



## SWHLI RAP

### MINUTES

<b>Time:</b>	10.00am	<b>Chairman:</b>	Richard Stanbury
<b>Place:</b>	NFU Office, Pynes Hill	<b>Co-ordinator:</b>	Annabelle Priest
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2009	<b>Tel:</b>	01392 878337

**Attending:** Richard Stanbury (Chair), Nick Cork (SWFD), Christine Marshall (SWFD), James Hassett (SWRDA), Andy Rummig (SWRDA), Tim Dart (SWRDA), Brian Preece (VLA), Helen Thoday (BPEX), Charlotte Evans (BPEX), Richard Simpson (Kingshay), Allan Wellwood (Animal Health), Phil Hadley (EBLEX), Tim McKendrick (The Dairy Group), Julie Edwards (NFU), Nick Bell (Bristol Vet School), Richard Soffe (Duchy College)

**Apologies:** Peter Baber (Farmer/Meat SW/EIG), Charles Bourns (Poultry farmer), Dick Sibley (Private Vet/EIG), Duncan Forbes (Kingshay)

**Minutes taken by:** Annabelle Priest (SWFD)

#### 1. Approval of Minutes and Review of Actions

RS

Minutes from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009 RAP meeting approved and signed.

##### 1.1 ADAS Market Research Update

ADAS Market Research all complete.

NC

100 pig producers were contacted in the Market Research, 46 of whom had 10 pigs or less. This could skew the results for large consumer producers. BPEX believe that it is appropriate enough, however.

HT

##### 1.2 Programme Update- Procurement

SWRDA have been looking at a process for SWHLI to begin activity on the ground in a way that is structured and transparent. Thanks and appreciation for usefulness and importance of the interim report and ADAS Market Research.

AR

There were 2 routes to market for the SWHLI programme that SWRDA considered:- procurement (of a service through OJEU) or grant applications. The grant application process involves opening up the programme for individuals or groups to submit applications for funding based on certain criteria stipulated in the programme documentation. The service procurement route would involve a lengthy process of designing a detailed tender specification document, which would have to be advertised in the Official Journal Of the European Union (OJEU) for a set period – and would be open to bidders from across Europe. Appraisal of projects could add considerably more time taken to begin delivery of projects. Service procurement would also incur VAT charges, which would eat into the available funding.

After careful consideration of the options, SWRDA has decided to proceed with the grant application option. Applications can be submitted to the SWRDA under the standard RDPE application rules between September 14<sup>th</sup> and December 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009. Applications will be appraised as they come in to avoid further delay in activity being delivered on the ground.

There will be indicative monetary allocations for each element of the programme (bovine, poultry, pigs, sheep, knowledge exchange and bTB). The RDA would expect to see appropriate letters of support from industry for applications from a single organisation or

collaboration wishing to deliver the full value of one or more particular elements (for example, Knowledge Exchange). Although it cannot be stipulated as a requirement, SWRDA will be actively seeking large collaborative applications. SWRDA will not consider combining applications that come in separately – applications will be appraised in their own right.

There will be comprehensive guidance on the RDPE application process, the RDA appraisal process and Measure 111. It will be made clear throughout that each project must fit within these and adhere to the SWHLI brief and SWHLI interim report to be eligible. There would be opportunity for capital grants to be awarded as vouchers through Measure 111 such as for faecal egg count packs, if that element were part of a project. This will be stipulated within the guidance.

The appraisal process involves three stages:

- 1) **Checking completeness of application**, ie does it have signed and complete form, three years accounts, does it conform to measure 111? If it does not the applicant will be informed and the timing of that project's appraisal period will only begin on receipt of a complete eligible application.
- 2) **Appraisal**. Asks if the application: has considered its financial capabilities and mitigated its financial risks; contains a comprehensive and realistic income and expenditure breakdown; has considered the private match funding source and percentage of the project's budget it takes up; has a sound system in place to manage the project; has considered any alternative options; has key people that are appropriate and experienced (CV to be included); fits with cross cutting theme areas; considers equality issues; is value for money. The RDA will not set figures on training days. (All of this detail for requirement is within the RDPE guidelines)
- 3) **Does it fit with RDPE, SWHLI brief and interim report?** There will be one person with Animal Health knowledge from the RDA on the appraisal panel, who can ensure that technical applications are appraised fairly and with knowledgeable judgement. It is possible that SWRDA could employ external experts using single pot finances. If there are RAP members or those involved with the RAP who are not intending to be part of an application or its delivery, they should notify SWRDA in order that their expertise of their own specialism and of SWHLI can be called upon during the appraisal period.

