

**Briefing for British Horse Council Webinar  
10 December 2021**

**Animal Welfare Plan for Wales & Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework:**

- We launched our **Animal Welfare Plan for Wales** on 4 November. The five-year plan builds on the progress made in Wales on animal welfare since the relevant powers were devolved.
- During this Government's term of office, we will introduce a broad range of policies to maintain momentum in animal welfare reform.
- We will promote education and awareness amongst everyone involved in keeping animals – to ensure a good quality of life for animals in Wales, but also to ensure future generations of animal keepers will understand how applying best practice makes a positive difference.
- Our ambition is for Wales to be recognised for:
  - Exemplary standards of animal welfare;
  - adoption and sharing of best practice;
  - engagement with key stakeholders;
  - development of effective, supportive and sustainable mechanisms for enforcement;
  - our contribution to research, and;
  - for championing education and responsible ownership for the benefit of our own and future generations.
- Working in partnership with stakeholders, enforcement agencies, the veterinary profession, scientific communities and our counterparts in the other UK administrations will be key.
- The aims of our Animal Welfare Plan for Wales are strategically aligned to the **Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework** (Wales AHWF) which seeks to maintain and improve standards of animal health and welfare for kept animals, protect public health, and contribute to the economy and the environment.
- We will be publishing a new Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Implementation Plan – on our key priorities for the next two years - in January.
- While the Animal Welfare Plan does not make specific reference to equines, it broadly sets out our plans to bring forward licensing requirements in relation to animal exhibits and animal welfare establishments. We will work in partnership with key stakeholders to identify areas of particular concern before consulting on revised proposals for the further licensing of activities involving animals, such as

animal welfare establishments (including sanctuaries and rescue/rehoming centres).

- Our Local Authority Enforcement Project currently includes training for officers in the enforcement of new regulations, and we envisage this model will be applied to encompass future training needs, as required.

### **Welfare during transport:**

- We are working with the UK Government on introducing a ban on the export of livestock and equines for slaughter through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill.
- We are also working with the UK Government and other administrations to consider how the protection of animal welfare during transport can be strengthened.
- We will now work with stakeholders and experts – including animal welfare and farming groups – to further develop these measures in order to help enhance the welfare of farmed animals during transport.

### **Equine ID**

- The Equine Identification Regulations require all horses in Wales to be identified with a microchip and hold a valid paper passport. The deadline for microchipping all equines in Wales was 12 February 2021. This included equines that were registered before July 2009.
- WG policy officials meet regularly with counterparts across the UK and have recently seen Defra's draft consultation on equine ID.
- The proposals set out in Defra's consultation are out of step with current equine ID policy in Wales and are likely to cause confusion with keepers and difficulties for keepers who regularly move equines from England into Wales.
- Defra suggest digitalisation will improve the accuracy of data held in the Central Equine Database (CED) and correct the inaccuracy of paper passports. However, WG officials are in regular contact with Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs) in Wales and although it's agreed the CED needs updating no issues of inaccuracy of paper passports have been raised.
- Welsh PIOs have provided brief feedback to WG officials on their dislike of digitalisation but a more detailed conversation has not yet taken place.
- Officials will arrange a PIO discussion on all aspects of the consultation once the Defra proposals are finalised.
- There are no doubts around the traceability benefits of Defra's proposal on the location of the equine. However, this would require increased resources to deliver in Wales.