



AGRI Steering Group – Saturday 24 June at 1.30pm Quality Hotel, Birmingham Road,
Allesley, Coventry, CV5 9BA

Chairman: Harriet Wilson (Staffordshire)

Vice-chairman: James Hutchinson (Wiltshire)

Present: Harriet Wilson (Chair [WM]); James Hutchinson (Vice Chair, NFU representative[SW]); Richard Carruthers (N); Gerald Norman (E); Kate Wainwright (EM); Ben Robinson (SE); Adam Churchman (SE); Sian Pritchard (KUHN); David Goodwin (WM); Russell Carrington (Fresh Start Representative, Herefordshire); Amy Panton (observer); David Fellows (WM P); Katie Wade (Farms for City Schools)

Part Meeting: James Eckley (NFYFC CEO); Ed Ford (NFYFC Chair [E]); Lynsey Martin (Vice Chair [SE]);

In attendance: Sarah Palmer (Agricultural and Rural Issues Officer)

1. Welcome and introductions

HW welcomed all present and introductions followed.

2. Apologies for absence

Becky Heal (TRIG Representative [Devon]); Charlotte Middlebrook (co-option, Yorkshire); Claire Bellew (SW); Caroline Trude (SW); Kate Bennett (KUHN); Charles Day (observer); Richard Bower (NFU Next Generation); Dafydd Jones (Wales YFC); James Evans (co-option, CEJA Representative[Wales YFC]); Tom Wells (CEJA and CLA Rep [EM]); Beth Duchesne (E); James Davies (observer); Josh Fincham (observer)

3. To confirm Minutes of previous meeting

HW signed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record.

4. Correspondence and any additional items for the agenda

Correspondence received included:

- Request from English Rural Housing Association for AGRI to consider the [National Federation's 5Point Plan](#) for rural housing and endorse
- Request from Humphrey Feed and Pullets to discuss future input to the YFC programme
- Farmers Guardian 24 Hours in Farming campaign – 10-11 August
- The work of the [National Land Based College \(NLBC\)](#)

Actions:

SP to endorse the 5Point Plan

SP/BR to liaise with Humphrey Feed and Pullets

All to note FG 24 Hours in Farming campaign

All to explore NLBC further and share with members

5. AGRI Forum 2017 Review

Feedback from discussion included:

Good chairing of forum; well-attended, t-shirts good and helped with positive publicity both before and after the event. A well-publicised event but could also be highlighted in future NFYFC presentations for counties and clubs ie the Annual Convention good behaviour guide presentation. Future suggestions for speakers included: farming-based speakers; award-winning farms representatives such as Daylesford; young farmers and farmers from overseas.

Objectives of the AGRI Forum

1. Inspire YFC members

- Gain/share experience from speakers via advice, opinions or case studies
- Widen members' horizons

2. Engagement platform

- stakeholder engagement – championing partnerships
- member engagement for AGRI – future skills and opportunities for YFC members

3. Endorsement opportunities

- create opportunities for endorsement of AGRI/YFCs and positive press and profile for YFC within industry/stakeholder/YFC membership.

NFYFC survey feedback:

Why do people attend?

- Inspiration/learn from speakers
- Peer pressure
- Network
- Widen horizons

-Food
-Curiosity
-Interest in the topic/theme
Future theme/topic suggestions
Brexit
Milk prices
AMR
Case studies
Education/FE-career progression
Current farming issues
Improving UK farming efficiency
Future proofing your business
Entrance into farming – farming and networking
Diversification

The group agreed there was an intention for attendees to learn, perhaps from a case study (Nuffield scholar/trailblazer), to stimulate a questioning thought process and to consider input from outside the industry. JH would give further thought to the discussion and bring back a draft idea for the October meeting with a relevant theme. It was agreed that doors would be open at 10.30 am for an 11.30 am start.

Positive feedback from Kuhn and thanks from all to Kuhn for sponsorship.

Actions:

JH to report back to the group in October

Future discussion with Kuhn

6. AGRI Topics

SP reported that no decision regarding the NFYFC Defra grant had been received, but if successful would comprise the following:

- Defra/YFC regional discussion groups, facilitated by Defra and chaired by NFYFC for input to a future Domestic Agricultural Policy
- A joint event with A Focus on Nature on 4 November to debate conservation and farming, listen to key note speakers and take part in a farm walk at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust's Allerton Project, Loddington. (organised, ready for marketing in September)
- Webinar on succession planning: how to approach succession planning and signposting advice, made widely available for a large reach (Possible partners – AHDB/Sian Bushell/NatWest)
- Meat for the Market training: training and guide to enhance knowledge of market demands and improve business skills in the livestock sector – AHDB Beef and Lamb
- Future training incorporating the Smart Farming Guide (launch date *tbc*)
- A project with the Rare Breeds Survival Trust to provide a 'how to start showing' guide and 'how to add value' guide
- Support for the 2018 AGRI Forum

AGRI area representatives would lead on regional Defra/YFC discussion groups scheduled to take part in October and November. The following suggestions were made: HW-West Midlands; JH-South West; RC-North West; SD/CM-North; TW/KW-EM; GN-Eastern; BR-SE and for further discussion with Wales YFC.

Potential venues were discussed and included: English Winter Fair and auction marts.

SP reported on a recent meeting with AHDB and details of Meat for the Market training offer-details of which and future training opportunities for members to be circulated widely.

SP reported on plans for 4 November event - *Finding Common Ground between Young Farmers and Young Conservationists* - at the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust's (G&WCT) Allerton Project, Loddington, Leicestershire:

Key note speakers

[Rob Yorke/Caroline Drummond](#)

Panel

[Rob Yorke](#) - Chair - Land Agent, Rural commentator

Caroline Drummond, ceo LEAF

[Jim Egan](#), G&WCT

[Ed Barker](#), National Pig Association

David Goodwin, NFYFC AGRI LEAF rep

Programme

- 10-10.30am - Arrive, Tea/coffee
- 10.30-11am - Introduction from Allerton Project staff (Jim Egan, Dr Alastair Leake and Phil Jarvis - 'How an integrated approach to farming and the environment can work')
- 11.15-12.45pm - Farm walk led by Allerton Project staff
- 1-1.30 pm - LUNCH

- 1.30 - 2-30pm - Rob Yorke and Caroline Drummond/Q&A
- 2.30 3.30pm - Panel debate, summary
- 3.30 - 4.00pm - Tea coffee depart

Domestic Agricultural Policy (DAP) workshop

The group held a Domestic Agricultural Policy workshop to further discuss and define a position paper. This will be widely circulated for consultation and recorded results from the following questions were as follows :

1 What are the most important considerations for a future Domestic Agricultural Policy (DAP) (excluding the specific next generation requests/general asks applicable to all)?

Trade

- equal opportunities
- actively seeking new markets

Regulation

- effective, fit for purpose
- support mechanisms
- responsible, quality British food

Science-led policy to enable innovation

Strong British Brand

- AMR
- Sustainability
- Biodiversity
- Access

Environment

Education

- children
- consumers
- agri careers
- farmers' understanding of consumers and markets

Labour

Skills and Training

- agri careers
- consumer led
- CPD

Support mechanisms

2 What are the most important agricultural considerations from a next generation perspective?

Need for a sustainable future

- We want government to provide a framework for young people to thrive and see/be confident about a future in agriculture

Support

- start-up loan scheme (underwritten by government)
- sustainable infrastructure grants
- support scheme that encourages next generation not just land owners
- communication of and accessibility to

Skills and Training

- mentoring (linked to loans)
- finding agri courses at colleges
- hard to find long-term jobs for apprentices – how can we deliver on government targets?

Entry to farming

- formal framework
- promotion of career opportunities in agriculture

3 What are the most important rural considerations from a next generation perspective?

Connectivity

- broadband
- transport - infrastructure

Environment/Landscape

Community

- support for tertiary rural business/employment opportunities/sustainability
- YFC creating rural cohesion
- results from Countryside Challenge-community support

Housing

- planning
- affordability

Planning

-in favour of sustainable business growth

Rural Crime

4 **What are the most important points from the [CEJA CAP Consultation response](#) to integrate/complement AGRI policy?**

Generational Renewal- 20%

Sustainable Economic Support - 50%

Progressive and proactive environmental measure - 30%

5 **What are the most important points from the Defra Next Generation workshop?**

Barriers

- Knowledge exchange
- Vision
- Lack of joined up work
- Funding
- Evaluation of success
- Structural complexities

Opportunities

- Look to examples in other countries – Holland, Ireland and Wales
- Government's role leading industry
- R&D
- Wholesome and trusted food chain
- Communication
- Farm practice – do levy payers use AHDB efficiently?
- Benchmarking

6 **What are the most important points from the NFYFC Brexit Survey?**

- Negotiating a better deal for next generation/young farmers
- A forward-thinking farm business culture
- Effective & relevant regulation
- Sustainable farm businesses (support for investing in these businesses)
- Support
- Skills and training

Actions:

SP to circulate training and event details at relevant times

All to lead on regional DAP discussion groups and highlighting event and training opportunities

SP to continue the position paper and circulate

7. Industry Reps' Feedback

NFU

JH reported back on two recent NFU meetings: NFU Next Generation Forum and NFU Council.

NFU Next Generation Forum - NFYFC office holders also attended the NFU Next Generation meeting which comprised: identifying work priorities and policy areas for further interrogation, with a view to highlight issues that are pertinent to the Next Generation of farmers within broader NFU policy.

Potential Work Areas (for discussion): • Domestic Agricultural Policy Paper • Contribution to CEJA workshops/meetings • Evaluate effectiveness of Young Farmer Schemes • Identify key barriers to entry for the sector • Identify key barriers for growth for young farmer enterprises

Proposed future work plan (to be finalised):

• Induction: HQ, Stoneleigh – summer 2017 • Induction: Westminster, London – October 2017 • NFU Next Gen/Industry Programme Event – November 2017 • Next Gen/NFYFC Event - *tbc* • HQ meeting – December 2017 • Brussels trip – January 2018

NFU Vice President Guy Smith attended part of the meeting.

It was noted that Sarah Dunsby had raised her interest regarding fruit farming with the NFU Next Generation Forum.

NFU Council - Secretary of State Michael Gove required evidence to support points raised with Defra. NFU's 5 Priorities were highlighted and NFU continues to lobby on subjects including: Brexit; labour and SAWS; investment; growth; bTB; avian 'flu; farm safety and glyphosate. Updates were received from all commodity boards.

JH was happy to continue as NFU rep until February, KW asked if any other AGRI member would like to take up the position and if not, she would do so.

LEAF

DG reported on his attendance of the last LEAF advisory board meeting which highlighted good practice for knowledge exchange/transfer and preparation for Open Farm

Sunday and for merging with FACE. (The group agreed that Open Farm Sunday enjoyed another successful year.)

Fresh Start Land Partnerships Service

SP joined the last advisory meeting by conference call which was attended by a Defra representative as well as the usual stakeholders. Continuing progress but more publicity and uptake needed. Nfyfc to continue helping to market the service via various communication platforms. Alison Rickett to continue to try to publicise further and to engage in more effective social media. A presentation regarding the service requested for Nfyfc Council and delivered by RC.

Tenancy Reform Industry Group (TRIG)

BH to attend the next TRIG meeting on 27 June and CB to shadow at next meeting and then take over the role. TRIG will be of particular significance to YFC members during this time of future policy decisions.

Actions:

JH and DG to continue with their respective representation

RC to make Land Partnerships Service presentation at Nfyfc Council

SP to continue to publicise the Land Partnerships Service

BH/CB to represent YFC members at TRIG meetings

8. Future CEJA Seminar

CEJA representative JE has requested hosting a future CEJA seminar be discussed at the AGRI meeting.

James Eckley joined the meeting with a request for the following points to be considered and submitted for the Board of Management regarding this topic.

A feasibility study to be produced for the Nfyfc Board of Management to assess financial risk which should include:

- a qualified budget
- potential venues
- partnership consideration between Nfyfc and NFU Next Generation Forum – 50% buy-in visits
- funding considerations
- financial liability
- resources
- considered outcome for Nfyfc/YFCs and NFU
- project management plans

The AGRI group will discuss further at the October meeting.

Actions:

JE to discuss with RB, submit proposal to BoM and report back at the October AGRI meeting

9. Farms for City Children

Katie Wade, Fundraiser for [Farms for City Children](#), gave an overview of the charity and its work offering urban children an opportunity to live and work together for a week on a [real farm](#). This was an exercise in information exchange and to find areas of mutual interest.

Actions:

All to inform YFC members of the work of Farms for City Children and to explore any areas of mutually beneficial future work

10. AOB

Lynsey Martin outlined her plans for launching a farm to fork education/heightening awareness of careers project, if successfully elected, during her chair's year. The project would be a prepared presentation (validated by appropriate partners including [FACE](#) and [BrightCrop](#)) and a challenge for YFC members to help spread the message of food and farming education and careers in the industry to 11-13 year olds.

Action:

Future project development

11. Date of next meeting and close

HW thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 6.07 pm. Date of the next meeting is **Saturday, 21 June 2017**

SIGNED.....

DATED.....