



Title of Meeting: Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) Sub-Group on Agricultural Pollution

Date of Meeting: 10th April 2019

Venue: Welsh Government
Offices
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
SY23 3UR

Present: Zoe Henderson (NRW Board member & Chairperson)
Bob Vaughan (Sustainable Land Farming & Forest Manager, NRW)
Dennis Matheson (Tenant Farmers Association)
Sara Jenkins (Menter a Busnes)
Stephen Bradley (DCWW)
Creighton Harvey (Carmarthenshire Fishermen's Federation)
Bernard Griffiths (FUW)
Rachel Lewis-Davies (NFU Cymru)
Lorna Davis (NFU Cymru)
Stephen Marsh-Smith (Wales Environment Link)
Brian Pawson (NRW)
Helen Haider (NRW)
Marc Williams (NRW)
Matt Lowe (NRW)
Sarah Hetherington (NRW)
Geraint Weber (NRW)
Kate Snow (United Utilities)
Rhianne Jones (CLA)
Jamie McCoy (AHDB)
Kirsten Hughes (HCC)

Apologies: Andrew Chambers (WG)
Betsan John (WG)
James Dowling (WG)
Spencer Conlon (WG)
Meinir Wigley (NRW)
Luke Davies (WG)

Rob McCall (NRW)
Liz Franks (Hafren Dyfrydwy)

Also in attendance: Kevin Taylor (WG) for item 5 only
Simon Evans (Chief Executive of the Wye & Usk Foundation) from item 11 onwards

No: Item

2. Welcome and Apologies

Zoe Henderson welcomed everyone to the meeting and highlighted how committed the members were to the work of preventing agricultural pollution. Kate Snow, Water Catchment Manager from United Utilities was welcomed as a new member of the WLMF Sub-Group. Zoe wished Brian Pawson well on his retirement at the end of April.

3. Agricultural Regulation Update

No representatives from Welsh Government (WG) were available to attend the meeting so an update on the new agricultural regulations was provided by Brian Pawson, who chaired the last WLMF Task & Finish Group on Regulation meeting on 21st March. The notes from the Task and Finish Group meeting are still in draft and once WG colleagues have reviewed them they will be circulated to the sub group members.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) is being undertaken by ADAS and the Minister Lesley Griffiths will consider any additional evidence submitted to her alongside the RIA. It was agreed at the Task and Finish Group meeting that the additional evidence would be submitted by individual member organisations independently rather than collated via the WLMF Sub-Group and should be submitted to WG directly. WLMF Sub-Group members can then decide whether to share their evidence with the rest of the sub-group. No deadline has yet been provided by WG for members to submit their evidence.

Discussion took place at the Task & Finish Group meeting as to what procedure and level of scrutiny the new regulations would be subject to when they are laid before the Assembly.

The difficulties of discussing the new regulations and any new schemes under Brexit and Our Land (BAOL) in isolation were highlighted. It was agreed that a member of the BAOL team should be invited to attend the next Task & Finish Group meeting so that the new regulations and new land management scheme can be considered together.

Other items discussed in the meeting included a letter sent by Dennis

Matheson, TFA to the Minister Lesley Griffiths raising concerns about the new regulations and their potential impact upon tenant farmers. There were a number of queries raised within Dennis' letter that required clarification during the meeting regarding the regulatory requirements.

WG presented a comparison table of the regulatory framework for water within England, Scotland and Wales. As Northern Ireland have a whole territory NVZ approach, the benefit of including their requirements within the table was raised. The need to link the new agricultural regulatory requirements to other rules such as air quality and cross compliance was highlighted to ensure an aligned approach is taken. Only half of the agenda for the Task & Finish Group was covered at the meeting on the 21st March and it was agreed that further meeting dates would be set asap.

