

Minutes

MEETING OF THE FARM ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COUNCIL (FAWAC)

Date: 13th June 2022

Venue: Midlands Park Hotel Portlaoise and Webex

Meeting Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Attendee's:

Ciara Feeney-Reid (Chair), Eoin Ryan DAFM, Sean Murray DAFM, Aiden Maguire DAFM, Catherine Lawler DAFM, Stephanie Ronan DAFM, Lynda Masterson DAFM, Siobhan Mullan UCD, Des Morrison ICMSA, Bernie Earley Teagasc, Brendan Golden IFA, Karol Kissane IFA, Ray Doyle ICO, Michael Kilcoyne Cllr Mayo CoCo.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Chair opened the meeting with some introductions. Eoin Ryan informed introduced himself and advised that he is the new head of division in Animal Welfare Division, a position vacated by Patricia Reilly.

All the members were satisfied with the minutes actions to be discussed further in the agenda.

2. Update on FAWN - launch by Minister

DAFM along with Teagasc are pushing this forward. A submission in relation to launching FAWN is with the Minister. Teagasc shared their Beef 2022 event flyer and also offered DAFM a stall at the event on the 5th of July. This enables DAFM to launch FAWN officially in tandem with the Beef 2022 event. There will be a press release, FAWN flyer and the possibility of the Minister appearing at the event pending confirmation of availability. The event will give FAWN exposure and publicity with farmer and raise awareness as 5,000 plus are expected to attend the event.

DAFM are also setting up a hub within AW Division with a dedicated FAWN e-mail address and phone number for point of contact.

DAFM are still in discussions with the HSE regarding a universal model for reporting health issues across all DVO's. There was no attendee from Veterinary Ireland for comment so the Chair will discuss with them.

3. Further discussion on painful procedures

EU legislation is currently being looked at and the with possible revised legislation in mid to late 2023. It was discussed among members this makes it somewhat difficult to make recommendations at the moment as they could be trumped by EU legislation.

Action: It was agreed to set up a subcommittee within FAWAC comprising of DAFM, Teagasc, ICOS, Brendan, ICMSA, and IFA for now, but all members welcome to assist.

This committee will look over previous research and publications so they can come back with recommendations to FAWAC.

Teagasc advised of the positive welfare standards in relation to painful procedures that exist currently. The recommendations can be helpful into inputting into the shaping of the EU legislation. It was agreed that it would be an advantage on our part.

A further discussion on castration and disbudding with Teagasc making the point that we should be moving away from word 'mutilation' and doesn't reflect procedure.

4.Dairy cow lameness

A round table discussion took place on the document Teagasc document by Muireann Conneely published online and circulated to FAWAC members in advance of the meeting. how to implement it and feedback for the Minister. It was agreed the document is excellent and comprehensive as it sets out the main causes and risk factors. It also introduces mobility scoring and the concept of lameness risk assessment, which needs to be promoted. The Teagasc research shows that one in ten dairy cows suffer from this.

It was agreed that there was a need to promote these guidelines and raise awareness among make farmers. Implementing lameness control programmes on farms was discussed among members. Some other suggestions were to put practical suggestions forward as to what farmers can do on farm; this would be more effective. The topic of mobility scoring and practical ways of implementing this system were discussed with visual aids for farmers to assist as practical tools discussed.

It was agreed to best practices out there and clear messages to farmers that back up the science and guidelines. It was also agreed to summarise the main points of the guidelines for the Minister and find the best way to implement them.

It was suggested to get Bord Bia involved in rolling this out. Unfortunately, there was no attendee to comment. The Chair suggested the PVP's also have a role to play, and she will discuss this with them.

5.Managing acutely injured animals

This is a technical issue and not for FAWAC. DAFM will follow this up.

6.Next meetings

The Chair put forward one in late September and early November in Backweston.

7.AOB

Catherine updated members on the urban horse issue in Dunsink. Many groups including DAFM, AGS, DSPCA, Fingal Co Co, and PVP's met with the owners on site, engagement went well. The

outcome was some horses were lifted to get castrated, microchipped and get a passport. There were 100 horses on that day but can be anything up to 140 on the site.