

Third Progress Report from the Small Abattoirs Task and Finish Group: 1 March 2023 - 29 February 2024

Summary:

This is the third progress report produced by the Small Abattoirs Task and Finish Group (TFG) since it was established in 2022. It has been prepared jointly by its members, Defra, Food Standards Agency (FSA) and sector representatives from the Abattoir Sector Group (ASG), Association of Independent Meat Suppliers (AIMS), Sustainable Food Trust (SFT), National Craft Butchers (NCB) and Pasture for Life (PFL). The report outlines the work undertaken by the TFG over the period 1 March 2023 - 29 February 2024. Positive strides have been made in tackling the key issues, notably simplifying the regulatory and administrative framework, funding and animal by-products, prioritised by the industry through TFG meetings over the last 12 months.

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Summary of Progress to Date:

1. The TFG was formed in 2022 to provide a forum in which government and industry could meet regularly to discuss those priority issues identified by industry as key to the longer-term economic viability of the smaller abattoir sector. The aim of the TFG was to enable topics to be raised and discussed in an open and transparent way with the intention of finding solutions, where these were possible. Three priorities were identified by industry at the formation of the Group, notably:
 - i. the possibility of simplifying the regulatory and administrative framework within which smaller abattoirs work,
 - ii. the funding mechanisms available to smaller abattoirs; and
 - iii. how to maximise the value and reduce the cost related to the handling and disposal of animal by products.
2. In the past year good progress has been made on all three of these priorities, with a new priority related to access to skilled labour and succession planning having been added to the list of issues to be addressed by the Group.
3. Key progress on the Group's key priorities as agreed by members over the last year include:

Priority 1: Simplifying the Regulatory Framework

- **Livestock Unit Regulatory Flexibility (5% Rule):** Defra together with the Devolved Administrations are actively pursuing a means of implementing the 5% Rule flexibility contained within Assimilated Regulation 2019/624 Article 7(1)(b). While there is no predefined timeline for the completion of this work, which will require active engagement with the European Commission, Defra has been updating the TFG on progress and during 2024 expects to formally establish a trusted external stakeholder group with which to seek the views of the sector on the mechanics of how the flexibility might be implemented.
- **Over-Thirty Month Rule/ Specified Risk Material Controls:** A revised Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Chapter was adopted at the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) General Session 2023. As a result of the adopted changes England/Wales and Scotland, as two separate WOAH zones, can apply for BSE negligible risk status in 2024, for consideration at the WOAH General Session in May 2025. Northern Ireland currently has BSE negligible risk status. The Group accepts that the appropriate time for reviewing existing TSE controls in England would be after we have attained BSE negligible risk status.

Priority 2: Funding Mechanisms

- **Smaller Abattoir Fund (SAF):** Following the Government's commitment to introduce funding for smaller abattoirs at the National Farmers Union Conference on 21 February 2023, Defra, in close co-operation with the abattoir sector drawing upon the co-design principle, developed and launched the SAF on 13 December 2023. This fund provides £4m of grant funding to support the procurement of capital items and investments in smaller abattoirs with the intention of improving productivity, enhancing animal health and welfare, adding value to primary products and encouraging innovation and the use of new technologies. The SAF will close on 30 September 2024. The TFG supported Defra throughout the development of the SAF, providing assistance in the elaboration of the list of eligible items, the application

process, the application timescales, providing insights on how best to engage with eligible abattoirs, funding levels, and helped review of the draft scheme documentation.

Priority 3: Adding Value to Animal By-Products (ABPs)

- The TFG have identified adding value to animal by-products as a priority to address the economic burden associated with the disposal of animal by-products, due to the value of by-products such as hides, skins and intestines having fallen dramatically in recent years. The smaller abattoir sector has been seeking support to help with the increased cost of the safe disposal of by-products.
- As the TFG has primarily been supporting Defra with the launch of the Smaller Abattoir Fund, the TFG has not been able focus on ABP issues directly. However, the TFG was able to support the inclusion in the SAF of certain capital items designed to support abattoirs with the more efficient removal of ABP (i.e., incinerators).

