# SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE PORK SECTOR COUNCIL MEETING AHDB ON 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021

### **CHESFORD GRANGE HOTEL**

**PRESENT:** Mike Sheldon (MS) – Chair, Robert Beckett (RBe), Robin Thompson (RT), Robert Mutimer (RM), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Mark Haighton (MH), Rick Buckle (RB)

**REMOTELY**: Tim Bradshaw (TB), Chris Aldersley (ChA), William De Klein (WDK)

**APOLOGIES:** Adam Cheale (ACH)

#### IN ATTENDANCE:

Angela Christison - Strategy director – AHDB Pork, Roseanne Thomas – Communications Director, Chris Gooderham– Head of Market Specialists (Dairy & Livestock), Ken Boyns - Divisional Director – Services, Finance & Operations, Lenka Rihova (LR) – Personal Assistant (Minutes)

#### AGENDA ITEM 1 – Apologies for absence

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

Apologies were received from ACH.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2 – Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interest.

# AGENDA ITEM 3 – Minutes from the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 23<sup>rd</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

The minutes from the meetings held on the above dates were accepted as a true record and will be signed by the Chair subject to an amendment on the list of attendees on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

#### AGENDA ITEM 4 – Matters arising

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

#### AGENDA ITEM 5 – Directors Report

The report was taken as read.

AC reported on welfare training. AHDB will be able to offer it free of charge for six months. The 6 months will start, once the system has gone live (expected January). Positive comments were made by the Sector Council.

AC reported on the move of eAML2 to LIP. This will not be happening for some time as sheep and cattle will be addressed first. Although the timetable for the transition from eAML2 to the new LI system is long, the Council is encouraged to remain engaged with LIP, since the aim remains to have a statutory traceability system where AHDB has access to the data and is able to exploit it in various ways for the benefit of the industry.

KB reported on a new appointment of a Director of Data & Architecture, who starts on 6<sup>th</sup> December. **AGENDA ITEM 6 – 'SHAPE THE FUTURE' (AHDB VOTING)** 

The AHDB vote is called 'Shape The Future'. AC presented on the principles, steps and timelines. The aim is to improve dynamic engagement between AHDB and levy payers and provide more clarity on AHDB's work and its value to levy payers. Levy payers will 'have their say' on what is/is not funded. The key is to provide more accountability and transparency to our relationships with levy payers. The cultural shift will enable AHDB to drive greater efficiency and efficacy. There will be a cultural shift from 'one AHDB' to Sectors driving their own agendas. It is important to encourage levy payers to register and vote. It is vital to take a collective action to optimise registrations and then voting. The results of the vote will be used by the council to inform (not instruct) decisions on the work they propose is carried out by AHDB for the sector.

The purpose of this discussion was:

- To understand the new operating model and be aligned to our individual roles in driving registration and voting
- Agree the major challenges/needs for Pork
- Review the AHDB workstreams that need to be in place for Pork

CHG presented on the registration to vote approach, timelines and portal, which will open in December. The registration will bring in levy payers who have not voluntarily contacted AHDB before. Results will be available in June. CHG reported on the user journey (registration, validation, and vote). If people are operating in more sectors, they will have to fill this form for each sector that they want to vote in. There will be various business questions to complete.

Some concern was expressed in relation to who should be filling out the forms (pig owners vs pig keepers). There might be a potential risk of double counting. Proper identification of eligibility to vote is key to success.

The Sector Council discussed their concerns in relation to the eligibility to vote. The key question was whether AHDB would collect the views of the people who have pigs on farms but are not owners.

The majority view within the Sector Council was that:

- They are primarily interested in the views of the people / organisations who own the pigs.
- All stages of production & ownership of pigs have a right to be recognised as owners of pigs and therefore to be able to express their views.
- They are interested in the views of those who look after the pigs but do not own them (as long as you can validate them). It is important to enable the wider community to be able to express their views and engage with AHDB.

Some concern was expressed around validation. A validation system will be in place. The majority view within the Sector Council was that the validation process needs to be sufficiently robust so that we can clearly differentiate between those who own the pigs and those who have a non-owning interest in the pigs. WDK offered to look into supplying data from Karro that may help in validation, other integrators were asked to consider what, if any data they could supply).

The Sector Council needs to be able to refine the list to properly identify the views of those who own the pigs when needed. We need to be able to look at the collated data in a number of different ways.

