

# SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE INTERIM MEETING OF THE AHDB PORK BOARD



ON 17<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER

TELECONFERENCE

**PRESENT:** Mike Sheldon (MS) - Chair, Richard Buckle (RBU), Mark Houghton (MH), Simon Watchorn (SW), Robert Beckett (RBe), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Robin Thompson (RT), Adam Cheale (ACH), Tim Bradshaw (TB), Robert Mutimer (RM), William De Klein (WDK), Chris Aldersley (ChA)

**APOLOGIES:** n/a

## IN ATTENDANCE:

Angela Christison (AC) - Strategy director – AHDB Pork, Phil Hadley (PH) - International Market Development Director, Mandy Nevel (MN) - Head of Animal Health & Welfare, Lenka Rihova (LR) – Minutes, Pippa Handley (PH) – Senior Knowledge Exchange Manager (Pork), Tim Isaac (TI) – Knowledge Exchange Director, Jon Foot (JF) - Head of Environment & Resource Management, Liam Byrne (LB) – Head of Marketing

### AGENDA ITEM 1 – Apologies for absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 10am and welcomed those in attendance. There were no apologies.

### AGENDA ITEM 2 - Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

### AGENDA ITEM 3 – Minutes from the meeting on 15<sup>TH</sup> September

Point 6.3 – amends suggested (*'... while reinstatement of exports to China following a Covid-19 outbreak at a UK plant had been achieved within 28 days, there was no guarantee of such an outcome in future.'*).

### AGENDA ITEM 4 – Matters arising

AC recapped on the matters arising and action points, confirming all items were either completed, on the agenda or in hand.

The Board expressed concern regarding persistent transport identity inaccuracies or omissions in the pig movement system. The Board recognised that there are a number of issues with proper identification of lorries, especially with quality of adherence. It was recognised that there were low chances to modify the current EAML2 system before moving over to a new system. The aim is to encourage closer adherence to the existing rules, improve communication and work with hauliers and industry to address the issue, as this would be vital data in the event of an outbreak.

Trailers have to be approved by Red Tractor and RSPCA every year (a fee). The Board discussed potential issues around this. It was suggested to contact RT in relation to discuss opportunities for closer compliance with the rules.

The Chair reminded the Board that the meeting is being recorded. There were no objections.

### AGENDA ITEM 5 - Directors Report

The report was taken as read.

AC reported on underspend. The Board was supportive of allocating more funds to Export work next year. The Board briefly discussed bad debt (a provision against bad debt).

### AGENDA ITEM 6 – Covid-19 restrictions on UK processing capacity / China access, focus on AHDB role

PH provided an update on the Covid-19 situation, specifically in relation to China. The Chinese have identified a risk from imported food products into China. Should a meat processing facility or food handling facility have a Covid-19 issue with their staff, they must notify the Chinese authorities. They should voluntarily suspend export from those sites until the problem is rectified and the Chinese reviewed the control measures and the effectiveness of them. There is a growing list of plant suspensions. There are four pork export approved sites currently suspended (voluntarily delisted). The first video audit went well apart from some minor issues, which have been resolved instantly. AHDB are working closely with the sites, Defra and the embassy in Beijing in relation to re-listing the



sites. This is an important step in understanding how we can open export channels again. The UK's experience of regaining listing after voluntary delisting is similar to that of other countries.

The Board discussed the US position and its agreement with China. It was felt that there is a political dynamic around this, resulting in greater success for US exporters.

Our export team was highly praised by the Board for all their work to optimise market access. Members also wished to express their gratitude to WDK, CHA and MH for sharing their knowledge and experience.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 7 – Environmental work update**

JF provided the Board with an update of the work of the Pork Infrastructure and Environment Sub-Group (PIES). The aim was to discuss the recommendations, and to seek Board's approval. The Board had asked the PIES group to assess the options enabling the industry to unify behind a single vehicle to measure progress on reducing carbon emissions. The paper with the recommendations had been distributed to the Board. JF also reported on the CIEL report and distributed the link to the Board.

