

**MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD WITHIN  
8/10 NEEDLESS ROAD PERTH, ON TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2012**

**PRESENT:** Billy McFarlane President  
Douglas Scott Chief Executive  
Sandra Giddy Training General Manager

Immediate Past President: Stuart Christie  
Vice President: Ian Faulds  
Junior Vice President: Beaton Lindsay  
Past Presidents: Duncan Mackenzie  
Honorary President: Roy Baird, Arthur Matthew  
Executive Members: Jack Meade, Stewart Dempsie, Neil Cameron

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Hamish Deans, Jamie Chapman, Alan Kennedy, Katherine Greer, Stuart Christie, John Chapman, Scott Jarron, Hugh Pender, James Pender, Jim Preston, Jack Broussine

**MINUTE OF PREVIOUS EXECUTIVE MEETING:** Minutes of the previous meeting held in January were approved by Duncan Mackenzie, seconded by Arthur Matthew

**MATTERS ARISING:** Ian Faulds asked if the former policeman SFMTA member had written us the promised article on security. Douglas said he would follow it up with Tom Courts.

PAGE 5 replaced word "Ian Faulds commented that he felt the NFU President Nigel Miller **spoke** very well at the SFMTA AGM."

The trip to Holland is underway with ten in the SFMTA party to visit shops who will be coming back tonight.

**PRESIDENTS REPORT:** Last Monday Billy McFarlane travelled to Inverness to meet Douglas and go on to visit Charlie Munro at Dingwall. They went on to look in on the other two members in Dingwall, Fraser Brothers and G Cockburn & Son who reported the same trend of one day it was busy the next it was not. Munros sells fish in their shop. Next they dropped in on Comfort Foods in Rosemarkie who were busy. The John M Munro shop in Fortrose was also doing fish. Billy visited MacDougall & Hastie in Inverness the next day.

Billy noted it was difficult to communicate at the regional meeting Inverness as it was in a room with other people there. Douglas said it had been a victim of its own success as the previous year there were 8 and he felt we did not need a separate room but when it came to the night this year 16 attended.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT:** Douglas Scott reported.

**RED MEAT STORY IN PRESS:** Douglas said that a story broke with the breakfast news linking red meat consumption with cancer. QMS took till 11:45 to respond to it by which time we had already been contacted by STV but significantly not contacted by any member. The results are based on the Harvard Medical School research QMS said it was done on observational research and not on controlled trials. The fact is that if you switch from red meat to white meat to fish it does not back up the trial either. FSA say that red meat is an important part of a balanced diet. The industry is trying to reduce the amount of fat in products but this research comes on the back of the Swedish report two months ago that was critical of processed meat consumption. The latest research is based on an American study and they eat twice as much meat as we do. Following the BBC Radio Scotland John Beattie Show Douglas had a call from Robertson Fine Foods who had heard Professor Lean say that sausages were made from sweepings from an abattoir floor. Stewart

Robertson immediately called the radio station to complain and Douglas urged everyone to do the same. Douglas felt the news would disappear out the newspaper in a couple of days and be forgotten. George Jarron felt we should hit them with something and felt we should push vegetables with our product. We were asked to go on the BBC and Alex Christie is doing that. George Jarron felt the QMS response was fairy tale and questioned whether any member of the public would swallow that and all they would take is meat is bad for you. There is no protection for the product at all. Beaton Lindsay said that across the counter the public say everything is bad for you. Duncan Mackenzie reminded everyone that this was an American study. Beaton Lindsay mention that a McDonalds Big Tasty meal had 1460 calories in it 60% of your daily recommended calorie intake. Ian Faulds felt it was a poor response from QMS. He felt that the public would want you to come back at Professor Lean's cheap shot comments. Beaton Lindsay suggested we invite him somewhere to see sausages being made. Douglas felt we could invite John Beattie to come and see. George Jarron felt we need to defend the private butcher. Ian Faulds felt we should send an email to John Beattie's researchers suggesting that the Scottish Craft Butchers feel Prof Lean comments are pretty insulting. Douglas agreed to draft a response.

**SAMW ANNUAL SEMINAR:** Scottish Government had a presentation on CAP reform Jim McLaren gave a QMS presentation. Brian Simpson highlighted there was not a lot of confidence in people producing beef cattle at the moment.

