



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# Agricultural Advisory Panel meeting: 23 April 2024

Minutes of the meeting held at the Welsh Government  
Pavilion, Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd.

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# Present

Chair – Dr Nerys Llewelyn Jones

Independents – Janatha Stout

NFU Cymru – Simon Davies

Unite – Jo Galazka, Barrie Roberts

Legal Adviser – Helen Snow (Geldards)

Welsh Government – David Thomas, Dan Ricketts (Secretariat)

Observers: Darren Williams (FUW), Ivan Monckton (Unite)

Guest: Faith Ebhoaye (Public Appointments Unit Diversity & Inclusion Programme)

## Item 1 – housekeeping/apologies/conflict of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Barrie Roberts was now officially a member of the Panel representing Unite the Union replacing Ivan Monckton.

A new representative for the Farmers Union of Wales had not yet been appointed to replace Darren Williams but it was hoped someone would be in place for the next meeting (July 2024).

Arrangements had been put in place for the new representative members to be supported in their roles if this was required. Ivan and Darren would therefore be able to attend the next three meetings (up to and including September 2024) during the transition. Travel expenses could be paid but as they were no longer

members of the Panel the representative fees were unable to be paid.

The Chair also welcomed Faith Ebhoaye to the meeting who was taking part in the Public Appointments Diversity and Inclusion Programme. Funded by the Welsh Government the project has been developed with the aim of increasing representation on Public Boards and Committees. Nerys would be acting as a mentor to Faith until the end of August 2024 as part of her training to provide participants with the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to move towards obtaining a board position on a public body.

The public appointment of a new independent member for agriculture was also progressing. Interviews were taking place on 10 May so the new member should be available for the meeting on 2 July.

There were no apologies noted.

## Item 2 – chair’s update

The Chair had attended a further quarterly meeting for Chairs of Panel and Boards and was finding them useful.

The Welsh Government has asked the Law Commission to review the law relating to agriculture in Wales with the aim of outlining the form and content of a Code of agricultural law for Wales and recommending how the law may be simplified and modernised to improve its accessibility.

Further information on the project can be found here: <https://lawcom.gov.uk/project/agricultural-law-in-wales/>

The Panel agreed it would be good to invite someone from the project to hear evidence from the Panel.

ACTION POINT 1 – Dan Ricketts to contact the Law Commission Project Team reviewing Agricultural Law in Wales and invite them to a meeting to talk with the Panel.

There were a number of Conflict of Interest forms outstanding – the Chair asked for them to be completed as soon as possible.

Nearly all Panel members reviews had been undertaken.

There had been 15 responses to the sub-committee’s Call for Evidence on the delivery of careers education, skills, training and development for agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers in Wales. These would be analysed by the members of the sub-committee who would then report back to the main Panel.

Farming Connect had published an article on the Agricultural Wages Order 2024 – <https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/news-and-events/news/agricultural-minimum-wage-changes-wales-1st-april-2024>. This article would also appear in the next online edition of Gwlad to be published on 25 April.

The Farmers Guardian had also contacted the Chair with regards to an article they were interested in writing about flexible working and job sharing within the agricultural industry.

## **Item 3 – minutes and action points of AAP 47**

The minutes were approved by all Panel members without amendment.

Outstanding action points which were not on the agenda for the meeting were discussed.

Nerys Llewelyn Jones to draft a letter outlining the Panel’s concerns around the Sustainable Farming Scheme.

The Chair stated she would be writing to the new Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to introduce herself and the Panel and outline the work that had been undertaken and would be undertaken over the next 12 months.

She would include in this letter the panel's concerns regarding the Sustainable Farming Scheme as discussed in the last meeting.

The Chair would also invite the Cabinet Secretary to attend the next meeting in July.

**ACTION POINT 2** – Nerys Llewelyn Jones to write to the Cabinet Secretary to outline the work of the Panel, the concerns over the Sustainable Farming Scheme and to invite him to the next meeting in July.

Secretariat to liaise with Dave Ashford with regards to attending the July meeting of the Panel.

A provisional slot will be booked for the July meeting regarding any updates to the Sustainable Farming Scheme

Dan Ricketts to contact Low Pay Commission to invite them to a future meeting.

The Low Pay Commission will be contacted to invite them to the next Panel meeting in July.

Ryan Davies to contact the Welsh Government Housing Policy Team to invite them to a future meeting to discuss the different types of agricultural lettings.

Ideally, the Panel stated they required a summary of the different types of agricultural lettings and whether any of these can be classed as a "tied housing" contract. This could then be used in the guidance section on the Accommodation Offset to help clarify for employers.

## Item 4 – The Agricultural Wages Order 2024

Dan Ricketts gave an overview on the progress regarding the 2024 Order.

The Order was laid at the Senedd on 19 March and came into force on 1 April 2024.

The guidance document and the separate guidance on Flexible Working and Job Sharing Document were published on the AAP pages of the Welsh Government website on 3 April. Some hard copies of the main guidance are available if they are required.

The report from the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee has been received. The majority of points raised were formatting or translation issues and there was nothing major to worry about. Welsh Government were in the process of responding and would keep the Panel informed of progress.

## Item 5 – Agricultural Wages Order 2025

Information regarding the Carer's Leave Regulations 2024 were distributed to the Panel before the meeting. Helen Snow gave an overview of the regulations. It was also stated that the Panel would only be required to consider the regulations within the context of the Order if they wished to enhance the UK provisions as they had previously regarding Agricultural Sick Pay, Bereavement Leave etc.

**ACTION POINT 3** – The Panel to discuss the Carer's Leave Regulations during the next meeting in July.

An updated version of the paper regarding overtime provisions within the

Agricultural Wages Order had been distributed to Panel members prior to the meeting. The Panel thanked Helen Snow for including examples within the paper, but the overall view was that the provisions were quite complicated to understand. It was agreed that Panel members would discuss the topic with their organisations and come to the next meeting with proposals on how to make the provisions simpler and more user-friendly. It was noted that changing the provisions on overtime would have an impact on agricultural workers and this would be subject to significant scrutiny with regards to the rationale used to make the changes and the consideration given on the impact to workers as a result.

**ACTION POINT 4** – Panel members to discuss the overtime provisions within the Agricultural Wages Order with their respective organisations and draft proposals for simplifying the proposals (if appropriate) for discussion at the next Panel meeting.

As discussed in the last meeting, information regarding the Sustainable Land Management principles which were introduced in the Agriculture Act from October 2023 had been distributed to Panel members prior to the meeting.

The Panel need to consider the SLM duty when looking at future Orders and demonstrate how their recommended policy best contributes to the principles. If it is deemed the Order does not meet the SLM Objectives it may be rejected by Welsh Ministers.

The Order needs to be looked at as a whole, however it was suggested that when looking at the 2025 Order a thorough examination of each article is undertaken.



## Item 6 – any other business

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and their contributions and closed this section of the meeting.

The meeting then went into private session to undertake an internal Panel Effectiveness Review.

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