



MINUTES OF NSA CYMRU WALES REGION ANNUAL REGIONAL MEMBERS MEETING
HELD AT HAFOD Y HENDRE, ROYAL WELSH SHOWGROUND ON WEDNESDAY
20th FEBRUARY 2019.

Chairman Tim Ward

Present

Alun Davies	Mary Gittins	Tim Tyne
John Lloyd	Huw Alun Evans	Stephen Welton
David Pittendreigh	John Richards (HCC)	Margaret Dalton
Lorraine Howells	Kevin Parry	Dennis Matheson
Kate Hovers	Gaina Morgan	Hywel Morgan
Will Hughes	H E Williams	Ieuan Thomas
Paul Wozencraft	Chris Thomas	Anne Groucott
John Morris	Nicola Drew	Bleddyn Davies
C R Davies	John Yeomans	Hugh James
D Jarrett (NFU Cymru)	Llew Thomas	Andrew Jones

In Attendance: Helen Roberts, Mr Phil Stocker

1. Apologies Jacob Anthony, Dafydd Jones, Caryl Hughes, Richard Isacc, Lesley Wickham, Brian Eagles, Andrew Edwards, Arthur George, Liz Price, Gwynne Davies, Linda Davies, Jane Smith

2. To Confirm the Minutes of last AGM held 22nd February 2018. - The minutes were confirmed by all those present.

3. To consider matters arising from the above. No Matters arising

4. Chairman's Report It barely seems 12 months since Llew was here doing this.

Over the past 12 months Brexit has dominated, and there still does not seem any certainty about the future. A tremendous amount of work has been done to try and secure the best outcome for the industry and thanks must be given to all those involved, although I feel there is still a long way to go.

The region had its usual stands at the Royal Welsh Show and the Winter Fair, and thanks must be given to Jacob Anthony and his family for hosting a very successful farm walk in the autumn.

Although Brexit has taken up a lot of time the region has also been working on a range of other topics such as quarantine units and Sheep Scab, where on the back of a report the Minister has allocated £5 million towards putting a programme together to help eradicate the disease. Further meetings are being held to discuss how the shortfall in funding may be met. Helen has also recently attended meetings regarding the HCC Red Meat Benchmarking programme, light lamb and the Welsh Hill ram scheme.

The region will be holding its biannual event on 21st May at Glynliffon College Caernarfon. This will be an event not to be missed and I am sure Helen would welcome any offers of help from members.

In closing I would like to record my thanks to Phil and the team at Malvern for all the work that they do on behalf of the industry, to my fellow office holders and the NSA Cymru Wales Committee members and last but by no means least to Helen for the immense amount of work that she does on our behalf.

5. To review the accounts for 2018.

The secretary/treasurer presented the accounts and reported that the accounts showed a healthy balance of £39,608 at the bank and £118,530 invested in COIF this was down on the year but had increased to approx. 123,000 in February. Sponsorship of the Royal Welsh and Winter Fair continued plus the sponsorship of Harper Cymru. Committee expenses covers the £800 paid to Malvern for NSA Cymru members to attend meetings etc. The overall net profit for the year was £42,379. NSA Welsh Sheep had an income of £104,591 and expenditure of £58,350. Tim Tyne requested a sheet showing the past three years to give a better comparison. The accounts were approved by those present.

6. To appoint Officers for the coming year.

- a) Chairman – Tim Ward to remain for second year Agreed by those present.
- b) Vice Chairman – Kate Hovers to remain for second year. Agreed by those present
- c) Treasurer - Helen Roberts was proposed by those present with Tim Ward proposed as Vice Treasurer.
- d) Secretary/Regional manager - Helen Roberts was proposed by those present.
- e) Committee Names of the committee were read out. It was agreed to keep the current members on committee and to remind Breed Societies to nominate representatives and inform the secretary of any changes. Bleddyn Davies was added to the committee. Dafydd Jones had requested to come off the committee
- f) To confirm nominations to NSA Board for 2019.
Nominations for Board were Tim Ward, Llew Thomas and Paul Wozencraft.
Policy & Technical committee John Lloyd
F& GP committee Margaret Dalton.
These nominations were accepted by those present.

7. Secretary's Remuneration. The annual amount would go up to at £6,000 per year plus expenses and travel at 45ppm. This agreed by those present.

8. To consider any other business. The issue about the plans to reintroduce Golden Eagles into Wales, was discussed at length and it was recorded that farmers should keep a note of predator attacks on sheep.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 11.30pm and thanked those for attending.

The meeting was followed by talks from the following people. Brexit, gearing business for an uncertain future and a proactive approach to animal welfare were among the other topics discussed. Chairman Tim Ward said the Annual Regional Members Meeting at the Royal Welsh Showground had been lively and enthusiastic, despite the prevailing negativity. He said: "It's been a very positive meeting, and everybody is looking forward to the future, whatever it might bring, and I think it all bodes well for the NSA that we get the support we do."

The call for farmers to register attacks by predators came from Lorraine Howells. She was concerned that Golden Eagles might take young lambs off the hills and farmers ought to keep a record of anything, including crows and ravens, that bothered the normal sheep population to monitor the impact. She said: “We were ignoring dog attacks, but now everybody is recording dog attacks we can see what a huge problem it is. If there is a register and it’s one attack by a raven you can put up with it, if it’s a hundred then you can say ravens are causing a problem.”

John Lloyd had suggested that even Snowdonia wasn’t big enough for more than two or three pairs of Golden Eagles. He said fifty breeding units were needed to sustain the population over decades. The population of the protected had increased enormously in recent years.

Brexit, proactive businesses and a lively, interactive, discussion on animal welfare with Mid Wales Vet and Farmers Weekly Advisor of the Year 2018, Oliver Hodgkinson, were among the other topics. NSA Next Generation Ambassador, Bleddyn Davies, outlined the benefits the scheme had brought him.

He said: “I was working on the farm full time, but I had less of an influence. I started the Young Ambassador then came home with ideas and Dad started to take notice.

“He listened to me and I got more of my ideas in. During that time, I’ve also become a partner within the business, so my voice is being heard.

“The Next Generation programme did open my eyes to what’s possible with different systems. There is no one golden answer or perfect system.

“It opened my eyes to different systems and different possibilities and the possible use of more technology on the farm – being more efficient.”

Hybu Cig Cymru Industry Development & Relations Manager, John Richards, said Brexit would be the biggest factor to affect the market in the coming months. He said it was a difficult time, with many issues outside the control of sheep farmers and urged them to concentrate on making their farming systems more profitable – using benchmarking and performance recording among other measures.

NSA Chief Executive Phil Stocker called for clear direction for the sheep industry, with potential trade disruptions from Brexit and attacks on the industry almost every week. He said there were times when it needed protection and there was definitely a need for a lot more explanation to the wider public.

He added: “It is still an industry that is not understood by the wider public. We’ve got a communications job to do within the industry and then the industry communicating out as well.”

The Welsh Government’s David Ashford outlined the approach to climate change and its potential impact on Wales over the next couple of decades. Far wetter winters and far drier summers were predicted, and it was important to learn what that meant in terms of animals, pests and diseases.