Priority 4: Access to Skilled Labour & Succession Planning

- The TFG identified a new priority during 2022-23 based on industry reports that both a shortage of skilled labour and succession planning now presents a key risk to maintaining a sustainable smaller abattoir network. It has been increasingly difficult for smaller abattoirs to attract both UK domestic and overseas workers into the smaller abattoir sector. Furthermore, large number of abattoir owners are reaching retirement age with no succession plan in place. Due to the focus on the regulatory and funding priorities, no specific work was undertaken by the TFG during 2023-24 in relation to this priority.

Overview of the Small Abattoirs Task & Finish Group

4. The TFG is a joint government/industry group which was established in March 2022 to facilitate solutions, where possible, to priority issues impacting the smaller abattoir sector in England. It reports to Defra Ministers; Food Standards Agency CEO; Rural Payments Agency; Chair of the Abattoir Sector Group; and Defra's Small Abattoirs Working Group (SAWG).
5. To date, four priority topics have been identified by the industry for the group to work through. These are: i. simplifying the regulatory framework; ii. funding mechanisms; iii. adding value to animal by-products, and access to skilled labour and succession planning.
6. To ensure work is focused, the Group is currently limited to 7 core members: Defra's Red Meat and Dairy Sector Team (co-chair); Abattoir Sector Group (co-chair); Food Standards Agency; Association of Independent Meat Suppliers; The Sustainable Food Trust, National Craft Butchers and Pasture for Life.
7. A copy of the group's Terms of Reference is attached in Annex A.
8. Since the last Small Abattoirs Task and Finish Group's progress report covering the period 1 March 2022 - 28 February 2023, which was published in July 2023, the Group has held 4 further meetings. These meetings were held on 15 March 2023, 21 September 2023, 30 October 2023, and 29 January 2024. TFG meetings have been held at strategic points this year, ensuring that the TFG members were engaged at the optimal time on the design and development of the SAF, ensuring the SAF delivered for the sector.
9. Over the past 12 months, significant strides have been made by the TFG, with primary emphasis placed on delivering the SAF and facilitating the implementation of regulatory easements. Details are outlined below.

Priority 1: Simplifying the Regulatory Framework

Overview

10. Defra has committed to working with the sector to identify and address potential opportunities to ease regulatory and/ or administrative burdens that apply to smaller abattoirs. Industry has expressed that the current regulatory framework which applies to all abattoirs irrespective of their size and throughput, and the associated costs of complying with it, is disproportionate to the volume of throughput of smaller abattoirs, which is negatively impacting the viability of the sector. Four key requests from industry have been discussed in the group over the past 12 months:
- i. the need to alleviate administrative burdens on smaller abattoirs, including modernising control regulations and applying existing flexibilities, where possible.
 - ii. for GB to implement the Livestock Unit Regulatory Flexibility (5% Rule),
 - iii. a relaxation of the Over Thirty Month Rule and,
 - iv. Official Veterinary (OV) provision and solutions that could improve veterinary resilience. This includes utilising a wider veterinary skill base, such as local veterinary practices and a review of OV standards and supply.
11. The TFG has played a pivotal role in identifying strategic opportunities for implementing solutions to further enhance our approach to the regulatory challenges the sector faces. Defra, supported by the FSA, continues to work with industry to seek solutions to the various regulatory and administrative challenges identified as impacting the smaller abattoir sector. Notable progress has been made against the four listed initiatives outlined above over the past 12 months, with details of progress made in these areas outline below.

Reduced Administration Initiative

12. Following a successful pilot to reduce the required amount of daily administration completed by small abattoir operators, the FSA introduced an exception reporting daily diary. This has been incorporated to the work instructions and guidance that all abattoir operators follow and included the FSA writing to all eligible small abattoir operators in September 2023. This was to ensure they were aware of the new approach and to encourage discussions with local FSA management in order to safely implement the new way of working.

FSA Escalation Process

13. FSA Field Operations management teams have undertaken a series of face-to-face visits to smaller abattoirs to ensure the abattoir operators are aware of their points of contact for any operational issues. FSA have appointed a “national portfolio lead” who has undertaken several site visits and is known to the trade bodies. This role can be used to escalate any issues that are not deemed to be getting local attention. To date several issues have been raised and through diversion to local management teams, have reached suitable conclusions.

