



# **Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru** **The National Assembly for Wales**

## **Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd** **The Environment and Sustainability Committee**

**Dydd Mercher, 5 Tachwedd 2014**  
**Wednesday, 5 November 2014**

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Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to Exclude the Public from the Remainder of  
the Meeting

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,  
cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.  
In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

**Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol**  
**Committee members in attendance**

Mick Antoniw	Llafur Labour
Russell George	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Llyr Gruffydd	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Alun Ffred Jones	Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
William Powell	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Antoinette Sandbach	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives

**Eraill yn bresennol**  
**Others in attendance**

Dai Davies	Cadeirydd, Hybu Cig Cymru Chairman, Hybu Cig Cymru
Rob Davies	Llywydd Cangen Cymru, Cymdeithas Milfeddygol Prydain President of Welsh Branch, British Veterinary Association
Siân Edwards	Rheolwr Addysg a Chymuned Cymru, Dogs Trust Education and Community Manager Wales, Dogs Trust
Rachel Evans	Cyfarwyddwr Cymru, Cynghrair Cefn Gwlad Director for Wales, Countryside Alliance
Alison Hughes	Pennaeth Bwyd, Iechyd a Diogelwch, Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen Head of Food, Health and Safety, Torfaen County Borough Council
Sion Aron Jones	Rheolwr Datblygu Diwydiant, Hybu Cig Cymru Industry Development Manager, Hybu Cig Cymru
Dylan Morgan	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr a Phennaeth Polisi, NFU Cymru Deputy Director and Head of Policy, NFU Cymru
Rhian Nowell-Phillips	Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr Polisi Amaethyddol, Undeb Amaethwyr Cymru Deputy Director Agricultural Policy, Farmers' Union of Wales
Christopher O'Brien	Rheolwr Materion Cyhoeddus, RSPCA Public Affairs Manager, RSPCA
James Yeates	Prif Swyddog Milfeddygol, RSPCA Chief Veterinary Officer, RSPCA

**Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol**  
**National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance**

Alun Davidson	Clerc Clerk
Peter Hill	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk

Nia Seaton

Y Gwasanaeth Ymchwil  
Research Service*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 09:00.  
The meeting began at 09:00.***Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon  
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr a chroeso i'r Aelodau. Os bydd larwm tân, yna dilynwch y tywyswyr; nid ydym yn disgwyl prawf heddiw. Dylai pawb ddiffodd eu ffonau symudol, *BlackBerrys* ac yn blaen. Mae'r Cynulliad yn gweithredu'n ddwyieithog, wrth gwrs, ac felly, defnyddiwch yr offer cyfieithu. Mae cyfieithu ar gael ar sianel 1 a gallwch glywed y sain yn well ar sianel 0. Peidiwch â chyffwrdd â'r botymau. A oes Aelod eisiau datgan buddiant o dan Reol Sefydlog 2.6? Na. Rydym wedi derbyn ymddiheuriadau gan Joyce Watson a Jeff Cuthbert.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much and welcome to Members. Should there be a fire drill, please follow the instructions of the ushers; we are not expecting a test today. Everyone should switch off their mobile phones, *BlackBerrys* and so on. The Assembly, of course, operates bilingually, so please use the interpretation equipment. The interpretation is available on channel 1 and amplification of sound on channel 0. Please do not touch the buttons. Does any Member wish to declare an interest under Standing Order 2.6? No. We have received apologies from Joyce Watson and Jeff Cuthbert.

09:01

**Lles Anifeiliaid: Trafodaeth Bwrdd Crwn  
Animal Welfare: Round-table Discussion**

[2] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Croesawaf ein gwystai i'r drafodaeth ar les anifeiliaid. Pwrpas y sesiwn yw cael yr wybodaeth ddiweddaraf gan y rhanddeiliaid ar y cynnydd mewn perthynas â materion lles anifeiliaid yng Nghymru. I'ch rhybuddio chi, nid ydym eisiau trafod rheoli ceffylau y bore ma—bydd sesiwn arbennig ar hynny yn y flwyddyn newydd—TB mewn gwartheg na hela, gan nad yw hynny wedi'i ddatganoli. Dyma'r cyntaf o ddau banel y bore yma. Rwy'n deall bod Siân Edwards mewn traffig ar hyn o bryd ac y bydd yn ymuno â ni yn nes ymlaen. Fe'ch croesawaf i gyd a gofyn i chi gyflwyno'ch hunain; yna, awn yn syth at y cwestiynau.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** I welcome our guests to our discussion on animal welfare. The purpose of the session is to receive an update from stakeholders on progress on animal welfare issues in Wales. To warn you, we do not want to discuss the control of horses this morning—there will be a designated session on that in the new year—TB in cattle or hunting, as that is not devolved. This is the first of two panels this morning. I understand that Siân Edwards is stuck in traffic at the moment and that she will be joining us later on. I welcome you all here this morning and ask you to introduce yourselves; then we will go straight to questions.

[3] **Ms Hughes:** Good morning. I am Alison Hughes, from Torfaen environmental health department, representing the dog panel, which is a technical panel representing all Welsh authorities.

[4] **Mr R. Davies:** Rob Davies ydw i. Fi yw llywydd cangen Cymru o Gymdeithas Milfeddygon Prydain.

**Mr R. Davies:** I am Rob Davies. I am the president of the Welsh branch of the British Veterinary Association.

- [5] **Dr Yeates:** I am James Yeates, chief veterinary officer of the RSPCA.
- [6] **Mr O'Brien:** I am Chris O'Brien, public affairs manager for the RSPCA in Wales.
- [7] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. **Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much. Croeso i chi gyd. Rydym am ddechrau gyda materion sy'n ymwneud â chŵn. Welcome to you all. We will start with matters relating to dogs.
- [8] Julie Morgan, do you want to kick off?
- [9] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you very much, Chair. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 is now in force. Could you outline your views on the enforcement powers for dogs in that Act?
- [10] **Mr O'Brien:** I can lead off on that one. New powers have come into force from that piece of legislation from, I think, 20 October this year. I think that it is worth looking at these powers in the context of what was on the table in Wales beforehand, and the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill. The RSPCA remains disappointed that the Welsh Government took the decision to initially suspend and then withdraw that piece of legislation, which was a piece of legislation that we thought was very positive. The new piece of legislation, the UK Bill, is a very broad, large piece of legislation that covers a huge number of issues, and it is not a dog-specific piece of legislation. We feel that the issues of dog control deserve their own piece of legislation and warrant the scrutiny of Members here to go through the legislative channels. We are concerned that the ethos of the UK Bill is more punitive than the Welsh Bill was going to be, which had an ethos of education and prevention, and we are concerned about how the new powers in the UK Bill—perhaps the powers to refer to are the community protection notices and the public space protection Orders—will be used. If they are used without enough knowledge of dog control matters or enough knowledge of dog behaviour and dog welfare, they could, ultimately, unwittingly compromise dog welfare. They could potentially stigmatise dog ownership as well.
- [11] They are new powers and we will obviously review how they go and look carefully at them. We hope that local authorities in Wales and other enforcers feel able to use them properly. However, certainly the context for us is that we are still disappointed that the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill was not progressed as was originally intended.
- [12] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you. I was heavily involved with the Welsh legislation and I was obviously disappointed that we did not have the preventative stuff in the present Act. Could you just outline, in particular, what you think is missing and what preventative measures are not in this Act?
- [13] **Mr O'Brien:** The key issue is that the dog control notices that were on the table before were dog-specific and were aimed at controlling issues around dog control specifically. What we have instead is a broad suite of powers that can be used to tackle any number of anti-social behaviour issues, and there is not necessarily the knowledge that is required by enforcers to use those powers in relation to dog behaviour and dog welfare. That is absolutely essential. If you had a dog-specific piece of legislation—and there were issues of training that were promised with that for local authorities—you could have enforcers who were better equipped to utilise these powers in relation to dog welfare. So, it was the dog focus of the Wales Bill that was the key. On the new powers—the community protection notices and the public spaces protection orders—if they are used to tackle dog welfare, they could unwittingly compromise that welfare, by placing restrictions on what dogs can do and on what owners have to do, without the knowledge of welfare that we at the RSPCA and other organisations would want to see.

[14] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you. I wonder whether the local authority has any view on this.

[15] **Ms Hughes:** [*Inaudible.*]—recognise that these new powers are very welcome. My main concern is that they have come in, as Chris has said, on a national basis and as a very broad spectrum, and that has had implications in terms of dog control. One of the implications is that there has been a loss of Welsh focus, and some of the training for dog wardens and other things that we were discussing have been lost in the mix. We now have legislation in, and the dog wardens are asking me, ‘Where’s the training? What happened to that? Has anybody heard anything?’

[16] **Julie Morgan:** So, the legislation has been implemented, but there has been no preparation for the legislation.

[17] **Ms Hughes:** There has been very little preparation. There has been a Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs code of practice that assists dog wardens. The difficulty is that, because this then starts being a very broad spectrum piece of legislation, the communication route for that legislation has gone through the community protection network, and there are dog wardens out there who do not know what is going on, because nobody has told them. I have been trying to find out and disseminate information, but it has been on a very ad hoc basis. As I have found out what is going on, I have kind of let everybody else know. So, in terms of the communication, the way that it is working, training, et cetera, that has been very ad hoc as far as the dog wardens are concerned, and they have not been kept in the loop.

[18] We do have a problem as well within local authorities, in that the people who are working on the ground with dogs, the dog wardens, are not necessarily enforcement officers. So, we have this element now where we have the people who know about the dogs and the people who know about enforcement, and they are different, and we have got to try and build the communication links between them. There have been no resources to enable that to happen. The argument from the Home Office was that the impact of this legislation was less overall on local authorities and, therefore, there was no funding available, but, in fact, that funding does not rest within the dog warden teams, so we are having to look at that issue as well.

[19] So, I think that in terms of the powers that we have, they are welcome and they will be used, but they are not necessarily what we wanted, and we are not necessarily ready yet to start that work. To put it in context, in four hours’ time, I have my first meeting due with the police to discuss a community protection notice that they want served.

[20] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I will come back to you now, Julie. I just take the opportunity to welcome Siân Edwards from the Dogs Trust, who has just joined us. Antoinette, do you want to come in on this?

[21] **Antoinette Sandbach:** It seems to me that this is an education and training issue and, as you said, there is a need for communication, but, actually, it is perfectly possible to implement the provisions of the Bill, provided that education and training are put in place. I can see you nodding, Ms Hughes.

[22] **Ms Hughes:** I would agree with that. I think that we are a little bit behind times, but none of this is unfixable, and we are working together. We all work together with the Dogs Trust and the RSPCA. I have already had a discussion with Chris and with his team about them providing the behavioural dog training that we are going to need. So, it is coming together, but I think that the loss of Welsh legislation meant a loss of focus for the local authorities, and a loss of the network within which that would happen naturally.

[23] **Antoinette Sandbach:** And, of course, there are the funding issues that you referred to. Local authorities' settlements are devolved here, so it is a matter of choice for Welsh Government as to whether or not it chooses to fund the implications—and I can see the RSPCA nodding. Sorry, I am saying that because, if I do not say it, it does not go on the record. So, really, it is a question of priority within the Welsh Government, and if it wants to allocate resources to implement the Bill, that is an internal matter for Welsh Government.

[24] **Ms Hughes:** I would say that the resources that we are talking about are fairly limited, but any help that we can get is welcome. I think that, with a little bit of training, we will be ready to go, and there are a lot of authorities out there with dog warden teams that want to move on and that want these new powers.

[25] **Anthony Sandbach:** Last question. The fact that the legislation now tackles the issue of dog attacks in private places, which was previously exempt, is a huge leap forward in terms of the potential to deal with really horrific attacks that take place in the home.

[26] **Mr O'Brien:** That is a very welcome step in the law. I should say that the Welsh Government was previously looking at the issue of extending, in amendments to the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, attacks on dogs to protected animals as well. The new Bill has extended the attack to assistant dogs, which is very welcome, but the Welsh Government's previous focus on protected animals has been lost. So, we would certainly encourage the Welsh Government to look at that in the context of amendments to the Dangerous Dogs Act. However, the issue that you referred to, of private property, is a very welcome step, definitely.

[27] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Rwyf yn dal o'r farn ei bod yn gamgymeriad nad ydym wedi cyflwyno deddfwriaeth benodol i Gymru ar y mater hwn, am yr union resymau yr ydym wedi'u clywed, ond ar ba bwynt yr ydych yn meddwl y gallwn ni fod yn asesu i ba raddau yr ydym yn derbyn bod y ddeddfwriaeth Brydeinig yn addas, a'r gwaith cysylltiol sy'n cael ei gario allan ac sy'n cael ei arwain 'nawr gan yr RSPCA, sy'n cadeirio'r grŵp y mae'r Llywodraeth wedi'i sefydlu? Ar ba bwynt y byddwn ni mewn sefyllfa i asesu a oes angen inni fynd yn ôl ac edrych ar ddeddfwriaeth Gymreig neu beidio?

**Llyr Gruffydd:** I am still of the view that it was a mistake not to introduce legislation specifically for Wales on this issue, for precisely the reasons that we have just heard, but at what point do you believe we could assess the extent to which we accept that the British legislation is appropriate, and the associated work that is being carried out and which is being led now by the RSPCA, which is chairing this group that has been established by the Government? At what point will we be in a position to assess whether we need to revisit Wales-only legislation or not?

[28] **Mr O'Brien:** First of all, I should mention the working group that the RSPCA has been asked to convene on issues related to responsible dog ownership. We were very pleased to be asked to do that, and we think that it is very important that that happens in the context of the legislation referred to being dropped. So, we were very grateful to the previous Minister for asking us to do that, and we look forward to taking that work forward.

[29] In terms of a review, I think that it is absolutely right that the legislation is reviewed in a Welsh context, to see how local authorities and other enforcers are using these powers, given what was on the table beforehand. For us, it is a lot of waiting to see what happens, to see how they cope with the resources, but certainly, within a short number of years, we would certainly hope that some kind of review takes place that looks at how these powers are being used, how effective they are in relation to dog control, and whether there would be a need to look at some of the issues that were on the table before—but they will be issues that we will be exploring as part of the working group as well.

[30] **Dr Yeates:** Just specifically to add to that, on the comment made about dog control notices, especially if you are training the dog wardens and other people, they could impart some of that expertise—not just in punitive measures of saying, ‘Don’t do this; don’t do that’, which might make matters worse and cause dog welfare problems, but actually to give that expertise to help people to improve how they are looking after their dogs. So, I think that that is one matter specifically for the working group to look at explicitly. That might be something that can be done quicker.

