



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-916
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/07119/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair of the Petitions Committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

October 2019

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter of 8 October regarding Petition 05-916 adequate funding to protect the welfare of farm animals in Welsh slaughterhouses received from Mr David Grimsell.

I am committed to ensuring high standards of welfare for all animals kept in Wales, at all stages of their life, including at the point of slaughter. All public sector organisations face difficult decisions regarding the identification and funding of priorities. This is particularly true with ever decreasing budgets. To ensure maximum impact officials meet FSA colleagues to agree priorities within the funding available. The Welsh Government also works with industry and other stakeholders to ensure the high standards of animal welfare at the time of killing are met.

I have previously stated I would consider introducing legislation to ensure CCTV is in place in all Welsh slaughterhouses. However, I am committed to working with slaughterhouse operators, in a supportive relationship, to achieve the same objective. A Food Business Investment Scheme for slaughterhouses opened to expressions of interest (EOI) on 30 September 2018. There has been a positive response from slaughterhouses with projects that include investments to safeguard animal welfare, such as installation, upgrade or improvement of CCTV, being given priority. EOIs are now being progressed to full applications with a January 2020 deadline.

Successful applicants of the scheme are being provided with guidance on installation and management of CCTV and are expected to adhere to a protocol jointly developed and agreed by the Food Standards Agency and industry bodies to enable Official Veterinarians access to CCTV footage. Grant supported investments will be inspected when the projects are completed and if there is evidence that protocols are not being adhered to across the industry I will be prepared to legislate.

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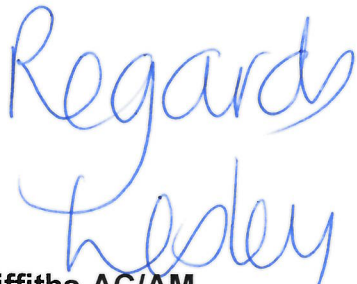
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Whilst CCTV can contribute to safeguarding animal welfare in slaughterhouses it should not be considered in isolation and there is more that can be done. To support this, I will require all applicants to receive expert welfare advice on the movement and management of animals in their premises. The Safeguarding of animal welfare requires both knowledge and a culture that respects animals, the grant scheme will go some way to address these twin challenges.

In addition to the Food Business Investment Scheme, the Food Skills Cymru (FSC) programme delivered by Lantra supports businesses within the Welsh food and drink processing and manufacturing industry to ensure employees have the right skills and training. FSC is working with Shropshire Training to deliver 'Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing' to businesses across Wales. FSC is also looking to develop additional animal welfare related courses for slaughterhouses to ensure animals are properly handled and cared for prior to slaughter.

I place a high priority on animal welfare in Wales and am working with industry to achieve the best outcomes.



Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs