

MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD WITHIN 8/10 NEEDLESS ROAD PERTH, ON WEDNESDAY 8 JANUARY 2003

PRESENT:

Mark Barnett	President (Chair)
Duncan MacKenzie	Past President
Douglas Scott	Chief Executive
Moira Brady	Secretary

Plus 8 Executive and Ordinary members as detailed below:

Roy Baird, Jamie Chapman, Hamish Deans, Jim Hastie, David Jarron, David G Lindsay, Arthur Matthew and Steven Sherriff.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Robert Baillie, John Chapman, Stuart Christie, Wilson Ferguson, Gilbert Grossett, George Jarron, Murray Lauchlan, George Lees, Adam McLay and Graham Murdoch.

MINUTE: The Minute of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 13 November 2002, was approved by Jamie Chapman and seconded by David Lindsay following an amendment to Page 8 under Q Guild. Line 3 to read "subscriptions had been raised to £10 per week from £400 to £500 per member".

MATTERS ARISING: The Chief Executive referred to page two of the Minute under the item Bell & Co. Auditors provision payment. This referred to sum of £40,000 reported on page three as the sum put aside to meet output related bonuses for trainees on achievement of SVQs. This sum was an over provision and the bonus is now no longer paid out. In order to reduce the account in as fair a way as possible, the Finance Committee had agreed that this money should be used to finance visits by the Food Training Services assessors to candidates undertaking the Federation Diploma, but who have already completed their SVQ qualification. This will help to fastrac people through and give us the opportunity of getting publicity to encourage more to come on to the Diploma programme. Douglas added that any movements in this account will be monitored by the Finance Committee and reported in the Annual Accounts.

Hamish Deans referred to page five and the comment by David Lindsay for something more tangible for members' windows and he asked the Chief Executive for progress on this.

Douglas replied that his understanding of this was that he would look at something bigger than the Federation sticker, perhaps a logo in a much larger size. If this would meet the requirements Douglas would have information for the next meeting. Hamish felt it was important to follow up, especially when you look at the list of non members, and realise how valuable it is to produce something tangible for members.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT: Douglas opened his report with a feedback from the World Scotch Pie Competition held in Glasgow on 14 November. Douglas was a judge at the competition and found it interesting to see how the Bakers Association managed the event in comparison with our own. He felt there was room for improvement. However, the occasion did give him the chance to note points of benefit to our members when they enter next year's competition, which will be held in Perth on 13 November 2003. The World Champion was McLeans Bakery, Forres. Butchers who received silver awards were Jacks in Stranraer and RT Stuart, Buckhaven and a number of butchers received bronze awards.

BBC GRASSROOTS: The Chief Executive then reported on BBC Grassroots which he attended in Edinburgh on 18 November. He had expected this to be an interview on what the Federation was about, but this did not happen. Douglas stopped the interview on three occasions to change the

direction of the questioning. He was relieved to hear that members who heard the programme considered that some positive messages on training had come out of the interview.

DEFINITION OF MEAT SEMINAR: This was a meeting with Michael Fogden of MLC to obtain more information for the QUID Regulations. It was held in this office on 20 November and was an open invitation to members to attend. More information regarding QUID will be given later in the Agenda.

SCOTTISH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE: This meeting was held in Inverurie on 21 November at this meeting Douglas had expected to be given information on the Review of Butcher Licensing but this did not happen. However, a Hygiene video, which would go out to caterers, was shown and Douglas felt it would be good to obtain a copy of this for our use. Their budget had been discussed and they highlighted how much they would be supporting Local Authorities and how HACCP was going to be high on their agenda. The meeting itself was not particularly good from the meat industry viewpoint, but this is unusual.

FARMERS' MARKET APEAL: On the request of Glasgow Association, we had put in an objection to a Farmers Market planned for Clarkston. On the 27th November the Chief Executive attended and spoke at the Appeal Meeting, as did Glasgow Association's representative Adam Dalgleish. However, the plan for the Market was passed for a year and it would be monitored during that time.

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY (S) MEETING: This meeting was held in Edinburgh on 27 November and the Chief Executive travelled to it directly from the Farmers Market Appeal. Douglas reported that this was an Organisational Review and that they had taken on board the views on how we interact with them. It was noted that we appear to have a better contact with them than other organisations in Scotland. This would include the National Farmers Union, The Association of Meat Wholesalers, Scottish Food & Drink Federation, and The Scottish Wholesale Grocers. This augurs well for us and they took on board various priorities, which were noted on the yellow paper circulated with the Minute.

