



MEETING OF THE HGCA BOARD

16 July 2014 at Woodside Conference Centre, Glasshouse Lane, Kenilworth
SUMMARY MINUTES

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2014 were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

Revised GM report received from Reading University was being reviewed.

Threats and Opportunities work was underway. There was a tight timeframe to produce the economic models. Two meetings had been held – one on crops and one on livestock.

HGCA were liaising with Reuters and the web company to resolve problems with live price reporting.

HGCA CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The first phase of the Monitor Farm programme had been launched and open days in all areas had been held. The first industry panel meeting to sense check the work of the entire business improvement programme had been held on 11 June. Feedback from levy payers who attended the open days had been extremely positive.

HGCA was strongly encouraged by Defra not to leave long periods of time between levy increases at implementation of the last one; therefore this item was discussed annually. The Chairman highlighted that the results of the levy question survey carried out at Cereals were extremely positive. Discussions resulted in agreement that a draft business case should be brought to the October meeting.

e-Grain Passport

The process had proved to be more complicated than first thought and the template had grown. The design company felt that the best option was to go back to the drawing board and produce a suitable template and this had resulted in some delays to the original timetable.

CHINA BARLEY PROTOCOL

The BCE committee had approved the proposal for this work at last week's meeting. There were discussions covering how long a protocol would last and the risk against expenditure as there was no guaranteed end market. Costs had been calculated on the worst case scenario. It was agreed that there was not sufficient information to make a decision and that the discussion should be deferred until the October board meeting when a more detailed proposal would be considered.

FINANCE AND STRATEGY

It was confirmed that if the China protocol work went ahead the international budget would need to be increased.

BALANCE SHEET AND ASSOCIATED SURVEY WORK

The meeting debated the benefits and challenges of AHDB undertaking this work on Defra's behalf but it was expected that efficiency savings could be made and that the data gathering programme could be improved with electronic submission. It was agreed that a full proposal should be brought to the October meeting. The current consultation would also include an assessment of the industry's requirement to continue or discontinue the haulage survey.

CEREAL HAULAGE

A small but consistent group of regional merchants had raised questions about the attractiveness of grain haulage work and concerns about future availability. This proposal was picking up the work that was done back in 2006/7 as part of the Cereals Industry Forum (CIF). The scope of the research would include looking at the structure of the UK cereal haulage sector, the attractiveness of grain haulage and benchmarking of cereal haulage to other relevant sectors.

HGCA REVIEWS

A review group had been formed to look at the definitions of board, committee and expert panels and would include scrutiny of the balance of HGCA's business functions and committees, identify any gaps and consider cross linking with other AHDB sector committees. Trade associations would be made aware of the review and their input would be invited. Proposals would be complete by spring 2015.

A review of the structure and function of the events team was currently underway. The review would include considering ways to deliver messages and whether alternatives to an event could successfully do this. Recommendations would be brought back to a future board meeting.

AHDB SKILLS UPDATE

An overview of work managing external industry skills was presented. Aims included developing an industry skills strategy and rolling out the skills agenda across all sectors, to manage relevant funding applications and programmes and to align work with existing education/careers initiatives. AHDB was successful in winning four RDPE contracts in 2012 and delivered these to a high level of 96%. AHDB delivered over 4,000 training hours in 'soft skills' across the sectors. Employers interested in apprenticeships were being sought – ten were needed.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE

The Board approved funding for the following projects:

- a) Best practice for drainage maintenance and renewal – KT proposal (2180005 KT)
- b) Autumn survey of wheat bulb fly incidence extension (2011-3758 Extension)
- c) Identification and characterisation of azole sensitivity shifts in Irish and UK populations of *Mycosphaerella graminicola* sampled from HGCA-Fungicide Performance winter wheat trials covering season 2014/15 (2009-3713 Extension)
- d) Fungicide performance in wheat, barley and OSR (2140006 Proposal)
- e) Developing enhanced breeding methodologies for oats for human health and nutrition (2200002 Proposal)
- f) Integrating control strategies against soil-borne *Rhizoctonia solani* in Oilseed rape (2140012)
- g) BBSRC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Innovation Club (2180007 Proposal)
- h) Potential impact on UK cereals and oilseeds of the Community Strategy for Endocrine Disrupters (EDs) (2140020 Proposal)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was confirmed that we had undertaken an impact assessment on neonicotinoids, which was available.

The next meeting of the HGCA Board would be held on 22 October 2014. It would be preceded by a Strategy Day on 21 October.