

Scottish Ports Liaison Network (SPLaN) Meeting

Thursday 29th November 2018 at 11:00am

Scottish Government, Saughton House, Broomhouse Dr, Edinburgh EH11 3XG

Present:

Crawford Sibbald(CDS)(Chair)	Falkirk Council
John Laird(JL)(Secretary)	Falkirk Council
Jeanna Sandilands(JS)	Scottish Government
Gary Gould (GG)	Association of Port Health Authorities
Christopher Redman(CR)	Health Protection Scotland
Susan Gallacher(SG)	North Ayrshire Council
Diane Ward(DW)	Fife Council
Charlie Roger(CR)	Edinburgh City Council
Paul Kerr(PK)	Edinburgh City Council
Lyn Sedgeworth(LS)	West Dumbarton Council
Pauline Reid(PR)	South Ayrshire Council
Michael Lapsely (ML)	Inverclyde Council
Richard Hyde	Fife Council
Karen Fisher(KF)	Glasgow City Council
John Grant(JG)	Aberdeenshire Council

Item Apologies

Item	Apologies	Action
1	Andrea Carson Vincent McBride Kevin Love Holly Nelson Craig Easson Hugh McGhee Robert Marshall Paul Turner Christine Morrison Patrick Smyth Martin MacNiven Graeme Webster Lynne Bissett Gary Welsh David Brown Clifford Smith	Aberdeen City Council Edinburgh City Council North Ayrshire Council Angus Council Angus Council North Ayrshire Council Renfrewshire Council Orkney Islands Council Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Food Standards Scotland Falkirk Council Falkirk Council Falkirk Council Food Standards Agency Orkney Islands Council Highland Council

2 Minutes of Meeting – 2nd November 2017

Checked for accuracy.

3 Matters Arising

CDS discussed the competence of officers and approval of ports and suggested that we looked at organising a REHIS training course in 2019.

CDS

GG informed everyone that Aberdeen City Council were having a Ship Sanitation Inspection Course on 29th March 2019 in conjunction with APHA and presented by Martin Walker and John Ambrose.

DW is to attend the REHIS Southern Centre meeting and will discuss port health training.

DW

4 APHA Update

Introduction

CDS thanked GG for attending the meeting and agreeing to provide an APHA update. GG started by saying that even though he had been very busy with Brexit. The update will focus on work done by the Task and Finishing Group in relation to regaining members by delivering value for money to the membership and re-establishing APHA in the eyes of government departments as representing port health authorities in the UK.

Noted
JL
CR

Communications

This is achieved partly by the publishing of the Port Health Handbook, the 2018/19 handbook being very well received and a regular monthly newsletter. The newsletter updates on the latest APHA business, new legislation, Brexit and anything else that might be of interest and he would encourage everyone to read it.

Training Events

The newsletter also includes news of upcoming training events in particular the successful Ship Sanitation Inspection Workshops the last of which was held in October 2018 in Belfast.

It is hoped that more of these workshops will be run again around the UK. There are also plans to run a Ship's Water course in the future. APHA will also promote port health courses provided by other organisation such as CIEH, REHIS, HPS and Public Health England and are happy to advertise these in their newsletter.

With regard to Brexit APHA have been instrumental in facilitating contact between government departments and supporting port health authorities. This has been helped by the fact that they maintain a database of all port authorities and contact details. APHA have been assisting the cross border delivery group, DEFRA, the Food Standards Agency.

Modernisation

APHA's aim has been to represent all port health authorities in the UK. This has been difficult because, for various reasons, as some of the larger ports left the Association a few years ago and formed their own group. APHA has therefore taken the initiative and approached representatives from the group in order to ascertain what was needed for them to rejoin the Association. The representatives looked at the articles of association, the operating arrangements and organisational structure and concluded that the Association was in need of modernisation in order to become streamlined and efficient. They are now working with the Executive Officer in order to transform APHA with a view to rejoining. Because any change to the articles will require AGM approval the process is likely to take approximately 18 months.

As part of the change process, APHA are looking at membership and funding. Their current budget is only around £50,000 per year. It is clear that the more members the lower the subscriptions. APHA's aim remains to ensure that all port health authorities are members but appreciates the pressure on local government finances.

APHA are actively engaged looking at other sources of funding and also part

of that is the way that the actual subscriptions are structured in an attempt to assess whether there is a better way.

In terms of the future organisational structure, PLaN groups will be retained because the network is key to its success. GG complimented SPLaN describing it as a fantastic, very vibrant, very active group; similarly in Wales and in Northern Ireland which is newly formed. All port authorities in Northern Ireland are members of APHA. Southern group will be holding a meeting in the next couple of months and APHA also has two volunteers to run a Northern group. If there is a need APHA will run an airports group as well because their needs are somewhat different to those of seaports.

GG's view is that the PLaN groups are the foundation blocks of the Association and they should have been supported far more than perhaps they have been in the past. The PLaN groups should therefore be retained and supported. The major ports group would continue to exist in their own right but over time could naturally become part of the Association but only providing that the modernisation process is implemented.