The Task and Finish group members highlighted the benefit of ADAS attending a future meeting to present on their work regarding the RIA. Members wanted the opportunity to influence the RIA but it's possible that ADAS will only make presentation after the RIA has been completed. NFUC raised that they were disappointed at not being given the opportunity to see the RIA specification to establish whether the methodology was acceptable. Also, that fundamentally work needs to be undertaken to identify the gaps with the current legislation and determine what has/has not worked as recommended within the Interim Report on Agricultural Pollution. As a way of starting to highlight these gaps it was suggested that the NVZ comparison table shown could be used, however some members fundamentally disagree that a whole territory NVZ will deliver the desired outcomes. NFUC raised that they were committed to help deliver all the recommendations within the Interim Report not specific ones. The need to keep working on all the actions within the Interim Report was highlighted.

CLA raised that there is potential misalignment between the new agricultural regulations and the future land management scheme. There is a meeting taking place within WG soon regarding the regulatory baseline and it was raised that concerns regarding the interaction between the new regulations and the future schemes needs to be highlighted with them. Discussions have already taken place within WG at a policy level regarding the need for a joined-up approach to the new regulations and the future schemes, however it was felt that more senior level staff need to be targeted to relay members concerns. It was agreed that a one-page summary be drafted with the key messages and concerns of the members detailed.

United Utilities (UU) raised that farm visits they had undertaken in December indicated that many farmers could not comply with the current legislation so it was unclear as to the reasoning behind the introduction

of new regulations without making significant grants available to fund improvements.

It was raised that there is a new integrated assessment framework in WG, but it is unclear as to whether this has been used for the RIA. There was an action taken at the Task and Finish Group meeting in relation providing further clarity of the RIA framework which will be provided to members.

Discussion took place regarding the new regulatory requirements and whether changes could be made for example by adding further exemptions. NRW highlighted that the Minister would be presented with the RIA and additional evidence and that the hope was that this would influence the nature of the new regulations and some of the measures within them. The FUW raised that measures should be targeted to those areas that require it. United Utilities stated that farmers need sufficient funding to comply with the regulations and to become more economically resilient. WEL raised that there may be unintended consequences of introducing new regulations such as changes in farming practises (e.g. a change to potato farming) that could cause impacts on salmon via soil run off. Rhianne Jones, CLA highlighted that the certain river catchments which are unpolluted don't need additional regulation. NFUC raised concerns regarding the paperwork burden being too much for many farmers and that they'll have to pay for a consultant to undertake this work. With 58% of farmers in England being in an NVZ and 16% of Cross Compliance penalties given for inadequate NVZ records, the pressure on farmers, including their mental health, was raised.

Dennis Matheson pointed out that there should be exemptions in place for tenant farmers who cannot gain landlords permission to upgrade fixed equipment, however they should not pollute and those found polluting should result in enforcement being undertaken.

AP1: Finalise minutes from the last Task & Finish Group on Regulation & establish dates for the next couple of meetings (Andrew Chambers, WG & Marc Williams/Helen Haider, NRW)

AP2: Prepare document for senior WG staff detailing WLMF sub-group concerns regarding the new agri regulations and their interaction with future land management schemes & share with rest of the sub-group (Bob Vaughan/Zoe Henderson, NRW)

AP3: Liaise with senior WG staff to highlight WLMF sub-group concerns regarding new agri regulations and their interaction with future land management schemes (Bob Vaughan/Zoe Henderson, NRW)

AP4: Provide further clarification for Sub Group members regarding the assessment method used during the RIA on the new regulations (Andrew Chambers, WG)

AP5: Circulate summary of outcomes from farm visits carried by United Utilities (Kate Snow, United Utilities)

4. Farming Connect Agri-Pollution Delivery Programme

The Farming Connect (FC) one-to-one clinics are being promoted and the flyer has been sent out to 10,000 businesses. The grassland and infrastructure clinics are continuing into the late Spring and are proving to be very popular. Farmers are being offered five free soil samples. The infrastructure clinics are the most popular, providing advice for the Sustainable Production Grant (SPG) round.

Farming Connect are looking for 18 new demonstration and focus farms across Wales which will look at specific projects including nutrient management and water quality. These farms need to have good geographical coverage and include different sectors e.g. dairy, red meat, poultry/pig and horticulture. Sara Jenkins asked for nominations to be made by members via the Farming Connect website by the 15th April. Demonstration farm projects operate for 3 years with focus farms renewed every year. Demonstration farms are checked for compliance although in order to see the changes over time on farm, there may be issues at the beginning that are addressed as part of the project.