**NFU CONFERENCE:** Douglas circulated the report on their AGM which he had attended. CAP reform debate is ongoing.

**QMS MARKETING CONFERENCE:** Unfortunately there was only one butcher present all day event held at the Dakota Hotel in South Queensferry. There was an interesting presentation in the afternoon that QMS had commissioned research on consumer switching habits. The report was completed in June 2011, and Douglas was concerned that by the time we react to this, a whole year will have past. There were some good things which came out of it with the best news being that the view of butchers' shops is very positive.

Ian Faulds said M & S tried butcher shop in store and it went away they are now going to have another go. ASDA are going to have a butcher brand. He felt the supermarkets are going to come at us hard.

Beaton Lindsay said he does presentations to women's guild groups and asked if a template could be made on hints and tips to doing the talks.

Douglas said QMS have created this report and we should use it to our advantage. QMS have said they would like to take its points and make it into a marketing tool. They are contemplating holding a workshop..

**TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT:** Sandra Giddy submitted a written report.

You will see from the attached report that we have 424 trainees presently registered with us. 219 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 163 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 have 4 trainees registered through our involvement with Falkirk Employment Training Unit and we still have 38 registered in Northern Ireland.

**SDS CONTRACT:** We are now in the final stages of awaiting our contract allocation for 2012 - 2014 with Skills Development Scotland. The final tender documents were submitted at the end of January. I have tendered for a total of 329 Level 2 places. 89 in the 16 – 19 yr age group and 240 in the 20+ age group. I have also tendered for a total of 43 level 3 places, 17 in the 16 – 19 yr age group and 26 in the 20+ age group.

As I expected, SDS looked for evidence of confirmed employer demand in the tender documents and we will be measured on our past performance rates. Our performance rate stands us in good stead but until the contract is awarded I would hesitate to predict what might be available for the coming years.

Under our current contract, we still have places available for both the age groups, 13 places for 16 – 19 yr olds and 68 places still for over 20 yr olds. Our Assessors have been 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 which expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

**EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE:** I realise that training budgets are often the first to go in a recession, but investing in training will ensure that our businesses will be well-positioned when the economy starts to recover.

Skills Development Scotland, who provide the funding for our Modern Apprenticeships have pledged to support 25,000 Modern Apprentices across the whole of Scotland and in all sectors for 2011/2012 and to this end they are working with all training providers to support the skills needs of employers and young people by encouraging more employers to take advantage of the employer recruitment incentives which they have made available.

The incentive introduced just before Christmas, provides up to £2000 which is paid to the employer when they offer new start opportunities for 16 – 19yr olds or progression to Modern Apprenticeships from 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011. People aged 20 yrs plus who have been unemployed for 3 months or more, starting on an MA within 3 months of employment are eligible for £1000 incentive payment. However, the cut of point for receiving the incentive for those over the age of 20 and previously unemployed has now been reached. Those eligible to receive this incentive MUST be able to claim that their employee started work on or before 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012 in order to meet the 4 week employed criteria before the end of March 2012. If you think you may have a new member of staff who is eligible for this incentive then please do contact Claire who will assist you with your claim.

In addition, SDS are promoting their Flexible Training Opportunities offer, where SDS will make a 50% contribution towards the costs of training for up to 10 episodes per company (up to a maximum of £500 per employee) which is available for companies with up to 150 employees. Again, more information and guidance can be obtained from our office.

The incentive payments are processed through Scottish Meat Training office and accounts and a 10% administration fee will be charged at the point of clearing our accounts.

**ESF FUNDING:** Funding for our project in the Highlands region will continue this year and we will be able to support the continuation of the Craftsman Certificate and provide access to related short courses in the region.

However, with the cessation of the funding in the Lowlands area from 31<sup>st</sup> March, we expect that unless an alternative funding avenue can be found after this date, that we will be unable to provide short courses or complete Craftsman Certificates.