KERRY LUCAS: On 28 November the Chief Executive had a visit from Danny Upton, Trade Development Manager from Kerry Lucas, who are a Corporate Member of this Federation. The company want to be involved in Regional Meetings and promotional activities. Douglas remarked that their materials looked very good.

CAREERS SCOTLAND: This meeting was attended by Moira and Douglas, in this office on 3 December. Moira will report on this later in the agenda.

ST ANDREW'S ABATTOIR AGM: This meeting was held in St Andrews on 3 December and, as the Federation have shares in this company Douglas attended the AGM. The meeting had been a useful place to debate the review of the 30 month rule. The views formed part of SFMTA's submission to FSA regarding this.

SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE TAYSIDE - Investors in People: Again, Moira and Douglas attended this meeting on 8 December within this office. SFMTA's Review Audit for IIP will be conducted on 27 January and the meeting was discussing the preparation for this.

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY (S) REVIEW: This meeting was held on 10 December in Aberdeen to receive the Wheelock report into the effectiveness of Butchers Licencing in Scotland. Douglas commented that he would cover this in more detail later in the agenda.

QMS BOARD MEETING: Held at Ingliston on 13 December, This will also be reported later.

ASSOCIATE CRAFT BUTCHERS OF IRELAND: Douglas, accompanied by Moira visited Dublin on 18 and 19 December. This meeting was arranged following the Federation's AGM, when their Chief Executive, Pat Brady, met with Douglas, Moira and SFMTA's main Office Bearers. Following which, the Irish association quoted for Moira and Douglas to visit Dublin on a consultancy basis to

give them advice on setting up and implementing training on a similar basis to the SVQ system. Douglas circulated a report of the visit to the members, together with some of the Irish Association's materials, all of which were very good. He concluded the report by stating that the Irish association appeared to be able to access finance support from just about everywhere to help them with their promotional materials and events.

Duncan MacKenzie asked if there was any way in which the Federation could access European funding. Moira Brady replied that ESF money was available for various types of activities, but it was a very time consuming task applying for this. In many industries they have specialists doing this work for them and this could be of value to SFMTA on a no win no fee basis.

FINANCE REPORT: The Chief Executive reported from the meeting held earlier today where the committee considered the first quarter of the financial year Accounts to the end of November. On Membership Services, the AGM spend was much higher than expected and this had caused the accounts to be behind budget. However the Chief Executive was fairly positive that the current deficit would turn to a slight profit by the end of the financial year.

On Food Training Services a surplus has shown over the past three months and this is all very positive. The forecast figure for the end of December is better than budget and the prognosis for the end of the year is still looking at a 4% surplus for the year.

The committee had looked at the Interest Rates generated from the accounts and they have made a recommendation to put a sum on money into a 90 day call account. The Chief Executive will look into this over the next few weeks and have a report for the next Finance Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP: In the absence of a new Convenor President Mark Barnett reported. He commented that subscriptions are coming in fairly briskly at the moment.

AGM: Mark felt that it would be valuable to have the Executive Committee's assessment of the AGM and ideas of how to encourage members to become involved. He was of the opinion that this year's event had gone over very well and the Saturday evening entertainment appeared to be enjoyed by those who had attended. Insufficient members had come along though and this had made the event costly to SFMTA.

Mark wished to know whether the Executive felt we should continue to hold an AGM of this nature or should we change the format to something which may appear more attractive? A discussion followed with various opinions being submitted, but by the end of the debate it was felt we should continue to hold the AGM in a similar format to the current arrangement.

Appointment of Convenors: President Mark referred to various vacancies for Committee Convenors and stated that it was important to get the right people into these positions. He also remarked on the importance of encouraging a younger representation at the Executive Meetings.

Past President David Jarron agreed to continue as Labour Conditions Convenor and Past President Duncan MacKenzie took over the vacant Promotions Convenor's post. At this stage President Mark welcomed Steven Sherriff from the Lanarkshire Association to his first meeting and remarked that he hoped Steven would find the meeting beneficial and would continue to attend.