Work is ongoing to enable farmers to submit applications for support under the SPG. United Utilities raised that they had not been able to secure an advisor for farmers and fund the remaining 20% of advice work for farmers (currently one to one advice work is 80% funded via Farming Connect with the farmer picking up the remaining 20%).

Geraint Weber has drafted a programme of targeted catchments to be delivered in 2019-2020, with 36 new catchments being identified along with follow up actions from the first targeted programme. Over the next month Geraint Weber will work with Sara Jenkins to develop the programme. It was raised that 36 separate events cannot be delivered but that events can be amalgamated to cover a number of catchments. There is a need to find out the number of farms within these catchments to determine the number of events. This programme has improved working together on the ground and farmers are getting a better service of advice.

Sara Jenkins circulated a document to the Sub-Group prior to the meeting on "Survey responses to Farming Connect Knowledge Transfer events on Reduction Agricultural Pollution". Zoe highlighted that this a great document with valuable information.

Due to data protection concerns Sara Jenkins is unable to circulate

copies of Nutrient Management Plans and Infrastructure Reports but suggested that an advisor who creates these reports provide a talk at a future meeting. There was a discussion around creating training for contractors and modules covering different aspects rather than a basic course. Discussions should take place with Kevin Thomas (LANTRA) to cover what contractor training they could deliver and what contractors are accredited for. It was suggested that this training should be trialled with farmers from different sectors and contractors first to provide feedback.

AP6: Nominate farms for potential FC demonstration sites by 15th April and respond via the FC website:

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/farming-connect-recruiting-new-demonstration-sites-now> (All)

AP7: Discuss availability of Farming Connect facilitators for the Sustainable Management Scheme (Kate Snow, United Utilities/Sara Jenkins, Menter a Busnes)

AP8: Circulate draft list of second tranche catchments to Sub-Group members (Geraint Weber, NRW)

AP9: Invite Kevin Thomas (LANTRA) & a contractor to attend the next WLMF Sub-Group meeting (Marc Williams/Helen Haider, NRW)

AP10: Explore the possibility of a Farming Connect advisor attending a future WLMF Sub-Group meeting (Sara Jenkins, Menter a Busnes)

5. Capital Items not covered under SPG

Kevin Taylor (WG) joined the meeting to discuss the list of items that are not included under the current SPG scheme. A paper was circulated to members prior to the meeting which included a review of funded capital items in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland compared to those in Wales. It was highlighted that some of the items listed on the SPG capital items list shown are covered under the Farm Business Grant (FBG) and Glastir Small Grants Scheme.

It was queried as to whether additional capital items would be considered by WG to which it was established that it was possible. Kevin mentioned that it is possible to create a list of additional items but there are some difficulties regarding the costings. It was suggested that the existing list of capital items not funded under the SPG presented to the group is reviewed and prioritised by members prior to forwarding to Kevin Taylor. It was agreed that the criteria for assessing capital items for the SPG would be shared with the sub group members.

There were many capital items listed that are available in England under a grant scheme that could be of benefit to and improve water quality in

Wales. It was highlighted that it is not always the best option to install a new structure and that upgrading existing infrastructure may be beneficial. It was agreed that WG would clarify whether upgrades to existing infrastructure could be funded under the SPG. WG confirmed that there is some flexibility within the scheme to fund additional items for example if they are integral to items on the SPG capital items list.

NFUC raised that farmers in the Newport area are not able to access funding easily and it's difficult for them to fund improvements. They're in a high-risk area but in order to increase productivity and resilience they struggle to access grants and must self-fund 60% of the cost to e.g. install new infrastructure. The thinking behind the SPG was that by accessing it, farmers could become more resilient and profitable. In addition to reviewing the list of capital items not funded under the SPG, it was agreed that the prioritised items that the sub group would like to add should be accompanied by an impact statement. The TFA added that as the grant cannot be used to upgrade exempt pre-1991 structures, the ability for a tenant to gain landlords permission to gain compliance could be compromised.

