

Cross-Party Group on Life Sciences

Tuesday 22 February 2022

5.45pm-7.15pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Kenneth Gibson MSP
Graham Simpson MSP
Emma Harper MSP
Michael Marra MSP

Invited guests

Professor Sharon Pflieger, (NHS)
Dennis Rijnders, Commercial Director Bovaer, BSM
Rob de Hooge, Site Director at DSM Nutritional Products
Jenna Bowen, SRUC
Andrea McColl, HIE
John Mackenzie, Edinburgh University
Dr Catherine Calderwood, Centre for Sustainable Delivery

Non-MSP Group Members

Kate Dion, 3D Communications
Alison Culpan, ABPI
Helen Reilly, ABPI
David Bowie, Albany
Philip Jones, BioAscent
Miranda Knaggs, BioCity
Martin Coombes, Bristol-Myers Squibb
Matt Barclay, Community Pharmacy Scotland
Steve Kerr, Department of International Trade
Bruce Whitelaw, Edinburgh University
Joyce Tait, Edinburgh University
John Macgill, Ettrickburn
Heather Rankine, Genomic Health
George Davidson, GSK
Sandra Auld, Healthcare Public Affairs

Mark Bustard, Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Centre
Ellys Wakeman, Ipsen
Gary White, IQVIA
Richard Mole, Moredun Group
Graeme Rose, Novartis
Giles Hamilton, ODX Innovations
Steven Burke, PPD
Grace Hutchison, Scottish Parliament
Santa Walker, Strathclyde University
James Crichton, Scottish Government
Amanda Dutton, Scottish Government
Tobias Croft, Scottish Government
Ewan Morrison, Scottish Government
Jamie Newbold, SRUC
Carole-Anne Duthie, SRUC
Annie McRobbie, SSERC
Alexandra Morera, Strathclyde University
Professor Roma Macguire, Strathclyde University
Emma Eusebia, Strathclyde University
David Littlejohn, Strathclyde University
Susan Muirhead, Strathclyde University
Connie McFadden, Strathclyde University
Iain Hunter, Strathclyde University
Professor Frank Gunn-Moore, St Andrews University
David Telford, KTN
Heather Ann Baxter, Lilly
Claire Headspeath, ABPI
Eleanor Charsley, ABHI
Deborah O'Neil, Novobiotics
Gemma Miller, SRUC

Apologies

Minister Ivan McKee MSP
Miles Briggs MSP
Fiona Hyslop MSP
Fulton MacGregor MSP
Michelle Thomson MSP

Agenda item 1

Presentation by John Mackenzie, CEO, Roslin Innovation Centre (Co-Chair AAA ILG), Andrea McColl, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Co-Chair AAA ILG) and Dr Jenna Bowen, SRUC

Animal Health, Agritech and Aquaculture

John Mackenzie discussed the real international assets sitting on our doorstep which the AAA ILG is committed to showcasing. A3 Scotland, a conference for the AAA

sector, will take place on 26 and 27 April 2022. Transition to net zero is this year's theme.

Andrea McColl introduced the Pathfinder accelerator programme, which has supported over 50 companies so far. Applications have been received from across Scotland and the programme is supported by the SRUC. Companies have access to support and advice and are invited to take part in expert round table discussions.

John also informed the group about the Food and Agriculture Science Transformer (FAST) pilot programme, which aims to develop and build new high growth tech companies for Scotland's Agricultural Bioeconomy.

Jenna Bowen presented on a mapping exercise that had been undertaken to demonstrate the scope of the current and future AAA landscape.

An innovation regulation round table is being planned and John encouraged MSPs and others attending to get in touch if they would be able to support this work. He encouraged everyone to champion the work of the sector wherever they can and put it in people's minds.

Dr Catherine Calderwood, National Clinical Director at the Centre for Sustainable Delivery of Health and Social Care welcomed the work of the AAA ILG and suggested that they should explore how they could work together to help to take forward its sustainability work.

Questions focused on antimicrobial resistance messaging, the development of new antibiotics from the seabed in Oban, the Dairy Nexus development, and the collaborative structure required to attract high level funding opportunities.

Agenda item 2

Presentation by Dennis Rijnders, Commercial Director Bovaer, EMEA, DSM, and Rob de Hooge, Site Director at DSM Nutritional Products

Production plant for Bovaer in Dalry, Scotland

Rob de Hooge introduced DSM and explained more about the company and outlined its operations in the UK, focussing in particular on the plans for a new production site for Bovaer in Dalry, Ayrshire.

Dennis Rijnders stated that Bovaer can reduce methane emissions, which could significantly contribute to reducing global warming. He explained how Bovaer works by being added to cow's feed, taking effect immediately to reduce the cows' methane emissions. The equivalent of one tonne of CO₂ could be saved per cow per year if Bovaer is used. To illustrate this, he equated feeding three cows to taking a family sized car off the road.

Dennis highlighted some of the findings from research that had been undertaken internationally. 48 trials have been conducted or are ongoing. Up to 90% reduction in methane emissions had been reported in some studies. No significant effect on milk yield or feed efficiency had been reported. Further studies are planned in the UK/Ireland throughout 2022. He explained that implementing Bovaer in dairy farms

will result in 8% of the targeted reduction in Scottish Agriculture. To truly implement, however, it needs to move to a farm level, and it was noted that EU approval was due in June, but UK approval was still awaited. Dennis noted that to truly achieve Bovaer's potential, financial incentives would be required to enable farmers to implement Bovaer.

Questions focussed on what the incentive would be for farmers to use Bovaer. It was noted that it was the fastest tool to help achieve net zero, but there were no increases in yield, which is why incentives will be required. The cost was calculated at 1 cent per litre of milk produced (8000 litres per year in Scotland would cost 75-80 euros per cow per year).

There was discussion around the differences between implementing for dairy cows and beef herds. The first-generation product is best suited to those mostly indoors, to ensure highest methane reduction. Future generations, including a slow-release product are being developed but there is still work to be done on the costs of this, so could be two or three years down the line, which would result in higher methane reductions while grazing.