[31] **Ms Hughes:** I think that the other thing for the working group to look at will be the question of attacks on other protected animals. As a dog warden, I get quite a few complaints about these, about dogs entering other premises and attacking pets. We see people being injured as a result, because they actually try to protect their pets and are attacked by the dog at that time. Also, I think that we see a real worry that, if a dog is attacking pets, and then attacking the people who are protecting those pets, they are not going to know the difference the next time they go in that garden and there is an unprotected baby there. So, we can see a real animal welfare issue here, as well as the potential human cost of not protecting protected pets.

[32] **Mr O’Brien:** The point that I briefly was trying to make before was that, unfortunately, that was previously the Welsh Government’s policy, and that was an issue that it was exploring. It is not a provision contained within the UK legislation. So, it is certainly something that we are keen to see remain on the table in Wales, to be looked at in the future.

[33] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Jyst i ofyn, a oes **Llyr Gruffydd:** Just to ask, does the group gan y grŵp ryw fath o amserlen neu a ydych have any kind of timetable or have you chi wedi amlinellu rhyw fath o raglen waith? outlined some kind of schedule of work?

[34] **Mr O’Brien:** We are still discussing that with Welsh Government. Once that is sorted, we would be happy to share that work where we can. We are looking forward to the group’s work starting. We think that it is a really positive development. We have been asked to do it and we are very grateful to Welsh Government for that.

09:15

[35] **Julie Morgan:** [*Inaudible.*—could you say who is going to be included in the group because when we were campaigning for the Welsh Government’s legislation, there was a wide range of organisations and individuals who were a part of that campaign? I wondered whether you were going to ensure that this group had those representatives.

[36] **Mr O’Brien:** What I can say is that the group will certainly have a wide range of stakeholders who are interested in the matter of responsible dog ownership and dog control. We would certainly want the group to hear from all of those kinds of stakeholders. So, I absolutely give you that assurance, definitely.

[37] **Julie Morgan:** Yes because one of the organisations was the postpeople’s union and obviously there has been a big advance in terms of its being extended to private property, but I think that they did play a big role in this campaign.

[38] **Mr O’Brien:** I know that the committee heard from the postal union last year, I think, along with our chief executive, and they were very strong on that one.

[39] **Julie Morgan:** Yes, very strong and so I was hoping that you would certainly include them.

[40] **Mr O’Brien:** We will certainly include all relevant stakeholders, absolutely.

[41] **Julie Morgan:** I do not know whether the Dogs Trust has any view on that.

[42] **Ms Edwards:** I would like to add to that in terms of the ability to work together, reflecting really what Alison has said. The people who are responsible for enforcement are not necessarily the people who actually know about dogs. From a Dogs Trust point of view, we were very concerned about the lack of training or information that is available to help people to make the right decisions from a dog welfare point of view. For example, there is no point implementing some sort of enforcement on a dog and its owner, if actually it will cause more problems further down the line. Simple comments include noise-pollution issues: if a dog is continually barking, there is a real welfare issue there. The local authority will be getting complaints, and so it needs to know how to deal with those. The Dogs Trust is providing free training for councils next February. There is one north-Wales and one south-Wales venue. It is a small requirement for what is needed, really, because so much more is needed, but we would welcome anybody's help in promoting that to the people who need that training. I would happily share those dates and the advertisement for that, to get that message out to people who are going to be responsible for enforcing it. Alison has already helped me to spread the word, and the events are booking up very quickly, as you can imagine, because there is just so much worry from people, saying, 'Oh, my gosh, we have got this coming to us and we do not know what to do with it, and we do not know what best to do for the dogs and for their owners.'

[43] **Julie Morgan:** If I could just have one last question, I have, as I said, been involved in this campaign along with my constituent, Dilwar Ali, who is still campaigning very strongly for dog control notices. Would this group, if it felt that there is still a lack of specific Welsh legislation, be able to come back to the Welsh Government to ask for it to be looked at again?

[44] **Mr O'Brien:** Absolutely. We were very disappointed that dog control notices came off the table in Wales, and about their absence. What the new powers will do instead will definitely be a focus of the group. If the group concludes that dog control notices need to come back onto the table, that is certainly a recommendation that we will make to the Welsh Government.

[45] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you.

[46] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Antoinette is next.

[47] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wanted to move on to non-stun slaughter. Is that all right?

[48] **Alun Ffred Jones:** No, I am going to try to wrap things up with the dogs first. Rob Davies.

[49] **Mr R. Davies:** Hoffwn wneud un sylw yn sydyn, sef ein bod yn ategu sylwadau'r RSPCA ac eraill ynghylch y ffaith ein bod yn siomedig bod y ddeddfwriaeth Gymreig ddim wedi cael ei rhoi ar y llyfr statud. Rydym yn sylweddoli ei bod hi'n bosibl cael rhybuddion gwella yng Ngogledd Iwerddon a'r Alban, a'r rheini'n bodoli'n barod, felly, bydd yn ddiddorol gweld beth sy'n digwydd yn y manau hynny. Byddwn hefyd yn awgrymu bod problemau dynol yn ogystal ag efo cŵn a phe

**Mr R. Davies:** I would like to make one quick comment, namely that we endorse the comments made by the RSPCA and others about the fact that we are disappointed that the Welsh legislation has not made it to the statue book. We are aware that it is possible to issue improvement notices in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and that they exist already, so it will be interesting to see what happens there. I would also suggest that there are human problems as well as with dogs, and if you were to get statistics back on how the



baech chi'n cael ystadegau yn ôl am sut y legislation is working, we should be able to see whether there are other offences that have possibly been committed by dog owners.

[50] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr iawn. A oes unrhyw gwestiynau pellach ynghylch lles cŵn?  
**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much. Are there any further questions on dog welfare?

[51] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Perhaps one: in the working group that has been set up, is there representation from organisations that represent the owners of working dogs?

[52] **Mr O'Brien:** In terms of the membership of the working group, it is still being discussed with the Welsh Government, but, as I mentioned to Julie, we are very keen for this working group to have a broad range of stakeholders representing all interested parties. I can certainly report back to you when the membership has been finalised and discussions with Welsh Government have concluded.

[53] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Russell George has questions on electric shock collars, I think.

[54] **Russell George:** That is right, yes, Chair, thank you. Before we move on to wider issues, Chair, I would just appreciate your views on the electric shock collars regulations. Is there anything that you would like to provide to the committee in that regard?

[55] **Mr O'Brien:** From the RSPCA's perspective, the introduction of a ban on electric shock collars was a very proud moment for Wales, and a proud moment for the Welsh Government and for the Assembly Members because of the cross-party support that the legislation had. We feel that it is a piece of legislation that reflects society's norms and values. We think that it is a very strong piece of legislation. The RSPCA brought the first prosecution under that piece of legislation, and we very much welcome that that ban is in place. Wales is the only nation in the UK to have that ban. It was the first and only, which is a very positive thing. We would be very concerned about any proposals—I am aware that there are members of the Petitions Committee here today who have received a petition looking at proposals to water down the existing legislation on the matter of electric perimeter fencing.

[56] **Ms Edwards:** Again, just to follow up on those comments, the Dogs Trust is extremely pleased that the ban has been put in place, but we would actually like a further implementation on that to be considered so that there is actually a ban on the sale of these items. We would just really like to remind everybody that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' own research proved the negative impact on dogs when these were used. It is not just the dog welfare side of things looking at this; there are other people looking at this too, reflecting the same sort of things that we are saying, which is that they are cruel, not helpful and cause more problems than they solve. We would really want to see a ban on the sale of these. To have a manufacturers' charter or something similar, as has been suggested, while it sounds good, would come down to self-regulation, and we do not feel that that is good enough. We really want to make sure that external bodies, like welfare organisations like us, can have an input to that and make sure that they are really robust and that it is not just left to the people who are making money from these things to regulate.

[57] **Russell George:** May I just ask this as well? The previous Minister had committed to reviewing the regulations at some point this year. I am not quite sure where we are up to on that. Do you have any further information?

[58] **Mr O'Brien:** I do not think that that review has begun. As I said, from our

perspective, we would not want to see any watering down of the existing legislation, and we are concerned by proposals that have been made—a campaign that has been launched by an individual—to end the ban on electric perimeter fencing. We are concerned about that. So, in any review, we would make our views very clearly known to the Welsh Government that we think that the ban is good and needs to remain in place. I am also keen to follow up on Siân’s point regarding manufacturers. These devices are sold online and elsewhere, and they contain no warning to Welsh consumers that these devices are illegal to attach to cats and dogs in Wales. So, I would definitely echo Siân’s comments on that.

[59] **Ms Hughes:** I just want to say that, from an enforcement point of view, and looking at the community protection notices, I see no place for these shock collars. If people are talking about protecting dogs and putting dogs under control, stopping them from straying et cetera, I would see there being plenty of better alternatives that we can put in place. Even if they were legal, this is not something that we would want to see from an enforcement point of view or want to see used.

[60] **Russell George:** Do you share the view as well that there are no amendments needed to the current regulations?

[61] **Ms Hughes:** Absolutely.

[62] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Is it on this point, Antoinette?

[63] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wanted to pick up on Chris’s comment about electric perimeter fencing. Obviously, a lot of dairy farmers and pig producers use electric fencing as a means of keeping their animals within an area, often where it is very impractical to fence. Given that the shock delivered is presumably one that does not harm, why is it that you have an issue with electric perimeter fencing in relation to another species?

[64] **Dr Yeates:** I think that there are two main reasons. One is that electric fences used in farming—and we do not encourage that, but you are right that we have not opposed their use—. First, it is harder to find alternatives if you are using a very big area, where we are talking about farming, unlike for dogs and cats. Also, the animals can see electric fencing if it is an actual wire. Often, it is white with a tape and they can see it and they can escape it by not going near the fence or, if they get a shock, they can move away. That is very different from invisible perimeter fencing, where the dog or cat does not know when it is going to get a shock. Also, it is attached to their necks. If you have something that is attached to your neck that is giving you a shock, you cannot escape it because it is going around with you. That is going to be important when they reach that perimeter, but also, if there is any malfunction, it is just going to continue to shock them, and there is no way they can escape that pain.

[65] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Is there not a possibility of having visible electric fencing that does not involve a collar?

[66] **Dr Yeates:** It will be hard to do that in terms of jumping. If you have something that cats or dogs cannot get over, you effectively have a better alternative to electric fencing, which we can call ‘fencing’. If they can see it and they cannot get over it, then that is stopping them already, and you do not need to give them any electric shock.

[67] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I think that there are some people who have very large areas. I do not know about the capacity of cats or dogs to get through fencing, but I would have thought that it is quite good.

[68] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae gennyf ddau **Alun Ffred Jones:** I have two other gwestiwn arall ynglŷn â chŵn. A fydddech yn questions on dogs. Would you note any

nodi unrhyw welliannau pellach yr hoffech eu gweld mewn perthynas â'r rheoliadau microsglodynnu? Hefyd, a fydddech am weld unrhyw newidiadau pellach i'r rheoliadau arfaethedig ar fridio cŵn? A oes unrhyw un am wneud sylw ar y cwestiynau hynny?

further amendments that you would like to see in relation to the microchipping regulations? Also, would you wish to see any further amendments to the proposed dog breeding regulations? Does anybody wish to comment on those questions?

[69] **Ms Edwards:** Yes, please. First of all, we are very keen to know when our date is going to be. Dogs Trust, among other agencies, are putting huge amounts of funding into educating dog owners about this and providing free microchips. We were given a date in March, but that is now unlikely to happen. So, we want to know what is going to happen in Wales. We understand that the English regulations are published. Are we going to be behind England? What is going to happen? I am sure that enforcers are just as keen to know as we are.

[70] We are also very keen to take note of when things about keepership are mentioned within the regulations. Previously, in documents put before us, there was an interchange between keeper and owner, and there was not a consistency in the wording of that. We want the responsibility to be on the seller and that, within seven days, the details have to be changed over. It is in the seller's interest to do this anyway, but we want something written to give a timeline for it. I would just say again that the definition of a keeper is required. Could it be an organisation? Could Dogs Trust be a keeper on the database, for example? Could it be more than one person in situations where people have a commercial business, perhaps? Could more than one person be noted as a keeper? We would like to have some definitions around these sorts of questions and would be keen to give examples of where we could make suggestions on this.

[71] We would also want standards in databases. We deal with the four main databases, but there are very different standards, and we would like there to be some sort of code of conduct or agreement between them all to give some continuity for users. For example, we would want a standard for things like call answering times and those sorts of things—just basic codes to make sure that everybody is at standard if they are saying that they can provide the service, and that someone cannot just set up next week and say, 'I'm now going to be a database; you can register with me' and then they disappear next month and all that information has gone. That includes a single point of contact—I should mention that. We say it a lot, but a single point of contact for the databases would be extremely useful, and I am sure that other people will tell you the same thing.

[72] We would also like there to be a provision for local authorities to be able to serve some sort of fixed notices or fixed penalties so it is a way for them to be able to generate some income from this as well as being able to give some enforcement. We understand; we want to offer everyone free microchips, and we want to help everybody to get on board, but we also want this to have some legs and be of some use to the local authorities that are handling the stray dogs.

[73] **Ms Hughes:** I would certainly agree with the Dogs Trust. We need to know when this will happen, as we will be doing the enforcing as things stand. One local authority in Wales already does not have a dog warden to enforce this, and, with increasing cuts, that is likely to happen more and more. It is going to be very difficult to protect that service when we do not know what service is needed, and when it is going to be needed.

9:30

[74] Coming back to some of the issues that Siân has raised—and I would certainly agree—I have actually got a copy of the Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2014

here. My colleagues in England have noticed a couple of issues that I would hope we can address here in Wales. The first thing is that the requirement to microchip the dog falls on the owner, rather than the seller. That has a couple of implications. The first thing is that, if we get somebody down the pub who says, 'No, that is not my dog, I have sold it', we have no further comeback, and that is exactly the situation that we were hoping to avoid, because, when we get a stray dog, we are told, 'It is not mine; I have given it to some bloke down the pub, I do not know who it is', and then, under the English regulations, it was their job, and their responsibility, to change that ownership, and we are left holding the dog, and then the Dogs Trust is left trying to rehome the dog. We actually do not then avoid the very real costs of stray dog management that this was hoping to address.

[75] The second issue that they have identified is that it does not specify that breeders have to register the dog in their name first. However, that might come on under the breeding legislation here in Wales, and it absolutely needs to fall under one or the other of those pieces of legislation. What it means is that even a good dog breeder might say, 'I am microchipping my dog at eight weeks, but next week I am selling it, so it is administratively more sensible for me to put the microchip details straight to the new owner'. I can see a good dog breeder thinking that that is a good idea. The difficulty is that a bad dog breeder—one of our puppy farms—is going to think, 'That is a useful way to ensure that my name is never attached to that dog and the local authorities can never find out how many dogs I am breeding'. So, we need to try to address that.

[76] I would certainly agree with Siân that fixed-penalty notices are a super idea. They are a very good first enforcement step, before we get to court. Getting things to court is serious and expensive for local authorities and for the person being taken to court, whereas a fixed-penalty notice is a very useful, intermediate step, that is used for a lot of other offences, such as littering and smoking and dog fouling. So, that would be a very good first step.

[77] The final comment that I would like to make is on enforcement, and this is something, I know, that we have discussed with the RSPCA. At the moment, local authorities are seen as the enforcement body. The dog wardens are going to be doing the bulk of the enforcement, but it does not make sense to us for us to be doing the enforcement on microchipping if the RSPCA is taking the welfare case, or if the police are taking the dangerous dog case. It makes sense for the body that is dealing with that case to deal with all of the issues, and certainly I would support the RSPCA and the police having enforcement powers under this, so that, if they are taking a prosecution anyway, they can deal with all of the aspects of that dog ownership.

[78] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. **Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you. Jenny Rathbone sydd nesaf. **Jenny Rathbone** is next.

[79] **Jenny Rathbone:** I just wanted to pick up on what Siân said about there being four registers of dog ownership. That seems ridiculous. I mean, we want to be able to license dogs in the same way as we tax cars—you know, there should be one register.

[80] **Ms Edwards:** I was just going to say I have dog wardens ringing four different databases about that dog in the back of the van.

[81] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is absolutely absurd. With modern-day communications and computerised databases, what are we doing here?

[82] **Ms Hughes:** The English regulations are going to require that the microchip companies signpost, so that any microchip company is part of the same network, and, if you go to one, it signposts you to the one that is correct for that dog. However, it means that, if you contact one, you are still going to potentially have two that you have to contact before

you can find the owner of that dog. That is an improvement on having to ring four or more, and I would say that, at the moment—

[83] **Jenny Rathbone:** I just wanted to understand why we have four—

[84] **Ms Hughes:** At the moment, we have more than four. My local authority rings four, and, if they are not on those four, we then take them to the pound. A person may have legitimately had their dog microchipped, in the expectation that it will be taken home to them, and we do not even know who the microchip company is—we do not recognise it, or our microchip reader is not picking it up; we have the dog's microchip, but we cannot find the information.

[85] **Jenny Rathbone:** Well, that is a completely absurd loophole in the legislation—

[86] **Ms Edwards:** We are extremely keen for this one point of contact, and this code of conduct, so that everybody is operating under the same remit because it is piecemeal at the minute. If you go and get your dog chipped somewhere and they are on a small database, or they are not with one of the big four, like Alison says, the dog warden is only going to try so many. So, bringing everyone into a standard with an ease of communication between them is really important, and it is going to mean the difference between the dog going to a pound or—

[87] **Ms Hughes:** The dog going home.

[88] **Mr R. Davies:** Mae milfeddygon ledled Cymru wedi gweithio efo Dogs Trust i osod microsglodion. Mae hynny wedi bod yn llwyddiannus iawn yn codi proffil y peth cyn iddo ddod yn statudol. Mae'n debyg fod peth tystiolaeth o Ogledd Iwerddon, lle mae hyn wedi bodoli ers cyn amser, fod problemau efo cŵn anghymdeithasol wedi lleihau. Efallai ei bod dipyn yn gynnar i fod yn hollol sicr a oes perthynas, ond dyna yw'r dystiolaeth gynnar mae'n debyg. Rydym yn sicr yn cytuno bod angen un bas data neu un ffordd o gael ato, beth bynnag.

**Mr R. Davies:** Vets across Wales have worked with Dogs Trust to fit microchips. This has been very successful in raising the profile of the issue before it becomes statutory. Apparently, there is some evidence from Northern Ireland, where this has existed for quite a long time, that problems with anti-social dogs have decreased. It may be early days to be completely certain as to whether there is a link, but that is apparently the early evidence. We certainly agree that there is a need for one database or one means of accessing it, at least.

[89] Un peth arall y byddwn yn tynnu eich sylw ato yw bod peth pryder am gŵn sy'n dod i mewn o gyfandir Ewrop—yn benodol, dwyrain Ewrop, sydd efallai yn mynd i fod ar ryw fas data hyd yn oed gwahanol wedyn. Mae pryderon wedi bod ynglŷn ag a yw'r cŵn hyn wedi cael eu brechu'n gywir ar gyfer y gynddaredd—*rabies*—ac yn y blaen. Mae hwnnw efallai yn rhywbeth i'w ystyried pan rydych yn sôn am sut rydych yn mynd i weithredu'r ddeddfwriaeth.

One other thing that I would draw your attention to is that there is some concern about dogs that are coming in from continental Europe—particularly eastern Europe, which may even be on a different database. There have been concerns as to whether these dogs have been vaccinated against rabies, and so on. Perhaps that is something to consider when you are talking about how to implement this legislation.

[90] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr iawn; diddorol iawn. A oes cwestiwn pellach ynglŷn â chŵn neu ryw sylw rydych eisiau ei ddweud wrthym ni ynglŷn â chŵn, Siân a Christopher?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much; very interesting. Are there any further questions about dogs or any comments that you wish to make about dogs, Siân and Christopher?

[91] **Ms Edwards:** Just to add to your comment, at our events, we are increasingly seeing dogs brought to us by dog owners who think that they have bought the dog from somebody who has bred the dog in this country, and we find a chip that has been implanted overseas and the dog owner had no idea that the dog was imported. That is definitely something that we are seeing in our day-to-day events. That is a reason why we want the databases linked into Europetnet as well, so that there is some link with some of the overseas databases and some of the European connections. Especially as dog passports and the movement of dogs is becoming so much easier for everybody and much more common, we would like that connection with Europetnet to be included as part of the development of working with databases to have some code.

[92] **Mr O'Brien:** I just want to make the point about enforcement, which Alison has already mentioned. The regulations as previously tabled in Wales stated that they were only to be enforced by local authorities. We do not believe that that is the position that has been taken in England. It was a surprise to us when we saw that within the legislation and the regulations that have come forward under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which is a common enforcers' Act. As Alison has already mentioned, where a body such as the RSPCA is at work on a welfare case, it seems silly that it would then have to contact the local authority for any breaches in microchipping legislation. So, we hope that the Welsh Government will revisit this. We think that the delays and the withdrawal, as has been said, is a disappointment, but it provides an opportunity for better regulations to come forward. We hope that this enforcement issue will be addressed as part of that, and we would be exceptionally grateful for anything that the committee could do to encourage the Welsh Government on that point.

[93] **Alun Ffred Jones:** James, did you want to add anything?

[94] **Dr Yeates:** Before we move on from dogs completely, on the dog breeding question that you also asked us about, one of the outstanding issues still is the ratio of staff to dogs. There have been a lot of discussions about that with various numbers, and the key point to make is that that ratio has to include puppies. As to a lot of the work that you do as a breeder, obviously you have to look after the breeding mother and father, but it is about spending time with the puppies making sure that they are healthy and developing properly. So, I think that it is slightly ridiculous to have a ratio that does not include puppies, and in fact it might be worse than having no ratio at all, if people are misled into thinking, 'That is okay, we don't need to worry about everything else'.

[95] **Ms Hughes:** I believe that there is another meeting going on this morning about the breeding of dogs, which some of my colleagues are attending. However, if I can raise here some of the concerns that I know they have about this legislation. The first thing to say is that any legislation we have has to be enforceable, and that means that we have to be able to get the information we need to enforce. It is no good giving local authorities the power to license dog breeders if we do not know where those dog breeders are and we have no way of finding out, and that is currently the case. That is why I come back to the microchipping issue, to say that that is an essential piece of intelligence for us to know where these dogs have come from.

[96] We do hear, particularly from our London colleagues, of people who are purporting to be breeders, but in fact they are just importing them. Part of the reason that we were looking for breeding legislation here in Wales is that we were being accused, here in Wales, of being the home of the puppy farms. I certainly think that that has been the case in the past, but I think that that is now dying out. They are getting cheaper puppies imported from Europe, sometimes under appalling welfare conditions. We have all heard of the cases where people have bought puppies from people they thought were bona fide puppy breeders here in England and Wales; they have thought that they have seen the mum and dad, and, in fact, they are puppies imported from abroad that are very, very ill. Hearing about people having to pay a

£1,000 vet bill on their new baby, their new puppy, is not particularly uncommon. So, I think that for any legislation that comes in, the first thing is that local authorities have to be given the powers to identify who those breeders are, so that we can actually get in there and start to address the issue.

[97] If I could just come on to one other point before we open it to discussion, the second area of concern is that the breeding of dogs legislation, as the proposal stands, specifies certain licensing conditions. Now, that might seem a very good idea on paper, but what it does is two things. Firstly, it makes those licensing conditions very difficult to change in the future because legislation is difficult and expensive and time-consuming to change. The second thing is that it devalues other conditions that local authorities may wish to put upon a business, so that you almost have two-tier conditions then. In fact, if we are going to thoroughly address welfare issues at licensed premises, we do need probably more than can be covered in legislation. I would just say that local authorities work with charities, vets and everybody that we can to develop sensible, practical licensing conditions that give a baseline. We are not gold-plating or looking for the puppies to have—. I think it is about conditions that a lot of people would expect. This is a baseline that we are setting and local authorities do need the freedom and the power to be able to do that and that is going to be very important to us. Those are some of the main issues that we see with the legislation as it stands.

[98] **Jenny Rathbone:** I just think that we need to know what discussions you have had with the UK Border Agency about how the control of dogs coming into this country is enforced, in terms of understanding whether they have been chipped, vaccinated against rabies and all those issues.

[99] **Ms Hughes:** I would say that there is massive room for fraud. With regard to the UK Border Agency, if a private car drives in with a basket full of puppies, it is not going to know; it is not even going to see it. We have certainly had cases where puppies have been sold and they have obviously been younger than we would permit in this country, where somebody has owned a puppy for a couple of weeks before they have gone to the vet and then the vet has then said, 'Well, this puppy is only eight weeks old now'. So, there are some real issues. To expect border controls to see every puppy coming in is going to be quite tough. We actually had a project a good few years ago as part of our animal welfare scheme. Local authorities and charities were funded to do some extra work, and one of the projects was looking at Irish imports that we have all been told are coming in through the ports. We know that they are coming in through the ports; we see charities that are set up to rehome Irish stray dogs. Yet, even with the environmental health officers there and people there to try and specifically look and bolster the people who were there to try to find them, we were finding it very difficult to find those coming in. They are too easily hidden.

[100] **Alun Ffred Jones:** James Yeates, you may have the final word.

[101] **Dr Yeates:** Just on that question, we have had a number of discussions and it has made some improvements. It is still, to a large extent, left to the carrier companies to be looking at the dogs that are coming in. I think that that means that it still going to be very easy, especially with the various loopholes in the European legislation, to bring in large numbers. We have had a number of cruelty cases where we are talking about very large numbers of puppies—as big as you might expect to see with some of the big breeders—and that makes it very difficult. Again, they are not necessarily chipped, coming back to our previous conversation, and that makes it very difficult to trace them back, and of course it is going to be even more difficult if we do get any disease outbreak.

09:45

[102] **Alun Ffred Jones:** I am going to press you to be very brief now because time is

running out.

[103] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I have one question to Alison. On the regulations, do you think that there should be an exemption in terms of the working dogs in hound packs—the licensing conditions, for example?

[104] **Ms Hughes:** I think that the licensing conditions are generic enough that we would see them as a baseline. The reality is that most pedigree puppies would be born and bred in very different conditions to our baseline conditions. I think that this is something that we are often criticised for and that we have faced on other welfare issues. We are getting complaints about things, but, when we go and look—and I am sure that the charities are the same—we think that that is not how we would treat our own pampered pet, but there is actually nothing wrong with it. I, for instance, have had long conversations with a lady who was furious that I allowed my dog warden to take a puppy that was going to be kept outdoors. She was going to go to the ombudsman; she was going to go everywhere because this dog was going to be kept outdoors and I was saying, ‘But there is nothing wrong with a working dog being kept outdoors’. Now, actually, when it came to the dog warden, his mother and the dog, it was a two-to-one vote against and the dog is now a pampered indoor dog, but I think that the difficulty that we have is public perception. We are often fighting against that in that they see putting dogs outdoors to work as being cruel and that they should be inside asleep on the sofa. In terms of enforcement officers, we see working dogs as being working dogs.

[105] **Alun Ffred Jones:** We are going to move on now to wild animals in circuses, which is William Powell’s chosen subject for this morning.

[106] **William Powell:** Thank you, Cadeirydd. The former Minister for Natural Resources, Alun Davies, nailed his colours firmly to the mast on the issue of wild animals in circuses and was looking for legislation to come forward on an England and Wales basis. Obviously that has not been the case up to now. What are the panel’s views on that matter and what progress would you like to see in this area?

[107] **Mr O’Brien:** The first thing to say is that the Welsh Government was in favour of a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses, which is exceptionally welcome. The circus environment is no place for wild animals and we are keen to see a ban implemented in Wales and beyond as soon as possible. The Welsh Government has said, as you stated, that it was happy for the Westminster Government to legislate on its behalf and legislation is still not forthcoming. Jim Fitzpatrick MP has brought forward a private Members’ Bill on the issue and it has been at the Second Reading stage a number of times and has not progressed beyond that as of yet. We are very keen to see the Welsh Government put some pressure on the UK Government to take some action because this was its policy and it was happy for its policy to be implemented via an England and Wales channel. So, for us, the Welsh Government is in need of putting some pressure on the UK Government, which was also in favour of action, and saying that this ban needs to come forward as soon as possible because the delays have been, quite frankly, unacceptable.

[108] **Ms Hughes:** I take on board that point of view. The animal welfare enforcement officers are often asked by members of the public about zoos and circuses who want us to have a look at them. Our concern is that we cannot have the expertise on wild animals. Although we have vets on hand to deal with our boarding and breeding establishments, it is a very rare vet who has the expertise to deal with wild animals. If we have any issues or problems with circuses and with wild animals, it is very specialist for us to try to resolve those issues and identify and deal with them. There is a real inspection and enforcement issue that these wild animals are going around the country with very little back-up or supervision to ensure that they are being treated well.



[109] **Mick Antoniw:** On a point of clarification, when you talk about wild animals, what is the position regarding those that are bred in captivity? Are they still categorised as wild animals and does the same position apply to them in respect of legislation?

[110] **Ms Hughes:** To be fair, there are fewer and fewer circuses going around now with wild animals because the public very often does not like them either. However, my animal welfare officer was called out to one where someone was concerned about an elephant. As far as he was aware, the elephant looked happy, but he has never met an elephant before or since. It was captive bred, but we do not know what the welfare needs of that elephant were. It would be very specialist.

[111] **Mick Antoniw:** It is a more precise point. If you are legislating, you need to know what you are legislating on, if you are talking about a Bill et cetera.

[112] **Dr Yeates:** The simple answer is probably 'yes'. Wild animals like lions and tigers, even if they are being bred in captivity, may not quite be a wild animal, but they will still have the same drives, motivations and welfare needs as animals that have been seized from India or elsewhere. They can still suffer in exactly the same way. In those cases, there is no obvious reason to differentiate.

[113] **Mr R. Davies:** Roeddwn am wneud pwynt digon tebyg, a dweud y gwir. Mae'r ffaith eu bod yn mynd o gwmpas y wlad mewn caetslys cymharol fychan yn golygu na allant ddangos eu ffyrdd eu hunain o fihafio. Nid wyf yn meddwl bod gwahaniaeth a ydynt yn dod o'r gwyllt ynteu a ydynt wedi'u magu'n ddof, fel petai. Mae'r ymennydd a'r genynnau yn gwneud iddynt fihafio mewn ffordd benodol.

**Mr R. Davies:** I was going to make a similar point, to tell the truth. The fact that animals go around the country in small cages means that they cannot display their own behaviours. I do not think there is a different whether they come from the wild or are bred in captivity. The brain and the genes make them behave in a certain way.

[114] **William Powell:** I am going to move on to another issue that has exercised the Petitions Committee in recent months, namely animal sanctuaries. There have been some alarming reports of animal sanctuaries being centres of either abusive practice or neglect. What are your views on the need to regulate animal sanctuaries within Wales?

[115] **Mr O'Brien:** First of all, it is worth pointing out that many animal sanctuaries or animal welfare establishments, as they are sometimes known, do a very good job within communities. They do a valuable job in rehabilitating, rehoming and caring for animals. That point needs to be made in any discussion around the future of sanctuaries. However, that is not always the case. There is not an official definition of what a sanctuary is, but, from our perspective, we are looking at organisations that hold themselves out within a community to take in animals. They are not selecting the animals they bring in. They are known within the community as a place where animals can be taken. Often, welfare problems spiral out of control.

[116] Unfortunately, despite this, there is no regulation in place in relation to these establishments. Even though there is regulation on stuff like riding schools, dog breeding or cat boarding establishments, there is not regulation for a sanctuary. We think that it is definitely time for regulation to come forward. The RSPCA, as part of the animal welfare network for Wales, undertook a review into the matter with a host of other organisations, including sanctuaries, which looked at this in detail, and concluded that regulation was required. That report was presented to the Welsh Government in 2012. Officials committed to a response, but, two years on, we are still waiting for it. We are very keen for the Welsh Government to nail its colours to the mast on this issue and to outline how it feels about

regulation. Data have shown that there are approximately 88 sanctuaries in Wales, so we know that a large number of animals are based in these types of establishments, and it is essential that their welfare is protected. A scheme of regulation and licencing could certainly help achieve that and avoid many of the welfare concerns you have referred to.

[117] **Mr R. Davies:** Nid ydym, fel cymdeithas, wedi trafod y mater yn benodol, ond mae'r trafodaethau anffurfiol rydym wedi'u cael yn awgrymu ein bod am ddiffinio beth yw un o'r llefydd hyn. Efallai fod angen ystyried bod ganddynt ryw fath o gynllun yn nodi'r math o anifeiliaid y maent yn eu cadw o ran rhywogaeth, y nifer fwyaf y gallant ddelio â nhw, a yw'r adnoddau ganddynt a gweithio ar rhyw fath o fframwaith i ddweud beth yw'r lleiaf y maent ei angen o ran nifer y staff, cytiau, *kennels* ac ati, fel nad ydynt yn cyrraedd y pwynt lle maent yn mynd dros yr hyn y gallant ddelio ag ef yn rhesymol. Mae pob un o'r rhain, byddwn i'n meddwl, wedi dechrau gyda bwriad da, ond, yn anffodus, yn cael eu boddi'n sydyn. Dyna yw craidd y broblem yn fy marn i.

**Mr R. Davies:** As an organisation, we have not discussed the matter specifically, but the informal discussions that we have had suggest that we need to define these places. It might be time to consider some sort of scheme to note what types of animals they keep in terms of species, the maximum number that they can keep, whether they have the resources, and to work on some sort of framework on minimum requirements in terms of staff, kennels, cages and so forth, so that they do not reach the point where they exceed what they can reasonably deal with. Each one of these sanctuaries has, I would suggest, started out with good intentions and then have quickly been swamped. That, in my view, is what creates the problem.

[118] **Ms Hughes:** I would certainly agree that we need to look at some form of animal establishment licensing, particularly in the current economic climate. The reality is that they are getting busier and busier. Money is becoming short for them, just as for local authorities, and they are being asked to do more and more work. They start off well meaning. They can become swamped. There are a few—and I would say that it is a minority—where we have had issues. The one that I am thinking of in particular is one that purported to take in ill and injured animals, but had no links to a vet. So, how was it actually caring for those animals and what was it doing with them? I think that the other thing, certainly from a dog warden point of view, that I am aware of is that, sometimes, our local authority dog warden facilities are criticised, and we are trying to bring them up to standard. The RSPCA has been very useful in producing guidance for us to help us to understand what we need to do with our stray dogs, and how we need to care for them, but I think that that needs to be more widespread, and there is a public expectation at the moment that we license them. So, I think that it is very much the case that if we said, 'Actually, we don't,' the public would ask, 'Why not?' They are taking in animals at their most vulnerable and there are no standards. The ones that I know are very good, but I would like to be able to work with them to keep them that way.

[119] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The last word will come from Christopher.

[120] **Mr O'Brien:** Just to back up the point that Alison has made on public expectations, many of the public already assume that these establishments are licensed and regulated and they use them to rehome animals or take animals to them, and they are very surprised that there are no checks and balances whatsoever on these organisations or on these establishments. So, that is a very important point.

[121] **Alun Ffred Jones:** The very last words go to Siân.

[122] **Ms Edwards:** Thank you. On Rob's points, many things are addressed in that piece of work that Chris talked about. Dogs Trust is part of Animal Welfare Network Wales and is also involved in that. Many of those points are there, so I would, again, urge for that piece to be looked at.

[123] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Russell George apparently has another question.

[124] **Russell George:** If they were licensed, what are the potential negatives that could come out of that? I am just thinking that there could be unintended consequences to doing that that could be negative. I actually agree that they should be licensed, but I am just posing that question.

[125] **Ms Hughes:** The big negative that was identified by the working group is that there will be a cost to licensing and who is going to meet that. I think that the view of the group was very strongly that if you could not afford a licence, what were you doing in the business? Its view was also that the cost of the licence, compared with the other costs, was very minimal particularly as local authorities are allowed to charge only the true cost of issuing that licence. This is not income generation for local authorities; this is just the cost of us going out, inspecting and issuing the licence.

[126] I think that the other negative is one that charities are already meeting, and that is what happens if they go wrong, or if we have to close them down. However, that is already having an impact on the third sector. We have had charities go bust. We certainly know with some of the horse charities, in particular, which are very well organised, that the bigger charities are already going in with their vets to assist with the veterinary costs of the smaller rehoming charities and sanctuaries, on the basis that it is cheaper for the big sanctuaries to put in a bit of veterinary care than to take the horses when that sanctuary closes. So, I think that the sanctuaries are already working together. The impact on the sanctuaries themselves will be minimal, and the impact on the third sector overall will, actually, be to help support the smaller sanctuaries by giving them the veterinary support that they need. If we go in with a vet at a cost, they will be getting veterinary advice cheaper than they would get it if they called in a vet themselves. So, there are swings and roundabouts. We thought that the overall benefit was positive.

[127] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Rwyf i eisiau symud ymlaen at fater arall, sef dulliau lladd heb lonyddu—*non-stun slaughter*. **Alun Ffred Jones:** I want to move on now to another matter, namely methods of non-stun slaughter.

[128] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wanted to hear particularly from the BVA about the extent of non-stun slaughter in Wales. I know that there is a BVA campaign addressing non-stun slaughter, but I would like to know how widespread the problem is and whether or not you think that sufficient information is being given to consumers about the way in which animals are being slaughtered so that they can make buying choices based on what has happened in relation to a particular animal?

[129] **Mr R. Davies:** Diolch yn fawr am y cwestiwn. Mae hwn yn fater sydd yn poeni'n haelodau ni yn fawr iawn—dyma'r uchaf ar y rhestr, mewn gwirionedd. Mae petisiwn wedi ei lansio drwy'r Llywodraeth yn Llundain ac mae hwnnw wedi cyrraedd dros 70,000 o lofnodion, rwy'n credu, erbyn hyn. Hefyd, rydym yn cefnogi deiseb RSPCA Cymru o fewn Cymru ei hun. **Mr R. Davies:** Thank you very much for the question. This is an issue that concerns our members very much—the No.1 issue, to be honest. A petition has been launched through the Government in London, and I believe that it now has in excess of 70,000 signatures. We are also supporting RSPCA Wales's petition within Wales itself.

10:00

[130] Cyn belled â bo lladd-dai yng Nghymru yn y cwestiwn, byddai'r wybodaeth As far as abattoirs in Wales are concerned, that information would come from the FSA.

honno'n dod gan yr FSA. Rydym yn deall bod un lladd-dy yn ochrau Wrecsam yn gwneud rhywfaint o hyn. Yn ddiweddar, roedd erthygl yn y *Daily Post* yn cyfeirio at y lladd-dy yng Nghaernarfon sydd wedi ailagor. Perchennog y lladd-dy hwnnw yw cwmni yn Birmingham sy'n hysbysebu ar ei wefan mai'r hyn y mae'n arbenigo ynddo yw cyflenwi cig o anifeiliaid sydd heb eu gwneud yn anymwybodol cyn cael eu lladd. Safbwynt y BVA yw ein bod yn ei erbyn a dyna fo, am resymau lles, wrth gwrs. Mae digon o dystiolaeth wyddonol, heb fynd i mewn i hynny yn drwyadl yma ar hyn o bryd.

[131] Tra bo deddfwriaeth yn eithrio cymunedau penodol rhag gwneud anifeiliaid yn anymwybodol cyn eu lladd, yna rydym yn credu ei bod yn anfoesol ac yn afresymol i bobl sy'n prynu cig beidio â gwybod hynny. Nid wyf yn siŵr iawn sut mae dod rownd y mater labelu. Rydym yn sylweddoli, wrth gwrs, bod symudiadau ar lefel Ewropaidd i edrych ar y peth yn ei gyfanrwydd. A yw lladd-dy yn eu lladd i gyd fel hyn, ynteu dim ond ambell un? A oes ffordd o ddweud a yw'r rhai sy'n cael eu lladd heb eu gwneud yn anymwybodol yn mynd i farchnad benodol? Nid wyf yn ymwybodol bod ffordd o gysoni'r ddwy set o ffigurau, os liciwch chi. Cyn belled â bo lladd yn y ffordd shechita yn y cwestiwn, yn ôl fy nealltwriaeth i, nid yw rhan ôl yr anifail yn cael ei ddefnyddio gan y gymuned honno, felly rhaid ei fod yn mynd i rywle. Nid wyf yn meddwl bod un ffordd o wybod i le mae'n mynd na phwy sy'n ei fwyta. Byddwn yn meddwl na fyddai'r rhan fwyaf o bobl gyffredin sy'n prynu cig eisiau ei brynu os byddent yn gwybod bod yr anifail wedi'i ladd yn y ffordd honno. Fel y BVA, rydym wrth gwrs yn cefnogi lles anifeiliaid, o'r amser y cânt eu geni i'r amser y cânt eu lladd, wedyn mae'n rhywbeth holistig i ni, i ddefnyddio gair a oedd yn arfer bod yn ffasiynol, ond nid bellach.

[132] Peth arall y byddwn yn awgrymu hefyd, yn sicr yng nghyd-destun brand cig oen Cymru neu gig Cymru yn gyffredinol, os liciwch chi, yw os yw ffermwr yn dewis mynd â'i anifail i ladd-dy a bod posibilrwydd uchel neu bendant na fydd yr anifail yn cael ei wneud yn anymwybodol, fy marn i yw y gallai hynny wneud drwg i frand Cymru ac i

We understand that there is one abattoir in the Wrexham area that is doing some of this. Recently, there was an article in the *Daily Post* referring to the abattoir in Caernarfon that has just reopened. That abattoir is owned by a company in Birmingham, which advertises on its website that it specialises in the supply of meat from animals that have not been stunned before being slaughtered. The BVA standpoint is that we are against it, end of story, for welfare reasons, of course. There is sufficient scientific evidence, without going into too much detail about it here.

While there is legislation that exempts specific communities from stunning animals before slaughter, we believe that it is immoral and unreasonable for people purchasing the meat not to know that. I am not certain how you get around the matter of labelling. We realise, of course, that there are moves on a European level to look at the issue in its entirety. Does an abattoir slaughter all animals like this, or only a few of the animals? Is there a way of saying whether those that are not stunned go to a specific market? I am not aware that there is a way of making the two sets of figures consistent, if you like. As far as shechita slaughtering is concerned, according to my understanding, the hindquarters of the animal are not used by that community, so it must go somewhere. I do not think that there is a way of knowing where it goes or who eats it. I would imagine that most ordinary people buying meat would not wish to buy it if they knew the animal had been slaughtered in this manner. As the BVA, we of course support the welfare of animals from the time they are born to the time they are slaughtered, so it is a holistic thing for us, to use a word that used to be fashionable, but is not so any more.

Another thing that I would suggest, certainly in the context of the Welsh lamb brand or of Welsh meat in general, if you like, is that if a farmer chose to take his animals to an abattoir where there is a high probability that the animal is not stunned, my view is that that could be detrimental to the reputation of brand Wales and to the reputation of Welsh

enw da ffermwyr Cymru hefyd. Yn fras, dyna farmers too. So, generally, that is our point of view. I can give further details if you like.  
 yw'n safbwynt ni. Gallaf roi manylion  
 pellach os ydych eisiau i mi wneud hynny.

[133] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A hoffai rywun **Alun Ffred Jones:** Does anybody else want  
 arall ddod i mewn? to come in?

[134] **Mr O'Brien:** I have a very brief point on the data issue. There is certainly an issue in Wales about the amount of data that are currently available about the number of animals slaughtered in Wales via the non-stun method. The Welsh Government has confirmed, as Rob has mentioned, that there is one abattoir in Wales that we understand is currently undertaking this practice, but the thoroughfare of animals through that abattoir is not currently a matter of public record. The Welsh Government has asked the FSA to collect data from that abattoir, which we welcome, but it has since said that it does not intend to publish them.

[135] From our perspective, this is a very timely debate. This issue is very prominent in people's minds at the moment. Rob has referred to the BVA petition at UK level, which is approaching 80,000 signatures, and the petition that we have worked on with the BVA as RSPCA Cymru at a Welsh level has some 2,500 signatures. We have been astonished by the public response to the issue and the care that is out there for welfare. The data for Wales are important when having that discussion, so we would urge the Welsh Government to publish those data so that we can have a more informed debate around the issue of non-stun slaughter.

[136] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I do not know whether you can say that this is right or not, but my understanding is that there are more animals being killed by non-stun slaughter than there is the possibility of that consumption taking place in the exempted communities, if you like, under the religious community—

[137] **Mr O'Brien:** That is certainly my understanding as well. I think that the figures at a Great Britain level are that 3% of cattle, 10% of sheep and 4% of poultry are slaughtered via this method. That is obviously not necessarily applicable in Wales; it might be higher or lower. However, it is a high amount—we are talking about millions of farm animals every year. My understanding is the same as yours on that.

[138] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wonder whether James Yeates could explain to us what the impact is on the animal if it is not stunned before slaughter.

[139] **Dr Yeates:** Certainly, and just to add on that, in some cases, whole parts of every single animal—so, the hindquarters of all cows—are going into the main food chain, we suspect. So, it is not just that some get overproduced and diverted, but part of the system—the economic model—is that it goes to people who are not Muslim, Jewish, or people who need to have that meat.

[140] Rob may well also want to add to this, but, in terms of the welfare implications, I think that, first, there is a greater degree of handling involved. You have to extend the neck of the animals to make sure that you can access the jugular. You are meant to cut the jugular and the carotid arteries. There is then the pain of the actual cut itself. Obviously, as you would imagine—the Farm Animal Welfare Council has been very clear and strong on this—cutting a neck through all of the vessels and tissues is going to be significantly painful for those animals. The third problem is the length of time that those animals then take to bleed out, especially in cattle, where it can be up to two minutes. That is a long time to be bleeding to death. They are probably the three key welfare issues involved in not stunning.

[141] **Mr R. Davies:** Os caf i, fe ddarllenaf **Mr R. Davies:** If I may, I will read from the  
 y gwreiddiol. Mae yna lythyr yn y *Veterinary* original. There is a letter in the *Veterinary*

*Record* yr wythnos hon, fel y mae'n *Record* this week, as it happens, which notes: digwydd, sy'n nodi:

[142] 'Based on observations on 800 lambs, non-stunned lambs take up to 65 seconds to die and ewes over 70 seconds, whereas fully stunned lambs take 43 seconds to die...Non-stunned calves...can take even longer to die: in 1 per cent over 360 seconds, 2 per cent over 300 seconds and 50 per cent 120 seconds'.

[143] Felly, mae'r dystiolaeth yn dod o sawl cyfeiriad, i ddweud y gwir. Un peth arall efallai y dylwn wedi sôn amdano yn gynharach yw mai ein barn ni yw, os oes lladd-dy yn agor, neu'n bwriadu agor, ac yn gofyn i Lywodraeth Cymru am hwb ariannol, neu gymorth ariannol, ni ddylai Llywodraeth Cymru gynnig yr hwb ariannol hwnnw os nad yw pob anifail yn cael ei wneud yn anymwybodol cyn ei ladd. Mae hynny'n rhywbeth y mae'n rhaid inni ei ystyried, oherwydd mae lladd-dy mawr yn sir Fôn, er enghraifft. Mae yno, ond pa un a wnaiff agor byth neu beidio, nid ydym yn gwybod. Fodd bynnag, petai cwmni mawr yn dod, sydd â'i brif farchnad yn halal, credaf ei bod yn bwysig eich bod yn ystyried y posibilrwydd hwnnw ymlaen llaw, os liciwch chi. Mae'n bosibl y byddai barn wahanol gan yr undebau amaethyddol, nid wyf yn gwybod, ond rwy'n feddwl ei fod yn bwysig.

So, the evidence is coming from a number of different directions, to be honest. One other thing that I should, perhaps, have mentioned earlier is that our view is that if an abattoir opens, or intends to open, and asks the Welsh Government for a financial boost, or financial assistance, the Welsh Government should not offer that financial boost unless every animal is stunned before being slaughtered. That is something that we need to consider, because there is a huge abattoir on Anglesey, for example. It is standing there, but as to whether it will ever open or not, we do not know. However, if there was the possibility of a major company coming in with its main market being halal, I think that it is important that you consider that possibility beforehand, if you like. It is possible that the farming unions would have a different view, I do not know, but I think that it is important.

[144] **Jenny Rathbone:** I was just wondering what information there is from the Muslim and Jewish communities whose members require this method of killing. Obviously, they are paying a premium for halal or other religious meat, and it is supposed to have been conducted by someone of the Muslim or Jewish faith. I note from the RSPCA evidence that there is only one abattoir in Wales that actually does this; therefore, I am slightly struggling to understand how it is that such a large percentage of this non-stunned meat is making its way into the general meat market. If there is only one abattoir, it must be reasonably straightforward to ensure that what is being sold as meat that has been killed in the religiously defined way is then going to that market.

[145] **Ms Hughes:** I think that the one thing to bear in mind is the size and complexity of the food chain. What the horse meat scare showed us was that meat is travelling throughout Europe, and, more than that, it is going through a number of different hands and through different brokers. The fact of the matter is that meat being eaten in Wales does not come from Wales. The meat from Wrexham is probably going all over the country and vice versa. This is part of the issue that you are going to have if we are looking at what happens in Wales, in that the meat being eaten here does not come from here. It is not only about looking at the meat, but at meat products. Most of us eat meat now in value meals and things like that; that is where meat comes from. Butchers' meat is actually becoming a rarer commodity. For me, it is all going to come down to labelling and giving people choice. I think that that is something that we can look at. With the recent scare with a major chain, where people thought that their meat was halal meat, and that it was, therefore, non-stunned meat, they had to step in very quickly and say, 'It is halal, but it is still stunned'. Even if we have it labelled 'halal', it is not giving us the information. It comes down to food labelling, I think, and giving people a choice. We label a lot of things on our food; it should not be beyond us to label this as well.

[146] **Jenny Rathbone:** I would agree with that, but this sounds like it is something on which we need to go to Europe to get the appropriate legislation. Just legislating in Wales is really not going to do it.

[147] **Ms Hughes:** Yes. One of the issues that we have is that the food chain is very, very wide.

[148] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Galwaf ar Rob Davies a wedyn James Yeates. **Alun Ffred Jones:** I call on Rob Davies and then James Yeates.

[149] **Mr R. Davies:** Y pwynt yr oeddwn am ei wneud oedd eich bod wedi sôn yn gynharach mai dim ond un lladd-dy sydd ac efallai nad yw'n broblem fawr. Fodd bynnag, os ydym yn mynd i gael deddfwriaeth yng Nghymru, yna rhaid inni fod yn ymwybodol bod efallai un, dau, tri, pedwar neu bump, o bosibl, yn cael eu heffeithio, oherwydd bod y farchnad halal o bosibl yn ehangu oherwydd bod y gymuned Islamaidd yn tyfu, ac mae'n bosibl bod rhai pobl o'r gymuned honno, hyd yn oed, yn meddwl, pan fyddant yn gweld 'halal', nad ydynt i gyd wedi cael eu gwneud yn anwybodol ac nid ydynt yn deall hynny; mae hynny'n bosibilrwydd. Roeddech yn sôn am bethau ar lefel Ewropeaidd; mae hynny'n rhywbeth sy'n cael ei drafod, hyd y gwn i, ar hyn o bryd, ond nid wyf yn meddwl bod hynny'n atal Cymru rhag dangos y ffordd ymlaen.

**Mr R. Davies:** The point that I wanted to make was that you mentioned earlier that there was only one abattoir and that it is not, perhaps, a big problem. However, if we are going to get Welsh legislation, then we must be aware that maybe one, two, three, four or five, possibly, would be affected, because the halal market is possibly expanding because the Islamic community is growing, and it is possible that some people from that community, even, think, when they see 'halal', that they have not all been stunned and do not understand that; that is a possibility. You were talking about things at a European level; that is something that is being discussed, to my knowledge, at present, but I do not think that that stops Wales from showing the way forward.

[150] **Dr Yeates:** I have two points on that. One is that I think that, from a labelling point of view, it may well be about more European pressure. From the point of view of what we allow in Wales, in terms of what is being done, not in terms of what is being sold, then that seems to me to be more of a matter here. The other point that I would make—obviously, I do not want to speak for any religious groups—is that this is about slaughter without stunning rather than about particular religious methods. There is halal meat that has been stunned; there is even some shechita meat, I understand, that has post-cut stunning. So, the issue is that ethical issue, which I think is clear on the suffering, about whether you stun an animal before you cut its throat, rather than any of the other issues. I think that that is what I try to concentrate on when I am thinking about this.

[151] **Jenny Rathbone:** So, have you had any dialogue with the relevant religious communities on this?

[152] **Dr Yeates:** We have, and there is a fairly major European project looking at some of the sociological and other aspects of this. Again, I am very nervous about representing those, but there is a range of views as well, of course, within different communities. So, there is not a homogenous type of person or a single view in either of those.

[153] **Mr R. Davies:** O safbwynt y BVA, ar lefel Brydeinig, rydym wedi cyfarfod â Shechita UK a'r Halal Food Authority, felly mae deialog yn mynd yn ei blaen. Mae'r **Mr R. Davies:** From the BVA's point of view, on a British level, we have met with Shechita UK and the Halal Food Authority, so there is dialogue going on. The

trafodaethau yn digwydd, wrth gwrs, achos rwy'n meddwl ei bod yn bwysig bod pobl o leiaf yn ystyried safbwynt y naill a'r llall a gweld os oes rhyw ffordd o ddatrys y peth yn rhesymol.

discussions are happening, of course, because I think that it is important that people at least consider each other's positions and work to see whether there is a way of solving this reasonably.

[154] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. Are there any other questions before I draw this session to a close? Do you wish to make any last statements before I send you away? *[Laughter.]*

[155] **Mr O'Brien:** May I just briefly say, on behalf of the RSPCA, what a fantastic idea we thought that this session was and put on record our thanks to committee members and staff for facilitating it? Obviously, it is a very pertinent time in relation to animal welfare. A number of issues are at a crucial stage, and we feel that this session is really important. We would definitely encourage as many sessions as possible on animal welfare, so I am always happy to engage with them. Thank you very much.

[156] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr. Thank you very much indeed. Thank you for coming and for giving your views to us.

[157] We will take a break now and we will see you back here in 10 minutes.

*Gohiriwyd y cyfarfod rhwng 10:14 a 10:24.  
The meeting adjourned between 10:14 and 10:24.*

### **Lles Anifeiliaid: Trafodaeth Bwrdd Crwn Animal Welfare: Round-table Discussion**

[158] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A gaf i eich croesawu yma fel tystion y bore yma i'r drafodaeth hon ar faterion lles anifeiliaid? Rydym wedi cael un sesiwn y bore yma a dyma ni yn wynebu yr ail. Gofynnaf yn gyntaf i chi gyflwyno'ch hunain. Nid yw Rhian Nowell-Phillips wedi cyrraedd ato, ond rydym yn ei disgwyl. Felly, gofynnaf i chi gyflwyno'ch hunain drwy ddweud pwy rydych yn ei gynrychioli, gan ddechrau ar y chwith efo Rachel.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** May I welcome you here as witnesses this morning to this discussion on animal welfare issues? We have already had one session this morning and we are now into the second. I ask you first to introduce yourselves. Rhian Nowell-Phillips has not arrived yet, but we are expecting her. So, I ask you to introduce yourselves by telling us who you represent, beginning on the left with Rachel.

[159] **Ms Evans:** Bore da. Good morning. My name is Rachel Evans, director for Wales of the Countryside Alliance.

[160] **Mr D. Davies:** Bore da, Mr Gadeirydd. Yn y lle cyntaf, diolch i'r pwyllgor am ein gwahodd ni yma a rhoi cyfle inni roi adroddiad ysgrifenedig i chi a'r ffaith ein bod yma y bore yma i drafod hyn. Dai Davies ydw i, ac rwy'n aelod o gorff fframwaith lles ac iechyd anifeiliaid yng Nghymru, ac rwyf hefyd yn aelod o gorff lles ac iechyd gwartheg yn y Deyrnas Unedig. Fodd bynnag, rwyf yma heddiw fel cadeirydd Hybu Cig Cymru.

**Mr D. Davies:** Good morning, Mr chairman. First of all, I thank the committee for inviting us here, for the opportunity to provide you with written evidence and for being here this morning to discuss this matter. I am Dai Davies, and I am a member of an animal health and welfare framework body in Wales, and I am also a member of a cattle welfare and health body for the United Kingdom. However, I am here today as chair of Hybu Cig Cymru.



- [161] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Wel, mae gennyh lawer het, felly. **Alun Ffred Jones:** So, you are wearing a number of hats.
- [162] **Mr D. Davies:** Wel, dyna pam nad oes gwallt ar fy mhen. [*Chwerthin.*] **Mr D. Davies:** Maybe that is why I do not have much hair on my head. [*Laughter.*]
- [163] **Mr Jones:** Bore da. Sion Aron Jones, Hybu Cig Cymru. **Mr Jones:** Good morning. I am Sion Aron Jones, Hybu Cig Cymru.
- [164] **Mr Morgan:** Bore da. Dylan Morgan, pennaeth polisi NFU Cymru. **Mr Morgan:** Good morning. Dylan Morgan, head of policy for NFU Cymru.
- [165] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Mae gennym gwestiynau, wrth gwrs, ond mae'n bwysig iawn eich bod yn manteisio ar y cyfle i ddweud wrthym yr hyn sydd yn eich meddyliau chi ar y mater hwn os nad ydym yn gofyn y cwestiynau iawn. Reit, fe ddechreuwn ni gyda Julie Morgan. **Alun Ffred Jones:** We have questions for you, of course, but it is very important that you take advantage of this opportunity to tell us what is on your minds with regard to this issue if we do not pose the right questions. Right, we will make a start with Julie Morgan.
- [166] **Julie Morgan:** Thank you very much. Bore da. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 is now in force. I wonder whether you could give us your views on the powers to enforce dog control in that Act.
- [167] **Ms Evans:** Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today, and thank you, Julie, for the first question. We are pleased to see the Act coming in. We understand that the Welsh legislation was put on the back burner, but we are very pleased that at least there is something now in place. It is very early days, and we are just going to have to wait and see how things develop. There are a couple of exemptions within that that we were quite pleased with, for example the householder exemption. Therefore, if somebody breaks into your house and has a nip from the dog, then it is not the owner's responsibility and that dog does not seem to be deemed dangerous. That did not extend to farm buildings. As the owner of a couple of farm buildings, where I often work on my own, I would have appreciated that being extended, perhaps. On the whole, though, we are pleased to see the legislation coming in, but it really is a matter now of seeing how it develops and to see whether the provisions within it are enough to combat what it set out to do.
- [168] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A hoffai unrhyw un arall ychwanegu unrhyw beth? Dylan. **Alun Ffred Jones:** Would anyone else like to add anything? Dylan.
- [169] **Mr Morgan:** The big point to make is that it is important that we have legislation in place that tackles that minority of dog owners who take irresponsible action. Just speaking from a farming background, anecdotally, we hear a lot more evidence now of dog worrying and the issues that that can cause, particularly around lambing time, so any legislation that is in place that helps to put more responsibility on the dog owner is to be welcomed. The only slight concern we have, following on from what Rachel said there, is that dogs do have a role to play in terms of private places and guarding property. What some people may see as quite strong behaviour against a person may not be seen as such by the owner of the property there, who is obviously guarding that property.
- [170] **Julie Morgan:** So, you think that there should be further exemptions.
- [171] **Mr Morgan:** In terms of the legislation, I do not know enough about the detail, but I think that what is important is that, when we are looking at a private place, it is different from

a public place. Obviously, a farmyard is different to a dog roaming around in a park.

[172] **Julie Morgan:** With regard to the original Welsh Government legislation that was dropped, do you think that the Westminster legislation adequately replaces that?

[173] **Ms Evans:** It seems to be adequate for now. Once again, we will just have to see how it pans out. The only one thing, if I recall correctly, is that, within the Welsh legislation, there was a provision to extend the offence to any protected animal, for example cats, chickens, et cetera. I would just really err on the side of caution with that, because if you are gathering 500 ewes and you have three of your best sheepdogs and one nips an ewe, is that deemed to be a dangerously out of control dog, for example? If somebody's cat comes into your garden and your dog is not used to that cat and, sadly, it takes that cat's life, is it really dangerously out of control or has it done it because it has never seen that cat before? If you are going to go down that road, you need to do that with some caution.

[174] **Julie Morgan:** There are differing views on that, as you know.

[175] **Ms Evans:** Yes, of course there are, but looking at it from a different perspective, we have to have a balanced view on it and look at things by coming at it from all angles.

[176] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Do you have any further questions, Julie?

[177] **Julie Morgan:** No, I will leave that there.

[178] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Clywsom yn y sesiwn gynharach bod yr RSPCA wedi'i wahodd i edrych ar berchnogaeth gyfrifol o gŵn yng Nghymru y tu hwnt i'r hyn sydd yn y ddeddfwriaeth ar lefel San Steffan. A ydych chi, er enghraifft, yn gweld rôl i chi ei chwarae ar y grŵp hwnnw, neu a oes pynciau penodol y byddech chi'n awyddus i'r grŵp edrych arnynt?

**Llyr Gruffydd:** We heard in the earlier session that the RSPCA has been invited to look at responsible dog ownership in Wales beyond what is in the legislation on a Westminster level. Do you, for example, see a role for you to play on that group, or are there specific subjects that you would like the group to look at?

10:30

[179] **Ms Evans:** *[Anhyglyw.]*

**Ms Evans:** *[Inaudible.]*

[180] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Sorry, I did not get the answer to that.

[181] **Ms Evans:** So, there is definitely a role for organisations like ours to sit on that group. It is just that getting the invitation in the first place would be a start.

[182] **Antoinette Sandbach:** On that group, are there any representations, as far as you are aware, from the owners of working dogs, because obviously there is a distinction between dogs that are being used in a working capacity and those that are family pets? The behaviour is likely to be different because the whole upbringing and breeding of the dog is completely different to that of dogs bred to be family pets.

[183] **Ms Evans:** To my knowledge, there are no representations for the working dog on any such group. I have checked, actually. We had a discussion yesterday with the National Gamekeepers' Organisation and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, from its working dog department, and I think there is a meeting on tomorrow, for example, for stakeholders with regard to the breeding of dogs legislation. We have no involvement in that, yet we have worked on this since 2008.

[184] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Okay. Are there any other questions on dogs or related issues? Antoinette.

[185] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Yes. May I go on to the breeding of dogs regulations? Obviously, there are very different requirements for dogs that are kept in packs as opposed to dogs that are kept individually—and, by their nature, I am thinking particularly of hounds, which are pack animals. They are kept in packs for welfare reasons. Could you advise us in terms of the dog breeding regulations, and, actually, any of the other pieces of dog legislation, what you would like to see and whether or not you think there should be any exemptions?

[186] **Ms Evans:** Well, I could talk for more than five minutes on this subject. It has been at the forefront—

[187] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Try five minutes.

[188] **Ms Evans:** How long have I got, Chair?

[189] Dwy funud. Reit. Two minutes. Right.

[190] To be fair, that whole topic could warrant a session of its own and, indeed, a committee to look into the legislation. It is heavy legislation and it needs to be workable, and I think it needs to be scrutinised by the Assembly.

[191] With regard to your specific question on working dogs, I have worked with all the previous Ministers on this. We have taken Ministers to hunt kennels, for example. My original position on this—and it does remain, however we find ourselves involved with hunt kennels in this—is that hunt kennels should not, to me, have been brought into this legislation, because they are not a commercial enterprise. Hound puppies or hounds are never sold, and they do not enter into domestic situations. The breeding of hounds is a very selective process. You might have 25 bitches in kennels, but you would choose to select only two, or three as a maximum, probably, of the very best to breed. So, already, you have these hounds in a far better position than bitches being kept at commercial dog-breeding establishments.

[192] It is important that hounds remain pack animals. They are very social animals. They work, play, rest and eat together as a pack, and anything that was brought in that would stop that happening would be very, very detrimental to their welfare. If this is about dog welfare, it needs to be about all dogs, and we cannot really go into being specific about different sectors.

[193] I would say that, since working on this legislation, from the very outset, we were looking at the large-scale factory production of pups. I do not like calling it ‘puppy farming’, but the factory production of pups, which can happen in a terraced house in a street in Cardiff, out the back. We were looking at combating this, stopping dogs from being bred in poor conditions and ending up in domestic situations. Hunt kennels did not actually feature in the first four years of the work on this. However, if they are in the legislation, it is absolutely paramount that, within the guidelines you can issue to local authorities, there are provisions for dogs to be kept as packs. For example, the last set of guidelines we saw said that each dog must have a bed of its own. Well, you could put 10 hounds into this room and you would find them all sleeping together, and the beds would probably not exist within a few days. It also says that they have to have access to two bowls of water. Again, they are communal in their eating and their drinking and are currently in a far better position, because, more often than not, there is a water trough with a continuous water supply coming through. So, two bowls of water would not be sufficient or practical.

[194] My final point—and you are probably going to raise this again—is the staffing ratio for hunt kennels. The 1:30 is not practical or justifiable, because you can walk 40 to 50 hounds down the road and they will all go as a group. If you had 40 or 50 different breeds, you are really unable to do that. So, the hounds look to their kennelman as their alpha male and they respect that, and they look to him—or her—for guidance. Very often, there is not a staffing ratio at the kennels because there is a large volunteer structure and everyone wants to be part of kennels. If you say, ‘We are looking for people to come and walk hounds’, which means just taking them out on their walk, you will have a gang of volunteers just because they want to be part of that community. Sorry, I could go on. You are going to have to control me, Chair. *[Laughter.]*

[195] **Alun Ffred Jones:** No, you are very persuasive.

[196] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wonder whether there is anything more that you would like to say that you have not had an opportunity to say to us. If so, perhaps you could write to us on that specific issue.

[197] **Ms Evans:** I would be more than happy to put a briefing paper together to forward to the committee. However, on the subject of microchipping, most of the hunts in Wales have now microchipped their hounds.

[198] **William Powell:** Do you think that there is a case for the licensing of dog rescue centres? This was an issue that came up in the previous session, which I am aware you were following. It has also been the subject of a recent petition to the Petitions Committee, and that is still live. Do you think that there would be merit in that proposal?

[199] **Ms Evans:** I think that there needs to be some form of registration, because you and I could open up a sanctuary tomorrow with no funding or expertise. I did listen to the previous session, and I can see full well the concerns that the public has. There does need to be some form of system where a sanctuary is at least recognisable—by a local authority, for example.

[200] **William Powell:** In terms of any legislation coming forward, to what extent do we need to be aware of cross-border issues—the England and Wales border—in this regard?

[201] **Ms Evans:** With regard to sanctuaries?

[202] **William Powell:** Sanctuaries or, indeed, any wider dog welfare legislation.

[203] **Ms Evans:** We definitely have to work with the Westminster Government on dog-welfare or any form of legislation, because there is so much traffic with regard to dogs, where people are taking them from Wales to England to show them, for example, or for sale or even for veterinary treatment. My neighbours sent their dog down to Bristol the other day because there was nothing that could be done for her locally, but she came back fit and well. So, there are lots of issues, I think, particularly with the sale of dogs. However, yes, we need to have a sort of blanket approach where we can, for as much as we can, just to make the laws simpler and enforceable.

[204] **William Powell:** Yes. That is helpful, thank you.

[205] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Russell, do you want to go on about electric shock collars?

[206] **Russell George:** Okay. I can do, Chair. I will just ask the panel for its views on that subject. Rachel mentioned that she heard the last evidence session. I am not quite sure whether the other panel members heard the last session, as well, but I would appreciate your views.

[207] **Ms Evans:** Okay, well, there is one particular campaign that I know of, and I know that the lady has contacted many Assembly Members, and she has contacted me several times. Earlier, I heard the RSPCA witnesses saying that the legislation need not be watered down. We are not looking for the legislation to be watered down, but there have been unintended consequences of that legislation. The person who was the driving force behind that campaign has lost cats to the road because she has had to take down her invisible fencing. I know that she has spoken to several Assembly Members, and I know that the current Minister in charge of this has written to her, spoken to her on the phone, and supported her while responding to her as a constituent.

[208] We cannot let this get to the emotional side. It has to be based on science, and it has to be science led. I think that there is scope here to look at this taking a balanced approach, with a balanced view, and, to be fair, to give the lady with all her hard work some listening time. I think that the points that she has made are very valid, and I think that there is more that can be looked into. The one issue that she raised with me is that boundary fences are not in the literal control of man, but with electric collars, you have a hand-held device and you would produce that zap. With a boundary fence, it is not in the control of man. So, I thought that that was a valid point. It is something that has been brought to my attention and I do have some empathy with the campaign that has been brought forward on that specific issue. I think, to be fair, perhaps there are unintended consequences here and it needs to be looked at from the point of view of welfare issues possibly.

[209] **Alun Ffred Jones:** So, on these invisible boundary fences, how do they work? I am sorry, I am—

[210] **Ms Evans:** They run off a battery, I would assume, like any normal—

[211] **Alun Ffred Jones:** So, when an animal reaches a certain point, it gets a shock because it crosses some—

[212] **Ms Evans:** Yes, at a certain distance from the fence line. So, the fence line would be on the edge of a main road and so—

[213] **Russell George:** But the animal has got a collar on as well.

[214] **Ms Evans:** The cat will have a collar.

[215] **Russell George:** It interfaces with the boundary fence. Is that right?

[216] **Ms Evans:** The cat will have a collar on, yes, I believe.

[217] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Rydym yn **Alun Ffred Jones:** We welcome Rhian croesawu Rhian Nowell-Phillips atom. Nowell-Phillips to us.

[218] **Ms Nowell-Phillips:** Diolch. Sori am **Ms Nowell-Phillips:** Thank you. Sorry for fod yn hwyr. being late.

[219] **Russell George:** I do not know whether Dylan wants to expand on that as well with regard to boundary fences on farms too.

[220] **Mr Morgan:** To be perfectly honest with you, it is not a subject that I am au fait with. I think that the only point that I would make in terms of a generic point on animal welfare is on the science base. I think that, in terms of animal welfare, everything going forward should be driven by that scientific evidence base. That is the only comment I think

that I am in a position to make.

[221] **Alun Ffred Jones:** We will now move on to non-stun slaughter and welfare at the time of slaughter. Perhaps that will give Rachel a rest. Perhaps some of the others will have a view on this. So, who is going to kick off? Antoinette?

[222] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Yes. I am aware of an abattoir in Wrexham that does non-stun slaughter, but are you aware of any factors in non-stun slaughter that, for example, affect the quality of the meat going forward in terms of the method of killing affecting the quality of the meat? Apart from the abattoir in Wrexham, are you aware of the extent of non-stun slaughter in Wales and whether it is carried out elsewhere? I think that HCC would probably have more information on that, than—.

[223] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Pwy sy'n mynd i **Alun Ffred Jones:** Who is going to start? ddechrau? Dai? Dai?

[224] **Mr D. Davies:** Thank you for that. As far as the abattoir in Wrexham is concerned, the production is quite small, but it is located in Wales. As far as the quality of meat is concerned, there is no scientific evidence to differentiate non-stunned meat from stunned meat. You say that the one in Wrexham is the only such abattoir in Wales, and the nervousness that I have over that is that there is potential, in that certain families that we know within the slaughter trade are considering moving into Wales—I know both families concerned—and one of the families at the moment produces meat through stunning and non-stunning. I wonder, if the situation in Wales were different from that in England, whether they would consider moving into Wales or whether they might change their minds. That is the nervousness that I have over it.

[225] **Alun Ffred Jones:** There is a new abattoir in Caernarfon and they kill by non-stun methods.

[226] **Mr D. Davies:** I was not aware, Mr Chairman, that they had started as yet. I know that they are at the point of completing issues. They have other abattoirs within the UK and, in those abattoirs, they practise both methods. The route that they take in Caernarfon, I am not too sure about as yet.