UU highlighted that they have been unable to fund farmers wishing to undertake improvements under the SPG in Wales (currently the SPG grant is 40% with farmers required to fund the remaining 60% themselves). UU wish to match fund farmers applying for grants. WG agreed to check with the Financial Appraisal Officer as to whether it'd be possible for UU to fund the remaining non-grant element.

AP11: Review existing list of capital items not currently covered by SPG and circulate to sub group members (Helen Haider, NRW)

AP12: Identify with sub group members the priorities within existing list of capital items not currently covered by SPG. Prepare narrative to accompany the priority list and send to Kevin Taylor in WG (Helen Haider, NRW)

AP13: WG to clarify whether upgrades to existing infrastructure can be funded under SPG (Kevin Taylor, WG)

AP14: Explore the possibility of United Utilities match funding WG grants to farmers (Kate Snow UU, Kevin Taylor WG & Bob Vaughan NRW)

AP15: Share details of criteria for assessing capital items under SPG with WLMF sub group (Kevin Taylor, WG)

6. Discussion on the Root Cause Analysis Report

Zoe Henderson explained that the root cause analysis work was undertaken to help the group understand the causes of agricultural pollution and asked members to consider what can be utilised within the

RCA report to help the sub groups work. Ian Roderick of the Schumacher Institute has received feedback from members regarding the report and during the RCA process sought help from the group. Geraint Weber explained that the Schumacher Institute was commissioned to look at the root causes of agricultural pollution and they have produced a comprehensive document, Ian Roderick has taken on board a lot of feedback from members and has addressed some of the inaccuracies and language used within the report.

Ian Roderick was clear about the objectives of the report and what could be delivered with the money and time available and a broad approach to systems analysis was taken. Discussion took place around whether the RCA work can be expanded out to consider the longer-term outcomes and sustainability of the farming sector in Wales. The TFA highlighted the benefits of someone with an outside perspective who is not involved in agriculture undertaking this type of work. NRW raised that the RCA report had confirmed the approach taken by the WLMF Sub-Group as beneficial and hadn't highlighted any significant gaps. Some of the tools utilised in the report could be used for other data being gathered, e.g. in relation to the Dairy Project.

The FUW stated that they were content to discuss the RCA report but did not wish for the report to be published due to the inaccuracies and flawed assumptions made within it. WEL stated that the RCA report should be published. CLA highlighted that a re-write of the RCA report would be more appropriate to show more of the background to the work, who Ian Roderick spoke to etc. The CFF highlighted that the group needs to look elsewhere to find out what else is being undertaken to reduce agricultural pollution and learn from others experience so that we can adapt our approach in Wales.

Discussion took place as to how the RCA Report could benefit others outside of the Sub-Group and whether changing the context of the report would make it more relevant to those outside of the group. AHDB raised concerns that publishing the report could create barriers to progress on farms. It was raised that the Sub-Group have been discussing the causes of agricultural pollution for 2 years and everyone acknowledges that there is a problem, so the group must look forward to fixing these issues.

Zoe Henderson summarised the discussions and it was agreed by the members that the report would not be published in its current format at this time.

AP16: Finalise the RCA report (Geraint Weber, NRW)

AP17: Identify learning opportunities from the RCA work and whether the tools used within the report can be expanded into other WLMF Sub-Group work areas (All)

7. Update on NRW Dairy Project

Matt Lowe was unable to provide a full project update as planned to include data from farm visits due to other commitments, but this will be delivered at the meeting in May. The Dairy Project has now been extended until 31st July 2020 after securing funding from Welsh Government. Additional recruitment will take place to employ additional officers, increasing to 12 staff in total.

To date 350 farm visits have been undertaken by the agricultural officers which meets the target by deadline of the end of March, with 230 farms recorded on the database. The data analysis undertaken will provide information regarding slurry storage capacity, herd size, compliance levels for exempt and post-1991 structures. The target number of farms for visits will be revised now that the project has been extended and additional resources will be made available. It is anticipated to be 1700 visits across Wales by 2021.

NRW are currently in discussions with WG regarding how the project continues and whether re-visits to farms will be included. UU highlighted the importance of undertaking re-visits to determine whether farmers are undertaking improvements or accessing grants. It was raised that farmers who are SSAFO compliant are not necessarily low risk.