RT presented on the communication plan & key messages. Key principles to follow:

- Farmer first
- Multi channel
- Sector Specific

It is key to listen to the industry and levy payers. The aim is to improve engagement, trust and credibility. Various mechanisms are in place to increase our visibility and reach. AHDB will tailor communications for each sector in order to remain relevant and timely in our messages. The communication will start on 6th December. It is vital that the language reflects that we work for farmers and processors. It is important that the Sector Council help AHDB to get the message across and encourage people to register.

The Chair confirmed the vote is a data collection exercise. There will be different ways of cutting and evaluating the data. The data, will inform the debate of the Sector Council, who will be responsible for making the recommendations to the AHDB Board.

This programme enables everybody with a view to express that view. This Council must apply its expertise, knowledge and vision to work up these soundings into a programme of work, which reflects accurately the levy payers' feedback & represents the best application of the levy funds at our disposal. How well we interpret that feedback, and the quality of our leadership is important. It will be key for The Sector Council to tap into a full range of views to enable the correct decisions to be taken

KB presented on the principles behind Workstreams. Shape the Future is a radical change to our relationship with the industry. The transition will result in a clearer, bespoke contract with the pork sector and clarification from AHDB on what is/is not expected. KB presented on the Shape of the Future Roadmap.

Two aims today:

- Agree Sector challenges/Needs
- First pass on workstreams to get Council input on the ambition

AC presented on the main Pork challenges/needs, which have been identified as follows:

- 1) The need to sell every part of the pig for the best return at home or overseas
- 2) The need to protect the reputation of pork and promote its benefits to consumers
- 3) The need to continue to improve animal health and welfare, and reduce our impact on the environment
- 4) The need to improve production efficiency to remain competitive at home and overseas

The Sector Council has agreed with the proposed challenges subject to changes in 3 & 4

A paper had been distributed to the Council prior to the meeting. The Council reviewed the workstreams to address the sector challenges. For further details on this subject, please refer to the paper called 'workstream review feedback'. Indicative costs were not included, however will be provided at a later stage.

#### AGENDA ITEM 7 – ACTIONS TO ADDRESS IMMEDIATE INDUSTRY NEEDS

#### • Cull and Render Facility

AC reported on the potential cull and render facility. Agreement from Government and APHA is required. There have been some challenges around legalities.

This is a minority backstop service to get in place ahead of time in order to mitigate a risk of some serious emotional and mental health issues for producers who are facing no other choice.

There was still a need to continue to press for the approval of a cull and render facility at Cheale's in Essex, as a service of last resort for producers who need to dispose of unsold pigs but are unable or unwilling to cull them at farm. The Sector Council remained in support of this facility.

# AGENDA ITEM 8 – RESEARCH RECOMMENDED TO ASSESS FINANCIAL IMPACT OF PIG DISEASES

A paper had been distributed to the Sector Council prior to the meeting. The aim is to look at the cost of disease and the cost of treating it and the benefits for levy payers & industry.

Some concern was expressed over data and whether productivity had stagnated in the past 20 years. It was felt that there is a significant gap between the genetic potential of the current animals on our farms and the actual performance on our farms (facilities, endemic disease). The Sector Council needs to understand what specific benefits there are for levy payers from the proposed research.

### AGENDA ITEM 9 - WORK TO SUPPORT 'LIVING WITHOUT ZINC'

A paper had been distributed to the Sector Council prior to the meeting.

This is looking at what alternatives there are at weaning to prevent diarrhoea. There is a time pressure on this due to the upcoming Zinc ban next year. Some concern was expressed over the benefits for levy payers and AHDB's role. More evidence was requested. It would be useful to understand what other countries have done to overcome inability to use Zinc.

#### AGENDA ITEM 10 – SECTOR BOARD MEMBERSHIP:

- Skills Matrix for Sector Council
- Selection Panel Sector Council

AC presented on the recruitment for Pork Sector Council. The objective is to have the right skills on the Council. The interview panel will be expanded. New starters will be ratified by levy payers at the

voting stage. Each council member will have an appraisal with the Chair. The aim is to have people in post by April.

## AGENDA ITEM 12 – CARCASE CLASSIFICATION

A paper had been distributed to the Sector Council prior to the meeting. The Pork Classification Programme has been subject to delays, most recently as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic (restricting both international travel and abattoir site access). Members of the AHDB Pork Board discussed the impact of the delays, and the current industry need for the equipment validation project. The recommendation was to put the project on hold.

The Sector Council has agreed to park the programme.

The Chair, on behalf of the Sector Council, expressed his gratitude towards Kim Matthews.

#### AGENDA ITEM

The Pork weekly calls are no longer required and can be cancelled.

The meeting has closed at 12.45pm.

