

SUMMARY OF AHDB PORK BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19TH JULY 2019

THE BOARD ROOM, AHDB, STONELEIGH PARK

PRESENT: Mike Sheldon (Chair), Chris Aldersley, Tim Bradshaw, Richard Buckle (RBU), Mark Houghton, Robert Mutimer, Robert Shepherd, Simon Watchorn,

APOLOGIES: Robert Beckett (RBe), Adam Cheale, Nick Davies, Iain Wyllie

IN ATTENDANCE: Liam Byrne (Head of Marketing, Pork Beef and Lamb), Susannah Bolton (Director, KE) Angela Christison (Strategy director – AHDB Pork), Sue Cleaver (minutes), Steve Dunkley (Head of KE, Pork), Tom Hind (Chief Officer, Strategy) Mandy Nevel (Head of Animal Science)

Apologies for absence

The Chair, Mike Sheldon, opened the meeting at 11am and welcomed those in attendance. Apologies were received from Robert Beckett, Adam Cheale, Nick Davies and Iain Wyllie. The Chair welcomed Hayley Campbell-Gibbons, Chair of the Horticulture Board.

Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes from the meeting held on 8th May 2019

The minutes from the meeting held on 8th May 2019 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising

AC presented an update on the matters arising from the meeting held on the 8th May 2019. This had been included in the papers and was taken as read.

The Board requested an update on the Defra Request for Views (RQV). The delay had been due in part to Defra staff being diverted to Brexit contingency planning. TH confirmed that momentum had now picked up, and Defra had completed the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the RQV consultation.

The Board discussed the LIPs van lease scheme that was due to finish soon. The Pork Board were supporting LIPs with £85k this year.

Directors Report / Operational Report

AC presented the Directors and Operational reports that had been included in the papers and were taken as read. The Board discussed the factors influencing the change in pig prices. It was expected that the recent increase would be reflected in the next set of figures.

Discussion on Strategy

AC updated the Board on the development and renewal of the strategy for AHDB as a whole, and for the pig sector. This was the beginning of a process that would carry on over the Autumn, with sign off taking place at the November Board meeting. The end point should be that everyone concerned has a clear understanding of “this is what we do, this is why we do it and these are the supporting activities”. It was also noted that it is important to be clear on what AHDB does not do. AC presented the outline model that would be used for all sectors. The Board discussed the merits of the model, in particular whether it was clear enough that the strategy is consumer led rather than

production driven, and whether it was sufficiently flexible to allow AHDB to respond rapidly to change. Subject to these points, the Board were supportive of the model.

AC then presented the key themes that were relevant to the pig sector. Potential “drivers” that should be optimised included growing global meat demand, greater volatility, new trading relationships, supply chain consolidation/collaboration, investment in infrastructure and leveraging of data/technology. Potential “restrainers” that should be minimised (where possible) included challenging domestic market, industry reputation (human health, animal welfare, environmental impact), loss of domestic/EU market (new trade deals/Brexit), higher COP (labour, regulations), decreased antibiotic use vs endemic disease levels, ASF or other exotic disease strikes. The Board discussed these potential drivers and restrainers and were in broad agreement that these were the main themes to consider. AC would present a more detailed consideration of these themes for debate at the September Board meeting.

Precision Pig Update - Steve Dunkley and Susannah Bolton.

SD presented an update on the Precision Pig project in order to inform the Board of progress so far, expected outcomes and next steps. The Board discussed whether the project would help producers do a better job and generate value. The aspiration was to add a level of data exploitation to the growing/ finishing herd and to determine the cost-benefit to producers. MS summarised that this is an ambitious project, and the nature of the project meant that there would be some uncertainty, but that the Board had accepted the uncertainty of success and were interested and supportive.

Presentation of Farm Excellence Survey results

SD presented the results of the Farm Excellent Survey. MS noted that any measurement scheme can raise as many questions as it answers, and the Board would be interested in future trend which would give confidence in the meaning of the results. It was encouraging that AHDB was doing its best to demonstrate value.

Update on revision of technical committee

A paper on the revision of the Technical Committee had been included in the pack which was taken as read. There was a discussion on the merits of retaining the Technical Committee, or creating working sub-groups that would be more focussed and time-limited

The marketing sub-group was working very well, and this was model that was proposed for future technical working sub-groups. Groups would be focussed, collaborative and task orientated.

The Board were in agreement that the current format of the Technical Committee was not working particularly well, however they did not want it to be disbanded until the new format was agreed. It was noted that the new strategy might have impact on the structure of sub-groups, and so the Board suggested waiting until the new strategy was in place in November. The Board agreed that the next steps should be to 1) map out the current committees (their members and remit), 2) leave the Technical Committee as it is for the moment, 3) look at what supporting groups are required (if any) when the new strategy is agreed.

Carcase Classification

AC presented a paper on carcass classification that had been included in the pack and was taken as read. There was concern that the results of this project would be acted upon by industry, and the appetite for industry to install new kit was robustly discussed. AC clarified that the trials would be a technical evaluation, not a commercial evaluation. MS asked the Board whether they wanted to press ahead with the trials knowing and understanding that this is not a complete commercial



evaluation, and that there may be no installation of the devices in plants. The Board agreed to go ahead with the proposition as they felt the resulting data would still be useful to the industry and allow any plants that wanted to install more sophisticated methods of carcass classification to have the choice of approved devices.

Industry readiness for an ASF strike

MN updated the Board on the industry readiness for an African Swine Fever (ASF) strike, emphasising the need for industry to be prepared for not just ASF, but any notifiable disease

MN posed a question to the Board regarding the approach to slaughtering infected pigs. The Board recommended following the dysentery charter arrangement, which had worked well (end of day/Friday afternoon kill, separate chillers, all disinfected etc).

Salmonella

For the pig sector, salmonella is largely controlled in the abattoir. On the poultry sector it was usually controlled on farm.

Next marketing campaign

LB updated the Board on the progress with the new advert and retailer engagement for the October campaign. He highlighted that the advert had a built in ability to be flexible if the cut needed to move from an emphasis on medallions (as previously agreed), to shoulder and belly cuts to support carcass balance (either due to Brexit or ASF), and that different recipes could be slotted in as needed. The Board were enthusiastic about the new advert and the success of the campaign so far.

Industry Reputation Group

LB presented the progress made in the cross-sector working group looking at Industry Reputation. This group had been formed to examine the evidence and define how to work together to address challenges around human health, animal welfare and the environment. Two meetings had taken place, and had been well attended by industry with representations from all livestock sectors, including NFU, Dairy UK, NPA, and Pork processors. The step changes that had taken place in these meetings was hugely encouraging, and good progress was being made.

The Board were encouraged that this group was moving along the right lines to address the concerns and challenges surrounding industry reputation.

Signed:

Date:

