



**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE PORK SECTOR COUNCIL MEETING**  
**ON 8<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2022 AT AHDB, STONELEIGH PARK**

**PRESENT:** Mike Sheldon (MS) – Chair, Robert Beckett (RBe), Robin Thompson (RT), Robert Mutimer (RM), Mark Houghton (MH), Chris Aldersley (ChA), William De Klein (WDK), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Jodie Bolland (JB), Hugh Crabtree (HC)

**APOLOGIES:** Tim Bradshaw (TB)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Tim Rycroft (TR) – CEO  
Angela Christison (AC) – Director of Strategy Development  
Will Jackson (WJ) – Divisional Director (Engagement)  
Paul Flanagan (PF) – Director of Stakeholder Engagement  
Ken Boyns (KB) – Divisional Director – Services  
Lenka Rihova (LR) – Personal Assistant (Minutes)

**AGENDA ITEM 2 - Apologies for absence**

The Chair opened the meeting at 8.30am and welcomed those in attendance. Apologies were received from TB.

The Chair expressed his gratitude towards Rick Buckle and Adam Cheale, who had completed their terms.

ChA, MH and RBe's terms have been extended.

The Chair welcomed the new Pork Sector Councils: Jodie Bolland and Hugh Crabtree.

The Chair welcomed Paul Flanagan, the Director of Stakeholder Engagement, who joined the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Tim Rycroft, the CEO of AHDB, who reported on current work at AHDB in relation to the vote results. The key is to keep AHDB's promise to levy payers to 'put them at the heart of everything we do'. The process is about making decisions about how AHDB want to change or redirect levy funding in the light of the results of Shape the Future. It is important to deliver on that promise and to listen to the levy payers' input. TR reported on the role of this Council going forward. The first step is to agree on direction of travel. TR thanked everyone for their support with the Shape the Future campaign.

TR reported on Zero-based budgeting and timesheets which have been introduced to AHDB to understand how people and activity support sectors.

There is no need to finally agree budgets for 23/24 until next year. The focus is on direction of travel; financial and other detail will follow.

TR left at 8.40am.

**AGENDA ITEM 2 – Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interest.

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – Minutes from the meeting held on 10<sup>TH</sup> March and 18<sup>th</sup> March**

The minutes from the meetings held on the above dates were accepted as a true record and will be signed by the Chair.

**AGENDA ITEM 4 – Matters arising**

All the matters arising, and action points were either completed, on the agenda or in hand.

**AGENDA ITEM 5 – Starting to translate the vote results into a new Pork Sector Plan PART 1**

WJ provided clarity on the restructure of roles at AHDB and the organisational changes. WJ, PF and AC will be working across all four sectors. The recruitment for the Head of Pork Engagement is in process.



Some concern was expressed over the accountability to different sectors in relation to the structural changes and how the accountability will be managed. Ultimate accountability for Pork and Beef and Lamb will rest with Will Jackson, and for Dairy and Cereals and Oilseeds with Ken Boyns. The Council will have the decision on **WHAT** outcomes they want from levy investment and the direction of travel, and the Executives will be responsible for **HOW** those outcomes are delivered. Timesheets have been introduced to AHDB to see where time is being spent. AHDB to become more agile.

AC presented on the timeline for moving towards an agreed Sector Plan. A paper (*Starting to translate the vote results into a new Pork Sector Plan PART 1*) had been distributed to the Council prior to the meeting. AC reported on the steps towards a Sector Plan.

- ⇒ *Step One:* June SC - **degree** of change desired in response to votes, **direction of travel**
- ⇒ *Step Two:* Exec will suggest **workstream targets** and further refined budgets for each workstream, Council to provide feedback
- ⇒ *Step Three:* **Draft Sector Plan & Approve workstreams**
- ⇒ *Step Four:* November Open Meeting to present the sector plans then publish: **Launch Sector Plan** alongside reminder of **voting results**

The aim is to have a sector plan for Pork that reflects an optimum balance of the workstreams by November. Key is to leverage the best value for levy payers and to show reaction to the voting results.

A query was raised in relation to communications before November (to give background of the process that is underway). The Council were reassured by WJ that suitable plans were in hand. The Council will need to be able to defend their decisions when the Sector Plan is published in November.

The Council discussed the levy mechanism and a potential levy increase. The Council can recommend a change to levy rates. The AHDB main board makes a recommendation to Ministers who make the final decision. AHDB must seek levy-payers' views at least every 5 years. The Council discussed funding and the possibility for other sources of finance. AHDB must respect the legalities of what they are able to do as a public body.

Clarity was requested on the purpose of the pork levy. It was felt that there are many crossovers with other organisations. The aim of this process is to bring clarity on what AHDB is and where it fits with other organisations. This is an opportunity to change AHDB's remit and its delivery if the council want that.

