

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Sheep Veterinary Society

Zoom Meeting

Wednesday 13 April 2022

The meeting convened at 12h00.

Minutes kept by R Reichel, Secretary

Present: Rebecca Mearns, Amanda Carson, Rudolf Reichel, Ed Hill, Hazel Rice, David Wilson, Phillipa Page, Rachel Forster, Kevin Harrison, Tricia Sutton

Apologies: Amy Jennings, Shona Mouncey, Jonathan Hobbs, Clare Phythian, Miranda Timmerman.

1. **Minutes and action points** from last meeting. Previous minutes accepted, proposed by Amanda and seconded by Rebecca.

Previous action points and progress:

No	Description	Responsible	Completed?
1	Invite Humane Slaughter Association rep to the September conference at Penrith	PP	Ongoing
2	Talk to Kate Hovers about the meeting at Malvern. Re castration / tail docking.	AC	Completed. Kate Hovers is on the Animal Welfare Council. Full report to follow.
3	Follow up with BVA regarding current lamb castration policy.	RM	Ongoing
4	Send email to speakers at Belfast Conference to inform them re expenses that can be claimed.	RM	Done
5	Need to inform members to arrange Sheep Meet meetings on expression of interest basis.	RM	Done
6	To reply to the person/student that asked regarding an SVS bursary, that it has been suspended indefinitely.	HR	Done
7	BVA governance feedback required by 28 March. Regarding non vets / non BVA members holding office in divisions.	AC	Done

2. BVA EMS survey responses – deadline extended to 13 April 22 – general discussion about what external opportunities means... will collate the responses I have and submit [RM to do]

3. BADAFS meeting Ed to provide summary – ToR provided separately. Better antibiotic data by farming system. Objectives and how these will be achieved unclear. Recognition of emedhub and need to record, but also concerns that membership includes some with agenda that organic farming is the only way. Pigs and poultry veterinary reps already made it clear they will not be joining the group. BCVA have a board meeting today and will be discussing. Duplication with RUMA and to present a united front it is likely that if BCVA are out then SVS will do same. EH / RM to liaise with Rachel (BCVA) and Fiona L re continued membership.

4. OPA working group stakeholder meeting RM to provide summary and notes – I have contacted James Russell (SVP, BVA) but no response yet. General discussion of lay scanners and what we, as vets, think in terms of feasibility of this notwithstanding the restrictions that mean making a diagnosis is for vets. EH, RF – lay scanners may find this more difficult than people think and would need to invest in different scanner. PP lay scanners could be useful to get engagement between farmers and vets if they were scanning chests and found suspicious cases. Do we need a small discussion group with relevant vets to gauge whether there is support for lay scanners doing this before we take it any further? No decision on this so will stick to finding out where the lines are drawn re RCVS and vet procedures and then I can take that back to the next meeting RM

5. Pathway – concerns re timeline of launch, update on beta testing... Soft launch in summer. So many unknowns in terms of how much interest there will be among farmers, how vets will cope with delivering the visits, training materials. RM

6. Wales Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) meeting update RM – see notes

7. VMD / watery mouth control guidance updated RM – updated guidance is clearer on what we don't want vets to do whereas version 1 was more on what they could do.

8. EMA consultation deadline 28Apr22 https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/documents/scientific-guideline/reflection-paper-prophylactic-use-antimicrobials-animals-context-article-1073-regulation-eu-2019/6_en.pdf Volunteer or subgroup needed to get feedback and collate. May do jointly with SAGG. There is a template document for comments to return. Doesn't look too onerous (apart from the need to read the 44 page consultation doc in the first place and interestingly sheep are omitted from the section on prophylactic antibiotics, but included for antiprotozoals). – General comments section and then section for specific comments requiring reference to line number of the text with proposed amendments. We could have a meeting last week of April to pull it together. RM to contact a few SVS members to see if they have time to read the consultation and comment – Judith Charnley, Emily Gascoigne, Matt Colston. Also will ask Amy, Shona and Jonathan (not on the call) if they are prepared to feed in. DW also volunteered but may not have time. Will e mail and arrange a meeting and hope to include FL also for SAGG response.

9. Welfare in Transport 11 May 1300-1430 - ScotGov hosting a meeting with industry representatives and NGOs to discuss maximum journey times for cattle and sheep. – RM can make it but is anyone else keen to attend? AC commented that SVS had provided feedback to the Scottish Welfare in transport consultation and will send that response – Complete

10. AWF Discussion forum Weds 11 May 22 1300-1430 – I can't attend in person but it's a hybrid event this year so I'll aim to attend virtually but it clashes with the transport meeting above. <https://www.animalwelfarefoundation.org.uk/discussion-forum-2022/> Anyone from welfare subgroup interested in attending? We need to add names to the welfare group as currently website has only Iain Richards and previously Nick Hart was also included. Can we co-opt

someone from outside the committee if necessary to fill this gap? Other working groups seem relatively well covered. HR – add Nick back on to the welfare and surveillance groups; add Guda van der Burgt to welfare and Jo Childs to parasitology and provide e mail addresses to RM to let them know!