The view is that APHA would still need a key strategic decision making Board or Group but it should be less bureaucratic. To achieve this, it is proposed that the Board should be made up of individuals appointed or elected from each of the PLaN groups. This ensures that regional representation continues but removes a layer of bureaucracy.

It was agreed at the recent AGM that as a cost saving measure and to remove another level of bureaucracy that the Oversight and Scrutiny Committee be dissolved. The PLaN groups, other organisations and individuals are now encouraged to scrutinise the activities of the Executive Board. To facilitate this all meeting papers and reports including income and expenditure are published to the website.

Since they were suspended, the roles of the technical committees have been absorbed by various government departments, for example, by FSA and DEFRA. PH England also runs a port health liaison group. The view was that APHA couldn't really re-establish technical meetings without duplication of effort. The idea is that they ensure that we get representation at any of these meetings that go ahead which by and large is happening.

However, should the need arise, a working group or technical committee could be formed but with clear terms of reference and a defined goal or outcome.

There will be no change to the roles of the finance and administration officers but obviously the roles will be reviewed as time goes on. There's a lot of work with the re-organisation and with Brexit which means that GG is working far more than his contracted 2 days a week.

GG had a meeting with the major ports representatives last week and outlined how APHA were going to take things forward but several questions need to be answered, for example does APHA need to be a not for profit public limited company and VAT registered?

GG intends to get revised articles drafted for approval at the 2019 AGM. If approved APHA could launch the new structure in 2020.

In background to this financing APHA is of concern. Even with cost cutting measures, the Association is running a deficit budget. In order to improve the

balance sheet, GG has applied for funding from the FSA who has a budget to support Local Authorities as part of Brexit preparations. Because APHA has taken on a the critical role of facilitating communication between Government Departments and Port Health Authorities, it is possible that it will be approved. As the main source of income is from membership subscriptions, without more members, there is the possibility that the Association will have to wound up. Should this be the case, the decision will be taken in good time so that it would be done in an orderly fashion. They don't want to let it get to that stage hence the efforts to get the major ports back and increasing the number of members. He asked the representatives non-member authorities present to consider supporting APHA by encouraging their authorities to join.

Conclusion

GG concluded by saying that he will continue to work hard to make sure that APHA gets through to the other end and we got a vibrant, modernised, lean and efficient organisation representing all of UK port health.

CR added that APHA should play a key role in training, plugging the gap in response to introduction of policy from PH England in particular with regard to approved ports and ship sanitation inspections. JL added that there should be more training available on imported food controls and Export Health Certificates. GG added that these training needs have been identified by FSA going through the Brexit process and should be delivered in due course.

5 HPS Update

Restructure

CR confirmed that there will be a new HPS website in 2019 maybe with a port health page. The page has not been created but will work with SPLaN to create a page which could include training, information, links to APHA, and particular Scottish guidance e.g. Ebola. To be discussed at next meeting.

Noted

There will be a new Scottish public health body but work still ongoing. This body will work around the Scottish Health Protection Network and subgroups and will be grass roots and bottom up or can work on a flat structure whichever is more effective to ensure collaboration between environmental/public health, the health boards and HPS. CR to give update at next meeting.

Disease Outbreaks

CR gave some reminders on outbreaks abroad. CPHMs use TRaVax to keep up-to-date. There have been outbreaks of Crimean-congo hemorrhagic fever(CCHF) linked to Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. There is seasonal transmission of West Nile Virus (WNV) across much of Europe, smaller number of cases in France and also Austria. JL asked if there were still issues with WNV in the USA. There is a surveillance system which comes into action in May to monitor for spread from southern to northern states.

HPS carrying out risk assessment on climate change and affect on disease, especially Lymes Disease and WNV, Schmallenberg and aedes species specific diseases such as Chikungunya virus and Zika. Prestwick Airport is involved in monitoring for mosquitoes.

In Morroco in 2017 there were 15 new cases of rabies and they are currently trying to vaccinate 65000 people.

Dengue and CCHF in Spain. STEC in lettuce in USA affecting 32 states.

Emerging hazards report circulated around the Health Protection Network subgroups:

European Bat Lyssavirus (EBLV) risk to humans in the UK associated with lack of awareness and warm weather and increase in bat mortality. There were 17 bats with EBLV1 in south east England and a similarity between EBLV1 found in Brittany and in England.

A person in England died, following a bite from a rabid cat whilst in Morocco. HPS has done work to remind travellers that bats as well as mainly dogs and now cats as well as other large mammals such as monkeys can carry the rabies virus. HPS advises if you are bitten or scratched make sure that you are tested.

Importation of monkeypox to the UK leading to a secondary case
2 primary; 1 HCW secondary through handling bedding of infected individual.

Extensively-drug-resistant (XDR) *Salmonella typhi* from Pakistan:
Sindh province.

Ongoing Ebola virus disease outbreak in Democratic Republic of the Congo. The outbreak area is in the east of the country, and virological evidence demonstrates this outbreak is not linked to the recent outbreak in Equateur Province. Since the outbreak was declared, there have been 276 cases of which 262 are in North Kivu Province and 14 are in Ituri Province, according to DRC Ministry of Health on 30 October 2018. It has been observed that a high proportion of cases are children.

Increase in measles incidence in the rest of the UK and Europe: updated cases numbers. Between 1 Sept 2017 and 31 Aug 2018 13,457 cases were reported by EU countries.

Transboundary impact of volcanic emissions on air quality and public health in Scotland: framework document now agreed by HPS and SEPA.

Detection of gonococcal strains in Scotland which display high level resistance to azithromycin (HL-AziR): update. Short Life Working Group established in Scotland to look at aspects of resistant STIs. Gonorrhoea treatment guidelines under review by BASHH

Post Brexit Relationship with EU

The UK, as a current member of the EU, benefits from and contributes to a number of specific European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) systems that fall under these domains including: The Early Warning Response System (EWRS), the European Surveillance System (TESSy), The Epidemic Intelligence Information System (EPIS), The Threat Tracking Tool (TTT), The Field Epidemiology (EPIET) and Public Health Microbiology (EUPHEM) fellowships,

The UK and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) Blueprint for a post-Brexit relationship – Faculty of Public Health was discussed.

HPS benefits from exchanges and training in microbiology and public health via ECDC and access to guidance. There was a close link with ECDC during the Commonwealth Games which we benefited from. Will have to wait and find

out what the outcome of Brexit and in what form these relationships will be in the future. Hopefully nothing will change as it is a two way process.

Port Authorisation

Fairlie Port authorisation was discussed and no issues with Fairlie port applying for approval however SPLaN needs to come up with a "light touch" SOP for assessing port authorisation which involves local authorities approaching HPS who would consult with SPLaN before HPS forward their recommendation to PHE. This SOP could go on the HPS website.

All

6 SFELC Brexit Working Group/EU Exit Update

There have been a couple of meetings hosted by Glasgow City Council including a teleconference. The first meeting was an update from Food Standards Scotland with their position regards to Brexit which is not a similar position to that of the UK government. There are numerous technical notices available outlining the UK government's position post Brexit based on a worst case scenario of a no deal. One of the outcomes of the meetings was to was for FSS to mirror FSA in gathering information regarding exporters of products of animal origin. Those exporters wanting to go on the list must meet the deadline of 12th December.

Noted

JG said that in his local authority area lots of businesses export fish to the EU and anticipates the increase in workload and resources required for issuing Export Health Certificates.

Cross border delivery group teleconferences taking place in December.

FSA Board meeting being held in December

FSS appointed a communications officer and GG to continue keeping ports informed via newsletters.

7 Edinburgh University Brexit and Scotland's Trading Relationships Brunch Meeting Feedback

Action

KF gave feedback from the meeting. All goods entering the EU from the UK as imports and goods leaving the EU for the UK as exports, subject to all relevant EU legislation, including customs duties, VAT, excise, customs declarations and customs control checks as per WTO rules and the Union Customs Code. Individual countries may issue facilitations to speed this up, as allowed for under the Union Customs Code; The Commission plans to list the UK as an authorised third country for sanitary and phytosanitary measures purposes as fast as possible, but strict health related import conditions, requiring the use of new BIPs, will still be applied; There are concerns regarding the setting of tarrifs in relation to profit margins and viability of businesses.

Noted

The Local Government Information Unit wants to talk to local authorities regarding port health. KF to forward contact details to JL.

KF/JL

8 Local Incidents

Falkirk Council notified Renfrewshire Council of a consignment which was bound for Glasgow. This was trans-shipped to Felixstowe from Grangemouth as it came in without proper checks and controls having been undertaken.

9 Port Health Training

Not many students attending Falkirk Council port health training so everyone else welcome to attend to maintain competencies including from FSS, HPS and Scottish Government. **Noted**

JL and KF informed at Border Delivery Group that REHIS and CIEH working together regarding EHC training.

FSS prepared to fund port health training but must have a food safety element to it.

ShipSan webinar and other online training available.

TRACES replacement (IPAFFS) training to be provided.

Ballast water management training to be provided by Orkney Islands Council at a future meeting. **DB**

Discussed Chloramine paper from DB, water sampling and chlorine levels in ships water supplies. TVC limits taken out Port Health Handbook and website. GG to investigate TVC standards for ships water for laboratory analysis. GG to provide more information regarding treatment of water supplies with chloramines as this disinfection method is used in the aviation industry as well. **GG**

10 AOCB

Noted

SB volunteered to be on the Oversight and Scrutiny Committee but has left Fife Council so no representative from Scotland. DW agreed to be Scottish representative but asked about funding for travel and accommodation expenses. GG to send DW information regarding meeting. **GG**

11 Date and time of next meeting

19th September 2019 at 1100.

Noted