[227] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Would your preference then be for labelling that allowed purchasers to be given a choice, so that they could buy meat that had either been stunned or non-stunned, so that consumers are aware of how that animal has been slaughtered?

[228] **Mr D. Davies:** That is a very difficult question to answer. We have to be clear in our minds that although the animals start off in an abattoir in Wrexham and might be slaughtered by non-stunning methods, the whole carcass would not go into the Muslim trade; some of that carcass would end up in what you or I would call a 'conventional market' and vice versa too. Certain parts of carcasses of animals slaughtered in abattoirs that stun may end up in the Muslim market as well. So, it is very, very complex and, to be honest with you, although our hearts may be in going down the route of labelling, the industry is that complex I am not sure whether you would actually be able to be clear in your mind as to where the different parts of that animal will end up, whether the labelling of those animals would just make things that complex, or whether it would be that complex that it would not be implemented in the first place.

10:45

[229] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Well, we have—

[230] **Mr Jones:** Hoffwn ddilyn i fyny ar hynny os gaf fi—maddeuwch i mi.

**Mr Jones:** I would like to follow up on that, if I may—forgive me.

[231] Rwy'n meddwl ei fod yn bwynt pwysig ynglŷn â labelu, ond mae'r Comisiwn Ewropeaidd yn ymgymryd â gwaith ymchwil ar y pwnc hwn ar y funud. Mae'r gwaith ymchwil hwnnw yn edrych ar y manteision a'r anfanteision i'r cwsmer, ac at beth fyddai'r sgîl effeithiau—bwriedig neu anfwriedig, fel y cyfeiriwyd ato eisoes—o ran unrhyw newidiadau yn y labelu. Rwy'n meddwl y byddai'n rhesymol i ni ddisgwyl i weld beth ydy canlyniadau'r gwaith ymchwil hwnnw—ac fe fydd o ddiddordeb, yn amlwg—er mwyn gweld a all y cwsmer gael labelu clir, o gofio'r holl elfennau eraill, o ran maeth y cig a'r cyfraniad i iechyd yn gyffredinol, sydd angen eu cynnwys ar y pac.

I think that it is an important point regarding labelling, but the European Commission is undertaking research work on this subject at the moment. That research is looking at the advantages and the disadvantages to the customer, and what the impact would be—intentional or unintentional, as has been referred to already—with regard to any changes in labelling. I think that it would be reasonable for us to wait to see what the results of that research work are—and it will be of interest, obviously—in order to see whether the customer is going to be able to have clear labelling, given all the other elements, in relation to the nutrition of the meat and the contribution to health in general, which need to be included on the pack.

[232] **Alun Ffred Jones:** A fyddech chi'n dadlau, efallai, y byddai'n well, os oes deddfu'n mynd i fod, ei fod yn digwydd ar lefel Ewropeaidd, oherwydd cymhlethdod y farchnad, yn un peth, fel yr ydym yn gwybod?

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Would you perhaps argue that it would be better, if there is to be any legislation, that it should take place on a European level, because of the complexity of the market, for one thing, as we know?

[233] **Mr Jones:** Wel, mae'r ffaith bod Ewrop yn ystyried y mater yn bwysig, ac mae angen i ni i gyd fwydo i fewn i'r drafodaeth honno.

**Mr Jones:** The fact that Europe is considering this matter is important, and we all need to feed into that discussion.

[234] **Mr D. Davies:** Yn sicr, byddwn i'n dweud bod yn rhaid iddo ddigwydd ar y lefel Ewropeaidd. Yr hyn sy'n mynd i ddigwydd yn Nghymru yw ein bod yn gwneud Deddf yng Nghymru, fel yr ydym yn gwybod, ac yr hyn yr ydym yn mynd i'w wneud yw allforio'r diwydiant i rywle arall a mewnfario'r cynnyrch i fewn i Gymru. Mae hynny wedi digwydd yn hanesyddol, o ran moch mewn cratiau, ac o ran ieir mewn caetshis. Wedyn, mae gyda ni rhyw gefndir o ran yr hyn a all ddigwydd. Ni fydd lles yr anifeiliaid tamaid yn well, achos yr hyn y byddant yn ei wneud yw symud yr anifeiliaid o Gymru, eu prosesu nhw yn rhywle arall, a dod nôl â'n cynnyrch ni, heblaw ein bod yn gallu gwneud hyn ar lefel Ewropeaidd.

**Mr D. Davies:** Certainly, I would say that it must happen on a European level. What is going to happen in Wales is that we are going to legislate in Wales, as we know, and what we are going to do is to export the industry to somewhere else and then import the product back into Wales. That has happened historically, with pigs in crates and chickens in cages. So, we have some background in terms of knowing what could happen. The animals' welfare will not be any better, because it would just mean that the animals would be moved out of Wales, be processed elsewhere, and our product would be brought back in, unless we can do this at a European level.

[235] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Jenny Rathbone, do you have a question?

[236] **Jenny Rathbone:** If you have religious reasons for wanting animals to be slaughtered

in a particular way, you want to be certain that what you are eating has complied with those religious beliefs. So, what regulations exist to ensure that people, if they think that they are consuming meat that is halal or shechita—? How do they know that? How does the Wrexham abattoir—or anywhere else—comply with their demands?

[237] **Mr D. Davies:** They have certification bodies to do it on their behalf. As far as the large slaughter premises are concerned, those certification bodies actually take out auditing quite regularly. On a small basis, of course, your local imam will actually have to be present, and therefore his presence within the slaughterhouse, at the time of slaughtering, would be sufficient to satisfy the religious orders that it is being done properly. That is the case, I think, as far as Wrexham is concerned.

[238] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay. So, if you go to a halal butcher in Cardiff—or anywhere else—you can reliably expect that meat to have been certified as having been slaughtered according to those principles. Is that right?

[239] **Mr D. Davies:** Yes. I think that we have to be clear in our minds as well. Halal meat, of course, covers stunning and non-stunning. The vast majority of that meat would have been stunned; it would be a very, very small proportion of it that would have gone down the non-stunning route.

[240] **Mr Morgan:** I think that the Muslim Council of Britain has estimated that over 90% of halal meat is stunned prior to slaughter.

[241] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay, but, if you have a religious belief, that you want to have non-stunned meat, is it labelled when you go to the halal butcher?

[242] **Mr D. Davies:** If you were going to go down that route, you would have to go to somewhere where the meat had been blessed by an imam.

[243] **Jenny Rathbone:** Okay, but you can see that there is quite a lot of confusion here as to exactly—. You know, for the consumer, it does not seem to be clear what they are buying—from a religious perspective, as well as for other people who do not wish to necessarily consume meat that has not been stunned.

[244] **Mr Jones:** Byddwn yn awgrymu, Gadeirydd, fod y sefyllfa yn debyg pan fo'r cwsmer yn dewis prynu cig neu unrhyw gynnyrch. Mae'n i fyny i'r cwsmer fynd at cyflenwr sy'n mynd i'w sicrhau eu bod yn cyflenwi cynnyrch sy'n bodloni eu gofynion. Rwy'n cyfeirio at adroddiad gan Brifysgol Caerdydd, a gomisiynwyd gan Lywodraeth Cymru, gyda dyddiad Ebrill 2013 arno. Ar dudalen 27, mae'n sôn am y gwahanol gyrff sy'n cymeradwyo cynnyrch wedi ei ladd mewn ffordd arbennig yn ymwneud â gofynion crefyddol unigolyn. Felly, o ran olrheinrwydd y cynnyrch, byddai'n bwysig i'r cwsmer holi'r person sydd yn gwerthu'r cynnyrch iddynt i sicrhau bod y cynnyrch wedi cael ei drin yn unol â'u credoau.

**Mr Jones:** I would suggest, Chair, that the situation is similar when the customer is choosing to buy meat or any produce. It is up to the customer to go to the supplier who is going to assure them that they are supplying produce that meets their requirements. I refer to a report by Cardiff University, which was commissioned by the Welsh Government, dated April 2013. On page 27, it talks about the different bodies that approve produce that has been slaughtered in a particular way according to the religious beliefs of an individual. Therefore, in terms of the traceability of the produce, it would be important for the customer to ask the person selling the produce to ensure that the produce has been treated according to their beliefs.

[245] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Efallai bod hyn yn faes rhy gymhleth, ond fe ddywedaso

**Alun Ffred Jones:** This may be an excessively complicated field, but you said a



ychedig bach yn ôl, o ran cig sy'n cael ei werthu fel cig halal, bod llawer iawn ohono wedi cael ei ladd drwy lonyddu neu stynio'r anifail, ond yr oeddwn yn meddwl bod holl bwynt cig halal oedd nad oeddech yn llynyddu'r anifail yn gyntaf. A ydw i wedi camddeall hynny?

few minutes ago, in terms of meat that is sold as halal meat, a great deal of it has been slaughtered by stunning the animal, but I thought that the whole point of halal meat was that you did not stun the animal first of all. Have I misunderstood that?

[246] **Mr Jones:** Mae sawl barn ynglŷn â beth sydd yn cydymffurfio â gofynion halal, ac mae sawl corff â barn gwahanol. Fodd bynnag, y realiti a'r ffeithiau yw bod 90% o gynnyrch halal yn cael ei lonyddu fel rhan o'r broses o ladd yr anifail. Wrth gwrs, o ran blaenoriaethau Hybu Cig Cymru, ein blaenoriaeth yw sicrhau bod y ffordd y mae'r anifail yn cael ei fagu a'i feithrin trwy gydol ei fywyd—. Dyna'r flaenoriaeth inni: sicrhau bod yr anifail hwnnw wedi cael parch tra ei fod yn fyw ac wedi cael ei drin mewn ffordd derbynol ar ddiwedd y dydd. Dyna yw ein blaenoriaeth ni fel corff.

**Mr Jones:** There are a number of views on what complies with halal requirements, and many bodies have different views. However, the reality and the facts are that 90% of halal produce is stunned as part of the process of slaughtering the animal. Of course, in terms of the priorities of Hybu Cig Cymru, our priority is to ensure that the way the animal is bred and nurtured throughout its life—. That is the priority for us: to ensure that that animal has had respect while it was alive and has been treated in an acceptable manner at the end of the day. That is our priority as an organisation.

[247] **Mr D. Davies:** Could I come back to your point? For clarification, I think that if you felt very strongly that your meat should not be stunned you would make sure that the meat had actually been certified by certain authorities. They are actually named in this document I have here, so you would check in your butchers and ask them, 'Has this meat been certified by these organisations?' As far as stunning is concerned, the confusion, and there is huge confusion even among the farming community, which you would have thought should have been up to date on these matters—

[248] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Incredible. Farmers are—. [*Laughter.*]

[249] **Mr D. Davies:** Yes. On the stunning, as far as halal is concerned, it is believed that, if those animals were left long enough, there is a possibility that they would become conscious again. How long that would be, I am not sure, but that is the assumption that is made as far as stunning for halal is concerned.

[250] **Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** Mae sawl canfyddiad cyhoeddus ynglŷn â'r broses a'r hyn sy'n digwydd i'r anifeiliaid ac yn y blaen. Mae'n eithaf clir, yn fy marn i, lle mae barn gyhoeddus ar y mater hwn, o safbwynt yr egwyddor, er, wrth gwrs, ein bod yn derbyn bod yna grwpiau sydd ag anghenion penodol. Fodd bynnag, a ydy Hybu Cig Cymru efallai wedi ystyried mewn unrhyw ffordd—a ydych wedi asesu hyn, efallai—a oes elfen o risg ein bod yn gallu niweidio enw da cig Cymreig o ganlyniad i unrhyw sgandal neu rywbeth a allai godi yn y maes hwn?

**Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** There are a number of public perceptions about what happens to the animal and so on. It is quite clear in my view where public opinion stands on this matter, from the point of view of the principle, although, of course, we do accept that there are groups with specific needs. However, has Hybu Cig Cymru considered in any way—have you perhaps assessed this—whether there is an element of risk that we could damage the good name of Welsh meat as a result of any scandal or something that might arise in this field?

[251] **Mr D. Davies:** Sefyllfa Hybu Cig Cymru, wrth gwrs, yw bod yn rhaid i ni

**Mr D. Davies:** The position of Hybu Cig Cymru, of course, is that we need to operate

weithredu y tu fewn i'r gyfraith. Mae cyfraith Ewrop ar hyn o bryd yn dweud bod yna bosibilrwydd, mewn rhai achosion, i ladd heb stynio. O ran y gwyddoniaeth, nid oes gwahaniaeth rhwng cig wedi'i stynio a chig heb ei stynio. Dyna'n sefyllfa. Nid ydym mewn sefyllfa i fynegi barn ac nid ydym mewn sefyllfa i bwysu am newid yn y gyfraith. Fodd bynnag, os oes newid yn y gyfraith, byddem yn dweud bod yn rhaid iddo ddigwydd ar lefel Ewropeaidd. Os byddwch yn gofyn i mi yn bersonol, byddai fy marn i fod yn gwbl wahanol nag yw fel cadeirydd Hybu Cig Cymru.

[252] **Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** Ond mae gan cig Cymreig delwedd bositif o safbwynt bod yn gynnyrch o ansawdd, gyda lles anifeiliaid yn uchel ar yr agenda. Mae risg, onid oes, os yw hyn yn i chwythu i fyny eto, efallai byddai'r brand yn cael ei niweidio mewn rhyw ffordd neu'i gilydd.

[253] **Mr D. Davies:** Yr ydych yn dweud 'chwythu i fyny', fel pe baech yn rhoi'r argraff bod rhywun yn torri'r gyfraith, ond, wrth gwrs, maent yn gweithio y tu fewn i'r gyfraith ac maent yn cael eu rheoleiddio'n llym iawn. Felly, nid wyf yn siŵr iawn beth yr ydych yn ei feddwl wrth 'chwythu i fyny'.

[254] **Llyr Gruffydd:** Wel, rydym i gyd yn gwybod sut y mae'r papurau cenedlaethol yn gweithio.

[255] **Mr D. Davies:** Rydym yn dweud yn glir bod 90% o anifeiliaid, neu ragor, mae'n debyg iawn—rwy'n credu mai 97% yw'r ffigur yng Nghymru—yn cael eu lladd drwy gael eu stynio.