11. 'Sheep Meets' update and plea to committee members to consider organising a meeting! RM and HR to update slidepack with relevant industry / SVS info and act as point of contact. RM to prepare an SVS introductory slide pack for use at all meetings

12. Conference update PP / MR / HR – all going well – look forward to seeing many of you there!

13. AOB – RM informed of Blunt force trauma meeting to be chaired by Minister Prentis. Kevin said he was representing NSA and provided contact details of organiser. SVS not invited. AC to contact meeting organiser Rebecca Thomas Defra and agreed to attend this event and has been invited - Complete

Current Action Points

No	Description	Responsible	Completed?
1	To invite Kate Hovers to go on the Welfare working Group and to provide feedback to SVS	RM	
2	To forward the relevant email from Kate Hovers regarding the above action point to RM	AC	
3	Invite Humane Slaughter Association rep to the September conference at Penrith	PP	
4	Follow up with BVA regarding current lamb castration policy.	RM	
5	BVA EMS survey responses- submit	RM	
6	Regarding the OPA working group stakeholder meeting – to get clarification from RCV if the scanning procedure is a veterinary act	RM	
7	Place announcement of the OGM at Belfast Conference in the VR	RR	
8	EMA consultation. See discussion point 8. RM to contact the following people to ask if they can review the 44 page document and comment – RM may break this down into sections. Judith Charnley, Jonathan Hobbs, Emily Gascoigne, Shona Mounsey, Mat Colston	RM	
9	Add Nick back on to the welfare and surveillance groups; add Guda van der Burgt to welfare and Jo Childs to parasitology and provide e mail addresses to RM to let them know!	HR	

10 Prepare an SVS introductory slide pack for use at all RM
"Sheep Meet" meetings

Date of next meeting: sometime in June, doodle poll to be circulated in advance Action HR

End of meeting:

Rebecca thanked those that attended and the meeting ended at 14h20

Attached Documents:

OPA Working Group Agenda

Wales Sustainable Farming Scheme BVA update meeting 31March22

BADAFS TOR

OPA Working Group Agenda

11.00 – 12.30, Monday 21st March 2022

1. **Introductions** (10 minutes) chaired by Phil Stocker
2. **Agree terms of reference** (5 minutes) – started with discussion that this was a 'task and finish' group though during the meeting it became pretty obvious that there were a lot of challenges so it wasn't as simple as that! Agreed ToR should be UK wide and not just Scotland, so will seek representation from NI, Wales, Eng.
3. **Presentation from Chris Cousens – Overview of OPA** (10-15 minutes) – scene setting. Clyde Wind Farm project started with 6 flocks, scanning 150 sheep and has expanded to whole flock scanning. 15,000 sheep scanned per year for the project.

Based on Phil's scanning the test has sensitivity of 0.76 and specificity of 0.998 based on detection of tumours >1cm diameter, assuming within flock prevalence of 0 – 5%. 2.5 false positives per 1000 sheep scanned. Demand from breeders exists. Comms is critical in terms of what a scan result and particularly a negative result means. Eradication – could be possible but not a near thing (>20 years). Assurance schemes based on some / all of the following may be worthwhile: scan (+PME), PME, abattoir screening and feedback. Role of histopath and IHC also mentioned to confirm diagnosis.

4. **Presentation from Sue Tongue – SRUC Webinar One** (10-15 minutes) – results of questionnaire from recent webinar
5. **Discussion on:** (30 minutes)
 - **Industry assurance scheme** – GC not at the stage where an assurance / accreditation scheme would be feasible. Aspirational right now in part due to poor access to scanners, costs. Discussion of concentrating on screening tups pre-sale or

snapshot screening of part flocks but generally considered that whole flock scanning is needed. Could scanning part flocks focussing on thin ewes work? Perception issue: flocks that scan must have the disease but will need to get away from this.

- **Scanning training and certification for vets** – not good geog coverage of competent vets to do scanning. Need more but cost of equipment, not an appealing job for many vets. Despite having run many courses at Moredun (CC and PS) not enough vets doing it and offer of telemed support after the courses not used. Welsh govt offered support for training. Vets offering scanning as part of any scheme would have to demo competence. No info on how many flocks scanned or number of sheep scanned plus follow up PME's of 'positives' are needed to give some level of competence. Discussion on whether lay scanners (those that do preg scanning) could offer chest scanning but if it's making a diagnosis then that requires a vet. Some discussion on lay scanners doing preliminary screens and referring suspects for a vet to screen but there still aren't enough vets to do this and telemed may have limitations. Lay scanners would also need to be able to demonstrate competence. Would vets be in favour of lay scanners doing this work? Do we need to ask RCVS if this is something that can be considered, perhaps through BVA / SVS?
- **Awareness for farmers** - improved based on Sue's findings from the surveys but still room to get better awareness
- **Improved research and diagnostics** – nothing on the horizon

6. **AOCB** (15 minutes)

Actions:

ST / CC to create strawman on best practice / standard protocols for discussion at next meeting

RM to contact BVA and RCVS re vet / no vet procedures

Wales Sustainable Farming Scheme BVA update meeting 31March22

1. Scheme update – timeline, high level aims and objectives, architecture (AP)
2. High level overview- AH+W and biosecurity aspects of the scheme (GW/AP)
3. engagement with vets in wales- new vet focus group: update
4. AOB

Meeting to update BVA and BVA divisions on the Wales SFS chaired by Gavin Watkins, DCVO Wales.

