



**Minutes of a meeting of the Directors of Hybu Cig Cymru (HCC) held at 10am at Tŷ Rheidol, Aberystwyth on Thursday 4 July 2024**

- Present:** Cath Smith (Chair)  
Gareth Wynn Davies, John T Davies, Jack Evershed, Hugh Hesketh-Evans, Mike Humphreys, Emlyn Roberts, Caroline Sanger-Davies, Vicki Spencer-Francis
- By Invitation:** Maria Richards, Welsh Government (WG)  
For update on Multi Species Wales - Carol Driver Head of Animal Policy Delivery (WG), Galvin Doyle, Multispecies Wales Lead (WG)
- Executive:** Heather Anstey-Myers, Interim CEO  
Gareth Jones, Head of Finance and Corporate Governance  
Rachael Madeley-Davies, Head of Sustainability & Future Policy  
Laura Pickup, Head of Strategic Marketing & Connections  
Jo Horder, Secretariat  
Elizabeth Swancott (item 6b)

**To receive a verbal update from Welsh Government on Multi Species Wales (MSW)**

The Chair welcomed Carol Driver and Galvin Doyle (Welsh Government), who provided the Board with an update on the Multi Species Wales project. It was felt that a discussion with key individuals about the data opportunities would be of benefit.

**Action: Head of Sustainability and Policy / Welsh Government**

It was also felt that a further update session for the Board would be helpful, with the opportunity to see a demo of the system and discuss in more detail some of the key points identified.

**Action: Chair / MSW team**

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

The Chair welcomed all to the Board meeting.

The Chair acknowledged thanks to Gwyn Howells following his resignation, for his many years of service to HCC and to the red meat industry.

The Chair also thanked Prys Morgan and Rhys Davies following their resignations from the Board, for their significant contributions during their time as Board members.

The Chair acknowledged that HCC is seeing a significant period of change and thanked the Executive Team and the staff for the work they have done and continue to do in HCC's name.

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It was reported that the Ministerial Roundtable meetings had started and had met in June. HCC will play a significant and important role in this.

HCC was also successful in a bid to be involved in the Carbon Sequestration Review. This panel has eight organisations represented and covers a vast and important workstream.

### 2. **Apologies for absence**

None.

### 3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no new individual declarations of interest declared.

### 4. **To approve the minutes of the Board meetings of:**

#### *a. The Board meeting held on Thursday 2 May 2024 (HCC 1202)*

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

#### *b. The Board Teams update held on Thursday 6 June 2024 (HCC 1203)*

Minutes of the meeting were approved as corrected.

### 5. **Matters arising from Items 4a and 4b above**

#### **Minutes of Thursday 2 May 2024**

##### *Item 3 - Outstanding Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest and Anti Bribery Letter*

The Head of Finance and Corporate Governance confirmed these had all been received.

##### *Item 6c – Vacancy management*

It was noted that this work is ongoing.

##### *Item 7b – Sustainable Innovation and Research Group minutes 27 February 2024*

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting had been formally approved.

##### *Item 9 – Multi Species Wales*

Covered on the agenda.

#### **Minutes of Thursday 6 June 2024**

##### *Item 4 – Welsh Lamb campaign*

It was noted that the campaign presentation had been uploaded to Sharepoint.

### 6. **HCC Reports**

#### *a. Delivery report (HCC 1204)*

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The above was taken as read with key HCC activities highlighted by the SLT.

It was noted that the results of the advocacy and defence campaign had been received and evaluated. These will be shared at the next Board meeting

### **Action: Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections**

It was noted that the Acronym list on SharePoint needs to be brought up to date.

### **Action: Secretariat**

#### *b. To receive an update on Meat Minds*

Market Intelligence, Research and Development Senior Officer presented the above.

The key points presented included:

- There were three elements to the 12-month programme, these were module sessions on different themes, mentors selected for each participant from a different area of the industry and a project which will be designed and delivered by the group.
- 10 group members had been selected from across Wales and across the industry. Ages range from 25 to 35. The standard of applicants had been very high with 34 being received.
- The Meat Minds Group will be launched at the RWAS when members will be announced.
- The next step will be to assign mentors and hold the first module session in September.

It was noted that the team will aim to keep in touch with unsuccessful applicants who will be invited to attend a Live to Dead session in the future, as well as other opportunities to keep them engaged.

It was also noted that the team will consider how to continue engaging with the group members at the end of the 12 months in order to build relationships for the future.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair commended what was an excellent initiative that had received a great deal of interest from a cross-section of young people within the industry.

#### *c. To receive a verbal update on HCC's presence at the Royal Welsh Show 22 – 25 July 2024*

The Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections updated the Board on the plans for HCC's presence at the Royal Welsh Show.

The schedule to date included:

- Monday – 8.00 a.m. HCC breakfast. This is invitation only. The Cabinet Secretary has confirmed attendance.
- Tuesday on stand – a.m. Weather Proof Farming session with the Nature Friendly Farming Network; p.m. Meat Minds launch

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- Tuesday off stand – cooking competition on the YFC stand being attended and judged by HCC’s Consumer Executive; steak competition on the Tesco stand being attended by Strategic Marketing and Connections staff to explain virtues of Welsh Beef and Welsh Lamb.
- Wednesday on stand – a.m. Aber Innovation project launch and overview.
- Thursday on stand – a.m. Scholarship reception.
- Thursday off stand – ‘Securing a farming future for the next generation’ seminar on the YFC stand.
- Other off stand events with dates to be confirmed include:
  - Consumer facing seminar activity on the FUW stand
  - Seminar with the Royal Welsh organisers and future generations
  - Consumer demonstrations on the Marks and Spencer stand.