AP18: Ensure sufficient time is available to include an extended NRW Dairy Project update as part of the agenda in May 2019 (Helen Haider, NRW)

AP19: Contact Matt Lowe with details of any additional analysis requests regarding the NRW Dairy Project (All)

8. Update on Voluntary Approach to Nutrient Management

Lorna Davis has been engaging with the farming community to raise awareness of water quality issues. The third project Steering Board meeting took place on the 3rd April 2019 with DCWW, FUW, NFU Cymru, WG and NRW attending. There were presentations made by Tim Stephens (Wessex Water) and Marc Williams (NRW) followed by a workshop to develop the “Earned Recognition” deliverables and methods of regulatory delivery. The third NFU Cymru Water Quality Task and Finish Group took place at Gelli Aur with a presentation on the Slurry Project followed by a workshop to discuss the assurance scheme outline and supporting guidance to deliver this.

A progress update on the different work packages of the project was circulated to the group and included the development of a communications plan for the model being developed, updating of the website content to include information regarding where farmers can seek further advice. NFUC are willing to share their website content for others to use.

Lorna Davis requested that members share water quality information regarding projects taking place locally which would help her when meeting with farmers. The development of on-farm events is being planned with FUW and NRW starting on Anglesey which will be co-ordinated with the Farming Connect targeted events.

AP20: Share Comms Plan for the Farmer-Led Voluntary Approach with sub-group members (Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru)

AP21: Share water quality information regarding projects taking place across Wales with Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru (All)

AP22: Explore the potential for the WLMF Sub-Group to attend a NFUC on-farm event in future (Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru)

9. Discussion on the WLMF Progress Report

Due to limited time it was agreed that a Skype/teleconference meeting would be set up to discuss the WLMF Progress Report in more detail.

AP23: Marc Williams (NRW) to set up a Skype meeting to discuss the WLMF Progress Report and arrange for TFA input

10. Update on aligning advisory services in Wales

Zoe Henderson highlighted the importance of aligning advice work and giving farmers consistent messages. Farming Connect outlined their approach in ensuring advice is consistent:

- All advisers are quality assessed (QA) before they are approved for each category they want to deliver. All CV's are screened against a specification set by WG and two reports must be submitted to be QA'd before they are approved
- All reports are QA'd independently by IBERS
- The first report submitted by each adviser under each category is QA'd and again after 12 months
- If any reports are border line passes, the next three reports delivered by the adviser are QA'd.
- Five percent of all reports over and above the pass line are QA'd
- Approved companies on the framework receive CPD on a regular basis
- Every adviser must complete and record 20 hours of CPD annually

At present the Dairy Project reports are quality assessed by senior NRW Agricultural Staff and a discussion took place as to whether they should go through a similar QA process as for the Farming Connect reports. AHDB identified discrepancies between nutrient management plans undertaken by them and other advisors however raised this difference could be due to the advisors being given different information by farmers that would lead to difficult calculations. Stephen Marsh-Smith highlighted his concerns regarding NRW undertaking advise work as they have a duty to enforce the regulations.

It was raised that there should be a standard operating procedure for farm advice work and that agricultural pollution is only one aspect of the farm but other areas (such as air quality) will need to be considered. The need to identify the different levels of understanding and what different advisors can do in terms of their skills was raised. Lorna Davis referred to a procedure that she has used in another line of work which could be amended to identify suitable advisors for agri pollution.

Lorna Davis is in discussions regarding approved courses for advisors. NRW have been trying to let a tender for staff training courses but have been unsuccessful and aim to re-let the tender to organise training. The subject area for the training does not fit under Aberystwyth University's funding umbrella for distance learning courses.

Stephen Marsh-Smith explained that Afonydd Cymru have 11 officers who all need to complete the BASIS training and in-house training.

