



(HCC 879)

Minutes of a meeting of the Directors of Hybu Cig Cymru (HCC) held at 10.30am at Tŷ Rheidol, Parc Merlin, Aberystwyth on Wednesday 27 February 2019

Present: Kevin Roberts (Chair)
Gareth Wynn Davies, Huw Davies, John Davies, Helen Howells, Barrie Jones, Rachael Madeley Davies, Catherine Smith, Claire Williams and Ogwen Williams

By Invitation: Julia Douch (Welsh Government) – Item 1
David Richards (Welsh Government) – Item 1
Maria Richards (Welsh Government)
Alison Wright (Calland Wright Consulting Ltd) – Item 1 / Observer

Executive in attendance: Gwyn Howells (Chief Executive Officer - CEO)
Julie Davies-Jones (Secretariat)
Jo Horder, Red Meat Policy and Strategy Executive (Item 8e)
Kirsten Hughes, Red Meat Executive (Items 9 and 10)

Red Meat Development Programme (Item 8a)
Gwawr Parry, Eleri Price, Rebekah Stuart

Management team: Bryan Regan (Corporate Services Manager)
John Richards (Industry Development and Relations Manager)

1. To receive a presentation on Public Sector Governance

The Chair welcomed David Richards (DR), Director of Governance and Ethics and Julia Douch (JD), Head of Public Bodies Unit, Welsh Government to the meeting, both of whom had met with the Board previously during the Board's induction programme in 2017.

Following the review of Welsh Government's Sponsorship of Public Bodies – "Delivering Together", both DR and JD would be attending meetings of all Boards for Public Bodies to present on Public Sector Governance.

DR informed that following the review, Dame Shan Morgan, Permanent Secretary had indicated a desire for the Welsh Government sponsored divisions to support and work closer with public sector Boards.

DR thanked the Board for their commitment and work to date in particular during the ongoing process with Brexit which continued to be challenging.

DR explained that working and delivery in a "public role" required the handling of funds in a clear, transparent and proper manor. The CEO had been appointed as

“Accounting Officer” for HCC with an individual responsibility for the stewardship of public monies and was accountable directly to Ministers in the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government had received positive reports on the Board and its Executive however, DR took the opportunity to remind the Board of their responsibilities as Non-Executive Directors of HCC and in particular referred to the Nolan principles of public life.

JD informed the Board that the Welsh Government’s Public Bodies Unit (PBU) had been established following the review. The role of the PBU would be to act as a centre of excellence and provide consistent advice and greater assurances to Government, arms-length bodies and the general public. The PBU would be engaging with Chairs and CEOs of all arms-length bodies to ensure adherence to appropriate processes and procedures.

The review was undertaken on 3,000 bodies who were grant funded and subsequently narrowed down to arms-length bodies. Many inconsistencies came to light but equally some strong governance was evident amongst public bodies.

The Welsh Government Public Leaders Forum had recently been established with a view of providing a network for Chairs, CEOs and sponsors and policy leads. It was hoped that this forum would facilitate improved communication and sharing of information that would lead to more efficient planning and better decision making. The Chair and CEO represented HCC at a forum meeting on the 31 January 2019.

During this meeting, JD informed that some decisions made were: -

- To remove observer status of Welsh Government Officials at arms-length Board meetings (they only need to be present in parts). However, for wholly owned companies, Officials would be present to represent the interests of the shareholder (Welsh Ministers).
- To improve on efficiencies at Welsh Government eg sharing of Board papers and the relationships between Government and the Boards. Terms of Governance would change along with changes to control procedures – no more sight of business plans and audits but more emphasis on working together in a clear and transparent manner in-particular between Welsh Government sponsor teams and Boards.
- It was noted at the meeting that Craig Greenland had been appointed as Head of Public Appointments and would work closely with public bodies in the future.

The next Public Leaders Forum would focus on the appointment processes of Non-Executive Directors which would include the process around evaluations and assessments.

The representatives the PBU and Alison Wright departed and the formal part of the Board meeting commenced.

2. **Welcome and Chair's Comments**

The Chair welcomed Maria Richards, Head of Future Farming Policy who would be attending future Board meetings representing the Agriculture – Sustainability and Development Division (HCC's sponsor division).

The Chair gave an update on the key events and meetings he had attended since the previous Board meeting: -

17 January 2019 – Minister's Brexit Roundtable meeting and – First Minister's Brexit meeting

18 January 2019 – Meat Alliance NZ meeting in London.

22 January 2019 – The Chair and CEO attended the FUW Farmhouse Breakfast event at the National Assembly.

31 January 2019 – The Chair and the CEO attended a meeting of the Public Bodies Forum.

5 February 2019 – The Chair and CEO attended the NFU Cymru Livestock Board Conference entitled "Welsh Red meat Sector – Where to now?" The Chair presented at the conference and was joined by the CEO for the Q&A session thereafter.

