



AGRI Steering Group – Saturday 25th October at 1.30pm Quality Hotel, Birmingham
Road, Allesley, Coventry, CV5 9BA

Chairman: Russell Carrington (Herefordshire)

Vice-chairman: Lynsey Martin (Kent)

Present: Russell Carrington (Chairman [WM]); Harriet Wilson (WM); Ed Ford (E); Lynsey Martin (Vice-Chairman [SE]); James Hutchinson (SW); Tom Wells (EM); Caroline Trude (SW); Duncan Howie (Co-option [E]);

Part Meeting: James Eckley (NFYFC CO); Hannah Talbot (NFYFC Vice-Chairman); Claire Worden (NFYFC Chairman); Chris Manley (Co-Option [SW]); David Clarke (BoM); Gordon Gatward (BoM); Christina Evans (Fundraising Officer)

In attendance: Julia Pointon (NFYFC Vice Chairman BoM); Joanne Wyles (Agricultural and Rural Affairs Officer); Sam Dilcock (N); Philip Miller (N); Kate Wainwright (EM); Catherine Bennett (W); Sioned Davies (W); Ant Boesen (E); Julie Mate (Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust); Duncan McLeish (Kuhn); Sian Pritchard (Kuhn)

1. Welcome and introductions

RC welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves. RC detailed the achievements of AGRI this year and also congratulated EF on his Farming Hero award.

2. Apologies for absence

Becky Hammett (TRIG [SW]); Charlotte Johnston (Co-Option CEJA [WM]); Paul Hartley (E); Scott Rix (E); Hannah Durdy (N)

3. To confirm Minutes of previous meeting

James Hutchinson and a few other members reported that they had not received the previous minutes.

RC signed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record but offered to revisit these minutes if there were any matters arising from those who had not seen them, at the next meeting.

4. Additional items for agenda

EF asked to add an item about a charity tractor run he was organising.

5. Introduction to new AGRI sponsor – Kuhn Farm Machinery

Duncan McLeish and Sian Pritchard from Kuhn introduced themselves and the company to the steering group. They discussed how they would like to work with the steering group. CE explained how we can work together and the aims of the partnership including going through the contract.

DM gave a presentation which explained how Kuhn works as a business and their locations.

DM discussed what Kuhn can offer including – allowing counties to advertise on TV screens in dealerships, efficiency with safety, SIMA tour, factory tours, pull ups for displays at events.

HW suggested that Kuhn could work with us on a project, SD suggested designing a machine competition, CE suggested a farm safety campaign and RC suggested a “day in the life” [of a young Kuhn employee] feature for Ten26.

Agreed actions:

All members to report back to area details of new sponsorship

All members to consider projects to work on

6. Julie Mate – Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust

JM gave a presentation on how Nuffield Farming Scholarships operate, with details of how to apply, what the requirements are and what the benefits are. She then answered questions from the room.

Agreed actions:

Highlight Nuffield opportunities to members, plus the resource which is available from their reports library and scholars willing to speak to clubs for possible programme fillers

7. St Georges House Consultation Feedback

CT (who has been leading on this) explained what happened and what was discussed.

CT and CM reported what the actions for NFYFC were and these included:

-Greater use of social media to promote farming as a career – particularly You Tube.

-Buddy System for people starting new jobs/apprenticeships to provide support.

-Matching Service

CM & RC suggested inviting Suzie Emmett to the next AGRI Meeting to talk about the Farming is Magic project and how NFYFC members can make videos to promote the industry to young people. Also suggested working with BBC, schools, Brightcrop and Farmers Weekly.

It was discussed that the buddy scheme already existed on an informal level through friendships within clubs. How this could be promoted further was discussed. Suggestions included contacting businesses taking on apprentices and asking if they would like to join their local YFC. Link with schemes such as EDGE. Create a source module to encourage more informal buddying. Another suggestion was some sort of web forum and also a reception to be held at agricultural shows.

Matching service was discussed and the reasons why this has not progressed. It was suggested that a meeting is held between members and NFYFC staff to discuss whether this could be taken further.

Agreed actions:

Invite Suzie Emmett to speak to the next SG to explore promoting farming careers by video.

Look into promotion of buddying, initially through case studies and some guidance.

Arrange a meeting to discuss the next steps for the matching service in time for a firm proposal by February Council.

8. Additional Item – Financial details from Chairman and Chief Officer

CW and JE entered the meeting to discuss the financial report from the board. CW asked members to consider the expenditure for this year and next and to consider future projects. She pointed out that this year AGRI is due to break even but next year will be £13,500 loss due to CEJA membership.

9. CEJA

TW reported on his attendance at the sugar and Starch Civil Dialogue Group in September.

LM & CB reported on their attendance at the International Summit of Young Farmers in Bordeaux, which talked about considering farming a profession and also calling for finance from the European Central Bank. LM had also signed a manifesto in support of family farming.

EF & DH reported on their attendance at the Copa-Cogeca Congress in Brussels. Matteo Bartolini CEJA President spoke at the event and called for the ECB to provide funding for YFs which they agreed to. There was also a lot of discussion on the embargoes placed on European goods going in to Russia.

JW explained that HOPS were not renewing their sponsorship for 2015 but that Mole Valley were again going to give £5,000, the Trustees had agreed to give the membership for 2015 but only for one year so an additional sponsor is being sought.

The next steps were discussed, such as bringing up CEJA business more in area meetings and club nights to raise awareness.

SD raised whether we should create an E-petition calling on Defra to make available additional capital funding for young farmers.

JW discussed other ways of campaigning such as contacting election candidates.

RC noted thanks to HOPS and Mole Valley for their sponsorship for this year and highlighted that this had enabled our CEJA activities to gain considerable momentum bringing benefit to a wider range of members. A press release is planned in the coming weeks to promote all of our recent involvement with CEJA and the benefits this has brought.

All members of the steering group expressed interest in being involved in future CEJA events. The CEJA working group (which includes all members who have been involved with previous CEJA activities) continue to communicate via the Facebook group but it was suggested another CEJA meeting be held at the February Council weekend.

Agreed actions:

All members – to promote CEJA more at county and club level.

All members – to thinking of campaign points.

Working Group to meet again in February and ask Charlotte Johnston to lead on this.

JW to look into e-petition calling for more capital funding

JW to prepare letter for election candidates.

10. Feedback from Area Reps

RC – West Midlands – reported that all feedback would be discussed in other points of the agenda.

CB & CM Wales – Wales Rural Affairs Conference to be held on 13th December. Other developing initiatives include the Sainsbury's lamb initiative, Agri Academy run with farming connect, Llyndi Isaf scholarship,

SD – Northern/Yorkshire – looking at putting together a training programme for qualifications which are now no longer funded by colleges such as NTPC training. Applying to Princes Countryside Fund. Norfolk and Derbyshire have also done this.

Many asked for Counties to be reminded about Agri-links representatives and for the role description to be put on the SG facebook group.

JH – SW – Discussed training days that were happening in the SW for hedge laying and cow signals, suggested linking up with fat stock markets.

Agreed actions:

JW – To share the AGRI Links description and send them to County organisers to encourage more local ambassadors for AGRI.

11. Feedback from Industry Reps

DH – CLA – Attended the last meeting where they discussed their new rural business policy document. Also discussed changes to inheritance tax, the water framework directive and pesticides. Broadband and the real level of farmgate sales were also topics.

LM – LEAF – LM reported that there had not been a meeting since the last SG meeting but there was one coming up shortly.

JW – TRIG – JW reported that NFYFC had responded to the latest consultation on changes to Model Clauses.

JH – NFU – Attended NFU Council, reported on their actions at Party Conferences, latest campaigns and also the free NFU membership offer for NFYFC members.

12. Agri Forum Progress

LM updated the group on the meeting of the Agri-forum working group which took place on the 23rd September via Skype. Presented the ideas discussed in the meeting and how they had come to them.

JW confirmed that the venue would allow a hog roast.

Speaker suggestions were discussed, whether there should be a big name headline speaker or more industry leaders. DM suggested Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones the “black farmer” other suggestions were the Farmers Weekly Young Farmer of the Year. It was agreed that the title topic would be “What’s your future in farming”

It was also suggested that the forum start at 12 as many would want to join friends early in the afternoon.

Agreed actions:

JW to invite speakers.

JW to create invite to send in club mailing.

13. Training and Events

JW reported on the progress with the Defra subsidised training and study tours. Dates are now being set for January. For Tenancy Training, Succession Workshops and Business Start up training. The study tour is planned for February to visit Paris and Kuhn will be involved.

The group discussed possibilities for future trips.

The group would like the trips to be open to associate members as well.

KW reported that the reason the meat for the market event was not supported by Derbyshire was because they already have their own event. However they would like to host some other types of training.

JW also presented a proposal from YFC Travel for a trip to Canada to see the Calgary Stampede. The SG agreed that this would be a good trip despite its cost as it was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

14. Oxford Real Farming Conference

RC discussed the conversations he had been having with the ORFC and what topics they would like NFYFC members to get involved in. AGRI will also be hosting one of the sessions focusing on some of the St Georges House Consultation to promote careers in farming to young people.

15. AGRI Manifesto

JW handed an updated version of the manifesto to all members still present and asked them to give feedback by the next meeting.

Agreed action

All members to review manifesto to see if points are still relevant.

16. Health and Safety

JW reported that NFU Mutual Yellow Welly Foundation were interested in working with NFYFC to widen their campaign and were looking at having the title topic for the 2016 forum as something associated with farm safety.

17. Any Other Business

17.1 Communications Update:

The newsletter is being very well received.

The Facebook group is good but conversations are limited, and possibly more people need to be involved to get really good discussions going.

Area feedback forms are also found to be useful – some members requested if they could also be emailed so that they can forward to local reps.

17.2 UK Dairy Day

JW asked for volunteers to work with the organisers to run the youth zone, LM agreed to get involved.

17.3 EF Charity Tractor Run

EF reported that him and other forage aid organisers were organising a tractor run from Somerset to Telford and would like YFC backing. DM agreed Kuhn could promote at their dealerships along the route.

17.4 Stockman of the Year

JW reported that comps would like input from AGRI for changes to the stockman of the year competition. LM said she would like to get involved but not if it would exclude her from entering this year.

17.5 Wiltshire YFC Calendar

JH said Wiltshire had done a charity calendar and had some on sale if anyone would like a copy.

Agreed Action

JW to send feedback form out via email in future prior to Council meetings.

18. Date of next meeting and close

RC thanked everyone for attending. The next meeting is **Saturday 21st February 2015**

SIGNED.....

DATED.....