



**Minutes of an update meeting of the Directors of Hybu Cig Cymru (HCC)
held at 9.30am via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 5 September 2024**

Present: Cath Smith (Chair)
John T Davies, Jack Evershed, Hugh Hesketh-Evans,
Mike Humphreys, Emlyn Roberts (part), Caroline Sanger-Davies, Vicki
Spencer-Francis

**Executive
in attendance:** Heather Anstey-Myers (Interim CEO)
Karen Davies (Secretariat)
Anne Dunn (Communications & External Affairs Lead)
Pip Gill (Campaigns Executive)
Gareth Jones (Head of Finance and Corporate Governance)
Rachael Madeley-Davies (Head of Sustainability & Future Policy)
Laura Pickup (Head of Strategic Marketing & Connections)

1. **Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were noted from Board Member, Gareth Davies.

It was noted Board Member, Emlyn Roberts would join the meeting shortly.

2. **Market and Industry update**

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

- Market Intelligence – prices are strong although supply is tight with concern and challenges for newer markets and ongoing availability issues. Will review later this month once the main season sales start. Forecast for beef is strong for the next 12 months, with supply being a concern in the long-term due to numbers on the ground. Need to closely monitor breeding females.
- Industry – although there are no confirmed Welsh cases of the bluetongue virus, there are a number of confirmed cases in Norfolk and Suffolk which are being monitored. Government surveillance plays a key role going into the winter months. Issue with processors taking animals from the east where restrictions apply. HCC have bluetongue stakeholder comms reactive plan in place and have previously shared more general comms. Press release was issued earlier in the year to urge farmers to remain vigilant without causing panic. Discussion took place and it was noted that HCC has a good relationship with the Chief Vets Office.

3. **Activities and Industry updates**

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

- Welsh Lamb Campaign for 2024 / 2025 is live, going well and tracking ahead of forecast.

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- Beef trade – work to be undertaken within export key accounts to deliver what is planned but all on track to achieve this as key accounts are well supported.
- UK Retail – meetings have taken place with all the retailers to inform them on HCC's strategy for lamb.
- Export Trade Shows – Planning was in hand for HCC's presence at SIAL, Paris from 19 - 23 October 2024. Possibility to engage with a processor whilst using HCC's stand and work more collaboratively with Welsh Government. It was noted that a Welsh major processor would not be attending the trade show.
- Corporate Comms – June and July had been challenging months due to negative press and the Comms team had done an incredible job. Articles issued had increased from 116 to 211 with more positive pieces, the reach having increased from 25 million to 123 million and this driven largely by the interview given by the Head of Sustainability and Future Policy to BBC Wales Nick Servini at the Royal Welsh Show which had been set up following much hard work by the Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections and the Communications and External Affairs Lead. The Chair and the Board thanked all and were grateful for all their hard work and positive outcome. Key messages were discussed and the Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections was to send an email to the Board outlining HCC's PR strategy for the business.

Action: Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections

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

- SFS – weekly meetings Officials Group, Roundtable Carbon Review Panel. Discussion was had regarding HCC's position in the ongoing policy discussions.
- LUNZ, resilient grassland project is slowly moving forward with agreements being drawn-up. It is still embargoed with details expected in November.
- Successful AFN scoping study application worth £50k for 'Breeding better beef and sheep to design breeding strategies to achieve net zero' more details to follow.

4. **To receive a presentation on HCC's PGI Welsh Beef Campaign 2024-25**

HCC's Campaign Executive delivered the above presentation. Slides to be shared with the Board. The Chair thanked the Campaign Executive for the exciting presentation.

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Discussion took place to include where to buy and KPI information before circulating presentation. The Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections assured all advertising is carried out in collaboration with the processors and retailers.

It was noted that Board member Emlyn Roberts exited the meeting.

5. **To receive a presentation on Royal Welsh Review and Feedback**

HCC's Communications and External Affairs Lead delivered a presentation – slides to be shared. The Board thanked HCC on how incredibly well they had adapted to a change in budget. Stakeholder feedback and engagement to occur at HCC Conference.

Following a year of change for HCC at the Royal Welsh, which had gone well, discussion took place on opportunities how to develop further to gain more value for money. The Head of Strategic Market and Connections together with the Communications and External Affairs Lead to pick this up October/November and build a session in and gather greater feedback from the 2024 show.

Action: Head of Strategic Market and Connections together / Communications and External Affairs Lead

6. **To receive a verbal update on arrangements for HCC's Conference 14 November 2024**

A verbal update was given by the Communications and External Affairs Lead. The topic for this year's conference would be succeeding in global and domestic markets - how being market-led will sustain the Welsh red meat industry's market-leading position and will take place at the RWAS Members Centre at 2pm.

The objective would be to both inform the audience about the global and domestic operating environment, as well as demonstrating how HCC is working in partnership with the supply chain to deliver appropriate initiatives and activity to respond to the opportunities and threats. In order to achieve this, HCC will be inviting a mix of external and contextual speakers and further include HCC in house expertise. PGI Welsh Lamb and PGI Welsh Beef have a well-deserved global reputation for excellence and are trusted by trade customers and consumers all over the world. To maintain this position, the Welsh red meat industry must work collectively to respond to market signals in order to ensure our world-leading red meat brands and products remain fit for purpose for the future. HCC's 2024 conference will explore global and domestic demand drivers, celebrate how HCC is working in partnership with the supply chain to meet those needs, and showcase best practice from within our industry.

Agenda and speakers to be confirmed.

Discussion took place.

7. **Finance Update**

The Head of Finance and Corporate Governance gave an update and ran through slides – a copy of which are available on SharePoint.

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A question was raised on how the discussion on cash reserve was progressing. It was noted that Maria Richards, Welsh Government advised that this was being pursued with the WG finance team. The Head of Finance and Corporate Governance to take this up with Maria Richards outside of the meeting. Assistance and support were offered from Board members if needed.

The Chair passed on thanks to the Head of Finance and Corporate Governance during challenging circumstances.

8. Any other business

The Chair thanked all for attending the meeting.

The Chair acknowledged this was the Head of Sustainability and Future Policy's last Board Update meeting ahead of her departure to her new role within AHDB. The Chair and the Board wished her well for the future.

The Head of Sustainability and Future Policy confirmed that the Cabinet Secretary had signed off the Operational Business plan.

9. Date of upcoming meetings:

Thursday 3 October 2024 – HCC Board formal meeting;
Wednesday 6 November 2024 – HCC Board Teams update.

Signed.....
Chair of HCC