

**SUMMARY OF 71st AHDB POTATO BOARD
21st May 2019**

John Barry Boardroom, Best Western York Pavilion, York, YO10 4PJ

PRESENT: Sophie Churchill (Chair), Phillip Huggon, Dan Metheringham, Jonathan Papworth, Andrew Skea, Mark Taylor, Alison Levett, Jim Cargill

APOLOGIES: Will Shakeshaft, Michael Welham, Chris Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE: Ken Boyns, Rob Clayton, Sue Cleaver (minutes), Sue Cowgill, Jess Durant, Rebecca Miah

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, AND DECLARATIONS OF BUSINESS INTERESTS

The Chair, Sophie Churchill, opened the meeting at 8:00 am and welcomed those in attendance. Apologies were received from Will Shakeshaft, Michael Welham and Chris Wilson.

There were no new declarations of interest. Mark Taylor reminded the Board that he was also the Chair of the Fresh Potato Suppliers Association, which had been declared at previous meetings. He would leave the room if there were any discussions in which this would cause a conflict of interest.

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 19th MARCH 2019

The minutes from the meeting held on 19th March 2019 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH MARCH 2019

An update on the matters arising from the meeting held on the 19th March was given. It was noted that levy payer knowledge regarding the Grow Your Own Potatoes campaign had dipped. The Board requested that awareness was raised in this area.

The Board noted that they were keen to maintain a continued awareness of support costs.

CHAIR'S UPDATE AND REFLECTIONS ON LEVY PAYER SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Chair's report was taken as read. There was an awareness of the necessity of ensuring that the leadership from the Board and team were right for turbulent times by having clarity on the roles of each Board member, running the meetings well, and making the Boards effective. The Chair challenged the Board to consider where they would like to see industry in the next 10 years, and to be prepared for challenges and change.

The Chair thanked Jess Durant for her presentation of the Levy Payer Satisfaction Survey results at the working dinner the previous night. The Board acknowledged the effect that the results might have on the team, and thanked them for their hard work. There was an awareness of survey fatigue and a discussion of the reasons behind this. There was a concern that increased awareness of AHDB products had not resulted in increased engagement and uptake. The Board was interested to know the response to the survey by AHDB and how that is communicated to levy payers who participated.

FINANCE AND LEVY

RC talked the Board through the year-end figures accounting for any variances.

The Board discussed the recruitment of Mike Storey's replacement. The Board requested that the level of potato research expertise was maintained within the team, and encouraged the recruitment of a potato specialist. There was a discussion of overall staffing needs within AHDB. The Board requested an overview of key staffing changes and the overall depth and breadth of the AHDB team.

HW would attend the August meeting to get feedback from the Board on the presentation of the Management Accounts. The Board noted a need for clearer linking between the commentary and the numbers.

The Board were positive about the new formatting of the market and pricing reports which had made the content easier to read.

The Board requested more information in the Potato Levy Collection Report to give a stronger sense of performance this year compared with last year. Suggestions included adding deadlines and previous years' progress in a table format to give a clear snapshot.

DIRECTORS AND OPERATIONAL REPORT

RC presented the Operational Report. The Board discussed issues surrounding the uptake of Farmbench and risks related to future development

CONSUMER RELATED ACTIVITIES UPDATE – REBECCA MIAH

RM presented on the latest market development progress, food service work, consumer segmentation, industry working group and the latest developments in the Food Advisory Board.

The Board discussed the merits of highlighting varietal differences to consumers. They were very interested in the work that had taken place on consumer segmentation and the increasing level of sophistication that came from this approach.

CROP MONITOR – CHAP

The Chair welcomed Fraser Black, Richard Glass and Femke van den Berg to the meeting. They gave an overview of Crop Monitor and presented a vision for the future, in which Crop Monitor would act as a platform for the prediction of risks for pest and diseases.

There was a discussion of the level of certainty and trust required in the results of a predictive model before growers would reduce spraying, and the financial risks involved.

CHAP encouraged the Board to consider the future when in 15 – 20 years' time when there may well be reduced chemistry and climate change, and what the long term industry needs might be. This project was about building the machine that has the potential to answer some of the questions that would need to be asked.

The Chair concluded the discussion by saying that it was a useful explanation of the potential of Crop Monitor, which would help in any further discussion around collaboration, and she thanked RB, RG and FB for their attendance.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – AOB

There was no further business. The Chair closed the meeting at 11:05am.