Mark encouraged members of the Executive to invite someone from their Association to meetings. Hamish Deans replied that it would be a good idea for the President to send a personal invitation to selected members and for this to be followed up by a phone call from the Chief Executive to give added encouragement.

The Chief Executive referred to last month's meeting when he had circulated lists of prospective members and had asked Executive members to go through the lists and remove any shops no longer trading. To-day an updated list, now 15 pages, has been circulated. He added that members would note some well known shops on this list and also some closely associated with

SFMTA, Past Presidents etc. The Chief Executive will now send out letters to the shops on the list, and ask them to complete a form and return it free post to this office when an Information Pack would be sent out.

Douglas also suggested that Bruce McCall could phone each of these people by area. This phone call could be combined with an information call regarding the Federation Diploma. A report of the result of the action will be given at the next meeting. It was also noted that we require to improve the profile of SFMTA and its activities to make the Federation an attractive association which encouraged all trading butchers to be members of.

Discussion arose regarding an application from a Farmers Market on the Isle of North Uist to become a member of SFMTA. It was agreed that if the application was from a butcher's establishment and not the Market in general, then we should encourage the membership. It was important to note that the Market Association itself could not become a member and receive the Federation Logo for display, but a butcher's shop preparing the meat for the market was a meat trader and should be given consideration.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Moira Brady, Training & Development Manager opened the report by giving up to date statistics on Skillseeker income and numbers.

Skillseekers continue to operate on a positive financial outcome. The November claim of just over £20,000 again exceeded the Budget figure. This has been the pattern since the commencement of the Financial Year in September.

The number of trainees registered in total is 130 from the Independent Butcher Sector, 60 of whom are on The Modern Apprenticeship Programme. The number of trainees registered from Meat Plants is 101, which includes 80 from Scotbeef.

REVIEW OF SVQ Level 2

Meat Training Council is undertaking a review of the current Level 2 S/NVQs. To date there had been two Working Technical Group Meetings, neither of which were SFMTA invited to or aware of. The first notice we had was when Moira personally received an invitation to attend a Steering Group Meeting to receive the recommendations from this Technical Group.

Moira stated that she immediately requested a copy of the Notes and recommendations from the Technical Group and together with Douglas and the two assessors, poured over them. Needless to say they took them apart as the recommendations did not meet the needs of the Independent Butcher Sector and were written to fit in with Meat Plant Operations and Supermarkets.

Prior to Moira's attendance at the meeting on 14 December she faxed MTC a copy of the recommendations drawn together by the team from within SFMTA and asked that these be taken into the re-shape of the qualification.

On her attendance at the meeting she was pleased to note that the Scottish independent's views had been taken seriously. Support for our proposed changes was also received from within the meeting from an English company who agreed that there was a total lack of Craft Skills within the VQs.

The outcome is that a further meeting of the Technical Group will be called this month and SFMTA now have a representative on the group.

A further meeting will also be held of the Steering Group. This completed the T & D report.

LIVESTOCK REPORT: Convenor Jamie Chapman opened his report with information regarding the 30 month Rule. Jamie stated there had been a meeting in London on 6th December to discuss the options on how to progress the 30 month Rule. Following discussion with some of our members, and Hamish McCall from the Auctioneers, the livestock committee felt the best solution was to pick a date after which all cattle born would be free to be killed for human consumption. It was felt by doing this, it allowed a month improvement every month and there would be no possible bad press every time a new date was set.

Hides and skins are currently running at about £32.50 for cattle and £3.30 for sheepskins.

Supply of good quality stock was readily available leading into the festive period, with prices rising steadily from the winter fair onwards. The quality of stock on offer at the Christmas shows had been reported as “superb” and this was reflected in the prices paid by butchers for these top quality animals. Farmers, Jamie had spoken with, were very encouraged by the trade.

No progress has been made in reduction of the SRM charges at abattoirs, or the recognition of a medium size plant in Scotland, but John Black of Forrests informed Jamie that charges down south were rising.

QMS: Jamie remarked that last year, when we wanted a SMILG meeting to hear everyone’s views on the PGI change, the NFU refused to convene the meeting if QMS was on the agenda. Unfortunately the secretary of the auctioneers “tipped” them off that we intended to raise the subject under “Any Other Competent Business” and the meeting therefore did not take place. Jamie felt that did not say much for democracy within the NFUS. The NFUS representative on QMS (Jim Walker) has now become Chairman of QMS.

