

Press release: Farmers, growers and processors asked for views on AHDB

Farmers, growers, processors and industry representatives are being asked for their views from today (31 August) on the role of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).

The AHDB is a UK statutory levy board, funded by farmers, growers and others in the supply chain. As we leave the EU, there is an opportunity to ensure that the sectors that the AHDB covers are as competitive as possible. This review will look at the AHDB's purpose and priorities, its strengths and where improvements need to be made.

This is a joint 10-week exercise covering England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The request for views will close on 9 November.

Farming Minister George Eustice said:

At a time when we are designing a new agriculture policy from first principles, now is also a good time to review the role and function of this agricultural and horticultural levy body.

The AHDB collects around £60 million a year in statutory levy from farmers and growers and currently uses that money for a range of purposes to support these sectors.

This request for views is an opportunity for levy payers to have their say about the role and function of the various components of the AHDB in the future.

Jane King, Chief Executive Officer of the AHDB, said:

We welcome this opportunity to gain feedback from farmers and growers, and to help the industry compete in a global marketplace as the country prepares to leave the EU.

We'd encourage views to shape where we can have the biggest impact and drive value as an independent, evidence-based organisation, which carries out marketing at home and abroad, while sharing best practice and innovation with farmers, growers and the wider industry, at this crucial time.

To submit your views please complete the online survey by 9 November. Defra will also be running a number of workshops in the coming weeks .

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Open consultation: Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB): Request for views

We are seeking views on the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB). We are particularly keen to hear from farmers, growers, and others across the UK who pay a levy to fund it.

AHDB was created ten years ago. Since then the industries it supports have changed and AHDB has become more strategic and efficient. As we leave the European Union it is a good time to consider what AHDB's future role and activities should be.

Which services are most valued? Should levy payers continue to pay money on the same basis in future?

Y Bwrdd Datblygu Amaethyddiaeth a Garddwriaeth (AHDB): Cais am safbwyntiau

Rydym yn ceisio safbwyntiau ar y Bwrdd Datblygu Amaethyddiaeth a Garddwriaeth (AHDB). Rydym yn awyddus iawn i glywed gan ffermwyr, tyfwyr, ac eraill ledled y DU sy'n talu ardoll i'w ariannu.

Sefydlwyd y Bwrdd Datblygu Amaethyddiaeth a Garddwriaeth ddeng mlynedd yn ôl. Ers hynny, mae'r diwydiannau a gefnogir ganddo wedi newid ac mae'r Bwrdd Datblygu Amaethyddiaeth a Garddwriaeth wedi dod yn fwy strategol ac effeithlon. Wrth i ni adael yr Undeb Ewropeaidd mae'n amser da ystyried beth ddylai rôl a gweithgareddau'r Bwrdd Datblygu Amaethyddiaeth a Garddwriaeth fod yn y dyfodol.

Pa wasanaethau a werthfawrogir fwyaf? A ddylai talwyr yr ardoll barhau i dalu arian ar yr un sail yn y dyfodol?

Press release: Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow new chair of PHE Advisory Board

Dame Julia was previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kent. She has

previously been Chair of the British Science Association and was also president of Universities UK from 2015 to 2017. She is currently president of the Royal Society of Biology.

Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care said:

I am delighted that Dame Julia has accepted this important role. She brings a wealth of relevant experience to support PHE's vital work in protecting and improving the nation's health.

I am very grateful to Sir Derek Myers for his excellent work as acting chair of PHE's advisory board since spring 2017 and pleased that he will continue in a non-executive role with the organisation.

Dame Julia sat on the Council of Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC) from 2011 to 2016 and currently sits on the Council for Science & Technology. She was previously Chief Executive of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), the non-departmental governing body responsible for both University funding and Institute base across the biosciences.

Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow said:

I am deeply honored to be appointed to this role. Over the last 5 years, the world-class scientists in PHE have provided data and evidence which is continuously improving public health.

The evidence-based advice and guidance given to local authorities has also improved public health systems and aims to reduce regional inequalities.

