



**MINUTES OF NSA CYMRU WALES REGION ANNUAL REGIONAL MEMBERS**  
**MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM WEDNESDAY**  
**24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2021.**

**Chair- Kate Hovers**

**Present**

Margaret Dalton  
Delyth Williams  
Elizabeth Grant  
James Owen  
Nicola Drew  
Wyn Williams  
John Yeomans  
Elain Gwilym  
Denis Matheson  
Caryl Hughes  
Errina Rogers  
Jeff Gwilliam

Gaina Morgan  
Huw Evans  
Hywel Morgan  
Zoe Stanisstreet  
Llew Thomas  
Gwynne Davies  
John Lloyd  
Dan Phipps  
Tim Tyne  
Gareth Jones  
Tanya Rogers  
Janet Holt

Alun Davies  
Liz Thomas  
James Coleman  
Steve Hughson  
David Pittendreigh  
Linda Davies  
Andrew Edwards  
Lorraine Howells  
Wyn Evans  
Jamie Heinrich  
Sarah Carr  
Gareth Jones (BW)

Kate Hovers had hoped that this meeting would have been face to face but as the current situation stands this has not been possible.

**In Attendance:** Helen Roberts, Mr Phil Stocker

**1. Apologies** Paul Wozencraft, Mary Gittins, Jane Smith, Tim Ward

**2. To Confirm the Minutes of last AGM held 20th February 2020.** - The minutes were confirmed by all those present.

**3. To consider matters arising from the above.** The decision has been made to postpone NSA Welsh Sheep, we have been in talks with the hosts and it is the best way forward at the moment. The hosts are keen to hold the event and this will now be in 2023. If restrictions are lifted later in the year then we will plan to hold a series of smaller events such as farm walks.

**4. Chairman's Report** from Kate Hovers. The transport consultation has been ill thought out regarding headroom and temperature controls, NSA will be putting a strong response into this. We were very disappointed to see Wales go into a full NVZ. The committee is encouraged to write to Lesley Griffiths and Senedd members. Pliad Cymru have tabled to reject the bill but need all the support they can get. This may not seem like a problem for sheep farmers but it will be due to the extra paperwork that will be created to conform to the rules. John Lloyd thought the proposed transport rules were a smoke screen to banning live exports for slaughter.

## **5. To review the accounts for 2020.**

The income is always a lot lower in the year we don't have an event but the bottom line is still ok with the Region in a healthy position to go forward. The balance in the accounts at the end of the year was £17,485 in the current account, £45,231 in the interest account and £148,725 in the COIF account. The accounts were approved by those present.

## **6. To appoint Officers for the coming year.**

This is a year where the officers stay the same. Therefore they are listed below.

- a) Chair – Kate Hovers
  
- b) Vice Chair – Caryl Hughes
  
- 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. Errina Rogers and Wayne Davies were added to the committee. Wayne will represent the Border Leicesters and replace Arthur George who sadly passed away earlier in the year.
  
- f) To confirm nominations to NSA Board for 2021.  
Nominations for Board were Tim Ward, Llew Thomas and Kate Hovers.  
Policy & Technical committee John Lloyd  
F& GP committee Margaret Dalton.  
These nominations were accepted by those present.

**7. Secretary's Remuneration.** It had been agreed at a previous committee meeting that the annual amount would remain at £6,000 per year plus expenses and travel at 45ppm. This was agreed by those present.

**8. To consider any other business.** Ideas for smaller events were needed. Jeff Gwilliam offered to host a farm walk later in the year.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 3.15pm and thanked those for attending.

The meeting was followed by talks from James Owen, Jamie Heinrich and Steve Hughson. A summary is below.

## Upbeat Online NSA CymruWales Annual Meeting -

Lockdown has shown a marked increase in consumption of home-reared lamb, NSA Chief Executive Phil Stocker told the NSA CymruWales Annual Regional Meeting, He said the conclusion was that, before Lockdown, the catering trade had been using significant amounts of Australian lamb.

The virtually held meeting was well attended and generally upbeat. Mr Stocker said: "I think as we come out of Lockdown, it's going to be one of the areas that we're going to need to really focus on.

"We need to try to expose a bit of a spotlight on that catering and hospitality trade around traceability and try and encourage a greater level of transparency over some of their sourcing." He explained that figures for the past year suggested there had been a growth of 4% to 9% in lamb sales to the domestic market. And people clearly weren't afraid to pay a bit more for a quality product, because the value of that lamb had increased by around 19%.

High Street butchers and farm shops reported trade had doubled or trebled, even quadrupled, with the vast majority of that meat being British. It wasn't being sold on a 'stack it high and sell it cheap' basis. People were paying good money to treat themselves at home.

Phil Stocker added: "I think we've also got to do a bit more to make sure that some of the growth we've seen in those independent outlets is maintained as we go forward. The range and diversity we've got in our market place is of great value to us. We've got to work hard to maintain that."

Brexit had been a real worry, but there was relief over the zero tariffs secured before Christmas. However the non-tariff barriers, such as border control posts, export health certificates and bureaucracy, meant that access to European markets wasn't as easy as it had been. Additional costs amounted to as much as £1400 per lorry.

Meanwhile, figures showed that opportunities were beginning to open up in other parts of the world, with the 96% of the 35% of lamb production that went to Europe reduced to 91%. He warned, though, that it would take a very long time to build such trade and wider exports wouldn't replace the volumes going to the European Union.

Chair, Kate Hovers, told the meeting that the proposed Government travel regulations were ill thought out. She said the legislation didn't seem to be the way to address core animal health issues and highlighted 'the untold consequences' and what she called the non-evidenced height and temperature restrictions.

Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Chief Executive Steve Hughson told the meeting that the events sector, which included the Royal Welsh Show and other Society events, was facing a Perfect Storm. It was going to be a real struggle for the next 12 months, as they strived to protect the Society, its reputation and its finances for the next generation.

It was very challenging, with the reduction of Government support and the furlough scheme coming to an end, while rate relief and VAT rate relief were unlikely to go on forever. Then there was a Budget due on 3rd March, with possible implications for Welsh Government spending.

Mr Hughson said: "That Perfect Storm of reducing Government support at the same time as we've cancelled some events for this year means we have no income and of course we're seeing greater requests for people asking for their money back."

Across the major shows, there were reductions in membership, presenting quite a challenge. The Society had for some years tried to get across that membership is not about tickets, it's about membership of the organisation, supporting it to deliver its charitable objectives. Mr Hughson added that the RWAS is fully engaged with the Welsh Government through the Visitor Economy COVID Taskforce and the more recently formed Event Wales Industry Advisory Group.

The proposals in the Welsh Government's Agriculture in Wales White Paper were outlined by James Owen Deputy Director, Land Management Reform, Welsh Government, and followed by full discussion with members. He said it comprised not just environmental sustainability, but also social sustainability recognising the vital role farming plays in supporting rural communities and economic sustainability.

The Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and other EU agri-environment schemes will be replaced with a single direct support scheme for farming. It also aimed to reduce the complexity of regulation. A set of National Minimum Standards would replace the existing pathwork, making it easier for farmers to understand them and comply.

The problem of attracting and retaining young people in farming was addressed by South Australia's Jamie Heinrich. He farms 880 hectares with his family and is a Nuffield Scholar and a former Youth Ambassador for the Sheep Meat Council of Australia,

Farming had a bright future, but needed the right young people, he told the meeting. Attracting and retaining them involved a good education, the right career structure and less negativity on the part of the current generation of farmers. There was a big difference between what farmers said about the industry and how they actually felt – most loved the lifestyle and the rewards and challenges of their industry.