I am pursuing the possibility of using the Flexible Training Opportunities funding which I have already mentioned in this report. As soon as I receive confirmation of our ability to utilise this funding, we will be contacting businesses who have trainees still completing the Craftsman Certificates to offer this solution. In the meantime, our Assessors are working with employers and employees to complete Craftsman Certificates wherever possible prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

**FALKIRK EMPLOYMENT TRAINING UNIT PROJECT:** We now have 4 trainees making good progress under this initiative. Following the initial project, which saw 7 trainees finding work in our industry, we have been asked to work with a further three who will all be completing a Modern

Apprenticeship under Scottish Meat Training programmes. This is funded through a private contract with Falkirk ETU

NORTHERN IRELAND: There is no immediate news on progress with the Northern Irish trainees who are still registered with us.

I originally pursued offering our services in Northern Ireland to provide additional income which subsidised the service which we were able to provide to Scottish Butchers during the two year period where SDS funding was withdrawn for those over 20 in Scotland and where ESF funding was not available. Funds were very slow to appear in our bank accounts, but they did provide an additional cash flow without which we would have struggled to maintain our free service. Unfortunately, due to the contract being withdrawn from our then partners, FDSS (Food and Drink Sector Skills) the service to Northern Ireland was halted prematurely with the result that we have been unable to complete the ApprenticeshipNI with the remaining trainees and have also been unable to receive monies outstanding and due to us from FDSS.

I have contact with the Scottish Bakers, which may provide a temporary solution to be able to complete a number of the remaining trainees under a contract held by Belfast Metropolitan College. It is a very slow, drawn out process and I am conscious of the need to remain cost effective in providing this service to the trainees in Northern Ireland. We still wait for the results of the award of training contracts for A4E who are the Training Provider in Northern Ireland with whom, if they are successful in their tender, we have agreed to work to provide access to work based training to the Northern Ireland butchers. I will provide more information on progress as soon as I can.

EXTERNAL VERIFICATION VISITS: We are scheduled to have our annual external Verification visit from SQA for the Food Manufacture SVQ's which we use in the framework of our Modern Apprenticeship programme. The visit will take place on 20<sup>th</sup> March in this office and on location with our Assessor Gordon Newlands and our Internal Verifier Helen Johnston.

We have a further External Verification visit for Core Skills, which are a component of the Modern Apprenticeship, scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> April

I will report the outcome of both of these visits at future meetings.

FOOD MANUFACTURE ANNUAL NETWORKING EVENT: I will be attending this event on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March at SQA offices in Dalkeith. On the agenda is an update on the review of the standards on which our qualifications are based. Standards are reviewed every 5 years and this is an important opportunity to input into the process and ensure that our qualifications are fit for use for our industry.

I will report further at our meeting next week.

INTERMEDIATE HACCP AND INTERMEDIATE: There are no immediate plans to hold these courses this year, but do continue to contact our office and register interest. We will endeavour to arrange courses in locations where interest is confirmed.

George Lees asked when it is anticipated that charges would come in for training. Sandra hoped it would never happen and we would pursue all avenues for funding.

Ian Faulds said that Northern Ireland had been a weeping sore on the organisation for a long time; he enquired how many of the 38 trainees are active in the meat trade. Sandra could only confirm the 38 are registered with our centre and not taken up by another training provider.

Roy Baird congratulated Sandra for all the work she is doing on the training side of the business keeping the focus on it and building up the reputation.

Douglas Scott said that Sandra had tendered her resignation the day before because she is taking on a hotel in Fife. Sandra is leaving at the end of March and has been with us for 8 years. She built a team and leaves the organisation in better health than possible could be believed in the predicament we were in 8 years ago. Douglas and the Executive joined in expressing their best wishes for the future. Sandra said she had thoroughly enjoyed her time here.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Douglas Scott reported.

**SCOTTISH MEAT TRAINING:** The income from February was £52,805 which is probably the best month it is going to be in this financial year. We are now projecting a surplus this year. This has been helped by the recruitment incentive and the 10% commission on the cheques going out which we do feel that we have worked hard to earn. The auditors will come in and do a new balance sheet for us. From the ESF project from Lowlands and Uplands Scotland we have still to claim £40k, £20k is on the current claim and should be paid reasonable soon with the other £20k to claim before the end of the financial period. In Highlands & Islands area we have an outstanding claim for £5578. We have another two claims to put forward in this project. We have been granted a new project which takes us up till the end of 2014. This is reasonable good news going forward it will be important that we continue to bring money in from Skills Development Scotland.