Livestock Unit Regulatory Flexibility (5% Rule)

14. The smaller abattoir sector has requested the Government to implement the Livestock Unit Regulatory Flexibility (5% Rule) provided in assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/624, specifically Article 7(1)(b). This measure is believed by industry representatives to provide smaller abattoirs with the opportunity to reduce costs and increase their production capacities.

15. The relevant assimilated Regulation 2019/624 gives the relevant competent authorities the option to grant this flexibility, which could allow smaller abattoirs with a combined throughput of up to 5% of throughput in Great Britain, to benefit from reduced OV attendance for post-mortem inspection, subject to them meeting certain criteria.
16. Ministers have instructed Defra officials to actively explore the means of introducing the 5% Rule. However, for the purpose of having a system which allows any meat produced to be sold on the domestic and EU markets, the EU Commission has also made clear that despite the provisions to implement this flexibility being adopted within domestic law, this flexibility is not automatically available to 3rd countries who trade with the EU such as the UK. The mechanisms and approach for the adoption of the 5% Rule flexibility within the UK, in order to enable a system which doesn't require a dual regulatory approach (which the UK meat processing industry has previously overwhelmingly rejected following an engagement exercise by the FSA) will therefore need to be discussed and agreed with the EU prior to its implementation.
17. As the implementation of the 5% Rule flexibility falls under Regulation 2019/624 Article 7(1)(b), this intersects with both public health and animal health rules. This encompasses aspects crucial to both domestic meat production and its export. It is therefore a devolved policy area.
18. Defra are actively engaging with the devolved administrations (DAs) on how the adoption of this flexibility might work consistently across the UK. This includes agreement on the eligibility and assessment criteria upon which abattoirs wishing to implement the 5% flexibility will be assessed against; and the review mechanisms and controls that might be required to be adopted to implement the system fairly and consistently.
19. Defra and the Devolved Administrations intend to actively engage with industry stakeholders on the approach to be adopted to implement the 5% flexibility and on developing the case to be presented to the European Commission.
20. Once UK wide agreement has been reached, and stakeholders have been engaged on the potential system that will be adopted, Defra and the DAs will commence a formal engagement with the European Commission.

Over-Thirty Month (OTM) Rule/Specified Risk Material (SRM) Controls

21. The TFG has outlined the benefits of a relaxation of the Over Thirty Month Rule (OTM), specifying that this is viewed as a medium to longer-term priority. This reflects that the appropriate time to review transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) controls would be after the UK as a whole has attained official Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) negligible risk (NR) status.
22. Achieving official BSE NR status would allow us to consider reducing burdens on industry and government by reviewing certain BSE controls. It would also enhance our reputation with current and potential trading partners.
23. The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) sets out the guidelines for animal disease controls and related trade recommendations depending on the official risk status of a country or zone. England/Wales and Scotland as two separate WOAH zones currently have BSE controlled risk (CR) status while Northern Ireland has NR status.
24. WOAH adopted a revised BSE chapter at the WOAH 2023 General Session. This included revised general criteria for the determination of the BSE risk and of requirements for NR and CR status. The previous requirement for NR status of not having had a BSE classical case born in the past 11 years has been removed. (The last case in England in 2021 was born in 2015).

25. Significantly, the changes also mean that a further case of classical BSE has no impact on the official BSE risk status of a country or zone, so long as it can be demonstrated to WOAAH within 90 days of the case being confirmed that certain conditions are met. The introduction of the new provisions is being phased by WOAAH. This means the earliest that England/Wales and Scotland can apply for negligible risk status is in 2024 for consideration at the May General Session in 2025.
26. Defra are working with the Welsh and Scottish Governments to submit a joint GB application this summer (2024). This is a significant piece of work.
27. The appropriate time for reviewing existing TSE controls, including the OTM Rule, would be after we attain NR status, which will not be before May 2025. At that point, we have agreed to engage with the TFG. However, any changes to TSE controls would require a risk assessment, an impact assessment (including consideration of the impact on trade), a public consultation, and legislative changes.