SWFD can offer services to SWRDA as a neutral outside body with previous experience of bids and monitoring. CM

Please ensure that scientific projects are considered by experts who understand the subject to an adequate degree. An expert of this calibre is unlikely to be working in the RDA but rather in a specialist animal health profession. The beef sector will take much of the three months to put together a collaborative project and would be extremely dissatisfied by the process if the funding had already been allocated before this project were appraised. PH

The RAP are concerned with getting delivery on the ground quickly but also in ensuring that the process is fair to those in the RAP and outside of it. It is the opinion of the RAP that an end date is essential to the application process but that the applications must be appraised as they are received but held and then scored and ranked after the closing date for applications. This would ensure that later applications, from whatever source are not unfairly prejudiced through a lack of funding, particularly if a larger project took more time to complete. This would also ensure that the findings of the SWHLI programme's research to date could be considered and that all the projects granted funding would be working towards the overarching SWHLI framework when taken as a whole. RS

Not only does the process of publicising the successful applications before all are appraised mean that activity on the ground is delivered as fast as possible but this is the way that the appraisal system is set up in the RDA. However the proposal to have an end date and then scoring and ranking after that date will be put to SWRDA and an answer will be given to the RAP as soon as possible to ensure that the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009 open for business date is maintained. There would also be a decision on whether the cut off date should remain JH

If the funding is not utilised within the application period, another application period can be established.

BPEX will be unlikely to have an application ready within the timescale.

HT

The allocation for the pigs sector and each sector will be set and not transferred over. If there were no successful applications within the timescale the funding would be carried over to another application period, but cannot be extended indefinitely.

JH

The bTB concept note and all concept notes that were sent to the RDA after the RAP meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009 when Rob Hatt declared SHWLI open for business, will have to be written as applications as with all projects and they will be notified of this by SWRDA. The grant application process as set by the RDA ensures no one organisation holds all of the programme funding.

SWHLI is a notified scheme and the EU have already stated that it is not a state aid case.

The definition of what SWRDA want through SWHLI under Measure 111 will not be allowed to duplicate the Skills RDPE requirements. SWHLI will be very specific and Skills will be more varied and flexible. It is recognised by SWRDA that there will be no confusion between the two for those being trained. Skills will be able to pick up the Measure 3.3.1.

AR

SWRDA will ensure that the application period is advertised very widely. RAP members and SWFD will have full guidance notes and information as soon as the application process opens so that they are able to answer any questions from their industries. The application period will be advertised to target audiences, networks, levy bodies, SWHLI reference group etc. Capital grants for farmers will not be granted through this fund, except where allowable through the guidance (i.e. FEC) Business Links would have to be informed of the criteria for concept notes going forward.

RAP members must not give advice or opinion on the interim report to outside enquirers, but direct them to the relevant documentation.

TD

There will be a mailbox open at the same time as the application period opens where any questions directed to anyone involved in the RAP or appraisal process can be posted along with the answer. This will be made available to anyone who asks to see it. Each question and answer will be logged in this way.

JH

A discussion considered SWRDA running events which would publicise the application period widely. These could be combined with surgeries on how to fill out applications although SWFD's previous experience of this proved that it was less valuable than expected and the time frame was now almost too tight to run events of this nature.

This is the last RAP meeting. Thanks to all involved for offering your time free of charge and doing so with such enthusiasm and expertise. Thanks to Gillian Collins for her contribution and to Nick Cork who took over half way through, the NFU for free use of their offices throughout, and to Nick Bell for his work and use of the Bristol Vet School. Thank you also to SWFD and to SWRDA.

RS

Final report will be written by Nick Cork.

Good luck and thank you.

**Chairman.....**

**Date: .....**