



## Agri-Brexit Coalition Meeting

AEA Offices  
Samuelson House  
62 Forder Way  
Hampton  
Peterborough PE7 8JB

30 November 2018

### Attendees

Ruth Bailey	(AEA)	Sarah Nightingale	(GAFTA - for
David Caffall	(AIC)		Jaine Chisholm Caunt)
Penny Maplestone	(BSPB)	Jill Hewitt	(NAAC)
Jeremy Moody	(CAAV)		
Sarah Mukherjee	(CPA)	Julia Corr	(Secretariat)

### Guests

Paul Rooke	(AIC)	Geoff Dodgson	(for AIC)
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### Apologies

Robert Sheasby	(AIC)	Dawn Howard	(NOAH)
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## 1. Introductions and Apologies

David welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Ruth for hosting the meeting. Also particular thanks went to Sarah Nightingale and Jeremy Moody for coming directly from the Defra meeting in London. Apologies received from Robert Sheasby and Dawn Howard.

## 2. George Eustice \ visit to Teagle

The agenda needs to be agreed along with timings for the day. It is agreed that Sarah M, Dawn, Paul and Jeremy will attend the meeting to make short presentations, along with Ruth who will act as Chair. Format of the meeting should be facilitated by us, with topics, questions and key points. Ruth will start the meeting and will steer. Each of our attendees should speak for not more than 8 minutes on the agreed topics as below. Tom will be given some 'managed' time at the end

- Animal Health \ welfare (Dawn)
- Skills shortage \ needs (Sarah M)
- R&D \ syndication (Paul)
- Advice (Jeremy)

Format of the agenda could look like the following:

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|-----------------|------------|
| • Introduction  | Ruth       |
| • Welcome       | Tom Teagle |
| • Scene setting | Ruth       |

- Topics (in no current particular order:)
  - Paul
  - Dawn
  - Jeremy
  - Sarah
- Tom Teagle – his company needs and wishes

DC and RB arranged to meet on Wednesday following the meeting to finalise the agenda and prepare a briefing note for George Eustice to read in advance of the meeting.

### **3. Agriculture Bill**

DC asked where people were with regard to the Bill. Sarah M said that she had recently had a meeting with George Eustice on pesticide regulations, which had gone well. CPA gave some good solution options on current issues which is exactly what the ministers want to hear.

Agriculture Bill is now finished with at Committee Stage and will now go to Report Stage for Reading in the House. This could be as early as 17 December (but if may carry into the New Year if there are more pressing issues for Parliament (highly likely!).

### **4. Withdrawal Agreement**

DC went around the table and asked what the position is of each organisation.

AIC believes that “no deal” would be the worst option and we intend to draw up a draft template letter to go out to members’ MP’s to explain their difficulties and consider the businesses in their constituency. It will be completely optional for the member to send it to their MP.

- BSPB hasn’t taken a position but if forced would say ‘no deal’.
- CPA – as above. Need to push the lobby for R&D investment, but they have no public position
- AEA – as above but no public position
- NAAC – as above
- GAFTA – not appropriate for them to comment as they are an international organisation and must remain neutral and impartial
- CAAV – no stance
- (NOAH – not available to comment)

### **5. ‘No deal’ planning - stockpiling**

Bearing in mind that our seminar today would have been on this topic, there had been very little interest shown in attending

Sarah M commented that many of their members are trying to find warehouse space and are finding it particularly hard – particularly specialist regulatory compliant warehousing, as it has already been taken. She also said that CPA had noticed a brain drain of specialists leaving the UK to return to Europe and that many organisations she comes into contact with are having a very bad year financially

JM recounted an IGD statistic that 2% of the population are already stockpiling food and 43% are thinking about it. Supermarkets are becoming increasingly worried that this could snowball and get out of hand.

Some large manufacturers are considering an early summer shutdown to ride it out for a few months.

Penny said that BSPB had noticed that people have become more aware and are anticipating seasonal requirements in advance and are therefore planning for this. DC commented that our sectors have also noticed the same and have been advising members to stay in close contact with their suppliers.

Sarah N said that GAFTA were aware of some discussions around contracts and tariffs amongst their members. Publication of tariffs in January will clarify this for them, however some wording used by the Commission in legislation has caused some confusion amongst members and this will need to be clarified. It was commented on that it was very clear that Government and businesses don't understand each other. Perhaps something the at the Coalition could be doing would be supply the skills knowledge gap to Defra \ Beis and meetings with any of our contacts there to offer this should be attempted

## **6. Defra Initiatives**

It appears to be quite random as to who is involved in which initiatives. Coalition doesn't as yet have a direct route into Defra as others do. We need a 'tame' senior who will give a route in. Jeremy suggested he could discuss further with Robin Manning at Defra. Currently all our interactions with Defra are intermittent as they have to be very selective as to which Trade Associations they align themselves to.

PR then issued an organogram of a new group – Agri-Food Chain Business Group - that he and JM are involved in. The livestock and arable groups have defined contact with Defra – so why not the Coalition?

Our objective should be getting regular meetings with Ministers, plus regular contact with a senior Defra contact. They don't understand the role of the supply trade and the knowledge we have of the detail and nuances that would give them a great deal of information they wouldn't otherwise have

## **7. The Coalition – post Brexit**

The Coalition agreed to meet again shortly after the New Year to talk specifically about how we evolve longer term – once Brexit has taken place. JM suggested that we could invite Robin Manning or Graham Friend to attend and discuss our offering on innovation and as advisors. DC commented that we need to all be able to sub for each other at events and represent our collective voice.

Sarah M suggested that if Robin Manning or Graham Friend were able to attend we could hold the meeting at the CPA offices. Alternatively we could consider a meeting room at The Great Northern Hotel.

DC to consider dates and JC will issue doodle polls for this meeting mid-January (post Oxford Conference) and then dates for 1 meeting per month for the next 6 months ahead.