6 February 2019 – The Chair and CEO attended the quarterly Welsh Government / HCC Governance meeting.

19 – 21 February 2019 – The Chair and CEO attended the NFU Conference, Birmingham entitled "Our Food, Our Future". The Chair presented at the "Welsh Farming: Food at the heart of our future" workshop.

22 February 2019 – The Chair attended the First Minister's Brexit meeting.

3. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Mark Alexander, Deputy Director, Agriculture – Sustainability and Development Division who would be overseeing the work of Gary Haggaty on a temporary basis until a permanent appointment was made and would attend Board meetings when available.

The Chair on behalf of the Board noted best wishes to Gary Haggaty in his new role as Deputy Director, Community Safety and Civil Contingencies with Welsh Government and thanked him for the good working relationship and support given to HCC during his time in the Agriculture – Sustainability and Development Division.

Apologies had been received from the Market Development Manager who was attending a trade mission in Japan and the Communications Manager who was representing HCC at a St David's Day reception held at the EU Parliament in Brussels.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no new Declarations of Interest declared.

5. **To approve the minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 10 January 2019 (HCC 863)**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 10 January 2019 were taken as read, approved by the Board and signed by the Chair.

6. **Matters arising**

EIDCymru – Multispecies traceability system for Wales

There was currently no update to report.

Abattoir and Processing Sector

The recent HCC engagement meetings with representatives from the abattoir and processing sector held at Pencoed College, Bridgend (15 February 2019) and at Rhug Estate, Corwen (16 February 2019) were successful and similar events would be organised for the autumn season. The Executive thanked Board Members Rachael Madeley Davies and Helen Howells for chairing the meetings.

The Industry Development and Relations Manager would represent HCC at the LAA AGM to be held on the 14 March 2019.

HCC Industry Liaison Group

Board Member Claire Williams briefed the Board on the first meeting of the above that was held on the 22 February 2019 with representation from HCC, Welsh Government, FUW and NFU Cymru.

7. **Brexit update**

a. **To discuss the latest developments with regard to the UK departing the EU**

Covered within item 7b below.

b. **To receive a paper on Examination of HCC's readiness for exiting the EU (HCC 864)**

The above was taken as read.

(HCC 879)

It was highlighted that this evidence paper had been prepared by the Executive following a call for evidence and self-assessment examination by the Auditor General for Wales of the Welsh public sector's arrangements for exiting the EU.

The Board agreed that HCC had undertaken pragmatic and evidence-based steps to engage with the sector.

The Board agreed that market access and maintaining exports was vital. This had been communicated widely with industry.

Roundtable discussion took place regarding the fortunes of the sheep sector and the uncertainties facing agriculture as a whole.

Short and long-term interventions had been identified by Welsh Government and were currently looking at possible legislation and crisis payments for supporting farmers. Internal Welsh Government Brexit meetings were held very regularly to discuss matters such as support packages for farmers, knowledge transfer work, well-being and mental health impact in addition to stock, capacity, storage issues etc. The CEO attended these meetings.

It was noted that the Executive had prepared a series of communications interventions between now and the 29 March 2019 in order to maintain confidence with consumers and Levy payers.

8. HCC Reports

a. Activities (HCC 865)

The above was taken as read.

Update on HCC's Annual Conference – Thursday 14 November 2019

It was noted that planning was in hand for the above with the venue confirmed as the Members' Centre, Royal Welsh Showground. Two keynote speakers had agreed to participate namely Lord Mark Price (previous Managing Director of Waitrose and former Trade Minister) and Dr Zoe Harcombe, nutritionist and author.

Red Meat Development Project (RMDP)

Staff appointed to the RMDP joined the meeting and presented on their respective projects followed by a Q&A session: -

Dr Eleri Price – Meat Eating Quality

Gwawr Parry – Hill Ram Scheme

Dr Rebekah Stewart – Animal and Flock Herd Health

Benchmarking Project

The Industry Development and Relations Manager gave an update on the above:-

1,600 farmers partook with 1,500 farmers paid date. Relatively few (40) farmers remained to go through the final verification process. An industry report would be drafted as soon as the data phase was concluded.

Next steps would be to communicate to farmers on how they could access their individual data online and benchmark their results against the project data. It was noted that Farming Connect would also be holding surgeries.

Welsh Government thanked the Executive for the work undertaken on delivering the project.

b. Market Bulletin Summary (HCC 866)

The above was taken as read.

c. Financial – Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet to 31 December 2018 (HCC 867)

The above was taken as read and summarized by the Corporate Services Manager.

d. Forthcoming events (HCC 868)

The above was taken as read.

e. To receive a briefing on HCC's Information Classification and Handling Policy (HCC 869)

The above was taken as read and presented by the Red Meat Policy and Strategy Executive.

Information security procedures from the Board's aspect were summarized as follows: -

The Board had a duty of confidentiality and a responsibility to safeguard any HCC information or data they access.