Some concern was expressed over a potential conflict with the other sectors in relation to different opinions on the workstreams. The aim is to have a sector focused organisation, and to be sensible and collaborate with other sectors to find the best way of delivery where appropriate. The plans and activities will reflect what is needed in each sector. Whilst there AHDB board will play a key role in the process, each sector will be able to propose what work they want AHDB to deliver and where they want the sector's levy to be spent.

AC reported on the differences in views expressed in Shape the Future (unweighted and weighted). The Council discussed the Voting Results. It was agreed to be led primarily by the weighted votes but with an absolute regard to the unweighted results.

The Council members discussed the ranking of workstreams results.

AC reported on the free text summary and what the main messages were (all free text replies were included in the paper). There is a desire for AHDB to be involved in supply chain fairness, specifically to provide evidence where it is available. Some concern was expressed over the lack of coordination and data in the forecasting of pig supplies to the market. The Council discussed the compulsory submission of data and whether this is something that should be built by collaboration. AHDB's role in the fairness in the supply chain is as a collector and a publisher of independent data from which everyone can improve the quality of their decision making.

Miriam Drewett, Marcomms manager for Pork, joined the meeting at 10am. The comms team will be contacting SC to raise their profiles amongst levy payers. This is part of the Shape the Future sector council promotion.

**AGENDA ITEM 6 – Starting to translate the vote results into a new Pork Sector Plan PART 2**



The aim of the session was to discuss the above subject in more detail with the focus on funds allocation and to get views on the direction of travel. The Council discussed where AHDB can best concentrate work on. Key points:

- Some concern over *Visibly adds value, earnest/silent work won't cut it* and its meaning
- AHDB to collate, process, publish and interpret data to levy payers (helping levy payers with compliance)
- Challenge: to establish where AHDB stops and where the market takes over (data)

Some concern was expressed over the volatility of the industry. Key is to get the direction of travel first. AHDB to respond to the voting results, present a plan and be able to adapt and retain flexibility.

The Council supported the proposed set of tests against which they will base their decision making.

AC reported on the available finance and the reduced levy income.

The Council discussed the workstreams. Key points:

## Exports

- ⇒ Concern over losing China licence, focus on alternative markets

The Council agreed with the Exports principles. The first step is for the Council to know understand and agree the desired outcome of export activity, and the second step is to agree the allocation of resources.

## Education

The ambition is to give younger consumers an accurate reflexion on the pig industry and pork products and arm them with the information that allows them to make an informed decision when they get older.

- ⇒ Greater visibility and impact to inspire young consumers to have a positive attitude towards pork
- ⇒ AHDB collaborate with NFU, British Nutrition Foundation and others
- **Pork Consumer Marketing** (the midweek meals campaign)
  - ⇒ Concern over people not watching TV adverts/cost
  - ⇒ Intention to shift attitudes
  - ⇒ Concern over overlapping areas
  - ⇒ Positive comments on the work of the marketing team

- **Reputation**

This is about reactive and proactive work AHDB do to enhance the reputation of the meat and dairy sectors. The Council agreed that this area of work is important and that AHDB has a role in enhancing the reputation, however some concern was expressed over the levy of investment in this area. Costs to be transparent.

- **We Eat Balanced**
  - ⇒ Reputation, protecting our place in the market
  - ⇒ This work is a cross sector activity
  - ⇒ Transparency is key in terms of how much pork levy is invested compared to other sectors, and the resulting prominence of pork in the campaign.
- **Environment**

The key question was whether to do what the levy payers have expressed in their views (short-term) vs the Council's responsibility as leaders thinking about the future (looking beyond levy payers views to meet the challenges that the industry is going to face).

- ⇒ This work is about giving substance to reputation, doing things that support reputation
- ⇒ Overall happy with the recommendations
- ⇒ Some concern was expressed over the FCR tool

- **Animal Health & Welfare**

This is the point of access that the pork industry might have to government funds. The potential exists for pig producers to qualify or apply for funds from central government. The key question was whether AHDB have a role in either guiding or enabling access (its value for levy payers). AHDB pay for the Pig Health & Welfare Council & provide the secretariat. It was suggested one possibility would be to stop PHS (and focus on CCIR (Collection and Communication of Inspection Results) improvement. Stopping the Real Welfare programme was also discussed.

- **Market Intelligence**

- ⇒ The historical track record of forecasts is good, the aim to make it timelier
- ⇒ Core work is essential, some of the interpretative work is not so critical
- ⇒ In particular should scrutinise consumer insight work.

- **People Working in Agriculture**

- ⇒ Pig Pro online training recording system & welfare training useful tools for farmers
- ⇒ To establish a relationship with TIAH (could they take on pig-pro?)

To focus on areas where AHDB can uniquely add value.

Overall it was felt that the balanced approach (which had to be bold in any case to meet the financial restrictions) is right Overall, the scores were good so it is not easy to identify work to reduce.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7 – AOB**

The next Pork Sector Council is on 20<sup>th</sup> July (National Pig Centre in Leeds).

## **AGENDA ITEM 8 – Finish**

The meeting finished at 12.45pm.