AP24: Provide Matt Lowe with further details regarding the Farming Connect QA process for farm reports (Sara Jenkins, Menter a Busnes)

AP25: Draft scoping paper regarding advisory work and training (Matt Lowe/Sarah Hetherington/Bob Vaughan, NRW)

AP26: Share procedure used in role as a Landscape Artist to identify those with specific skills & knowledge to deliver work- this can be used to develop a similar procedure for the advisory work (Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru)

11. Presentation on the AC/DC Project in Wales

Stephen Marsh-Smith gave a presentation regarding the Afonydd Cymru/Welsh Water project on the Afon Teifi to decrease water pollution. Compliance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD) was a main driver for the project as the catchment was failing to meet its objectives. Stephen highlighted the merits of undertaking one to one farm visits. The five impacts on water quality were considered to be mines, pesticides, organic pollution, sediment and endocrine disrupters. It was described that some impacts of pollution on rivers cannot be seen

such as the destruction of fish eggs.

Two farm advisors were employed for 6 months and trained with funding from NRW and Welsh Water. The advisors worked with in selected areas and undertook cold call visits, monitored actions and outcomes, produced implementation plans, sourced funding and produced farm reports. Water quality monitoring and invertebrate sampling was undertaken in addition to soil health assessments, grass/crop nutrient uptake and farm infrastructure assessments.

The farm reports included good farm practises, an overview of the holding, opportunities for improvements, maps of the farm using SCIMAP, storage/rainfall calculations, crop planning, watercourse protection and implementation through funding etc. SCIMAP was used to predict problems and was a useful tool in showing farmers where issues occur. A risk mapping system was produced to help farmers decide what can and shouldn't be undertaken on different parts of the farm holding.

Welsh Water funded a driller that drills between the maize crop. Existing water quality data was referred to in addition to local farm data. The project is still ongoing but initial data analysis shows that 15% of farmers declined advice and 85% farmers engaged with Afonydd Cymru. Most of the advice given was regarding clean and dirty water separation. 110 farms were visited with no fully compliant farms. The value of the project was £250K.

No external evaluation of the project has taken place. Some farmers were given money directly to fund improvements. A discussion took place as to which approach to advice work was the best to deliver outcomes. It was agreed that a summary of the outcomes of the AC/DC project would be provided to the sub group members.

Stephen Marsh-Smith thanked Welsh Water for taking part in the AC/DC project to deliver catchment improvements.

AP27: Provide details of the number of farm visits on the Afon Ceri to WLMF sub-group members (Stephen Marsh-Smith, WEL)

AP28: Provide details of the outcomes of the AC/DC project to sub group members (Steven Bradley, Welsh Water)

12. Presentation from Simon Evans – “After Regulation – what next?”

Simon Evans of the Wye and Usk Foundation (WUF) gave a presentation of the work that's been undertaken with farmers on the River Usk. WUF have been identifying ways of engaging with farmers regarding soils. There has been a gradual process of increasing work with farmers including peer to peer support and getting a fair price for

produce. A partnership project has been taking place in the River Wye catchment to solve issues such as phosphates within water, soil loss and pesticides to improve the sustainability and profitability of farming. Simon described how farmers are working together to reduce plastic packaging. The focus is now being directed towards the River Wye in Wales where Simon hopes the partnership approach similar to that in England can be taken.

The Wye & Usk are vulnerable river catchments and a key food sourcing area. Eight companies in England have invested in farmers in the Wye & Usk and have deals that support farmers. Dairy farmers get paid an additional 2p per litre for undertaking a number of actions such having 5 months slurry storage capacity. The project is also considering the incorporation of carbon sequestration targets.

The Wye & Usk agri food board met on 4th March with the purpose of identifying threats and opportunities within the sector and to clarify what was being asked of buyers.

The partnership approach can be funded through national capital markets, advice can be via the third sector and be promoted via champion farmers. Simon explained the need for a regulatory floor and the importance of NRW enforcing the regulations. The funding for the project has come from Pillar II, agri-environment schemes and the Coulthard scheme money. The difference in England is that there is no funded advisory service like in Wales (Farming Connect).

Simon is in discussions with buyers in Wales to try to deliver collective responsibility to farm sustainability. Some success has already been achieved in the dairy and soft fruit sectors, but it is unclear if the same approach can be applied to the red meat sector. The project was described as a private funded public good scheme. The approach is to use farmers on the agri board rather than approach suppliers.

