**Minutes of the Seventh meeting of the Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council.**

**Venue**; Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin.

**Date**; 19 November 2003.

**Present**; Professor Patrick Fottrell, David Walsh, Aidan Murray, Niall O’Nuallain, Mary-Anne Bartlett, Barbara Bent, John Stack, Sean O’Laoide, Tom Doyle, Alison Hanlon, Didier Rebet, Lorcan McCabe, DermotSparrow, Kevin Kinsella, Angela McCarthy, Colette Connor.

**Apologies**; Derek Deane, Bernadette Earley, Kevin Kinsella, Martin Blake, Jackie

Cahill. **1. Opening Comments**

The Chair re-iterated his thanks to the Working Group on Guidelines and all Council members for their input to the launched Guidelines for Beef and Sheep farmers. He thanked the Minister, the Secretary to the Council and the department for the support given to the Council in producing these guidelines. He hoped that these publications would be the first of many and that the Council had a full work programme in front of it which would be awaited by farmers and the public in general.

He welcomed Mrs Colette Connor as a nominated replacement for Liam McKibben.

**2. Minutes of the Last Meeting.**

The minutes with amendments under Transport and Visit to Marts were agreed and adopted.

**3. Maters Arising.**

**Transport;** the department stated that it had met with all concerned parties involved in the consultative process and that the EU Commission also had a high input which meant that it was been carried through to be dealt with under the Irish Presidency of the Union. The department will continue to brief the Council which in turn will examine the final draft and express its own opinion thereafter.

**IHWT letter**; This will be reported on by the department at the next meeting.

**Export of Horses and Dogs**; the department stated that it had produced a paper which would be circulated with the minutes.

**Correspondence with the Fur Farmers Association**; the Secretary circulated the response and stated that the visit is open to all members of the Council who wish to participate. The Chair stated that this would be dealt with in more detail under the work programme.

**Working Group on Co-operation**; the IFA stated the they hoped to have their Councils approval before the end of November and the SPCA stated that their Council had approved of the document subject to clarification on “Training”. The Department of Agriculture and Food are currently preparing a final paper for presentation to the Council, possibly at the February meeting. **4. Work Programme.**

Farm Animal Welfare Education/Guidelines; the Working Group Chair stated that they would be meeting shortly to finalise the guidelines for dairy farmers. It was agreed that the secretary would circulate the final draft to all members and asked to reply in three working days to the e-mail after which it would be forwarded to the printers for publication. The Secretary circulated the observations received from Council members.

It was further agreed that Horses, Pigs and Poultry would be examined at which point **Alison Hanlon** would join the group.

**Consumer Affairs**; Secretary to co-ordinate with **Alison Hanlon** regarding contact with Cathal Cowan (re Terms of Reference of the Council and World Trade i.e. Green Box issues), Mairead McGuinness and another representative from the Consumer Affairs Panel who would give the supermarket multiples points of view.

The Chairs proposal that all three presentations should be taken on the one day was agreed upon.

**Fish Farming**; It was agreed that an official from the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources along with Richie Flynn should be asked to make a presentation and afterwards the Council could decide a course of action regarding its inclusion in the work programme.

**CIWF** circulated their document “In Too Deep” and stated that the author could also address the Council after the first two presentations. It was agreed that this would be taken into account when deciding what course of action to take.

**Visit to Marts**; It was agreed that these visits could commence in April and that Council would be divided into different teams. The Secretary will liase with **Barbara Bent, Tom Doyle and John Stack** regarding dates and marts to visit.These visits will cover all farm animals where possible.

**ICOS** are continuing to work on their Welfare Guidelines.

**Medicines and the Non Availability on Medicines**; It was agreed that this is a serious farm animal welfare issue and that a Working Group should be set up to examine both existing availability and what is being proposed at EU level. This group will be **Chaired by Dermot Sparrow with Council members John Stack, Tom Doyle, Colette Connor, the Secretary, DAF Representative and Lorcan McCabe**. This group will meet before Christmas. The Secretary and the Chair would draw up draft Terms of Reference for the Group.

**DAF** stated that it was near completing a review of this issue and that it would give an up-to-date report at the next meeting. It was agreed that DAF could be contacted on a bi-lateral level if any representative body wanted to discuss the Departments Special Investigation Unit, which was outside the remit of Council.

**Fur Farming**; It was agreed that a visit which is open to all Council members will take place in or around the month of June. The Secretary will liase with **Alison Hanlon, CIWF and DAF’s Veterinary Inspectorate** regarding a presentation prior to the visit. It was agreed that fur farming would cover both mink and foxes.

**Abattoirs**; It was agreed that as this was within the terms of reference of Council that a speaker should be asked to address Council and that a clear and exact understanding of the rules are for both abattoirs and farmers should be outlined. The Secretary will liase with **Alison Hanlon** regarding the speaker (Steve Wotton). The issue of Council drawing up guidelines would be examined after the presentation.

**5. A.O.B.**

The Chair thanked all of the Council for their contributions to the Work Programme and re-iterated his opening comments that having set such high standards in our inaugural year that we have a very busy schedule to achieve in 2004.

His proposal of taking a stand at the 2004 Ploughing Championships was agreed by all. The next meeting was fixed for Thursday 15th January in Dublin following which other venues will be agreed upon.