Official Veterinary (OV) Provision

28. The TFG has been actively engaged in assessing the delivery of official controls in smaller abattoirs, with a particular focus on the standard of OVs. The TFG has identified concerns over a prolonged problem the FSA has experienced in recruiting domestic OVs. This issue is believed to have consequences which affect the service that the meat industry receives.
29. The long-term challenges with OVs can be attributed to the following issues:
 - Recruitment and Retention: challenges to the recruitment and retention of veterinarians to public health roles including working as OVs in abattoirs.
 - Standard of English language within the OV community impacts effective communication within abattoirs and the overall service quality.
30. In response to these challenges, the TFG are looking at possible strategic measures to address the identified issues:
 - Utilising Wider Veterinary Skill Base: This measure involves incorporating local individuals and/or groups of veterinary practices with enhanced skills into abattoir OV work. This move could help to diversify and strengthen the veterinary skill base within abattoirs.
 - Review of OV standards and supply model: The TFG recognises the broader challenges in OV standards and supply chain. Furthermore, the TFG is aware of the attention to improving quality standards put in place by the FSA and wishes to continue dialogue on these subjects.
31. In response to some of these measures, the FSA have included ASG as a stakeholder within the engagement process for the FSA's re-tender of contracts for veterinary and meat inspector resources. The suggestions of utilising local and small practices have been included in the feedback; however, it is for such veterinary businesses to tender for the work.
32. By advocating for a modernised OV provision and encouraging the involvement of a wider veterinary skill base, the TFG aims to create a robust framework that meets the evolving needs of the industry while maintaining high standards in veterinary practice.
33. Ongoing collaboration and strategic planning will be pivotal in achieving these objectives. The TFG will continue to explore and implement solutions, where possible.

Priority 2: Funding Mechanisms

Overview

34. At the National Farmers Union Conference in February 2023, Minister Spencer announced the Government's commitment to provide capital grant funding tailored specifically to smaller abattoirs. The Smaller Abattoir Fund (SAF) was designed during 2023 and launched on 13 December 2023 providing £4m in funding. The Fund provides capital and investment grants to support eligible smaller abattoirs to improve productivity, invest in innovative and new technologies, enhance animal health and welfare standards, and add value to primary products.
35. The SAF represents a significant governmental initiative aimed at supporting smaller abattoirs, reflecting its commitment to address funding challenges in this sector. A meticulous co-design process was initiated, between governmental bodies including Defra, FSA, RPA, along with key industry stakeholders including specifically, the TFG.

The Smaller Abattoir Fund

36. The SAF aims to support farmers to access local private kill services, increase the viability of rearing rare and native breeds, maintain slaughter destination facilities, increase local employment opportunities, and improve animal health and welfare by enhancing on-site facilities and helping to maintain shorter journey times to slaughter for livestock. The SAF will help to maintain as broad a geographical and specialist range of domestic abattoirs as possible, within a robust and competitive market environment.
37. The SAF also builds on previous government funding in this area, such as the funding of a mobile abattoir in 2021 via the Rural Development Programme for England. Additionally, ongoing funding for producer-owned abattoirs under the FIF, further underscores the commitment to bolstering the sector.
38. The aim of the SAF is to provide support to all smaller abattoir businesses to address their current limited opportunities, by offering financial support in the form of grants for capital items and investment to expand and enhance their operational capacity and to open up new markets.
39. The SAF is accessible to FSA-approved mobile and static red meat and poultry abattoirs in England only. This covers both producer and privately owned abattoirs. It is open to red meat and poultry abattoirs who in 2022 processed up to and including 10,000 farmed livestock units (i.e., bovines, sheep, goats, pigs, farmed venison), and/or 500,000 birds (i.e., chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks, capons, hens).
40. In designing the SAF, Defra worked closely with the TFG and the wider abattoir industry. In June 2023, Defra launched an extensive engagement exercise with a large number of smaller abattoirs which sought feedback on the scope and design of the Fund and the identification of example capital items that might be financed under the Fund. This exercise served as a vital mechanism for gathering invaluable insights directly from those operating within the sector, ensuring that the SAF's structure and provisions were aligned with the needs and challenges faced by smaller abattoirs.
41. Moreover, throughout the SAF's development, Defra actively engaged with the TFG and wider industry stakeholders, on the scope and content of the Fund, the Fund's administration and the publicity and promotion strategy, and the review of the draft scheme documentation. Feedback was reflected in the form of the Fund that was launched. The TFG also offered to work with potential applicants to support them in preparing applications for submission to SAF. As the Fund is implemented, we continue to work with the TFG on encouraging more applications and on monitoring uptake.
42. Following the launch of the SAF and in line with best practice, in January 2024 with the support of the TFG, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) hosted two webinars for eligible abattoirs, both of which have been recognised as successful initiatives. These webinars served as valuable platforms, aiding eligible abattoirs in understanding the application

process and requirements and facilitating an interactive forum for queries. The first applications to the SAF were received in early 2024 and at the time of writing this report (29th of February 2024), 9 applications had been received totalling grant requests for £191,477.45.