Jamie remarked that he believed that the members of the Wholesalers Association were opposed to any changes and that their representative voted against his members’ wishes. In private conversation Jamie found it difficult to find one wholesaler who agrees. It is also the case that many farmers who fatten cattle are also against it. Jamie also stated that it would be interesting in 12 months from now to see what percentage of the total income has been taken up on salaries, expenses, travelling and committee meetings and he suggested that QMS had just created an expensive “talking shop”! (Time will tell!)

From a Federation position we do not want to alienate our border members, many of whom buy at St Boswells market, where a considerable percentage of the cattle will come from south of the border. (Certainly more than 7%).

If bull beef is to qualify Jamie wondered if QMS would insist that it is marked differently from clean beef. If the fore legs from Holstein cattle are boned and boxed will this be declared on the labelling?

The answer to these questions may be in the specifications. The original specifications were not designed with butchers who buy live in mind and were only for wholesalers, Jamie commented. How short sighted, or does QMS see the future without auction markets and choices for the butchers. These would appear to be the views of the chairman Jim Walker and of the president of the wholesalers. Jamie wondered who would pay for the inspection and implementation of the specifications. The boning plants or the abattoirs? Or perhaps the butchers!

Jamie concluded his report by commenting, should the abattoirs controlled by the private trade choose not to join the scheme, are they prepared to go to Court to represent a butcher who has bought a beast born, raised and slaughtered in Scotland (at a non scheme plant) and has called it Scotch beef?

Hamish Deans commented that there was some very radical thinking in the report, but it was certainly consistent with the thoughts of many people. We do feel that the trade is being led by the

nose he said. With regard to the meeting with the farmers the time to resolve this would be when the new NFUS President is in office.

Hamish then referred to the item in the newsletter mentioning that Wishaw is no longer a member of the Special Select Scheme. He was concerned about this as the last newsletter from QMS gave details of Rory Duff, from Wishaw Abattoir having been appointed to the Technical Committee who will oversee the standard for Special Select. Douglas Scott was asked to take this point up at the next QMS meeting.

Douglas spoke of the need for Abattoirs to give information to butchers as required for Beef Labelling and he questioned how this could be done. Under the QMS proposed scheme beef cannot be called Scotch unless it is bought from an Approved Scheme abattoir. Born, raised and slaughtered in Scotland is not enough for QMS it must also be bought from an Approved establishment. Hamish Deans added that the scheme also includes the use of Approved hauliers.

The Chief Executive then asked the members if they wish the Federation to oppose part of or all of the PGI application. Hamish replied that he was opposed to anything that restricts qualification to sell Scotch Beef and Lamb to those who are members of a scheme.

David Lindsay spoke of 'Approved Slaughterhouses', he felt that it was not being made clear that what we are talking about is a QMS Approved establishment who are paying QMS for this. All Abattoirs are approved by the Vets and EHOs and there should be no confusing of the two. Hamish agreed that there is not a more regulated industry than that of slaughter abattoirs.

Stephen Sherriff spoke of his experience where he has been involved with discussions. Stephen wrote to QMS and pointed out where the scheme was flawed but did not receive an answer to his letter.

Discussion ensued on Promotion money and the Levy and it was suggested that we go to QMS and say this is what we wish to promote. The difficulty is if the title Special Select is dropped and referred only as Scotch, then this will be Scotch from the approved scheme. Hamish Deans suggested that we ask to promote quality beef, not Scotch and this could be a way around the problem.

It was agreed to inform QMS that SFMTA were opposed to the assurance conditions being added to the PGI application.

LEGISLATION REPORT: The Chief Executive reported on the outcome of the QUID Seminar held at the end of November with Michael Fogden, MLC's legal adviser. The seminar was well attended and a power-point presentation given to the members. Anyone wishing copies of this can have one if they apply. Following the seminar, information was included in the Federation's Newsletter which invited members to have a trial of their products and how they would be reported under the new legislation. To-date only one butcher has returned his form. The new legislation was implemented on January 1st but will not be enforced until June this year. Douglas felt it would be useful if we had a date when the butcher would do the change over, as it will cover the whole meat industry it could be useful to have the multiples making the changeover first.

Douglas then referred to the pink sheet circulated which was the Final Report regarding the Evaluation of Butcher Licensing by Professor Verner Wheelock.

Douglas stated that FSA's response to the conclusions of the report was disappointing. The media had picked up their comment that lessons needed to be learned but really in the report it was the FSA and EHOs who had to learn the lessons. Guidelines for Licensing, which we had in 2001, are now just going out in a consultation paper, but it is uncertain who is looking at them. There is also concern about which road to go down for licensing. Douglas felt that we should be asking for more clarity as the inconsistency is dreadful.

Hamish Deans felt it was crucial to have a clearer definition, as some members will still wish to go down the separation route. We have until mid February to respond and it would be important for the Federation to have members' points to take forward by that date.

Douglas referred to a letter from South Lanarkshire Council, inviting a representative to attend a Local Planning meeting. Stephen Sherriff agreed to attend on behalf of SFMTA.

LABOUR CONDITIONS: David Jarron stated there was nothing to report.

The Chief Executive mentioned that the Master Bakers' Newsletter reported holding a seminar on implementing the Law. Douglas had replied to them suggesting that we make this a combined event.

REVIEW OF WAGE STRUCTURE: David Jarron felt we really required to look at this to make the industry structure more realistic by moving away from minimum guidelines. Douglas felt it would be important to debate this as a number of butchers stick very much to the minimum guidelines.

Hamish Deans was of the opinion that we should not remove the option. If a butcher wishes to pay more he is free to do so. If we wish to promote the industry to young people we should be looking beyond just wages. Mark Barnett commented that the biggest barrier to recruitment was Saturday working!

PROMOTIONS: The report was presented by the new Convenor Duncan MacKenzie, who informed the meeting that the Haggis Poster and a Revised leaflet had now been circulated to members.

Jamie Chapman enquired if under QUID was Haggis a meat product? The Chief Executive replied that he would clarify this for Jamie.

Duncan added that the Posters and recipes were also circulated for the Burns Truffles Promotion. Duncan commented on an in shop promotion he held last year, when he invited customers to recite a verse of Burns to win a free Haggis. This had gone over very well and he felt others may wish to think about doing something of a similar type.

QMS BOARD MEETING: The Chief Executive reported from the Board Meeting held on 13 December. The Notes of the Meeting were circulated on the Blue Paper attached to the Agenda. Douglas commented that QMS were contemplating the employment of Richard Sneddon of MLC to assist with industry development activities for farmers, processors and butchers.

Millers of Grantown on Spey had been withdrawn from the SSS scheme. One other processor was under investigation, this raised a long discussion on whose responsibility it is to put companies out of the scheme.

Communication Strategy a consultant had looked at this and had made recommendations. QMS staff had to know what they are selling and work with businesses for their benefit and development. Stuart Ashworth and Louise Welsh had been appointed to take on communications.

Jamie Chapman asked about the statement "quality was described as fit for the purpose" and wished to know who decides on what this is. Discussion ensued on this point. Douglas felt that at the next meeting, arranged for 31 January, it is possible to have answers. It was noted that Jim Walker takes over in April.

STEAK PIE EVALUATION: The Chief Executive reported that the Steak Pie Forms have gone out and there has been a positive feedback to the competition. Entries are expected to be good.

RESPONSE TO MLC CATERERS CODE OF CONDUCT: The Green sheet attached to the Agenda detailed the response sent to MLC. This referred to labelling of the origin of meat on the menu. Butchers supplying caterers would need to make declarations, which are rather difficult to back up. The problem would be, who would police it? However, it is recognised this is only a Code of Conduct with no enforcement, but nevertheless it requires answers.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS: David Jarron spoke of MLC's Finance Liaison Committee, on which George Jarron is SFMTA's representative. With the new set up of QMS George was questioning whether it was worth making a visit to London to attend this meeting.

Hamish Deans felt possibly because of QMS, the Finance Liaison was not such a priority but it could be beneficial to continue to receive the papers and Minutes of the Meeting.

David Jarron then mentioned that Jim Ewing was to retire from MTC's main Board and he wondered if the Training Department was aware of this information.

Maira replied that she was due to attend MTC's AGM at the beginning of February but had not been aware of Jim's imminent retirement. She felt it was important that SFMTA have a nominee identified to put forward at the AGM.

It was agreed that Maira make enquiries to confirm the situation and also if relevant put forward Duncan MacKenzie as the nominee.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.45pm with a vote of thanks to the Chair.