Information disclosed in relation to HCC (not in the public domain) must always be treated as confidential and not be disclosed to anyone outside of HCC. To ensure that information is kept safe at all times, the Board must abide by the HCC Information Security policy and procedures.

(HCC 879)

A Cloud-based storage service would be used to store and share all Confidential HCC documents, such as Board and Committee papers. The Board would have individual access to this facility which would be developed over the coming weeks.

The Board Members' nominated email address would only be used for sending general correspondence.

Following the above, the Red Meat Policy and Strategy Executive briefed the Board on their duty with regard to handling Board documentation.

Do's

- ✓ Comply with the HCC Information Security Policy
- ✓ Inform HCC immediately if you know or suspect that information has been lost, stolen or disclosed to someone who is not authorised to have it
- ✓ Ensure personally owned devices used for accessing HCC information are Password or PIN protected
- ✓ Keep all of the software on personally owned devices up to date
- ✓ Change your password if you have any suspicion that it may have been compromised
- ✓ Be mindful of the risks of using open (unsecured) wifi hotspots in public places
- ✓ Ensure that hardcopies cannot be overlooked when being used
- ✓ Dispose of hardcopy confidential documents by secure shredding. These could be left with HCC for disposal if necessary.
- ✓ Seek advice from the Corporate Services Manager if you are unclear about any aspects of HCC's Information Security

Don't's

- ✗ Share passwords with anyone
- ✗ Store confidential information on personal devices or on memory sticks.
- ✗ Send confidential HCC documents using personal email accounts
- ✗ Provide access to or share confidential information with anyone who is not authorised to see it
- ✗ Leave a device with access to HCC information unlocked when left Unattended
- ✗ Leave hard copies of HCC confidential information unattended or unsecured
- ✗ Discuss confidential HCC matters over the telephone if the conversation can be overhead

9. **Corporate**

- a. To approve the summary of changes to HCC's draft Corporate Plan 2019 / 2022 arising from the 10 January 2019 Board meeting (HCC 870)

The above was taken as read and presented by the Red Meat Executive.

- b. To approve HCC's draft Corporate Plan 2019 / 2022 (HCC 871)

The above was taken as read.

Following discussion, it was agreed to submit the Corporate Plan 2019 / 2022 and the Operational Plan 2019 / 2020 to the Minister for consideration but to include a caveat that a review of the documents would be undertaken depending on the outcome of Brexit.

Taking the above into account, the Corporate Plan for 2019 / 2022 was approved by the Board.

- c. To approve the summary of changes to HCC's draft Operational Plan 2019 / 2020 arising from the 10 January 2019 Board meeting (HCC 872)

The above was taken as read, presented by the Red Meat Executive and approved by the Board.

- d. To approve HCC's draft Operational Plan 2019 / 2020 (HCC 873)

The above was taken as read and approved by the Board.

10. **To approve the Work Plan for the Board 2019 / 2020 (HCC 874)**

The revised copy of the above was taken as read and approved by the Board.

11. **HCC Committees**

Audit and Risk Committee

- a. To adopt the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on Wednesday 7 November 2019 (HCC 875)

The above was taken as read and adopted by the Board.

Marketing Advisory Committee

- b. To receive a verbal report of the Marketing Advisory Committee meeting held on Monday 11 February 2019

The Chair of the Committee reported on the above.

- c. To adopt the minutes of the Marketing Advisory Committee held on Monday 10 December 2018 (HCC 876)

The above was taken as read and adopted by the Board.

Research and Development and Knowledge Exchange Committee (R&D&KE)

- d. To adopt the minutes of the R&D&KE Committee teleconference meeting held on Wednesday 5 December 2018 (HCC 877)

The above was taken as read and adopted by the Board.

Communications Advisory Committee

- e. To adopt the minutes of the Communications Advisory Committee meeting held on Thursday 10 January 2019 (HCC 878)

The above was taken as read and adopted by the Board.

12. **Any other business**

Board Member Cath Smith highlighted that she had recently attended a meeting of the NFU Monmouthshire County where discussion took place regarding HCC's work in education and schools. It was reported that some stakeholders present were not aware or informed of HCC's work in this area. The Board was reminded that HCC was very active in this area of work and access to information was available on HCC's websites such as: -

<https://hccmpw.org.uk/en/about/what-we-do/education>

<https://hccmpw.org.uk/en/news-industry-info/download>

<https://hccmpw.org.uk/en/about/what-we-do/marketing>

Information was also available on HCC's social media platforms or via the Communications team if needed. It was agreed that it would be beneficial that this was communicated to the next NFU Monmouthshire County meeting. The ability to communicate HCC's activities was a key role for the Board to undertake.

Board Expenses

The Board was requested to complete their expenses and return to the Corporate Services Manager as soon as possible.

13. **Dates of forthcoming meetings: -**

Board update teleconference – Thursday 4 April 2019 at 2.00pm
HCC Board meeting – Thursday 2 May 2019 at 10.30am

Signed.....
Chairman of HCC