MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD WITHIN 8/10 NEEDLESS ROAD PERTH ON WEDNESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2002

PRESENT:	**Duncan MacKenzie**	**President (Chair)**
	Mark Barnett	**President Elect**
	Douglas Scott	**Chief Executive**
	Moira Brady	**Secretary**

Plus 11 Executive and Ordinary members as detailed below:

RC Baillie, R Baird, B Brymer, GJ Deans, J Hastie, D Jarron, G Lees, D Lindsay, A Matthew, C Murdoch and G Murdoch.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Jamie Chapman, John C Chapman, Stuart Christie, Wilson Ferguson. Gilbert Grossett, George Jarron and Adam McLay.

MINUTE OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2002:
The Minutes were approved by David Jarron and seconded by Arthur Matthew.

MATTERS ARISING:
The Chief Executive referred to the offer to Federation Members from Sunlight Services and stated that he had received a note of their special rates. These have been checked against those from other companies servicing our members and were seen to be around 25% cheaper. He reminded members that they may find it difficult to withdraw from current contracts and may require to await their expiry before joining the Federation agreement. Douglas suggested that this was very much a win/win situation. Members did not need to take it up but those who do are likely to get a very good deal. Sunlight are also suggesting a rebate back to the Federation as well as offering a cheaper price to members**. The meeting agreed to The Chief Executive formalising a contract with Sunlight.**

President MacKenzie referred to the item on page 4 which suggested that Local Association Secretaries put out a questionnaire asking if an Executive Meeting was held in their area would they attend, and enquired if any of the associations had undertaken this. The Chief Executive added that he had put an article in the last Newsletter regarding this but to-date had received no replies.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT:
Douglas Scott listed the meetings he had attended since the last Executive Meeting. He added that the subject of the Guild of Q Butchers would be discussed later in the Agenda and that of Farmers Markets, which he had attended would be discussed under Legislation.

He referred to a meeting he had attended regarding a new standard for Scottish Quality Management System. This was a Standard the Federation were audited against, and had achieved for the past four years. The qualification had been necessary to enable us to contract with the various Local Enterprise Companies for Skillseeker agreements.

Douglas stated that he felt what was set out was worth while and probably of value. Douglas had been of the opinion that the system was very costly to us but the meeting had convinced him that if the audit was done efficiently it could be more cost effective. However, at a later meeting attended at Tayside, it was stated that SQMS standard may not be required to contract with LECS, but at the moment we have no alternative.

EHO Dumfries: Douglas reported that he had attended this meeting as Moira was at the Meat Training Council AGM in London. At the meeting were representatives of other food sectors, Seafish. Food and Drink and Arthur Rayer from the Scottish Association of Master Bakers. The meeting had been called to look at the potential of the EHO giving funding support to Level 3 SVQs being undertaken by one person in food establishments within the Dumfries & Galloway area. The idea to look at the potential of SVQs had been put forward by SFMTA at an earlier meeting and David Grant the EHO had responded positively. He spoke of a substantial sum of money from the Pennington fund which could be made available for this training. Food Training Services have put a proposal into Dumfries & Galloway EHO, which encompasses all that we have been trying to take on board within the Hospitality and Catering sectors.

The EHO is to write to the various bodies who attended with an outline of how they will endorse the training. On receipt of this we will target establishments to get them to take up the training. If this was to be extended throughout the country it could be very good for Food Training Services.

Bruce Brymer asked how the situation with Dumfries and Galloway EHO had arisen.
The Chief Executive had written to all of the EHOs in Scotland and Dumfries had invited him to talk about training. Moira had attended the meeting with Douglas and during the conversation she had stated that Level 3 SVQs could have value in upgrading training within food establishments. Dumfries and Galloway Council has £100,000 in the bank which has to be spent on food training and this may be the way it is used.

The Chief Executive attended a meeting with SEPA in Stirling on 7 February. The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency wished to discuss the Pollution Prevention Control Regulations 2001, which will impact on large businesses and was not really of interest to us. These will be introduced into the Food and Drink Industry in 2004 and the size of business they will be looking at will require an output of 75 tonnes per day. Definitely not for our members.

FINANCE REPORT:
The Chief Executive reported from the meeting held earlier that day. The normal procedure of examining bad debts etc had been followed. The current situation indicated that two members had defaulted with Direct Debits in month of October, November and have been followed up , but there appears to be a little difficulty in this respect. Other than these there are no problems on the General Services side. On Food Training Services there is a substantial amount of money outstanding from an Enterprise Company, which will come through. It is just a matter of time getting the situation cleared up. There are also one or two outstanding amounts from courses and the Fast trac system, but these are all being followed up. There is an issue with regard to a New Deal funded trainee with a butcher and it is felt that a letter may require to go out stating we will require to take legal action if the amount remains unpaid.

The spreadsheet showing the Trading Accounts for December was looked at by the Committee, in relation to variances and how this will affect us during the year. The General side budgeted at the beginning of the year for a deficit of £967. Although it is uncertain how subscriptions will come in, but if it is in relation to what was projected, the account should now create a surplus.

On Food Training Services the income from Skillseekers, which is the major part of our income, we had projected an income of just over £170,000, with a surplus of £9,000 for the year. Unfortunately with various costs and under-budgeting on mileage and assessors' fees we are now predicting a deficit.
This, however, will depend very much on the Skillseeker income. We have predictions on Skillseekers, but we know that in February and March, in particular, the sums we have budgeted will not be achieved as the LECS have asked for the claims to be made by an earlier date. This money will not be lost and should be portrayed in the May accounts.

The Chief Executive continued the Finance report by stating that the committee had met on 21 January to look at the accounts and consider questions made at an earlier Executive Meeting regarding the viability of Food Training Services. Resulting from this meeting a decision was made to dispense with the role of Business Development Manager. The committee felt that they addressed the financial situation in respect of the lack of business. They also recognised that the Business Development Plan did not suggest this role at the start, but rather that the new business should grow gradually rather than build in new resources right away. Douglas further stated that we aim to continue the policy to nurture the catering and food and drink sectors, but not to employ someone to do this work. He added that the predictions made at the moment did not take into account the savings in salary which will be made because of this action.

FOOD TRAINING SERVICES:
Moira Brady presented the report, prepared by Joan Sampson.

Food Hygiene:
- We delivered 4 Essential (all in-house – 2 charities, 1 hotel and P & K Council) in January, generating an income of £1465. We have also delivered an open course in Glasgow in February. An Intermediate course is currently running in Edinburgh
- We have 3 in-house Essentials booked for February, for Highland Heritage Hotels. We also have another P &K Council booking for March, as well as two half-day courses with WCF Potatoes (Total income - £2000)

SVQs/Business Development courses:
- We now have seven candidates on the Food & Drink Manufacturing Operations Level 2 (including AKS three, who have just completed). Three of these candidates are packers working for a new client, McKean Foods.
- Our first candidate for Food and Drink Preparation has now started.
- Three of the Business Development courses will be going ahead – Supervisory Skills, Customer Service, Performance Appraisals

Tenders:
- We will be delivering a Food Service course and a Stress Management course for Forth Valley Enterprise in March.

Marketing:
- Mailshot was sent out
- Pub, Club, Hotel and Catering Show, 26-28th February
- Chamber of Commerce newsletter insert
- Training presentation included at regional meetings.

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT:
Convenor Mark Barnett reported on the up to-date position regarding membership. Annual Direct Debits 64 received, Quarterly Direct Debits 15, 43 Monthly, 141 cheques and 3 corporate members. Giving a total of 266.

Cost of producing the Handbook by Envoy is £1700 and to-date this amount has been committed by advertisements. Publication is expected to start at the beginning of April.

Mark continued by reporting from the Deans Group regarding waste water initiative. They have completed proposals and these were sent out to the membership. Initially 52 members registered an interest, but out of this 34 have provided information. They are also keeping an on-going database of members who have registered an interest in electricity initiative and this will allow them to provide information and have it to hand, whenever they receive enquiries.

The response from members was disappointing only 8 returned their response forms. The level of response was 1.8%. The number of members with questions answered is 3
And the number of members to whom quotes have been posted is nil. The combined annual spend in respect of members is £65,069, the combined spend over prospective members is

£2606. The combined saving over the term for prospective members is £46,736. Anyone wishing more information should contact the Deans Group.

Mark concluded his report by stating that the committee only consisted of David Lindsay and himself and he would like to see a third person coming on.

Hamish Deans referred to the membership information which had previously been supplied at meetings. As this helped area representatives to see how their membership stood, he asked if this could again be supplied.

The Chief Executive referred to the Product Competition for this year's Trade Fair and suggested that as Meat Trades Journal were looking for a Champion of Champions Sausage competition, we may find it difficult to put someone forward, unless we held a sausage competition.

Debate evolved regarding previous sausage competitions and the various difficulties with judging speciality sausages. Bob Baillie proposed we go for Beef and Pork and following further discussion this was agreed to have two competitions one for Pork Sausage and the other Beef Sausage.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT:
Convenor Bruce Brymer reported from the meeting held on Wednesday 6 February.

Enhanced Diploma – A programme has now been agreed. Bruce stated that the meeting had identified the need to come back to Craft Skills training, which had been lost within the SVQ programme. He spoke of the training in the past when those who were involved would recall the small log book each trainee had. The new programme was based on this and was very comprehensive and covered everything. Very much on craft skills, the breaking down of forelegs and sides of beef, lamb, pork and progressing into manufacturing and processing.

When involved with the manufacture of meat products the candidate will require to have a wide knowledge of HACCP as well. We agreed that it would be difficult for an assessor to see the whole process of a cooked product, but the candidate will require to display a total knowledge of the whole process from start to finish, including HACCP. The Diploma will only be awarded to candidates who can go through the whole range, including all the parts. However, to cater for those who are unable to do so we will have a Manufacturing Certificate and Butchery Certificate, also one to cover front shop work. This will give credibility for the Federation training which will be seen to cover the broad range of craft skills.

Graham Murdoch felt that this was a duplication of the SVQs system. Bruce replied that the SVQs do not have the same depth of craft skills as what is being proposed. Bruce felt that in the past the craft skills were not properly monitored and that the SVQ could be achieved by working with one specie. Douglas added that a SVQ could be achieved without having to carry out any butchery. What is being proposed with the Enhanced Diploma is the need to cover all three species and also the three areas of manufacturing, butchering and front shop. The assessment of the Diploma will be done along with that for a VQ. A new candidate coming onto a SVQ will be identified after 6 months as being suitable to proceed with the full range and work towards the Diploma. This will be done in tandem with the VQ and will be at no extra cost. President Duncan MacKenzie added that the credibility of the Diploma will be that the Federation's assessor will require to see the evidence of everything being covered. This is not so with the SVQ, which is signed off in-house and the Federation's assessor verifies this. Bruce Brymer added that the Diploma will also take in Value Added Products.

David Lindsay welcomed the news that we were returning to the recognition of craft skills. In his experience some of the young lads with SVQs were not employable because of their lack of skill.

Graham Murdoch questioned if the Diploma would be a recognised National standard which could attract LEC funding. Douglas Scott replied that the system would be similar to a university course, where 3rd year candidates are identified by the professor to go forward for

Honours. Graham then asked what the situation would be for funding of two Level 2 qualifications and Moira Brady replied that this would not be available. Funding could only be offered once for the same level of qualification regardless of whether or not it was a different titled award.

Meat Conceptions: Bruce Brymer reported that last year we had identified a need for young people to have a total knowledge of the meat industry, from farm to butchers' block.
David Jarron has been working on a plan for this programme, which will be very comprehensive. He has approached a quality breeder and hopes soon to produce a video with an input from this farmer. This will show what the farmer is trying to achieve through breeding and feeding methods and the time scale to rear beast. It will also take in the store ring to fatstock. The husbandry and if required organic requirements. It will then move on to slaughtering techniques.

At that point discussion arose within the T & D committee whether it would be wise to have a video within the industry showing the slaughtering process. Concern was raised regarding the potential of a video getting into the wrong hands. Hamish Deans remarked that the Meat Hygiene Service has a video on skinning the beast etc. David Lindsay suggested that the video only requires to show the beast entering the slaughter process. Bruce felt it was important that young people had a wider understanding of the background of the industry.

Meat Skills Competition: Bruce reported that the committee had looked at the materials prepared for last year's Regional Competitions and had agreed a format for this year's events. There will be 4 Regional Heats:

North – Grampian, Moray, Highlands & Islands
South - Dumfries, Galloway, Borders, Lothians
East - Angus, Fife, Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth
West - Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Ayrshire, Paisley

The finalist from each event will come forward to the Trade Fair. This year, again we will have the two age categories. Under 21 years and 21 to 30 years group, and the competition will be an in-house event.

The younger group will work on Leg of Pork, Chump on/Skin on. Innovation and plating will be brought into the judging criteria. The time allowed will be one hour.

The older group will work on a Fleshy end plus a Leg of Pork, Chump on/Skin on. Time allowed will be one and a half hours.

The criteria has been set to close the skill gap between the Regional event and the Final at the Trade Fair.

Hygiene courses/Distance Learning: Bruce stated that as the demand for hygiene courses was falling away, Food Training Services had put together a distance learning package to meet the needs of an individual wishing to take the course. Initially this was offered to Skillseeker trainees but requests have come in from outside this group. The study time for the programme will be 6 hours. A cost has been applied to this course with an additional amount charged to non-members.

As fewer numbers are also coming forward for the Intermediate Course it has also been agreed to introduce a Distance Learning Package. A marketing flyer has been prepared and the cost of this programme is currently being addressed.

Mark Barnett reported that funding has been agreed from the National Farmers Union Scotland, to train farmers to become butchers. This is to enable them to prepare meat for the Farmers Markets

Bruce Brymer remarked that this raised a Policy decision for SFMTA, do we wish to train these farmers to compete against us?

George Lees was against the Federation doing the training as these farmers do not require the same standard of Food Hygiene training as butchers. He mentioned one butcher in his area who had been stopped by his EHO because he did not have Intermediate Hygiene and yet these farmers are allowed to trade without it. The meeting was concerned that what was being suggested was a fast tracked training just to give farmers the qualification and therefore they would be very much against this.

David Lindsay referred to an advertisement in his local paper that promoted a Red Cross First Aid Course of eight sessions of two hours, these were to be held on a Tuesday evening. However, after enrolling David found that the certificate does not meet the requirements of a First Aider under the Health & Safety at Work Regulations, but would be the appointed person for the business. He felt members should be aware of this.

Meat Training Council's bid for Sector Skills Council. Moira Brady reported on the current situation, which looked as if the Government was already set in their decision for Sector Skills Councils. Although Meat Training Council continues to progress their submission to become a Sector Skills Council they are being advised at every stage on the way that their proposal will be difficult to support. The other four sectors within the food group, ie bakery, fish, dairy and drink have all agreed to form one Sector Skills Council.

This leaves the meat industry on its own and if they are unsuccessful with their bid they will then have to join the others in the food group. This could make it difficult to negotiate our own terms.

The Chairman of Meat Training Council, Alan Stevenson, has written to all the Trade Associations asking for their support in the form of a letter which would accompany the submission, and would emphasise the need for the industry to have its own Sector Skills Council. If individuals within the industry wished to write to Alan with their own letter of support, it would be very welcome.

The meeting agreed to the Chief Executive writing to Mr Stevenson giving them our full support.

Moira then reported from a meeting of Meat Training Council Scotland. At that meeting Ron Spy, was introduced as the successor to Chris France, who had resigned last year. Ron had been an adviser with the Meat Training Council Scotland's Initiative and is currently working, as an advisor, with the Food Learning Network (now Food & Drink Learning).

At the meeting a proposal had been agreed to hold the Meat Training Council Scotland Awards this year, in May and that these should be focussed on individuals who have achieved outstanding success through training. Each Trade Association was asked to nominate two young people and there would be a sector award plus an overall Scottish Winner. The meeting agreed that the Chief Executive, Bruce and Moira should agree on the two nominees.

LIVESTOCK:
In the absence of Jamie Chapman, the Chief Executive read the Convenor's report.
The Foot and Mouth restrictions continue to relax and things are heading back to some type of normality. Live sheep sales are starting to resume with Forfar market holding their first sale of hoggets today. This should help to find the real price of the different weight and categories of sheep. Cattle are holding prices with sheep dropping back slightly. Hides are around £27.00 for cattle with sheepskins about £3. Jamie referred to the victory with Forrest over the disposal of waste from slaughterhouses with a reduction of £5 per ton. This will not be enough to reduce killing charges, but it is a step in the right direction.

The Chief Executive then referred to the Industry Up-date at the QMS Board, which he had attended on 8 February. The report circulated highlighted the concern regarding the shortage of supplies and the UK forecast showed a drop of 12% in 2001 and 8% in 2002. Douglas stated that he raised this because of the mid-term reviews which are carried out in the livestock sector, which we probably should make noises about. This is because the European subsidies are acting to discourage beef production as the Europeans see a surplus of beef. At the same time we have suggestions that there is insufficient quality beef coming through. This appears so within the Specially Select Scotch scheme, and it would seem as if the wrong message is coming through. For this reason we should be making our opinions heard at the appropriate places.

Hamish Deans remarked that FMD had wiped out a number of beasts. They are trying to bridge the deficit by encouraging the dairy breed and in another year's time we could have a better market. Hamish added that we should be lobbying the Scottish Office with regard to getting the suckler herds back to what they were pre-FMD. The meeting agreed to take this forward.

LEGISLATION:
The Chief Executive commenced his report by stating that the long awaited meeting with David Crawley at SEERAD was arranged for 28 February and the four representatives to attend this required to be agreed. The meeting agreed these should be President MacKenzie, the Chief Executive, Wilson Ferguson, John Chapman or Jamie Chapman. Subjects to be discussed included Hygiene Training. Farmers Markets, Planning Permission and Out of Town Planning, Uniformity of Regulations, Butcher Licensing, Quality Meat Scotland and Livestock matters.

IRIS Seminar – (Improving Regulation in Scotland) The Chief Executive reported that we have been asked to send a representative to this seminar. In the past Sheila Ferguson has attended on our behalf, but she would prefer not to go if someone else could attend. The meeting to be held in Glasgow on 26 February in the morning. Douglas added that the event is one we should attend. The matter was left with the Chief Executive to progress.

Cameron Food Safety Ltd – The Chief Executive reported that he had written to the Food Standards Agency, incorporating a letter from David Cameron, asking them to clarify the situation regarding bactericidal detergents properties. Members would be kept informed of the response.

Douglas stated that David Cameron has asked him to address a REHIS Seminar in Aberdeen in March. On an previous occasion Sandy Crombie had undertaken this on our behalf.

Beef Labelling - The Chief Executive stated that this letter had not come directly to the Federation but had gone to the Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers, and Alan Stevenson had copied the letter to him. The letter referred to compliance with the Regulations on Beef Labelling at retail level, which was a concern with informal inspection indicating that all was not well. Although the department had provided advice on the matter and had produced and issued a beef labelling guide.

The responsibility for enforcement was a matter for Environmental Health Officers reporting to the Food Standards Agency. They are currently in the process of consulting the FSA with a view to writing individual EHOs reminding them of the regulations. The difficulty was with the Scotch label and the importance of effective monitoring. Hopefully this Directive will lead to more effective monitoring in future. This confirmed that anyone who was of the opinion that beef labelling was going on to the "back burner" is wrong.

Hamsh Deans suggested that Douglas write back to the writer stating that future correspondence should be sent directly to The Chief Executive, SFMTA at this address.

Hamish Deans remarked that the main fact of beef labelling was to determine the imported meat coming into the country and the NFU are making the point that this has not been highlighted. Information of which farm the meat has come from is gathered but yet there is no information on imported meat coming in and going into pies, burgers etc. Hamish was of the opinion that the government has tackled it in the wrong way.

On the 18 February Lamb traceability comes in and this is going to be difficult for Abattoirs as the label will require to go to the wholesaler stating where the animal has come from. Now allowed four movements with 20 days between each movement and all this requires to be stated by the Abattoir.

Scottish Food Advisory Committee – The Chief Executive stated that he had attended this meeting in Oban on 6 February. A report of the meeting was circulated with the Agenda, which showed the subjects the Scottish Food Advisory Committee covered. The discussion on Farmers Markets was the main attraction to encourage the Chief Executive to attend and this will be discussed later.

Food Hygiene Awareness Campaign – Starts 11 February, the focus initially is on caterers, but will move to consumers.

The Curry Report – This is a multi-agency group formed to make a Scottish response to Farming and Food – a sustainable future. The group of 15 includes SFMTA member Mike Gibson.

E-Coli Task Force – So far no actions have been taken and Professor Pennington and Professor Reilly are pushing on this especially as scout and guide camps will be planned soon.

Mycobacterium Bovis – There is some concern about infected cattle entering the food chain. The Scottish figures reflected very badly but this may be due to the Scottish figures being more closely scrutinised than in the south.

BSE in Sheep – a Report is due on at the end of March for public consultation.

Licensing of all Food Premises was one of the facts taken in the question session at the end. Although they did not come to any conclusion on the Licensing of all Food Premises they did put a wide focus on HACCP and throughout the discussion butchers were reported as being very good on the implementation of HACCP. A presentation of Whitbread's HACCP implementation in their businesses.
Their businesses could be anything from a Marriott Hotel to a Leisure complex and obviously their difficulty was that each of the establishments were independent and would do their own thing. Very much like our situation with butchers. The Whitbread solution sounded very much like a "cook-book" style of addressing the problem, with one manual that was sent out to all their businesses. It included audits and they appeared to be doing the job properly, but it sounded as if a template could suffice. Douglas asked this question and intimated that if this was so then it could also be the case for butchers, but the suggestion was that a template would not do for caterers. In Douglas's opinion it is wise to keep a watchful brief on the SFA.

Certification in schools for Food Hygiene training is getting big support from them and this is encouraging.

The main thrust of the meeting was Farmers' Markets, and the Chief Executive felt it was important today to get the Executive's opinions on Farmers Markets and our decisions on what we should do about them

President MacKenzie together with the President of Paisley United Fleshers, Drew McKenzie, went to a Farmers Market in Paisley at the end of January. A review of Farmers Markets was called, and we were possibly the instigators of this. The Food Standards Agency visited the markets asking questions of stallholders, industry organisations and the public. They found that standards generally were high, with only a few small improvements needed. Douglas felt the report indicated a drift of support for Farmers' Markets

One of the recommendations made in the report referred to the need for measures to ensure uniformity by Enforcement Officers. Another suggested hygiene training for all stallholders and their staff, using the outlets selling the same goods as a benchmark.

Ann Campbell, one of the committee, commented that Farmers' markets are rapidly developing and are a distinctive part of the food retail industry. Emphasis on local produce, which she believes should be encouraged.

There was a suggestion that licensing of Farmers' Markets should come under the same regulations as those for Fruit Machines, Tattooists and Sex Shops! Douglas then read the six recommendations within the Report, which covered most of what had been discussed earlier.

He also referred to a consultation letter containing six questions on food safety at farmers' markets which was sent to 30 organisations in September last year. The report lists the comments of organisations which had responded. The Report went into the findings of the market research which identified the issues affecting stallholders and consumers attending the markets and the role of the local authority enforcement officers and to assess consumer perceptions of the food safety issues. 60% of consumers stated they were not at all concerned about food safety at Farmers' Markets. Only a small percentage of stallholders claimed to have difficulties with regulations regarding the sale of meat. The main concern was sourcing a local abattoir or cutting plant to prepare the meat after slaughter.

Douglas stated that one of the problems he noticed was with regard to labelling. Farmers were promoting meat as having come from their farms and as we know this requires verification with beef labelling. Food sold at the markets was very wide and varied and certainly offered interest for the public.

Discussion ensued with the various points being made in relation to local situations and the need to ensure that butchers do not get the job of cutting for markets. It was also agreed that the Federation do not offer advice on labelling, storage etc.
Douglas's conclusion was that Farmer's Markets have public and government support, Local Enterprise Companies and Town Centre Management are willing to promote them and even the SFAC is willing to endorse them by interpreting the survey to meet the agenda.
In Inverclyde we have the first Local Authority to recognise that by bringing in all these traders from outside is taking money out of the local economy. This he felt may be one way the Federation should attack the issue.
The meeting agreed that we should lobby to stop financial subsidies for farmers markets, ensure regulations are upheld and push to ensure they pay for the use of the services.

LABOUR CONDITIONS: Convenor David Jarron stated that the Chief Executive has approached USDAW. but to date there was no reply. Douglas remarked that as the rate of inflation in January was around 2.6% he had intimated settling at 2%.