I look forward to working with Duncan and everyone in PHE as they continue to protect and improve the nation's health.

The PHE Advisory Board is responsible for providing strategic advice on the running of PHE, assuring the effectiveness of PHE's corporate governance arrangements, and for advising the Chief Executive.

Sir Derek Myers, who has acted as interim chair since the departure of Professor David Heymann in March 2017 will remain a member of the advisory board and continue oversight of PHE's audit and risk governance.

Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England said:

I want to warmly congratulate Dame Julia on her appointment as the new chair of our advisory board.

Julia's wealth of experience in research will be a tremendous asset

in our mission to improve the public's health.

Dame Julia is a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, the Royal Society of Biology, the Institute of Physics and is an Honorary Member of the Biochemical Society. She was awarded a CBE in 2001 and a DBE for her services to science in June 2010.

Background

1. [Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and providing specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct organisation with operational autonomy. We provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific expertise and support. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](#) and Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.
2. The PHE Advisory Board has established an Audit and Risk Committee as a standing committee of the Board to support the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer in his responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance.
3. The Committee will provide advice and assurance on the development and maintenance of appropriate corporate governance, risk management and internal control arrangements, including assurance of PHE's risk management plan.
4. The PHE Advisory Board meets at least 4 times a year. Led by its Chair, it is responsible for providing strategic advice on the running of PHE, assuring the effectiveness of PHE's corporate governance arrangements, and for advising the Chief Executive on:
 - the development of PHE's corporate plan and annual business plan
 - PHE's financial and performance objectives, and progress on meeting those objectives
 - ensuring that PHE maintains independence, and the highest professional and scientific standards in preparing and publishing its advice, and commands the confidence of the professional and scientific communities related to public health
 - issues and policies, both within the public health system and from other
 - government departments, which could impact on the strategic direction of PHE

Press release: Government saves £300m in two years by preventing fraud and error

- Minister for the Constitution, Chloe Smith, announces over £300 million in savings from clamping down on fraud and error in the public sector through the National Fraud Initiative
- Minister for the Constitution, Chloe Smith said, “We are determined to build a fairer society and stopping a small group of unscrupulous people who break the law will help us achieve this.”

The government’s National Fraud Initiative (NFI) has saved over £300 million in taxpayers’ money over the last two years – the equivalent of the annual salary for 7,843 full time teachers – by detecting and preventing fraud and error in the public sector, Minister for the Constitution Chloe Smith has announced today (Friday 31 August 2018).

The government and the organisations that take part have been able to detect or prevent fraud and error worth hundreds of millions, ensuring that money is spent where it should be, including in areas such as:

- £144.8 million in occupational pension fraud and overpayments
- £32.6 million in fraudulent or wrongly received council tax single-person discount
- £24.9 million of housing benefit fraud and overpayment
- £25.5 million in social housing waiting-list misrepresentation
- £18 million of blue badge misuse – 31,223 blue badges were revoked or withdrawn
- £5.5 million from tenancy fraud

Public bodies spend billions of pounds of taxpayers’ money delivering essential services. Often delivered through complex and wide-reaching systems, these can be seen as targets for fraudsters, undermining our fairer society by robbing those with a genuine entitlement to these services.

When people defraud public institutions, they are diverting funding from essential public services, denying citizens the help and support they are entitled to, including access to social housing or disabled parking spaces in the towns and cities.

Minister for the Constitution, Chloe Smith said:

I am delighted that the National Fraud Initiative has been able to save UK taxpayers over £300 million since April 2016.

In England alone, more than £144 million will be going to protect vital public services instead of pension fraud and error.

We are determined to build a fairer society, and stopping a small group of unscrupulous people who break the law will help us achieve this.

The NFI compares sets of data, such as the payroll of a company with benefit records, allowing fraudulent claims and payments to be identified. Between April 2016 and March 2018, the NFI worked with over 1,200 public and private sector organisations, preventing and/or detecting over £300 million fraud and error nationally, of which £275.3 million has been in England alone.

NFI report

PDF, 833KB, 38 pages

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Notes to editors