[256] **Mr Jones:** Credaf ei bod yn bwysig hefyd, Gadeirydd, i bwysleisio—i fynd yn ôl at y pwynt diwethaf y cyfeiriodd Dylan ato—y dystiolaeth ar sail wyddonol; mae sawl cyfeiriad wedi ei wneud at hynny. Roeddwn yn ymwybodol o'r drafodaeth yn San Steffan ar hyn gyda'r grŵp trawsbleidiol yno—yr APPG—ar gig oen a chig eidion. Ei argymhellion oedd bod llawer iawn mwy o waith ymchwil yn angenrheidiol er mwyn cymharu'r sgil-ffeithiau ar yr anifail os yw wedi cael ei stynio ai peidio. Felly, fel y cyfeiriwyd ato gan gadeirydd Hybu Cig Cymru, mae'n rhaid inni weithredu ar sail

within the law. European law at the moment states that there is the possibility, in some instances, of slaughtering without stunning. In terms of the science, there is no difference between stunned meat and non-stunned meat. That is our situation. We are not in a position to give a view or to press for a change in the law. However, if there is a change in the law, we would say that it has to happen on a European level. If you asked me personally, my view would be completely different than it is as the chair of Hybu Cig Cymru.

**Llyr Huws Gruffydd:** But Welsh meat does have a positive image from the point of view of being a quality product, with animal welfare being high on the agenda. There is a risk that, if this were to blow up again, that brand might be damaged in some way.

**Mr D. Davies:** You say 'blow up', as though you are giving the impression that someone is breaking the law, but, of course, they are working within the legislation and they are being regulated very strictly. Therefore, I am not quite sure what you mean by 'blow up'.

**Llyr Gruffydd:** Well, we all know how the national newspapers work.

**Mr D. Davies:** We state clearly that 90% of animals or even more, quite probably—I think that the figure is 97% in Wales—are slaughtered by being stunned.

**Mr Jones:** I think that it is also important, Chair, to emphasise—to go back to the last point that Dylan referred to—the evidence on a scientific basis; many references have been made to that. I was aware of the discussion that took place in Westminster on this with the cross-party group there—the APPG—on lamb and beef. Its recommendations were that much more research work was necessary to compare the side-effects on the animal if it was stunned or not. Therefore, as the chair of Hybu Cig Cymru referred to, we must operate on a scientific basis. Obviously, that science does not exist at present.

wyddonol. Mae'n amlwg nad yw'r wyddoniaeth honno yn bodoli ar hyn o bryd.

[257] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Cyn imi ofyn i Alun Ffred Jones: Before I call Antoinette, Antoinette ddod i mewn, a oes gan yr do the unions—Rhian or Dylan—have any undebau—Rhian neu Dylan—unrhyw farn ar views on this situation? y sefyllfa hon?

[258] **Ms Nowell-Phillips:** I just totally accept what Hybu Cig Cymru has said. We as a union do not want to get involved in religious discussions. It is hard enough dealing with the farming side. From our point of view, the important thing is the way that animals are raised to high welfare standards. We have protected geographical indication for Welsh lamb and Welsh beef. That is extremely important to farmers in Wales. I think that some of the press forget that such a high percentage of halal-slaughtered animals are actually stunned; I think that that gets lost. However, it would not be a story. The important thing is more clarity on what is meant by religious slaughter, rather than just the assumption that all animals that are killed for halal are non-stunned.

[259] **Mr Morgan:** I think that we would say the same. It is not for us, as NFU Cymru, to discuss the religious questions, but what we would expect, as you say, is that farmers take great pride in their animal welfare on farms, but we need to make sure that it happens at slaughter as well. So, whatever we do, we must put animal welfare as a priority. However, any changes in legislation would have to be based on the best scientific evidence. As Sion says, there is work going on at the European Commission level looking at that. If there are to be changes, it is on the basis of the best scientific evidence. I think that a lot of it goes back again to what Dai and Sion have both talked about: what we have to make sure in terms of rules and legislation is that there is a level playing field, not just throughout Europe but throughout the world, because we are dealing with commodities here that are traded across continents. If we decide to do something in Wales that is not replicated anywhere else, we have to remember that we are going to lose those markets, and it is going to affect the sustainability and viability of red meat production in Wales. So, everything has to be done on the basis that we are looking at. If we are talking about labelling, legislation or anything like that, that covers whatever is sold, and not just Welsh produce.

[260] **Alun Ffred Jones:** William Powell, did you want to come in on this?

[261] **William Powell:** Yes, it is on a related point. The newly appointed Deputy Minister for Farming and Food, in her backbench career, gave quite a lot of support and commitment to the cause of installing CCTV cameras in slaughterhouses. However, since her appointment, I have not heard any suggestion that she is planning to pursue that. If she were to go down that route, what advice and caution would members of the panel give her, if they were asked, in terms of that kind of initiative being developed? What concerns would you have if that were to be the case across the board?

[262] **Mr Jones:** The three large abattoirs in Wales currently operate CCTV within their abattoirs off their own volition. What is important in terms of controls and responsible use of CCTV is that it is not open to any negative use, and that it is used as a positive tool in the workplace. Obviously, it has a role in that respect in terms of ensuring that high standards of animal welfare are adopted in abattoirs, and Hybu Cig Cymru will be fully supportive of the use of CCTV in abattoirs.

11:00

[263] **Mr D. Davies:** We have to be very conscious of the fact that the owners of abattoirs that are located in Wales have a choice of where they want to locate them. They could locate

them in Wales, the midlands, Scotland, Northern Ireland or wherever. If there is anything happening within Wales, legally or through other means, it can deter those people from deciding to come to Wales or to continue operating in Wales. As far as the abattoirs are concerned, at the moment, they are running on very thin margins, and there is a need, probably, for some rationalisation within those abattoirs. If, when looking at the situation, they have to invest heavily in Wales in order to stay within Wales, and there is an option of carrying on with another abattoir, perhaps in the midlands, where they do not need that investment, as a businessman, which one would you choose? The pressure would be for you to move to the midlands. Certainly, if there are rules and regulations coming in, we want to make sure that they are blanket rules and on a UK basis, if possible.

[264] **William Powell:** That is very interesting.

[265] **Mr Morgan:** I do not think that we should forget how heavily regulated and inspected abattoirs are at present. If you go into any abattoir in Wales, you will see the FSA, a completely independent body, which is there at every phase—post-mortem, ante-mortem or wherever—throughout the whole process. So, as you say, it is probably one of the most regulated aspects in the country.

[266] **William Powell:** Is it a matter of particular concern that such an initiative would be particularly detrimental to the ever more threatened smaller and medium-sized abattoirs? If they close, the food miles are going to be increased and you have issues around longer transport, which were implied by Mr Davies's answer to my previous question regarding going cross-border. Is that a particular issue that we need to insulate ourselves against?

[267] **Mr Jones:** It comes down to assessing risk. As Dylan pointed out, given the Food Standards Agency's presence in all abattoirs in Wales and given that it is the body responsible for licensing those abattoirs, the issue of risk is important in terms of judging what additional controls may or may not be required. The converse to that is that, perhaps, there is an opportunity through the adoption of technology to reduce labour unit inspections in food businesses across Wales. So, I think that the balance needs to be considered.

[268] **William Powell:** I am grateful, thank you.

[269] **Antoinette Sandbach:** I wanted to come back to non-stun slaughter. You were talking about research that has been carried out in Europe. Presumably, what that research is looking at is whether or not the quality of the meat is affected by the stress of animals not being stunned at slaughter. I see you nodding.

[270] In relation to non-stun slaughter here in Wales, I am not suggesting that we should necessarily go it alone by regulating against it, but you spoke about the consumer educating themselves. A housewife is not going to walk into Tesco, Asda or Lidl and ask what the supply chain is for the lamb or beef that they see. They will educate themselves and make their choices through what is on the label. We had evidence from the RSPCA that said that the business model for halal or kosher meat, in effect—I am sure that I am using the wrong terminology—requires part of the carcass to go into the non-religious market. The position in Europe is that all animals should be stunned and that there is a specific exemption for religious communities. It seems to me that, if that is the European-level regulation, you are only giving consumers a choice if they know how that animal has been slaughtered, and if they do not know, it risks that high-welfare branding of Wales's lamb and beef being compromised at the very last minute. You are putting that at risk if that is going into the housewives' food chain. So, how do you think that that should best be addressed?

[271] **Mr D. Davies:** It is a difficult and complex one. If it was very simple, it would have probably been done by now. The concern that I have is that—. Actually, it is the stunning and

non-stunning in relation to halal meat that concerns you. Of course, you have to remember that, as far as the feet from carcasses of non-stunned animals are concerned, they will end up in the same box, as it were, or in the same shipment as those feet from stunned halal meat as well, and will probably end up in the market. Are you suggesting, perhaps, that we should label the feet accordingly? The feet is one thing, but there are of course other by-products as well from carcasses that will end up in halal boxes, which will contain fifth quarters from stunned animals and fifth quarters from non-stunned animals. Are you suggesting that those boxes should be kept apart?

[272] **Antoinette Sandbach:** We do see products that, for example, say ‘may contain nuts’. Is there something that would stop the labelling of something with ‘may contain meat from non-stun slaughter’?

[273] **Mr D. Davies:** I am not trying to defend non-stunning, but I have to present the facts as I see them. As a processor, I would be very concerned that my feet would be tarnished, if you like, by having non-stunned feet mixed with them. It may devalue the rest. That is a complication that I can see, thinking on my feet, in replying to you as I see it today.

[274] **Antoinette Sandbach:** Without that labelling, how do you give the consumer the kind of choice that Sion was talking about?

[275] **Mr Jones:** My point is in relation to somebody walking into a butcher’s shop seeking halal slaughtered produce. Following up on Dai’s point, our concern is that the unintended consequences here are that the requirement to label halal cuts could have a negative impact on carcass balance. Dai was talking about feet, but, as he said, there are other aspects to balancing the carcass. Whereas the most expensive cuts may go to one market, the cheaper cuts may go to another market. So, currently, abattoirs have the flexibility to sell different parts of the carcass to different customers, often in different markets. This has benefits in terms of minimising food waste, keeping prices down, and it helps processors compete, in the ways that Dai referred to, in relation to the challenges they face with very short margins.

[276] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Well, all we can say is that this is a rather complex and complicated issue. I am sure that we have learned—. Well, I have certainly learned a lot, but, certainly, it is difficult to come to any conclusion. Are there further questions to the panel?

[277] Na. A oes gan y panel rywbeth i’w ddweud wrthym? A ydych am ein gadael gydag unrhyw neges? No. Does the panel have anything to tell us? Would you like to leave us with any message?

[278] Do you want to leave us with any thoughts?

[279] **Mr D. Davies:** The only thought I would sort of—. I sympathise with where the panel stands, but, as I say, if there are any changes, try to make sure that it is done in terms of European issues. If it is done in terms of regional issues, it can cause huge complications for us.

[280] **Mr Jones:** Rwyf hefyd am danlinellu pwysigrwydd—rydym wedi sôn am y pwnc yn gyffredinol, ond cig coch yw cyfrifoldeb Hybu Cig Cymru—y diwydiant a phwysigrwydd allforion. Rydym yn bwyta llai na 5% o’r cynnyrch cig oen a chig eidion rydym yn ei gynhyrchu yng Nghymru. Felly, rydym yn wlad sy’n allforio—rydym yn allforio i Loegr—ac o ran gwerth yr allforion **Mr Jones:** I would also wish to underscore the importance—we have talked about the subject generally, but Hybu Cig Cymru is responsible for red meat—of the industry and the importance of exports. We eat less than 5% of the lamb and beef that we produce in Wales. So, we are a country that exports—we export to England—and in terms of the value of the exports from the UK coming from

o'r Deyrnas Gyfunol sy'n deillio o Gymru, yn 2013 roedd gyfystyr â £224 miliwn. Roedd gwerth y cig oen yn £155 miliwn, ac roedd hynny i fyny 7% ar y flwyddyn flaenorol. Felly, hoffwn bwysleisio bwysigrwydd y diwydiant a'r sector i Gymru.

Wales, in 2013 that was equivalent to £224 million. The value of lamb was £155 million, and that was up 7% on the previous year. So, I just want to emphasise the importance of the industry and the sector to Wales.

[281] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr iawn. Roedd honno'n neges—

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much. That message was—

[282] **Mr D. Davies:** My parting shot, Mr Chairman, is that, at the moment, 10,000 tonnes of bushmeat comes into the UK illegally. By passing a law prohibiting non-stun kill, we do not want that bushmeat to increase to 15,000 tonnes because people need to bring it in illegally. It needs to be sorted one way or another.

[283] **Ms Evans:** Just on the breeding of dogs legislation, Chair, if the committee is going to look into that in greater detail, I would welcome the opportunity to come back to give you more evidence. I will provide a paper, but I would like to—*[Interruption.]* Okay, I will be as short as I can, Jenny; I promise. I would like to extend an invitation to the committee to visit a hunt kennels just outside Cardiff. I know that some are familiar with the situation of hounds in kennels, but I would like to extend the invitation to the committee, so that you can see at first-hand how hounds need to live in order for their welfare not to be compromised. I doubt that you will get many invitations from commercial dog breeders, but the invitation to the hunt kennels is there for you. Diolch.

[284] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Diolch yn fawr iawn am y gwahoddiad. Mi wnawn ni ystyried y mater maes o law. Diolch yn fawr iawn i chi am ddod o'n blaenau ac am rannu eich barn a'ch syniadau.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** Thank you very much for the invitation. We will consider the matter in due course. Thank you very much for coming before us and sharing your thoughts and ideas.

[285] **Ms Evans:** Diolch yn fawr.

**Ms Evans:** Thank you very much.

11:10

### **Papurau i'w Nodi Papers to Note**

[286] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Yr unig bapur yw geirfa'r Bil cynllunio. A ydych yn hapus i'w nodi? Gwelaf eich bod. Diolch yn fawr.

**Alun Ffred Jones:** The only paper is the Welsh language glossary for the planning Bill. Are you happy to note the glossary? I see that you are. Thank you.

11:11

### **Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd o Weddill y Cyfarfod**

#### **Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to Exclude the Public from the Remainder of the Meeting**

[287] **Alun Ffred Jones:** Cynigiaf fod

**Alun Ffred Jones:** I move that

*y pwyllgor yn penderfynu gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y cyfarfod yn unol â Rheol* *the committee resolves to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting in*

*Sefydlog 17.42(vi).*

*accordance with Standing Order 17.42(vi).*

[288] A ydych yn hapus i wneud hynny?  
Gwelaf eich bod. Diolch yn fawr.

Are you happy to do that? I see that you are.  
Thank you.

*Derbyniwyd y cynnig.*  
*Motion agreed.*

*Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 11:11.*  
*The public part of the meeting ended at 11:11.*