



**Minutes of an update meeting of the Directors of Hybu Cig Cymru (HCC)
held at 9am via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 6 June 2024**

- Present:** Cath Smith (Chair)
Gareth Davies, John T Davies, Jack Evershed, Hugh Hesketh-Evans,
Mike Humphreys, Prys Morgan, Emlyn Roberts, Caroline Sanger-Davies
- By Invitation:** Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs,
Huw Irranca-Davies MS, Welsh Government (WG)
Maria Richards, WG
- Executive
in attendance:** Heather Anstey-Myers (Interim CEO)
Julie Davies-Jones (Secretariat)
Anne Dunn (Communications & External Affairs Lead)
Rachael Madeley-Davies (Head of Sustainability & Future Policy)
Laura Pickup (Head of Strategic Marketing & Connections)

To welcome the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies MS

The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Secretary to the meeting and individual introductions followed from the Board.

The Cabinet Secretary acknowledged that Wales' food and drink sector enjoys an exceptional reputation. He stated the importance of working with stakeholders, such as HCC on a granular level to resolve the big themes such as SFS, TB and CoAP regulations. We have an environmental focus but also a social responsibility to ensure functioning supply chains and they sit in one basket. When it comes to the SFS, we must establish how we progress the farming /land management sector in a post-Brexit world and create something that is fit for the future. It must work not just for food production but also address soil, air and water quality among the other environmental issues. We need the farming sector on board before the scheme goes live so they have a chance to adapt their businesses. We know that Wales's big selling point is our green and pleasant land but we do need to deal with water pollution especially so that we can maintain that positive image for export markets and overall reputation. An independent chair will be announced soon to lead the review. Animal health remains a priority, it is integral to our Welsh Food production and reputation. TB is an ongoing issue, 2041 eradication target. On farm slaughter issue is being addressed.

A discussion was had on the challenges facing the red meat industry, the concerns regarding the throughput of livestock and the importance of maintaining a critical mass to sustain the industry and the processing sector in Wales. The important role of HCC was acknowledged.

The Chair on behalf of the Board and the Executive thanked the Cabinet Secretary for joining the meeting.

1. **Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were noted from Board Members Rhys Davies and Vicki Spencer - Francis, Gwyn Howells, CEO (who remained on sick leave) and Gareth Jones, Head of Finance and Corporate Governance.

It was noted that Board Member, Prys Morgan would need to depart the meeting at 10am in order to attend another engagement.

2. **Activities and Industry updates**

An update was given by the Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections on the following:

- Planning was in hand for the Welsh Lamb Campaign for 2024 / 2025 (agenda item 4 refers).
- Work continued with exporters / processors in terms of key account delivery and engagement on potential new markets. This work would be further enhanced following the appointment of Jason Craig as Market Development Lead with HCC.
- Trade Shows – Planning was in hand for HCC’s presence at the Summer Fancy Food Show, New York from 23 – 24 June 2024. The event, held annually, attracts thousands of people from buyers, brokers, distributors and industry professionals worldwide. Arrangements were underway for HCC to host two receptions for networking and business opportunities. Invitations would be issued to trade representatives including key buyers and retailers as well as the press to attend.
- HCC will be represented at the National Education Show to be held in Llandudno on the 14 June 2024. This gives opportunity to brief teachers and other representatives from the education sector on key health messages and the importance of red meat as part of a healthy balanced diet.

An update was given by the Head of Sustainability and Future Policy on the following:

- HCC’s presence at the RWAS Sustainable Grass and Muck event at the Aberystwyth University Farm, Trawsgoed on the 30 May 2024 had proven worthwhile with the opportunity to network with a number of stakeholders on the important role that livestock farmers play in managing grasslands and highlighting the work of the GrassCheckGB project. The Head of Sustainability and Future Policy joined a panel of experts as a keynote speaker at a seminar entitled “Sustainable Science Seminar” and the team handed out copies of the newly published Recommended Grass and Clover list handbook.
- The deadline for applications for the new HCC Meat Minds Programme was 5pm Friday 7 June 2024. A number of varied and credible applicants from across the sector had already been received and would be considered in due course.

3. **To receive an update on HCC's presence at the Royal Welsh Show 2024**

The paper uploaded on Sharepoint ahead of the meeting was taken as read and summarised by the Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections.

The Executive had given a lot of thought on what could work for HCC and the Levy payers under a restricted budget.

The Board were shown the stand visuals. The main difference to highlight was that there was no kitchen as this was the most expensive element of the stand.

The HCC breakfast would continue to be held on stand. The only difference was that the food would not be cooked on stand and would either be a cold breakfast catered by HCC or a hot breakfast provided by an outside caterer. Options were currently being explored.

The question was raised on whether there was any scope to use HCC trailer at the Show. This option could be explored again at some point going forward.

The stand would highlight to farmers what their Levy money pays for in form of a variation of info graphics. There would also be plenty of opportunity for Levy payers and to engage with the Board and Executive through interactive activity and possible on stand seminars. HCC would partner with WG in terms of trade development engagement / activity and consumer engagement work would be undertaken through wider key account activity on retail stands. It was also planned to run seminars with the farming unions, YFC Wales and the RWAS to position HCC as a thought leader and to also meet knowledge transfer objectives.

The Board felt that despite the significant change to HCC's presence this year, it was a step in the right direction given the budgetary constraints. The overall new approach was well received and although the stand was smaller, it was felt HCC's presence was wider and greater in different ways.

The Board would be updated further on HCC's activities throughout the duration of the Show at the 4 July 2024 Board meeting.

4. **To receive an update on planning for the 2024 / 2025 Welsh Lamb Campaign**

The Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections presented on the above. The presentation would be uploaded to Sharepoint for the Board's information.

Action: Secretariat

5. **Any other business**

HCC Vision 2025 – 2030

The Interim CEO highlighted that discussion amongst the SLT had commenced on the above and would be developed further over the coming weeks. In the meantime, the Board were requested to give thought and feedback to the SLT on views, strategic key areas for consideration and industry challenges which could input towards the development of the new Vision.

Resignation – Julie Davies-Jones, Personal Assistant

The Chair on behalf of the Board, thanked Julie for her dedication and contribution to HCC over the past twenty-four years in her role as Personal Assistant and in particular for the valued work undertaken in providing secretariat duties for the Board.

The Interim CEO on behalf of the staff congratulated Julie on her new appointment as Personal Assistant with the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Ltd and wished her well for the future.

6. **Date of upcoming meetings:**

Thursday 4 July 2024 – HCC Board formal meeting

Thursday 5 September 2024 – HCC Board Teams update.

Signed.....
Chair of HCC