43. For further information about the SAF, please consult the following links:

- [Applications open for new £4 million fund to support smaller abattoirs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Introducing the Smaller Abattoir Fund - Farming \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

Farming Investment Fund (Adding Value Theme)

44. The TFG has taken a keen interest in funding for new abattoirs which during 2023 was available under the Adding Value grant of the Farming Investment Fund. Throughout the year, the TFG received regular updates on the Adding Value grant and have been active in requesting more support for new abattoirs. In 2022, the first round of the Farming Investment Fund's Adding Value grant was launched, providing financial support for existing abattoirs and for the establishment of new producer-led abattoirs and mobile abattoir units, amongst other projects for farmers to add value to agricultural products, after they have been harvested or reared.

45. Ongoing deliberations are in progress to ascertain the possibility of additional funding within the framework. Should further funding be allocated, it is anticipated that the scope will encompass similar infrastructure projects, reinforcing the Government's commitment to the growth and sustainability of our agricultural landscape.

Priority 3: Adding Value to Animal By-Products

Overview

46. At the outset of its work, the TFG identified the cost to smaller abattoirs of disposing of animal by-products (ABP) as a priority issue.

47. To help alleviate the financial burden associated with ABP, Defra working with the TFG has proactively incorporated on-site incinerators and other ABP investments that go beyond regulatory requirements, as items eligible for funding under the SAF. However, the TFG notes that some smaller abattoirs continue to withhold investment in on-site incinerators, due to both the high labour input and fuel costs in running them.

48. Having focused this last year on other priority work areas, the TFG plans to work collaboratively with the industry to assess the feasibility of advancing solutions in this area during the coming year.

Priority 4: Access to Skilled Labour & Succession Planning

Overview

49. Succession planning has been recognised as a critical factor posing a risk to the long-term sustainability of the smaller abattoir network. While time has not allowed the TFG to focus on this priority during the last year, it plans to re-activate its work in focus on this area during the coming year as and when time allows.

50. The TFG notes that a number of abattoirs closed during 2023-24, due to owners retiring with no succession plan in place. Further issues with accessing skilled labour, both domestically and overseas often on a part-time basis, has also been a factor in recent closures and is considered by the sector to be a key risk to the continuation of a

sustainable smaller abattoir network. Recognising the challenges the meat processing industry including smaller abattoirs are facing with the recruitment of skilled labour, the Government commissioned John Shropshire to undertake an independent review of labour which considered how automation, domestic labour and migrant labour can contribute to tackling labour shortages in the food supply chain. The Government response was published in May 2024.

51. To support wider Defra work on engaging with DfE and DWP on access to/ supply of skilled labour, and to facilitate further work on access to labour, the TFG continue to collect intel on the specific challenges faced by smaller abattoirs in securing skilled labour, identifying key areas of concern and potential solutions. This will form the basis of discussions within the TFG during the coming year.

Forward Planning

52. The TFG remains committed to advancing its objectives in alignment with the priorities outlined in this progress report. Looking ahead, the Group has confirmed its focus in the coming year will be sustained in the following key areas:

- **Funding:** working with Defra to monitor the uptake of the SAF and exploring funding options for new abattoirs in geographical areas across England that currently lack local small abattoirs.
- **Regulatory and administrative easements:** Ongoing collaboration between the abattoir sector and Defra and the FSA to continue to identify opportunities to reduce regulatory and administrative burdens, with special attention being given to implementing the 5% flexibility Rule.
- **Adding Value to ABP:** The TFG is exploring proposals to improve ABP management and Defra will collaborate with the industry to assess the feasibility of any proposals developed by the TFG. Work on ABP will also be informed by the roundtable held with industry in March 2024, forming the basis for any work undertaken in the ABP space in the coming year.
- **Access to skilled labour and succession planning:** To work with Defra to continue to provide intel and evidence for Defra to utilise in their engagement with DfE and DWP, specifically on efforts to promote apprenticeships and career opportunities for employees within smaller abattoirs. In addition, the TFG will continue to work with industry to provide support on access to skilled labour and succession planning, which will be informed by an industry roundtable hosted by Defra in March 2024, forming the basis for the work to be undertaken during the coming year.

