

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Sandra Giddy reported.

You will see from the attached report that we have 442 trainees presently registered with us. 273 of these trainees are working towards Modern Apprenticeships which include the Craftsman Certificate and are funded entirely through Skills Development Scotland.

There are a further 112 trainees who are working towards their Craftsman Certificates having previously completed SVQ level 2 or 3 and these are funded through our ESF projects.

We still have 38 registered in Northern Ireland. There are 3 Apprentices in England through our partnership with Darlington College and 4 trainees registered through our involvement with Falkirk Employment Training Unit. Attendees of the many courses arranged through SMT have amounted to 236 over the year since January 2010.

SDS CONTRACT: The contract tendering process was completed and submitted well within the deadline of 19th January 2011 and I have bid for the following: 118 places for the level 2 MA and 17 places for the level 3 MA in the 16 – 19 year age group, 200 places for the level 2 MA and 23 places for the level 3 MA in the over 20's age group. I have provided evidence of employer demand which justifies the increased numbers in the bid. I have also completed the contingent liability exercise which accounts for the amounts of funding carried forward into the new contract for those trainees still in training on 31st March 2011. The announcement of the Government commitment to providing funding for 25,000 Modern Apprenticeships in 2011 is heartening and I am hopeful that I will be able to report a satisfactory contract award at the next executive meeting.

Under our current contract, we have successfully filled all of our allocated 20+ trainee places, but still have availability in the 16 – 19yr age group. Our Assessors are working hard to ensure that as much progress as is possible is made with the existing trainees in order that we are able to draw down as much as possible of the remaining monies available in the current contract. This does mean that Assessors will be asking for access to trainees during what we know is still a busy time for you all.

NORTHERN IRELAND: The Training providers in Northern Ireland are in the same position as ourselves in that they are awaiting the results of their contract bids. Once these are announced, I may have some better news regarding our future in Northern Ireland.

ENGLAND – DARLINGTON COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP: We have 3 trainees remaining under the partnership agreement with Darlington College and these are all scheduled to complete their Apprenticeships by 24th March. At the present moment, due to the continuing uncertainty with the funding situation, Darlington College is not actively recruiting in the Food Sector.

FALKIRK EMPLOYMENT TRAINING UNIT PROJECT: The 4 remaining trainees who started on the pilot programme with Falkirk Council Employment Training Unit (ETU) continue to make good progress. 2 of these trainees have been offered full time employment in their butcher shop placements and will now work towards a level 2 MA. The other two continue to follow the level 1 SVQ route and we hope that they will be offered the same opportunity for employment as the others.

As I explained at the last meeting, following on the success of this project, there is an opportunity for Scottish Meat Training to be involved with an ongoing programme of work placement with a large food business based in Falkirk. Initially 12 young persons will be recruited and inducted onto a similar programme and Scottish /meat Training will deliver the Level 1 SVQ as part of this process. Where trainees on this and the original project are progressed into full time employment, Scottish Meat Training will deliver the Level 2 Modern Apprenticeship as a private contract.

MEAT SKILLS COMPETITION 2011: The closing date for this competition was 23rd February and we have 37 confirmed entries. The two categories are Young Butcher of the Year - under 22 (age at 8th May) and Butcher of the Year - over 22 (age at 8th May) The qualifying heats are now well

under way with the kind assistance of our judges Mr George Lees and Mr Stewart Dempsey. From the heats, the four finalists in each category will be invited to take part in the Meat Skills Final held at the Scottish Meat Trade Fair on Sunday 8th May in the Dewar Centre in Perth. Quality Meat Scotland has kindly agreed, once more, to sponsor the prize money and trophies.

INTERMEDIATE HACCP: An Intermediate HACCP course was held in Bridge of Allan on Tuesday 18th and Wednesday 19th January. The next scheduled course is to be held in Perth on 17th and 18th May and another in Dingwall the following week.

INTERMEDIATE HYGIENE COURSE: An Intermediate Hygiene course is taking place on each Tuesday in February in Dunfermline. The next scheduled course is to take place on Tuesdays in April in Fenwick and in Perth. There are places available for both of these courses, please contact our office for details.

PASTRY MAKING COURSE: This very well received interactive course has been held in two locations in February and is scheduled to be held in Inverness and Aberdeen in March. They were hosted by bakery expert, Mr Robert Ross.

CUSTOMER CARE TRAINING COURSE: Recently run in Stornoway another one day course hosted by David Nicol is scheduled to run in Bridge of Allan on 24th March. Places are still available.

EXTERNAL VERIFICATION VISITS: These are scheduled for 9th March in Scotland and 1st April for Northern Ireland. Although there has been very little activity in Northern Ireland since June 2010, the remaining trainees are still registered through the Awarding Body SQA/SFMTA and this fact has generated the need for an EV visit.

SQA SYSTEMS VERIFICATION VISIT: This took place on 3rd February and we have received a very favourable report which makes comment on our 'robust system'.

SDS COMPLIANCE VISIT: This took place on 26th January. We had a few minor non-compliances to close down, due in the main to the sudden increase in in-training numbers as a result of the SDS Incentive scheme in 2010. These have now been addressed and will be confirmed as closed down at our next audit in July.

NEW ASSESSOR: In order that we continue to service the existing and anticipated numbers of trainees in Scotland, we have employed Richard Brown, who joins our team of Assessors. He is at present undergoing an intensive training programme and is making good progress. I anticipate that he will be given his own training workload within the next few weeks.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Douglas Scott reported.

We have had an audit from HMRC which we had only two minor points from the three hour visit.

We had audit from ESF LUPS and Scottish Executive who overlook both HI and LUPS.

Money has been coming in but the ESF money does not appear on the accounts as it relates to income prior to September.

MEMBER SERVICES: we have billed for £85,275 and £11,500 for corporate members. Lots of this income is coming in.

We have trade fair receipts of in excess of £14,000 as all the stands are sold. Income is up as we have merchandising of the stand up butcher man. We are forecasting an income of £136K with cost of £98K plus £24.5K for trade fair, competition expenses etc we are looking at a gross profit of £13K.

SCOTTISH MEAT TRAINING: We are running at an income £400k on the year. The £236K from Skills Development Scotland, £100k from LUPs and £25k from H&I. We will have some income from seminars and pastry courses etc totally income from courses £10K.

Expenditure side Douglas was asked about the costs incurred from the NI assessor travelling to Scotland. We are hoping that if we get a contract back in Northern Ireland but if we were not to get a contract we would have to look at this. SQA registrations are healthy.

All in all there were no real complaints with the figures.

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Beaton Lindsay reported.

Membership renewals were sent out at the beginning of January. A reminder letter has been issued for renewal by 20th March. After this date a final letter will suggest services will be withdrawn at the end of March to unpaid members.

New Members

Robert Pringle, 2 shops in Hawick
Watson Family Butchers, Newburgh
S Mitchell & Son, South Queensferry and Kennoway

Lost Members

David Dale & Son Prestwick & Dalmellington
William Cranston, Glasgow – can't afford it this year.
Stewart Quality, Carnoustie has not renewed lease, Alan Kennedy has re-opened under James Ewart Ltd.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

These were reasonably well attended, there are a few new faces turning out but it does tend to be the usual attendees. That said all those attending found the evenings worth while. Attendances were as follows:-

St Boswells 18, Ayr 12, Queensferry 13, Inverness 11, Inverurie 11, Stepps 23, Dundee 18, Oban 9. The Castle Douglas meeting will be held on Wednesday 23rd March and the Northern Isles meetings later in the year.

POULTRY

Members have raised questions about access to Scottish poultry. We have sent out a questionnaire with the newsletter to establish a broad view on poultry supplies. Vion are interested to get feedback as they have only had ten complaints between December and January. They distribute to foodservice mainly through Halls, Failte Foods and IM Foods. Stuart Christie said he gets excellent service from John Vallance. Alan Kennedy is still using Poultry Direct but are okay.

TRADE FAIR

All 44 stands have been booked for the trade fair. We have agreed sponsorship for the Haggis competition with Hamlyns.

We will have demonstrations from ingredient suppliers – Raps, Dalziel and Lucas - in a dedicated area at one end of the hall. The Meat Skills competition will take place at the other end of the hall and. The Federation will occupy the Refreshment area with QMS.

Capital Cooling have agreed a sponsorship deal for the refrigerated cabinets which will in effect mean that the cost of the cabinets will be reduced from £2500 to £500.

LEGISLATION REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

MHS: We submitted a response to the consultation on the full cost recovery of meat hygiene service charges, we have had no comment back.

Jamie Chapman and Hamish Deans both went to a meeting with Douglas Scott on the Scottish Government expert forum. This looked at how to recover costs such as from FMD outbreak. John Cameron chaired the meeting. There was a need for cost sharing but it is also the whole of the rural economy which is affected.

After this meeting the three met Charles Milne Chairman FSA Scotland on full cost recovery. We concentrated on looking for a way to raise the level of which a small abattoir was described. We thought the meeting was worthwhile.

Remedial Action (RANDS): a paper was circulated with the agenda which is for comment for us to respond.

FSA UPDATING MEETING: This was for stakeholders, there were some concerns on packaged goods with nutritional labeling. If you use traffic light system it would need to be in colour.

FHIS: 17 of the 32 local authorities are in the system with another seven coming on board. The other authorities are not doing anything at present.

ECOLI 0157: We issued the booklet to all members with the newsletter. Douglas had a discussion with Gerry Fallon of East Ayrshire, at present he is not sure how to address this at present. He did feel it should be addressed in a consistent manner and through an educational manner. We feel all the authorities and chewing over its content at present.

Ecoli is more likely to be present in a butcher shop than in other establishments although the guidance is for all food premises. Beaton Lindsay said that there are only two cases and is it proportional to the threat. Ian Faulds said to be fair in the cases that have involved fatalities and children, it becomes very emotive when the press get it. Alan Kennedy feels we should be firing this back to Richard Lochhead and say we cannot bury our heads in the sand over we need to have a workable industry. Beaton Lindsay said if we fight against it and if there was another case we would come out of it badly. Duncan MacKenzie if this is taken forward it has to be across the board. Alan Kennedy said we need to draw parallels on what happens in butcher shops. The supermarket conveyor belt is a classic example of where things can go wrong. Ian Faulds said that there get out is that they will say that they are here to discuss your property not theirs.

Alan Kennedy said that aprons need to be clean to enter the designated clean area. He felt that this was entirely unworkable. Duncan Mackenzie said he was not able to get round this at butcher licensing so he stopped selling cold meats.

George Jarron said having separate areas is not the complete answer, with common sense and awareness of basic hygiene and consideration for your fellow worker.

Alan Kennedy said that it may be a problem with sides of beef coming through the front door of the premises.

Douglas Scott said there were problems behind the scenes where things are made and segregated. Beaton Lindsay said that the raw meat for the sausage rolls is not going in to the bakery. Douglas Scott said it will be important where they are stored when they are taken out of the oven up to that point they are raw product.

Douglas Scott felt that the local authorities wanted to some sort of consistent message. He felt that we need to put forward the points as an industry problem and not just a butcher problem and how we are going to address it.

Douglas said that we cannot defend someone who is handling cooked meat at 4:30 with a dirty apron. We need to look at the practicalities of it. Beaton Lindsay said that all food businesses need to all of it. George Jarron felt that designated staff was needed on cooked meats. Ian Faulds had previously taken the decision that it was not practical, the customer did not want items pre-

packed either from him as previously sold loose. Alan Kennedy wanted two or three people to sit down and go through every possible problem with the legislation and firing it back at the Food Standards Agency, local authority and other trade food authorities. Alan was very scared of this. Stuart Christie said we cannot win on this if they say that this can harm people by not doing this. Alan Kennedy felt that the public may be on our side if pub, bakers restaurants were going to close over this. George Lees said we have a lot of members which cooked meats is an essential part of the business. What we want to do is to find a way for them to continue to do it. Duncan MacKenzie suggested everyone put down half a dozen points and return to Douglas. Douglas Scott also wondered how they would treat pre-packed cooked meat.

LIVESTOCK REPORT: Alan Kennedy apologised that he did not have a report this month but he noted there was a marked drop of 8 to 10% on cattle at market. There is a slight drop on last year. George Jarron said that Morrisons were paying a lot of money for small lambs. Jamie Chapman said hides are £35 and skins £5.

George Jarron said we are really suffering with the quality of beef that is out there at the moment.

Stuart Christie commented on the very low prices which Lidl are selling their meat for and it is specially selected Scotch through Strathvale. Laurent said that the Strathvale comes from a number of places so the label should be checked by the number.

PROMOTIONS REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

NATIONAL BUTCHER WEEK: PR posters and vinyls have been sent out to all members with the March newsletter. The Federation will print butchers' own messages on to the posters free of charge in colour. The Pick and Mix idea have been taken on by at least one member

BPEX Bacon Poster. A two sided poster has been circulated and window sticker the recipes can be downloaded online.

MEAT TO GO 2011: over 100 entries have been received. The categories are Ready To Heat, Ready To Cook and Beefburger. The best beefburgers will be mystery shopped and judged at a central location. The other two categories will have Diamond Awards for Beef Lamb and Pork and the recipes will be purchased from them to share with members for £500.

THE SCOTCH PIE CLUB: A meeting was held to discuss the competition. The judging will take place on Wednesday 16th November at Carnegie College with the award lunch on Wednesday 5th January 2012.

QMS UPDATE: Laurent Vernet reported.

He said that QMS now has a butcher think tank, which has been a very worthwhile exercise. We already have a lamb promotion in place for the butchers and the promotion in relation to rugby in butcher shops has worked extremely well.

We had undertaken a project on foodservice. In the past when we reported on retail share of the market this did not always reflect the experience of the butcher. The share of meat retailed through the butcher has been decreasing over the last ten years. This does not mean the butcher is doing less business since a lot of the red meat sold is not going straight to the consumer. However, over the last five years sales of poultry have increased. The report on the food service should be available for the next meeting. Butchers are seeing an increase on online sales. He said that it does not matter which researcher we are using it is consistent.

Douglas asked if the figures include kitchen ready meat or marinade. Laurent said this is included in the increasing area but when we are reporting we are very much talking fresh meat. He said that the big boom for butchers had been poultry.

A large majority of butchers are doing some food service.

39% drop of meat sales drop in butcher in the UK in one year was a figure quoted at the last butcher think tank. Laurent Vernet said he would be delighted to come back next time with some statistics of where we are and what the trends are.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:

Jamie Chapman asked about how members will be treating the Royal Wedding on Friday 29th April. Beaton Lindsay said that contracts give 9 public holidays. George Jarron said are you brave enough not to give your staff an extra day. Stewart Dempsie said this is classed as a Royal Wedding and does not happen very often, you will find that butchers will not close because it is a Friday and give their staff a day in lieu. Duncan Mackenzie said his staff had expressed a view of little interest in the day.

Douglas Scott reported employment law seminar in Nairn will not take place but there is one on the 17th March in Falkirk.

St Andrew Abattoir AGM takes place on the 29th March, Douglas cannot attend. George Jarron commented that the abattoir would not sell unless it was at the right price.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 17th May 2011

The meeting was closed with a vote of thanks to the chair.