Proposal made to the Board:

- use Feed Conversion Rate as a proxy for carbon foot printing rather than attempt to collect complex data to directly calculate the latter
- compliment this with monitoring soya use and source and,
- continuing with the Pork Roadmap which measures environmental impact every five years

In principle these were agreed but there was some tension around the simplicity of the approach to use FCR as a proxy.

More information was requested on how a 'data warehouse' would be built to collate information from the myriad of existing industry tools capturing environmental data.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 8 - Update on account management approach to KE**

PH presented on the progress of the account management approach to KE. Progress has been made. There are three main areas of work: Integrators, Stakeholders and Large Independents. The Board expressed concern regarding keeping a track on quantity of interactions and identified a need to develop some simple ways of tracking progress.

PH's intention is for members of the KE team to attend pig clubs next year, an interaction which is key to improve engagement with those who are not involved with AHDB activity. The Board was supportive of AHDB influencing vets/feed suppliers to drive producer engagement with AHDB.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 9 - Update on Animal Health and Welfare Pathway**

MN provided an update on the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway (one of Defra's proposals to replace funding for agriculture once we have completed EU exit). There have been regular meetings, including the AHDB team, held to discuss individual sector approaches. The 'straw man' basic outline of what we want to propose for the pig industry has been put forward to the ministers. It focuses around every pig producer being part of the pathway.

AHDB's key role in the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway will be the gathering and managing of the data that supports the desired outcomes. These mainly relate to disease control.

The Board discussed the potential for grant funding of buildings to decrease stocking densities.

MN reported on the PRRS project.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 10 - ASF Readiness – Questions**

The report was taken as read.

MN reported on ASF scenario planning (in case of ASF outbreak) which was postponed due to Covid-19. A paper has been circulated detailing our preparedness as an industry and the role AHDB would play in an outbreak. The paper was well received as a comprehensive approach.

MN provided an update on the current wild boar situation, which remains an issue. The recommended target in order to stabilise the population year on year is to cull 60%.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 12 - Cross Sector Reputational Campaign**

LB gave an update on progress within domestic marketing, focusing on reputation and the three key projects agreed back in July (Pork Marketing Campaign, Meat & Dairy Reputation and Project Q). LB reported on consumers' attitude, upcoming work and campaigns in January 2021, including a new TV creative 'Eat Balanced'. The aim is to promote a positive role for meat and dairy in a balanced diet. It is about reassurance, naturalness and Britishness. Feedback from consumer research and retailers was positive. The cost of the 'Eat Balanced campaign' is shared proportionately among all the relevant sectors.

The Board positively commented on the midweek meals campaign.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 13 - AOB & Dates of future meetings**

A request was received from the NPA to consider taking overweight pigs out of the Standard Pig Price calculation, on the grounds that their inclusion unfairly depressed the SPP. The advice of the AHDB team is that this would not be appropriate, given that the SPP is a reflection of actual prices paid, rather than a contract-setting tool. Given its strategic role as a mirror to the market, it would not be appropriate to alter the calculation for tactical reasons. Any change to this strategic tool would require consultation and agreement from all parties. The Board was supportive of the recommendation that the calculation process for the SPP index price should not be changed.

The Board discussed the ongoing negotiations and prospect of a trade deal between the UK and the US. There is a potential for US pork to gain access to the UK market. It was recommended to the Board that work was needed in advance to understand the potential impacts and to discuss what options might be available to the industry to make the UK defensive position stronger. The Board agreed that a call should be set up to start discussions in December.

The Chair reminded the Board of the procedure around expenses. Expense claims should be based on time spent, including reading and the preparation for meetings, phone calls, emails, and time thinking about the issue.

The 2021 Pork Board dates have been circulated to the Board.

The Chair congratulated RT on his National Pig Award.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.

**Signed:**

**Date:**