In order to encourage change, no enforcement action is taken against farmers. Arla and Mueller farmers can choose to make changes which are not enforced- this leads to increased profit margins. Discussion took place regarding how farmers and producers are recognised for the work that they have done to farm more sustainably beyond monetary benefits.

AP28: Circulate presentations from Simon Evans & Stephen Marsh-Smith to sub group members (Helen Haider, NRW)

13. Arrangements for future sub-group meetings

Dates have been confirmed for WLMF Sub-Group meetings for 2019. The meeting on 8th July is to take part in the Bangor NRW office with a site visit to Cemaes Bay, Anglesey.

Lorna Davis suggested a site visit to a Game and Wildlife Conservation

Trust trial farm in England and suggested asking a representative to make a presentation at a future WLMF Sub-Group meeting.

Kevin Thomas (LANTRA) will be invited to provide a talk at the WLMF Sub-Group meeting in May in addition to a contractor.

With the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show (RWAS) approaching, it was agreed that at the next WLMF Sub-Group meeting an agenda item would be added on communications and the RWAS. A discussion took place as to whether members take part in the RWAS as a group. Lorna Davis is organising a seminar for the RWAS and intends to invite WLMF Sub-Group members for a question and answer session.

The issue of planning and agricultural developments was raised with a reminder for members to contact Helen Haider/Marc Williams with specific concerns or examples in relation to this matter. Planning and agricultural developments would be discussed again at a future WLMF Sub-Group meeting.

A session on Innovation is planned for Junes WLMF Sub-Group meeting with WG colleagues undertaking a workshop to identify opportunities for innovation in the sector.

AP29: Identify sites for future WLMF sub group visits (Helen Haider, NRW)

AP30: Liaise with Lorna Davis regarding a possible site visit to a GWCT trial farm in England (Helen Haider)

AP31: Explore the potential for someone from the GWCT to make a presentation at a future WLMF Sub-Group meeting (Lorna Davies, NFU Cymru)

AP32: Add scoping item & update on WLMF work planning issues to a future meeting agenda (Helen Haider/Marc Williams, NRW)

AP33: Collate details of sub group member concerns regarding agricultural developments and the land use planning system (Helen Haider/Marc Williams, NRW)

AP34: Ensure that the agenda for the next sub-group meeting in May 2019 includes an item on Communications and also on RWAS. (Helen Haider, Meinir Wigley)

AP35: Organise innovation session for Junes WLMF Sub-Group meeting (Bob Vaughan/Helen Haider, NRW)

AP36: Invite WLMF Sub-Group members to Q&A session at the RWAS (Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru)

14. Minutes from WLMF sub group meeting on 11th March & outstanding Action Points

The list of outstanding actions from the last WLMF Sub-Group meeting are highlighted in blue as follows:

AP6: Circulate report regarding advisory capacity to WLMF Sub-Group (Stephen Marsh-Smith, WEL)

AP8: Prepare a proposal describing how existing advisory services across Wales could be better aligned to ensure consistency (Matt Lowe, NRW/Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru/Sara Jenkins, Menter a Busnes/Stephen Marsh-Smith, WEL)

AP15: Circulate draft summary advice on nutrient application to WLMF Sub-Group (Lorna Davis, NFU Cymru)

AP16: Provide comments to NFU Cymru on draft summary advice on nutrient applications (All)

AP17: Prepare standard sentence to appear on all Voluntary Initiative publications (Brian Pawson, NRW & Lorna Davies/Rachel Lewis-Davies, NFU Cymru)

15. Update on relevant diary activities

AHDB are launching strategic dairy farms which is an improvement programme part-funded by WG and is taking place in collaboration with Farming Connect. Four farms are going to be launched with year with the plan to develop across 8 farms in future. The farms will be systems orientated and there may be opportunities to link to agricultural pollution themes.

AP37: Circulate details of the launch dates for AHDB's farm improvement programme to sub group members (Jamie McCoy, AHDB)

16. AoB

Dairy project officers have asked if it's possible to do a press release in relation to silage clamp maintenance in advance of the first silage cut.

AP38: Liaise with Meinir Wigley, NRW to explore the possibility of a press release regarding silage clamp maintenance (Marc Williams, NRW)
