

Land Business Update

Week commencing 7 August 2017

Farming

Greening simplification, including ban on pesticides on EFAs, now set to come into force

The package of measures, which includes banning the use of pesticides on Ecological Focus Areas, has come into force and the UK must implement it in 2018. We are liaising with the NFU and others on how it will be implemented and the detailed implications.

Glyphosate renewal: next two months critical

Member States must submit written statements on their positions by early September, with the EC warning that it will not reapprove the herbicide without the support of Member States (i.e., that this is a shared decision and countries should not abdicate the responsibility). Interestingly, in Germany, Angela Merkel's CDU party supports the re-approval while the Environment Minister from the SPD is against it. The French environment minister is also against.

Second European Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Action Plan launched

Resistance to antibiotics already has serious impacts globally, with over 700,000 people worldwide dying from it each year, including 25,000 in Europe, and this figure is expected to rise to 10m a year by 2050. Farming and food production using no or low antibiotics is a key element of the plan, as well as creating better links between the health and veterinary sectors. The value of the plan will depend on its 'teeth' and how quickly it is implemented. It has been welcomed by the major European farming bodies but has been called flawed by the European Public Health Alliance as it does not have clear time frames or additional money for implementation.

STOP PRESS Fox doesn't eat chicken

Liam Fox has been challenged to eat a chlorinated chicken (which the US allows to kill bacteria including salmonella) after questioning whether the UK would continue with the Europe-wide ban on it. The US argues that the practice is safe and this highlights one of the challenges facing international trade agreements. Fox dismissed the issue as 'a detail at the very end stage of one sector of a potential free trade agreement'. The British Poultry Council, the House of Lords EU committee and probably Michael Gove would disagree! Fox's visit also coincided with the escalation of the trade dispute between the EU and the US on protectionism of Spanish table olives.

Economy

RDPE grants reopen for productivity (£120m), tourism and food processing (£45m) and broadband (£30m)

The funding is through the Countryside Productivity and Growth Programme grants. It also includes investments in woodland management equipment, creating on-farm reservoirs and using water more efficiently. Please contact [Sholto Moger](#) for further details.

Energy

Onshore wind can be delivered at £50-55 per MWh across 15 years, says Scottish Power

Scottish Power is using research by Arup to try to persuade the government to reconsider its stance on onshore windfarms, which have effectively been blocked since 2015 due to planning barriers and restricted subsidies. As this cost is close to the wholesale price, Scottish Power argues that the turbines would effectively be subsidy free; what they are asking for are guaranteed prices, to enable schemes to be financed. As a comparison, the new nuclear power station at Hinkley will cost £92.50 per MWh.

Fishing

Brexit: Gove says EU boats will still fish in UK waters post-Brexit

In an example of his pragmatic approach and willingness not to pander to vested interests, Michael Gove has said that the UK would set 'scientifically sustainable' quotas for fishing for boats from other countries as the UK does not have the capacity to catch and process all its fish alone.

Planning

Scotland: Scottish Government publishes position statement on planning reform

The position statement sets out the changes that the Scottish Government is suggesting to the planning system, with a request for feedback by 11 August. The government will then publish a Planning Bill later this year. The Position Statement contains 20 proposals, some of which are quite significant, for example replacing strategic development plans with more flexible regional partnerships. We will keep you updated and please contact [John Wright](#) in the meantime for more details.

Property

Growing the rental sector may include three year tenancies and a new affordable private rent tenure

As part of the Government's plan to increase the number of homes available to rent, it is considering changes to the National Planning Policy Framework to make tenancies a minimum of three years long, so that they are more family friendly. It is not clear whether the three-year period would just apply to new build-to-rent properties or to all tenancies, and also how an affordable private rent tenure might be applied.

Shooting

Code of Good Shooting Practice updated

The [Code](#), which is produced by ten shooting organisations, is recommended reading for anyone involved in shooting, not just shoots and guns. It lists five golden rules that underpin shooting: safety; respect for others and wildlife; respect for quarry; responsible releasing of birds, which includes never releasing to replenish or replace any birds already released and shot in that season.