The schedule will be shared with the Board when the details are finalised, along with lines to take. A pre-show press release will go out next week.

It was noted that there are a number of invites being received for HCC presence at various stands and events, so it was helpful to know Board members availability to assist.

### **Action: Board**

- d. To receive a verbal update on the planning for the Welsh Beef Campaign 2024 / 2025 – Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections

It was noted that the start-up meeting for the campaign had not yet been held so there was no update.

An update report will be uploaded to SharePoint before the Board’s Team update on 4 September and a verbal update provided at the meeting.

### **Action: Head of Strategic Marketing and Connections**

- e. Market Bulletin Summary (HCC 1194)

The above was taken as read.

It was noted that throughput of cattle at UK abattoirs was up by 2% in May. It was queried whether this was reflected in HCC levy income, in line with national trends.

This information can be shared when available.

### **Action: Head of Finance and Corporate Governance**

- f. Forthcoming events (HCC 1197)

The above was taken as read.

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### *g. Financial – Management Accounts to 31 March 2024 (HCC 1195)*

The above was taken as read and summarised by the Head of Finance and Corporate Governance.

Key matters for the Board to be aware of were highlighted:

- There had been an operating surplus of £100k, which is £15k ahead of budget out-turn;
- This is supported by an under-spend to date against expenditure (£125k), but some of this is committed to support a period 2 shortfall in sheep levy income of £102k;
- There had been a stark decrease in throughput, which was 24% down on the same period last year;
- Whilst high farmgate prices may encourage more to come forward, concerns remain that producers have retained fewer ewe lambs for breeding, which could have implications further down the line.

A discussion was had on the long-term challenges in relation to the downward trend in sheep throughput figures, what this may mean for the industry and future processing capacity within Wales, and the effect on the future funding of HCC.

It was felt that there was a need for a better understanding of how HCC can plan for different scenarios and what market changes may mean for the future shape and remit of HCC. This will be considered by the Executive.

#### **Action: CEO**

Maria Richards (Welsh Government) informed the Board that Welsh Government will be commissioning research of the wider industry, information from which should provide a better picture of future trends. This will be taking place in September/October with findings anticipated before the end of the year.

Further discussion was had with regards to raising the issues identified with the HCC sponsoring division, and starting discussions in relation to the governance and industry implications of a reduction in critical mass and future processing in Wales. It was felt this would need to be done in the near future.

This will be raised at the HCC / Welsh Government Governance meeting and Maria Richards (Welsh Government) informed of who to invite to a wider meeting to discuss the issues.

#### **Action: CEO**

## 7. HCC Committees

### Audit and Risk Committee

#### *a. To receive a verbal report and adopt the minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on Tuesday 11 June 2024 (HCC 1208)*

The above was taken as read and utilised as a report to the Board with no matters raised.

The minutes were adopted by the Board.

It was noted that there is a vacancy on the Committee following the resignation from the Board of Rhys Davies. This will be addressed at the Audit & Risk

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Committee meeting in October.

- b. To approve the Audit and Risk Terms of Reference and Letter of Appointment (HCC 1209)

The Committee Chair thanked the Head of Finance and Corporate Governance for preparing the papers.

It was noted that from time to time the Board membership or Committee structures can change and queried whether this element in relation to Audit and Risk could be reflected in the Terms of Reference.

### **Action: Head of Finance and Corporate Governance**

The Terms of Reference and the Letter of Appointment were approved by the Board.

### **Sustainable Innovation and Research Group**

- c. To approve the minutes of the Sustainable Innovation and Research Group held on Tuesday 27 February 2024 (HCC 1210)

It was noted that the minutes presented had been approved by the Group and were adopted by the Board on that basis.

- d. To receive a verbal report of the Sustainable Innovation and Research Group held on Thursday 16 May 2024

The Group Chair gave a verbal update on the meeting.

The key points were;

- Research and Development and Sustainability Executive), provided a HCC update which included GrassCheck GB, PhD studentships, the British Society of Animal Science Conference, Arfor Challenge and Aber Innovation funded projects, and the Meat Minds Group.
- A facilitated discussion took place to rank the 16 priorities discussed at the initial meeting in February 2024.
- The top three priorities were identified as;
  - 1) Grazing
  - 2) Animal Health and Welfare
  - 3) Soil health and nutrient management
- The key elements under each priority were also discussed. These identified a broad range of issues, and covered much of what was identified in the initial 16 priorities.
- It was proposed that a positioning paper be developed on why we need livestock in Wales. HCC will lead on a framework for the paper supported by input from the group.

A discussion was had on the running of the meeting and what was included on the agenda. It was acknowledged that the Group is in its infancy, but it was

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agreed that further consideration of the agenda content and opportunities to for participants to get more from the meetings would be helpful going forward.

**Action: Group Chair / Head of Sustainability and Future Policy**

The Chair thanked those involved for their work to build up the Group so far.

8. **Any other business**

*Appointment of new Board members*

The process for appointing new members was outlined. As these are Ministerial appointments, the process is led by Welsh Government, but takes a collaborative approach.

The Chair and interim Chief Executive will be meeting with Welsh Government during the following week to discuss the Board requirements and the process to be followed.

Maria Richards (Welsh Government) informed the Board that, with regards to timescales, the existing Board terms will end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, so they will be looking to align dates and carry out one appointment process. The Board is quorate with the current membership.

9. **Dates of forthcoming meetings**

Board Teams update - Thursday 5 September 2024 at 9.30am  
HCC Board meeting – Thursday 3 October 2024 at 10am

**HCC Board Closed Session**

A separate and confidential meeting of the Board followed.

Signed.....  
Chair of HCC