

Summary of the Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Panel (AAP) Meeting 17 – 2 September 2019

Hafod y Hendre, Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd, Builth Wells

Attendance

Lionel Walford – Chair	Peter Rees – Independent
Steve Hughson – Independent	Darren Williams – FUW
Ivan Monckton – Unite	Daryl Williams – Unite
Will Prichard – NFU Cymru	Dylan Morgan – NFU Cymru
Lucy Ralph – NFU Cymru	Helen Snow – Geldards

Welsh Government:

Ryan Davies – Panel Manager
Spencer Conlon - Agricultural Strategic Framework Project Leader
Dan Ricketts – Secretariat

Apologies

Nick Fenwick – FUW	Bridget Henderson – Unite
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Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting including Daryl Williams from Unite who was returning to the Panel and replacing Neil Beveridge.

Agenda Item 2 – Chair’s Update

There was nothing to report.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting and Action Points

The minutes of the previous Panel’s meeting were discussed and approved. Several Action Points from the previous meeting were on the agenda for this meeting.

An update was given on publicising the consultation document in Agri Trader magazine. Due to publishing dates an advert in the magazine would not be viable. Lionel said that, as Chair, he would write a letter to the “Dear Editor” sections of the Farmers Guardian and the Farmers Weekly. This was agreed by the Panel.

Agenda Item 4 – Suggested Changes to the 2019 Order for Incorporation into the 2020 Order (Legal Advice)

As per Action Points from the previous meeting (AAP 16) Helen reported back to the Panel with regards to the new wording of the following articles of the Order:

- Article 15 – Accommodation Offset Allowance
- Article 21 – Entitlement to Agricultural Sick pay
- Articles 31 and 34 – Calculating Holiday Entitlement

The amended articles were all approved by the Panel.

Helen also stated she had looked at Article 16 regarding On-Call Allowance and Night Work Allowance after recent Court of Appeal decisions and the Order is currently compatible so no changes are required. It was agreed the guidance would be changed for 2020 to ensure greater clarity.

Agenda Items 5 and 6 – Presentation of Employer (Farming Unions) and Employee (Unite) Papers

Both parties presented their papers in terms of their positions with regards to any rise in Agricultural Wages from 1st April 2020. It was agreed both were excellent submissions and would now be discussed further.

Agenda Item 7 – Discussion of Draft 2020 Order

The rates for 2020 were discussed. After three rounds of negotiations between the employers (NFU / FUW) and the employees (Unite) a vote was taken as the employers had submitted a full and final offer.

Proposal 1: To approve the NFU / FUW offer of a 1.8% increase
For – 4 Against – 2

Proposal 2: To approve the Unite proposal of a 2.9% increase
For – 2 Against – 4

During negotiations Unite moved the following formal motion:

“The Panel recognises the extract of the report of the Fair Work Commission previously circulated in AAP 16 Documents 6 and 7 and commits to investigating the feasibility [of paying the Real Living Wage within three years] as recommended as a matter of priority”

It was unanimously agreed by the Panel this should be on the agenda for AAP 19 in November as the situation with Brexit will hopefully be clearer by then.

Agenda Item 8 – Progress on Modernisation

The panel looked at the Revised Modernisation Paper – mainly around how an Agricultural Worker can progress to a Senior Agricultural Worker. It was agreed that both sides would redraft the paper and it would be discussed again at the next meeting.

It was also agreed that at the next meeting the timelines for the 2020 and 2021 Orders would be discussed (these had not been updated due to leave commitments) and also the removal of age references in pay bandings.

Agenda Item 9 – Any Other Business

Darren recently met with Kirsty Williams who would be happy to attend a meeting of the sub-committee on Skills Development and Training in her role as Education Minister. She would attend to listen and work with the sub-committee. However, it was felt that as the main agenda item at the next meeting of the sub-committee was regarding the “Sustainable Farming and Our Land” consultation from the Welsh Government it would not be appropriate for a Government Minister to attend.

LANTRA will be holding an awards ceremony in October 2019 to recognise the commitment of individuals and businesses in terms of development and training across the agricultural sector.

The chair then closed the meeting.