged to promote applications for the role Pork Chair with their contacts. Closing date Friday 8th December
- HC asked if we would be running a 'Shape the Future' type interaction with levy payers again soon. MS confirmed the process would be repeated at some point in the future, meanwhile if there was any informal groundswell of opinion where priorities needed modification, this could be considered at any point.

Meeting close

MS thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting at 12.43pm, confirming, the next meeting, which will be in person, would be 21st February 2024 with a suggestion that the location may be in Yorkshire.