PROMOTIONS: Convenor Cheryl Murdoch reported from the meeting held earlier that day. As the convenor had been unable to atend the QMS Meeting held on 6 February the Chief Executive would report. To-day's meeting had been mainly positive with the committee focussing on the development of an identifiable logo for the independent butcher for Specially Select Scotch. It was important that we disassociate ourselves from supermarkets and that we promote ourselves as quality specialists. Cheryl remarked that a meeting has been arranged with Maggie Mitchell and Malcolm Todd on 13th March to discuss our aspirations in relation to promotional support. Maggie Mitchell has come up with something for the graphics for a Logo. This will be for the independent butcher, whether they subscribe to Special Select or not. The possibility of promoting the Diamond Award winners.
We feel that these could be a marketable product. If we knew in advance who the winners were we could have the material etc ready.

We need to identify the difference between the Specially Select Scotch scheme and the promotions that the Federation membership will receive. The "Cut Above The Rest" slogan will be generic. We want to know what added value there is for prescribing to the Specially Select scheme and this will be discussed on the 13th March. We are not looking for competitions etc. as we will use our own budget for this. In conclusion Cheryl stated much depended upon the outcome of the meeting on 13 March.

The Chief Executive then circulated the conclusion report of the meeting held on 6 February. He showed drafts of the strap line on the proposed Logo. What was coming through very strongly in the discussions are the words “independent butcher” and this is what people want to see. The idea is to put the “independent butcher” along with the Scotch Meat Logo and for those who are not promoting Scotch Meat, they would get a simple “independent butcher” logo. Douglas and Duncan displayed both Logos and Duncan asked the members for their opinions and reminded the members that the supermarkets will have the “Specially Select Meat” and the meeting agreed that the strap line should totally encompass the Specially Select Logo.

QUALITY MEAT SCOTLAND:
The Chief Executive reported from his attendance at a Borad Meeting on 8 February, the Report from which was circulated. The main thrust of the meeting was on page 3, under Industry Update, QMS/MLC Structure and that they have set up a working group with SEERAD, members of which consisted of representatives from SAMW and NFU Scotland. He commented that Wales will have an ‘MLC Wales’ as from 1st April, it is expected to come out of this consultation that duplication will be avoided and that nothing would be lost because of the change.

Douglas then spoke of the 90 day rule and that this can only be enforced through Specially Select Scotch. He added that SSS are exploring the possibilities of extending this to 180 days. Red Tractor Scheme – Douglas stated that this appears to have wide recognition and will therefore continue to be approved.

The Chief Executive then reported from a meeting of the **Guild of Q** held on 23 January. At this meeting the Guild were more positive about their future as MLC had underwritten their budget, had paid of their debts and have given them funding for one year. Because of devolution in Wales and Scotland they do not know whether MLC will support the Guild in future. Despite concerns, but for this year membership should remain worthwhile. However, because of the funding situation it is doubtful if there is a future beyond this. The current membership is 250 with 46 members in Scotland.

MLC – FINANCIAL LIAISON COMMITTEE:
A report received from George Jarron, who had attended a meeting on 24 January. George reported on Signet, which is a group set up my MLC to be involved in the breeding side, has had another difficult year. The partnership of MLC 51% and SAC 49% will probably be separated or dissolved. Other points to note:-

- MLC – Generally has survived a very difficult year, mainly due to taking advantage of Foot and Mouth, by putting staff into the field. Income of about £1,250,000 was earned this way.
- MLC staff has been trimmed where necessary and the use of temporary staff has been curtailed.
- Promotions – Pressure from Wales to handle their own Promotion Spend has opened up the opportunity for Scotland and England to push for control of their own Promotion money control.
- MLC Commercial Services had an improved year – more business, ie Hire of Rooms for Meetings, Functions etc. May create a Tax Problem. Being monitored.
- Report – MLC seem to have run their business reasonably well, considering the past year. George’s thoughts were that the pressure from the 3 species groups to have more individual control would not work well for our side of the industry.

The next Financial Liaison Meeting would be held in November 2002.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS :
Graham Murdoch referred to the meeting to be held with SEERAD on 23 February and asked if Parking Restrictions in Town could be discussed and to seek sympathy for our members.

David Jarron mentioned that Dundee Butchers Annual Dinner Dance would be held on 2nd March to which everyone was welcome to attend. The next meeting was agreed for Wednesday 13 March, and the Meeting closed at 17.25 with a vote of thanks to the Chair.