WALES ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE FRAMEWORK GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting held in Cathays Park, Cardiff on 3rd June 2015

Present:
Peredur Hughes Chair
Christianne Glossop Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales
Joanna Price
Huw Davies
Ifan Lloyd
David Davies
Moss Jones

Welsh Government
Chris Hale Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Carol Harris Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)
Janet Perry Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO)

Agenda Item 1: Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the fifth meeting of the Group. He explained that the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food would be joining the meeting for the BVD agenda item and Michael Seals, Chair of Animal Health and Welfare Board England would be joining after.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes and Action Points from 3rd June Meeting

2. The final minutes and updated action points from the last meeting were emailed to Group Members in May as part of the papers for this meeting. The majority of the actions have been completed. Some actions remain on-going whilst others have been tabled for discussion at this meeting.

3. Huw confirmed he would send the FAWC minutes to the Secretariat for circulation

Action Point 1 – Huw to send the FAWC minutes to the Secretariat for circulation

Agenda Item 3: Update from Chair

Meeting Between Chair of AHWF Group and Deputy Minister for farming and Food

4. Peredur provided feedback from his meeting with the Deputy Minister for Farming and Food on 6th May. He explained that this had been a very positive meeting. Key items discussed included BVD, Sheep Scab, and the proposed
review of Electronic Shock Collars legislation. Ifan explained that the BVA were also considering the issue of electronic shock collars and boundary fences. He explained that BVA were also looking to review the issues. Christianne stated the policy intent for the legislation remained valid but that it was important for the review of the evidence base to take place and that the result of this review would be considered once available.

Review and lessons learnt from first year of Framework Group

5. The Group agreed that their role has developed over the last year with members now facilitating and influencing work priorities. Members agreed that it was important to work closely outside of the formal meeting structure and going forward would hold ad hoc meetings as required.

Key Priorities

6. The Group confirmed that the following elements would form part of the Wales Animal health and Welfare Framework Implementation Plan.
   - Biosecurity/Health Planning – this is a fundamental priority and changing mindsets will be a crucial part of this work.
   - Responsible use of veterinary medicines
   - BVD
   - Sheep Scab
   - Engagement with welfare sector (equine and companion animals)

Planning for Royal Welsh Show

7. The Group agreed that they would be at the Welsh Government stand and would prepare a rota to ensure that at least 2 members were there at appropriate times of the day. Christianne explained that there are plans in development for seminars covering bTB, biosecurity and launch for the bTB dashboard.

Action Point 2 – Secretariat to pull together Royal Welsh Show rota.

Four Chairs Meeting

8. Peredur explained that he would be attending the next Four Chairs meeting on the 24th June which is being hosted by DEFRA. He also explained that the next CHAWG meeting was taking place on 30th June. It was agreed that if no member of the Group could make this meeting then a Welsh Government official would attend instead.

Action Point 3 – Secretariat to confirm who will attend CHAWG

Agenda Item 4: BVD Sub Group - update/discussion on proposals to eradicate BVD in Wales
9. Peredur welcomed Rebecca Evans, Deputy Minister for Farming and Food to the meeting for the discussion on development of the BVD Eradication Scheme for Wales.

10. Peredur explained that a lot of progress was being made in developing the scheme, in particular the Expression of Interest for Rural Development Plan for Wales funding. Peredur invited Ifan to provide an update.

11. Ifan provided an outline of the Expression of Interest and short overview of how the scheme would work. The key issues that needed to be resolved include the establishing a database and also where samples will be sent for testing. Chris provided feedback from the meeting between the Rural Development Plan team and the Chair of the BVD sub group. It was agreed that the final draft of the Expression of Interest will come to the Framework Group to be signed off prior to submission to Welsh Government.

12. The Deputy Minister thanked the Group and said that progress was encouraging. She said that it was important to set out the economic benefits of having the eradication scheme.

13. Peredur thanked the Deputy Minister for coming to the meeting and that she would be kept informed of progress.

**Agenda Item 5: Update on Agriculture Strategy**

14. Peredur invited Chris Hale to provide an update on the development of the Agriculture Strategy. Chris explained that the strategy was now being called the Strategic Framework for Agriculture. He explained that there had been workshops with industry representation to develop the consultation proposals. The approach is focussed on setting common goals and working in partnership to achieve these. The Group agreed that it was encouraging that the approach being adopted mirrors that taken in developing the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework. The Group agreed that it was vital that animal health and welfare was a key part of the agriculture framework and would invite Andrew Slade to the next meeting of the Group in September.

**Action Point 4 – Secretariat to invite Andrew Slade to next meeting of the Group to discuss the Agriculture Framework.**

**Agenda Item 6: Sheep Scab**

15. Peredur invited Ifan and Moss to provide an update on the work to consider sheep scab and the action from the last meeting for the Group to consider options for commissioning a study to establish the prevalence of sheep scab in Wales. Ifan explained that this work was progressing and presented a draft questionnaire to the Group for comment. The Group discussed how to target and promote the questionnaire. It was agreed that members provide Ifan with any comments on the questionnaire. Secretariat will speak to statistician
colleagues for advice on mailing out the survey. It was also agreed that Ifan and Moss would prepare a business case to help fund the survey work.

**Action Point 5 – Members to provide Ifan with comments on the draft survey questions**

**Action Point 6 – Secretariat to speak with Welsh Government statisticians for advice on mailing out the survey.**

**Action Point 7 – Ifan and Moss to prepare business case seeking financial support for the survey.**

**Agenda Item 7: Communications (30 mins)**

**Awareness raising including biosecurity**

16. Peredur invited Carol to provide an update on the work to raise awareness of biosecurity. Carol explained that a lot of work was underway. She explained that the first stage had been to undertake an exercise to see what information is already available. Second a survey is being developed to look at people’s understanding of biosecurity. The survey will start at the Royal Welsh Show and run throughout the summer. The survey will be predominantly on-line with hard copies available on request. It is envisaged that the results of the survey will be used to “sign post” and inform next steps of the campaign.

**Publication of the Implementation Plan**

17. Peredur invited Carol to provide an update on the development of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Implementation Plan for 2015-16. Carol explained that she had met with Christianne to go through the final draft and that this would now be sent to members for final comment. She explained that the aim, pending Ministerial agreement, is to publish the plan before summer recess and in time for the Royal Welsh Show.

**Action point 8 – Secretariat to circulate draft implementation plan for final comment.**

**Agenda Item 8: Ian Scott, Animal Health Distributors Association (AHDA)**

18. Peredur welcomed Ian Scott from The Animal Health Distributors Association. AHDA to the meeting. Ian provided an update on the work of AHDA and roles and responsibilities of the Suitably Qualified Person (SQP).

**Agenda Item 9: Role of Framework Group in a disease emergency**

19. Peredur welcomed Tony Joss, Head of Exotics and Contingency Planning.
Tony referred to the circumstances in respect of animal notifiable disease which would trigger the contingency plan and the arrangements for involving industry stakeholders. The Group agreed that their role in an exotic disease emergency would be to be kept informed of position and provide advice as required. It was also agreed that the Group would have the opportunity to comment on the draft Wales Contingency Plans as part of the annual review. It was also agreed that Tony would brief Ministers as to how the Group would operate in a disease emergency, in light of the discussions today. This would give them the opportunity to identify any other function they might have in mind.

**Action Point 9 – Tony to seek comment from the Group as part of the annual review of Welsh Contingency Plan.**

**Action Point 10 – Tony to brief Ministers about how the Group would operate in disease emergency.**

**Agenda Item 10. Engagement with the welfare sector**

20. Peredur explained that welcomed Alun Streeter engagement with the Welfare Sector is a key priority for 2015/16. He explained that following the last meeting, he and Christianne had written a joint letter to the Chair of the Animal Welfare Network Wales (AWNW) outlining initial steps for a way forward. Feedback has been provided following the AWNW meeting on 29th May. It was agreed that further thinking was needed about the approach to ensure that all those with an interest are included. It was agreed that Ifan and Jo would take this work forward.

**Action Point 11 – Jo and Ifan to progress work on engagement with the equine and companion animal welfare sector.**

**Agenda Item 11: Michael Seals, Chair of Animal health and Welfare Board England**

21. Peredur welcomed Michael Seals, chair of Animal health and Welfare Board England. Michael provided an update on the role and work of AHWBE. The Group agreed that it was useful to have updates on what is happening in England due to the cross cutting nature of animal health and welfare issues. Peredur said that the four Chairs forum was a useful forum for discussions with colleagues from across UK. Peredur explained that both he and Michael had been involved in the recruitment for the Surveillance Governance Board. The Group welcomed the fact that there was representation from Wales on this new board.

**Agenda Item 12: Any Other Business**

22. Moss asked whether the detail on resolved welfare prosecutions was published.
Action Point 12 – Secretariat to find out if details of welfare prosecutions are published.

23. Ifan raised the issue of salmonella agona. He explained that through research it was evident that badgers were considered a reservoir host for this disease. He explained that it would be useful to consider the prevalence of this disease in cattle and badgers. Christianne suggested that the badger Found Dead Survey could be an option for taking forward this work. She suggested raising this with Gavin Watkins.

Action Point 13 – Secretariat to email query on salmonella agona to Gavin Watkins.

24. Christianne suggested that the Group be updated on the latest position on the bTB Eradication Programme at the next meeting in September. She explained that there were a number of developments being taken forward, including the forthcoming launch of the TB Dashboard.

Action Point 14 – Secretariat to add bTB Eradication programme onto the agenda for the next meeting in September.

25. The next meeting of the Group is on Thursday 17th September 2015 in Cathays Park. Future meetings are booked for Wednesday 2nd December and Thursday 3rd March 2016.