

Committee Name: Regional Livestock Board

Circulation:

Meeting Date: 10 March 2016

Location: Derby Cattle Market, Chequers Road, Derby DE21 6EP

Chairman: Philip Abbott

Secretary: Simon Fisher

Tel: 07803 204507

Present: Philip Abbott, Nick Adams, Andrew Critchlow, Nick Dowler, Stuart Fairfax, Simon Fisher, David Forrest, Philip Richardson, Charles Sercombe, Ros Turner

By Invitation: Tom Fullick, NFU Livestock Adviser

In Attendance: Simon Fisher

Apologies: Des Allen, Andrew Baugh, Anne Blair, Clive Brown, John Royle, William Walker

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2016 were confirmed.

Matters arising

On cattle grid changes an NFU briefing dated 4 Feb 2016 had been circulated with the agenda. Board members were asked to raise awareness of this issue with local branches.

The delegate place for Holland (Lincs) county branch is in hand.

Basic Payment Scheme 2015

The RPA update as of 18 March is that 72,700 farmers (84% of eligible claims) have now received their 2015 BPS payments. Following NFU pressure, the RPA will be sending letters to all those farmers currently not paid during March. Claim statements to support the 2015 BPS payments are now being issued in weekly batches.

BPS 2016 has now been launched with online applicants able to view details and access the application forms from 19 March. Paper applications are expected to be circulated in early April. BPS roadshows would take place in the region on March 17. The NFU were dealing with multiple issues, both for 2015 and 2016.

Tom Fullick, National Livestock Adviser

Tom was welcomed to the meeting, and provided an update of a number of current issues that HQ were dealing with.

Ten mile rule

Roll out will start in July 2016 and finish by March 2018. This is going to be the biggest shake-up of movements and licenses for some time with the overall objective being simplification. The centre of a holding will be movable in individual circumstances. The ten mile rule will allow farmers to amalgamate land, including temporary land associations as an extension of your own farm. There would be no need to report movements within the ten mile and there will be no six day stand still. Beyond ten miles batch movements of animals that will no longer apply. 80% of movements are within ten miles of the centre of the holding. CTS links will be targeted first.

The voice of British farming



Red tape and gold plating

Defra have announced the introduction of single farm inspections this summer, amounting to 20,000 fewer inspections. In addition measures to reduce penalties are also being considered. The NFU are challenging Defra on excessive 5% penalties for petty breaches; supporting the CPH cleansing exercise; seeking confirmation that cross compliance inspections will be reduced to 1% and challenging in all instances the quality of inspections.

Dead weight transparency

The EU is currently reviewing the sheep regulations and we are pressing for mandatory reporting and dressing to a standard spec, as for cattle. We are making sure that Defra are lobbying on our behalf in Europe. Domestically we are seeking a voluntary code for sheep (similar to beef) as a first step. We are also advocating the need for the Grocery Code Adjudicator's oversight for voluntary codes so that they have more traction with processors. Our end goal is to have, at the least, codes under the Grocery Code Adjudicator helping us to challenge beef grids and VIA.

TSE's/SRM

The NFU is progressing the cut-of date of the 31 May with the UK and EU. This is seeking to make the legislation more workable and it could be in place for 2017. In sheep there is the option to mouth after the 31 May which will help other producers. Rolling back SRM in member states is possible when BSE is declared negligible. This is the ultimate goal for sheep and cattle thereby allowing re-categorisation of fallen stock and other bi products, currently caught up with the regulation.

Livestock data hub

The current CCIR (Collection and Communication Inspection Results) system is not fit for purpose with over 70 different conditions. Work is under way to review the list of conditions with a proposal for new lists of around 15 for cattle and sheep. The goal is to reach a position where all farmers can get a CCIR report, in standard format, of useful information, regardless of whether they go via a live market or dead weight. It is expected to be in place by mid-2016 and then will look at how results will be communicated. While there is a long way to go, before is sorts out the current mess of reporting systems, the NFU are looking for clear wins for the industry.

It was agreed that Tom Fullick's slides used in his presentation would be circulated to the board.

Free trade and New Zealand

Charles Sercombe reported on NFU work in this area which he is spear heading through the EU sheep meat forum. Board members noted that New Zealand is coming under increasing scrutiny, and even the French are calling for the date of slaughter to be included on packaging. New Zealand quota stands at around 230,000 tonnes (GATT agreement) and utilisation is normally 70-75%. In 1990 53% of New Zealand was cuts; it now stands at 98%. Under the GATT agreement, should changes in technology and trade then make it possible to modify the structure of trade, then parties to the GATT agreement can consult each other for modifications.

In addition, Charles also outlined the sheep meat forums and the desires to address the declining consumption and increase self-sufficiency. Commission reports on sheet meat over the summer would be an important point in time as we press for policy changes in Europe. Sheep meat quotas are going to be part of this and the NFU is seeking a strong position across Europe in order to drive this particular issue.

Charles answered questions with regard to what would the position of sheep exports be if the UK left the EU. This aspect would be part of the two year negotiation on how to exit, including agreements on how to trade with other countries in Europe. In addition he outlined the work of the NFU to ensure that

market transparency and a fairer supply chain system were in the forthcoming 25 year food and farming plan from Defra.

Election of Deputy Vice Chairman

Nick Adams was unanimously elected as Deputy Vice Chairman of the Regional Livestock Board, for two years.

Board co-options

It was agreed that Clive Brown (AHDB) and Anne Blair (AHVLA) would be co-opted for the following two years. Other co-options would be agreed at the next meeting in May, following the appointments at national level on the main board and the NFU sheep and beef groups.

Bluetongue

With two stereotypes circulating within Europe and Bluetongue virus 8 (BTV-8) in France, there is ongoing surveillance and a risk to livestock in the UK during the spring and summer months. An outbreak in late summer is rated as most likely at the current time in the South of England. There is a vaccine for BTV but stocks are currently low. There is no vaccine currently available to farmers in the UK. The NFU are working with vaccine manufacturers to address this. It could take 2-3 months for stocks to be made. Thereafter selective targets for vaccine may be appropriate (e.g. young bulls). There would be 150 kilometre fire break from the south coast. Producers are urged to be vigilant in the coming months.

Headquarters board report

Phil Abbott brought members up to date with recent meetings of the HQ board. The Tesco sheep group has been massively over subscribed for piloting on 100 farms. If individual members are considering this, NFU HQ would be happy to advise on contracts, however we are currently bound by a non-disclosure agreement.

Phil further reported on the current red tape review and the increasing ground being made for earned recognition. The new AHDB Beef and Lamb Director, Laura Ryan is settling in well. There will be better coordination of events going forward which was welcomed by the board as it had originally been one of their suggestions.

Phil highlighted the need for practical farmers to go on to the farm assured technical advisory committees. Vacancies were coming up and more active farmers are needed. Details would be circulated to the board.

Land Rover and trailer weights

Clarification was requested if a Discovery and trailer combination should have a tachograph if going over 100km. The secretary would make enquiries.

Derby Market

Andrew Critchlow reported that there is no information or news on the future of the market following representations by auctioneers and NFU to the local authority.

Next meeting

To be held on the 11 May 2016 at 2pm at the Newark Livestock Market. Paul Tame has been invited to discuss the forthcoming Defra consultation on NVD's designation and action programme.