53. The TFG remains flexible and adaptive, recognising the evolving needs of the sector, and is ready to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

The Small Abattoir Task and Finish Group

November 2024

Annex A: Small Abattoirs Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference

Government/Industry Small Abattoirs Working Group – Small Abattoirs Task and Finish Group

Mission: To facilitate solutions, where possible, to priority issues impacting the small/medium abattoir sector in support of a resilient abattoir network that can contribute to the future farming vision, environmental goals and local rural economies.

Reports to: Defra Ministers; Food Standards Agency CEO; Rural Payments Agency; Chair of the Abattoir Sector Group (ASG); and the Small Abattoir Working Group.

Co-Chairs: John Powell (Defra), Marisa Heath (ASG)

Membership: To be set by co-chairs and limited in size to approx. 6 core members with additional membership varying based on issue being discussed. Core membership to include:

For industry:

- Represents independent meat processors
- Represent farmers who use smaller abattoirs
- Independent operator

For Government:

- Rep from the Food, Farming Sectors and Trade Policy team ¹
- FSA Rep

Secretariat: Megan Perry funded by ASG & Defra's Red Meat and Dairy team

Frequency of meetings: Meetings to be held at least bi-monthly (min 6 per year).

Timescale of activities: Provide a full report once a year to Ministers and those that the group reports to. Provide regular updates on issues discussed and ongoing Defra schemes.

Information Sharing: Meetings to be held under Chatham House Rule, with actions and outcomes to be shared externally only with prior agreement of all parties.

Objectives:

- Identify and agree priority topics for discussion to focus industry and government efforts on finding practical and timely solutions to issues.
- Ensure industry takes a full part in itself delivering its own resilience and can play a significant role in food delivery and security within the scope of small and medium abattoirs.
- Government to support solutions and remove obstacles where safe to do so and integrate industry with wider policy work across Defra, FSA and RPA.

Key Priorities:

While any issue relevant to the small abattoir sector may be discussed by the group, the Group will seek to focus its deliberations on key priorities for the industry, notably:

1. Regulation:

¹ Following changes to the structure of Defra's Agri-Food Chain directorate in 2023, Defra now provide representatives from the Farming and Primary Processing division.

- i. FSA provide regular updates on the Operational Transformation Programme, starting with setting out planned deliverables over the next 12 months, to support strategic planning by industry.
 - ii. Support identification of opportunities and/or delivery of additional improvements to administrative burdens, eg. on OV's, control regulations (5% Rule), LIP and potential use of local authorities.
 - iii. Industry confirms the will and capability to progress outcomes and a clear plan to communicate to the wider network in conjunction with FSA.
2. Funding
 - i. Explore funding mechanisms with the relevant Defra team that is appropriate to industry needs.
 - ii. Industry is provided with the knowledge to effectively apply for any added value funding, where eligible, for ancillary activities under the Agriculture Act, including Farm Resilience Funding.
 - iii. If required, industry has clarity on other private and public sources of funds.
 - iv. Industry confirms the will and capability to progress these activities including setting out what funding is necessary, e.g. Capital investment, and evidence that funding will facilitate a sustainable sector.
3. Adding Value to Animal By-Products
 - i. Explore options for managing the high cost of ABP including alternative models for waste disposal (e.g., hubs), alternative uses for 5th quarter waste, and improving waste reduction skills (abattoir staff).
 - ii. Industry has the knowledge to effectively integrate its waste into the local green economy or as added value.
 - iii. Industry finalises proposals for suitable technologies and the 'Pod and Hub' concept to deal with abattoir waste.
 - iv. If required, clarity is provided on other options including potential ancillary activities, e.g. a tannery.
 - v. Industry confirms the will and capability to progress these activities and a mechanism to bring abattoirs together to communicate the options.

(As the work develops, these priorities can change and adapt, with agreement from the Group.)