

Pigmeat Supply Chain Task Force – Environmental Requirements Sub-Group

Note of Inaugural Meeting held on Monday 18 May 2009

Present:

Barney Kay, NPA (Chair)
Nigel Penlington, BPEX
Diane Mitchell, NFU
Nick Green, Alvis Bros
Lizzie Press, BQP/Tulip
[REDACTED] Defra
[REDACTED], Defra
[REDACTED] Natural England

Duncan Prior, Task Force Secretary

Apologies for Absence:

[REDACTED] Environment Agency
[REDACTED] Defra

1. Introductions and Background

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the first meeting of the Sub-Group, and explained the background to the main Task Force, its membership, aim and principal sub-groups. He said that Jane Kennedy was giving the initiative personal commitment, and that it was important for supply chain stakeholders to grasp the opportunity to maximise benefits from it. The initiative had an initial 12 months' time-span, making it important to focus on key areas where lasting change could be achieved.

2. Scope and Principal Aim of the Sub-Group

2.1 The Chair set out his aspirations for the Sub-Group. It was crucial that its work led to benefits for all of the participating stakeholders, providing an in-built incentive for success to be achieved. The draft Sub-Group workplan was introduced, which the Chair regarded as a flexible framework for going forward, allowing the Sub-Group to pursue specific initiatives as priorities became clear through debate. Membership of the Sub-Group would also be kept under review to ensure proper stakeholder representation and expertise (through topic-specific invitations if necessary).

2.2 The meeting considered and agreed the draft overarching aim of the Sub-Group:

“Achievement of environmental goals within the pigmeat supply chain set against the wider context of sustainable development – especially the need for economic growth.”

3. Workplan Objectives

3.1 Each of the 4 draft objectives was discussed and adopted. The following main points were made:

3.1.1 Objective (i) *identify priorities for enhancing environmental benefits... and solutions to barriers*

- need to demonstrate benefits/good news stories already being achieved from increasing environmental pressures in outdoor and indoor pig production (eg rotation cropping/mixing arable and livestock production; environmentally

efficient housing to improve productivity and animal health; positive impacts of Climate Change Levy; reduced environmental damage from new cost effective animal diets);

- identify best practice, capable of being piloted/rolled-out on farm;
- review R&D on environmental performance (especially to identify knowledge gaps) and link into the Task Force's R&D workstream led by Defra;
- anaerobic digestion/bio-energy was a particular area of potential significance where the Sub-group could assist by feeding into the separate Defra Task Force on AD.

Actions:

1. **Barney Kay** would set up a separate meeting with selected experts on bio-energy. He noted that the Defra AD Task Force did not have high levels of farmer representation, and felt that could be a useful input from this Sub-Group. He would also speak to Iain Notman, as Defra's lead on the AD Task Force.
2. **Nigel Penlington** agreed to prepare a paper by mid-July identifying priority areas for action by the Sub-Group (ie over and above work on AD), and good news stories/case studies of environmental business benefits to promulgate to pig producers.

3.1.2 Objective (ii) *improve interface between industry and enforcement bodies*

- Agreed need for key bodies to have formal statement of shared vision of intent and compendium of good practice (including recent lessons learned from IPPC which had developed from positive collaboration principally between industry, Defra and the Environment Agency);
- The Sub-Group wished to know more about the role and accountability of Statutory Consultees (eg in environmental permitting regimes), and the operating guidance they work under (eg do they have to take into account wider factors of sustainable development when advising on a specific aspect for which they are deemed to be authoritative; and what is the scope for industry to collaborate with such bodies in developing the latter's formal advice to the permitting authority).

Actions:

1. **Duncan Prior** to draft short vision statement for consideration by Sub-Group at its next meeting.
2. **Duncan Prior** to ask Defra to provide advice on the definition of "Statutory Consultee" and any generic guidance that exists to help such bodies carry out their functions, for consideration at the next Sub-Group meeting.

3.1.3 Objective (iii) *improve business efficiency within environmental regulatory implementation and enforcement regimes*

- Agreed that there was scope for a full appraisal of regulatory implementation regimes (including IT systems) across the whole supply chain from farm to point of sale that sought to identify more cost effective ways of achieving the environmental performance standards required from legislation; which would then provide businesses with the incentive to explore higher, voluntary performance standards where the enforcement bodies were able to assist with cost effective mechanisms;
- Information management and the use of IT systems were seen as key to environmental monitoring on farm and business success – it would be helpful to review the progress made under Defra's Whole Farm Approach initiative, and to draw useful lessons from it for further consideration;
- It would be useful for the Sub-Group to be brought up to date on the Government's 'Farm Regulation and Charging Strategy' – particularly what had been achieved and what future action was proposed.

Actions:

1. **Barney Kay** to discuss with Environment Agency the idea of employing a business process improvement consultant to help map a particular process and develop protocols for future use. IPPC might be a useful area to look at, given the existing positive collaboration between industry and the EA in developing that implementation regime. A proposed protocol could then be tested before wider roll-out.
2. **Duncan Prior** to invite Defra to give presentation of the 'Farm Regulation and Charging Strategy' at the Sub-Group's next meeting.
3. **Sub-Group members** to provide Task Force Secretary with lists of existing regulatory regimes where there were likely to be potential process improvements resulting in efficiency benefits to those managing the regimes as well as those operating within them.

3.1.4 Objective (iv) *conduct environmental audit/mapping of whole chain pigmeat production, with recommendations for long-term improvements*

- some food sectors were already pursuing similar initiatives from which lessons could be learned (eg WRAP working with the fish industry, or other work undertaken by Cranfield University);
- BPEX had commissioned an LCA/environmental burdens study (carbon footprint) on the whole pork supply chain (report anticipated later in the summer);
- BPEX had commenced an initiative to develop a Pig Industry Environment Strategy (PIES) some while ago. The initiative had stalled due to higher priorities (ie significant economic challenges in the pig sector during the past 18

months or so), although BPEX had produced a discussion document called *Pig Environmental Partnership*;

- This objective was not an immediate priority within the workplan; but the other objectives combined should provide important elements of a longer-term approach and confidence to achieve this objective.

Actions:

1. **Nigel Penlington** to distribute copies of *Pig Environmental Partnership* to Sub-Group members.
2. **Nigel Penlington** to keep Sub-Group informed on progress of BPEX's pork chain LCA.

4. Issues to raise with Task Force

4.1 Although the Sub-Group saw strong merit in addressing environmental challenges across the whole of the pigmeat supply chain (especially the proposal to undertake business process modelling), the meeting was very conscious of the predominance of producer interests currently represented. It was therefore thought prudent to seek a steer from the main Task Force (at its next meeting on 10 June) about (a) the merits of such an approach, and (b) wider representation on the Sub-Group itself.

4.2 Action: **Barney Kay and Duncan Prior** to ensure this issue is put before the Task Force on 10 June.

5. Identifying and Managing Risks to Sub-Group Success

5.1 The Sub-Group expressed concern about the absence of a dedicated budget for taking forward specific pieces of work; but took note that the Task Force had agreed that existing resources should always be the first point of consideration (re-aligning priorities where justified). However, Defra had told the Task Force - without commitment - that in identifying crucial work resources should not be an automatic show-stopper. In such circumstances, the Task Force should be invited to consider a full and robust business case and make recommendations on next steps.

5.2 The Sub-Group took note of the risks cited on the register appended to the draft workplan previously circulated, and were asked to consider adding other risks as they became apparent.

6. Members' Expenses

6.1 The Chair asked about direct costs incurred by members attending Sub-Group meetings. The Task Force Secretary explained that Defra had adopted the approach whereby each member was expected to meet their own expenses (as part of their contribution to the initiative for which they should be beneficiaries) – though that did not rule out consideration of special cases. The Chair asked TF Secretary to specifically raise the point with Defra, as some Sub-Group members were acting for the wider interests of stakeholders and whose relatively small business organisations may find it difficult to fund such costs.

Action: **Duncan Prior** to ask for Defra's ruling on expenses and report back to the Sub-Group.

7. Conclusion, Next Steps and Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The Chair concluded the meeting by saying it had been a very positive round of discussions, and he was heartened by the level of positive attitude and enthusiasm displayed. He stressed again that all parties to the initiative should be beneficiaries – and emphasised to his producer colleagues that this should not be a confrontation with enforcement bodies, as it was essential that all should work collaboratively to meet shared goals.

7.2 The draft workplan would be refined where necessary – following discussion – and submitted to the Task Force for endorsement on 10 June. It would then be important to determine urgently a more tangible programme of projects to deliver the Sub-Group's objectives. The next meeting, to take that forward, would be held on Tuesday 28 July at Defra.

7.3 Actions:

1. **Duncan Prior** to amend draft workplan as necessary.
2. **Barney Kay** to present proposed workplan to Task Force on 10 June.
3. **Duncan Prior** to confirm notice of second meeting to all Sub-Group members particularly so that those absent from the first meeting were able to note their diaries accordingly.

Secretary to the Pigmeat Supply Chain Task Force
May 2009