Timeline for the scheme: 2022 draft SFS, 2025 final consultation and Agr (Wales) Act comes into force; SFS starts (multi-year transition for payments)

Aims: universal – simple but build capability over time; optional higher level with more complex, more tailored; collaboration (landscape / catchment)#

Three parts: animal health improvement cycle (AHIC), biosecurity, a good life (above 'a life worth living; in welfare terms).

Sheep, beef, dairy are main focus. Eligibility may be based on land area.

Discussion focussed on what can be learned from Pathway and how it will differ from Pathway. Comms challenges for farms / vet practices spanning Eng and Wales as could be confusion between different schemes. Similar challenges in terms of vet resource to deliver visits etc as have been identified for Pathway.

Vet focus group meeting planned for after Easter. Miranda is on this so can feedback to SVS also.

Relevant docs for further reading:

Wales AHW Framework Implementation Plan 2022-24 <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-03/animal-health-and-welfare-framework-implementation-plan-2022-2024.pdf>

Five year welfare plan <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-11/animal-welfare-plan-wales-2021-26.pdf>

Better Antibiotic Data by Farming Scheme (BADAFS) – Working Group

Better Antibiotic Data by Farming Scheme (BADAFS) Working Group advises on, coordinates and reviews the collection of antibiotic-use data for schemes which aim to achieve higher minimum welfare standards, including organic, free range and pasture fed livestock. The key benefits for this are:

- **Monitoring trends** - in order to understand the baseline level of use and the effect of any interventions
- **Benchmarking** – to help vets and farmers understand their use relative to other similar farm types. This will encourage higher users to work with their vets to optimise usage in a way that does not compromise animal health and welfare. Understanding the reasons behind higher and lower usage (e.g. through surveys/ linking with other on-farm metrics) can also facilitate the sharing of best practice

Terms of Reference

The BADAFS Terms of Reference (ToR) are:

- To agree antibiotic usage metrics (and any additional system metrics) for monitoring trends in antibiotic use for each species/sector and allow farms within each accreditation/ label to benchmark their antibiotic use with similar farm types
- To agree different benchmarking categories for each species/sector
- To facilitate the collation of antibiotic usage data from the different organic accreditation schemes to create an overall organic antibiotic usage dataset, for the purposes of trend monitoring
- To work with existing data collection systems where possible, so as to help improve the overall national dataset per species/sector
- To agree and coordinate central storage of antibiotic-use data collected under each scheme, which is to be coordinated with e.g. SA Exchange¹.
- To provide annual analysis and review trends of antibiotic-use data.
- To combine antibiotic usage data with other data/ metrics in order to better understand which factors are contributing to higher and lower antibiotic use within each scheme
- To act as the focal point for the exchange of views and sharing of best practice around improving antibiotic use and stewardship and, where appropriate, the creation of additional standard/scheme requirements relating to antibiotic usage data collection, seeking input from relevant stakeholders, both in the private and public sector, and experts in relevant fields, as appropriate.

¹ Soil Association Exchange is a digital platform which that will enable farmers to LEARN about and implement agroecological practice; MEASURE the climate, nature and health outcomes that are being delivered on farm and REWARD farmers by receiving financial benefits for the positive outcomes. [Find out more](#)

- To make findings and recommendations available in a comprehensive, understandable, and timely way.

Frequency of meetings and review of BADAFS Terms of Reference

The Secretariat is the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

The BADAFS meetings will be chaired by the Head of AMU Surveillance and Stewardship at VMD.

The Working Group will meet a minimum of four times per year. The Working Group can meet more or less frequently and on an ad-hoc basis, as agreed by the Working Group.

The Secretariat will review the ToR annually, with changes to be agreed by the Working Group

Minutes of agreed actions will be circulated.

A report will be published annually and/or in a timeframe consistent with the TORs as agreed by the Group

Membership

The Working Group members are from the following organisations:

Veterinary Medicine Directive; Soil Association; Pasture Fed Livestock Association (PFLA); Alliance to Save our Antibiotics; Organic Farmers and Growers (OF&G); AHDB; Red Tractor; RSPCA; Ed Bailey (George Vet Group and Sustain); FIIA; BCVA; National Pig Association; British Poultry Council

Members should attend each meeting, but if unavailable, they may ask a suitable deputy to attend on their behalf. The secretariat should be advised if a deputy will take a member's place.

Applications to join the group will be considered and agreed by all members.

Contact details

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