**MEMBER SERVICES:** We have billed £86k for subscriptions and £12.5k for corporate members. These monies have been coming in fairly well and we are budgeting for a profit.

**MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT:** Convenor Beaton Lindsay reported.

Subscriptions: 305 members with 95 branches have joined this year.

21 are still outstanding.

All the unpaid members received three letters and a phone call. Services will be withdrawn after 21<sup>st</sup> March a letter at that time will be sent to them

4 New Members

Neil Hoey, Rosyth

William Stark, Lochore

Laxdale Foodservice, Stirling

Lochalsh butcher, 3 shops in Kyle, Portree and Mallaig.

17 corporate members have paid including 2 new ones:-

Walkers Shortbread and Marshall Wilson Packaging.

5 members have chosen not to renew.

Braveheart Butchers, Wallasey – not entering competitions.

J Adams & Sons, Motherwell – no reason given.

Ronald Gray, Braemar – retired, new owner has been sent details.

John M Steel, Bishopbriggs – shop closed

Stewart Butchers, Dalkeith – retired

**Regional Meetings:** Regional meeting taking the form two course dinner and discussion were held with there attendance noted as

Ayr 16

Queensferry 20

New Pitsligo 11

Inverness 16

Kemnay 13

Stepps 21

Inchture 18

Oban 7

Castle Douglas 10

Subjects which were covered were Christmas trading, promotions, online shopping handbills, Utility contracts, cross contamination guidance, poultry supplies.

The next Regional Meetings in April will be held in conjunction with George Murphy who will introduce members to Newlyweds, USA and worldwide ingredient manufacturer, bought over Witwood ingredients to get a foot into the UK market. Rich Sauces will also be featured. Scotweigh will also be in attendance and Capital Cooling will say a few words at Braehead, Broxburn and Inchture. Simultaneously with the demonstration will be the judging of the regional heats of the 2012 Beef Sausage and Black Pudding Competitions.

Golf: This year the golf event will return. The competition will take place at Strathaven Golf Club on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June first tee time 1.30. It will be a two person team competition. Those without a playing partner can be matched up with others. Corporate Members can have a maximum of two people. Guests are not eligible. Members can enter along with any of their employees. The cost is not available at present but will include a bacon roll, Tea coffee on arrival and a meal afterwards and a £10 prize levy. Entry forms will be issued in the April newsletter.

Handbook: Letters to potential advertisers will be sent out this week.

Douglas said the AGM is expected to be a Sunday in Kilmarnock. Ian Faulds enquired about the appeal of Kilmarnock as a venue. He did not anticipate having a function on a Saturday night. He did hope that there would be as many as McDiarmid Park in the last couple of years. Duncan Mackenzie said there will be core supports whom will be there. Stewart Dempsey said that a function on the Saturday night had a bigger turn out. Douglas said that not many from the Saturday night attended on the Sunday. George Jarron suggested we concentrate on the AGM.

#### **LIVESTOCK REPORT:** Bruce McCall reported.

Deadweight cattle values improved for a fifth week with gains across the categories. Steers are now just 0.1p/kg short of their November peak while heifers and young bulls reached record highs. Prices are up 21% on this time last year. In contrast, prices paid for prime cattle at Scottish auctions slipped back on the week.

Deadweight hogs fell marginally at the GB level but have generally shown stability since mid-January, trading in a narrow band around the 440p/kg mark. Volumes have similarly stabilised and are close to year earlier levels. At Scottish auctions hogs also decreased in value. Prices slumped to a six-week low and were just 3.5% higher year-on-year. The ewe price declined sharply on the week and remained only slightly higher than one year ago.

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George Jarron said we are going to be on a severe time on the live cattle front. No small farmer is interested in having cattle at all.

**PROMOTIONS REPORT:** Convenor Duncan Mackenzie reported.

On behalf of everyone Duncan said Sandra had done a sterling job and would be missed.

Scottish Venison Partnership: Douglas and Bruce met with Bruce Brymer, Pete Moore and Dick Playfair of the Scottish Venison Partnership on Friday of last week. They want to highlight the versatility of venison, encourage butchers to use more of it and raise its profile in general.

They would like to run Venison Appreciation Nights in Aberdeen and at Carfraemill in September. These would involve dispersing of knowledge and a cutting demonstration and would be held in conjunction with SFMTA Regional Meetings.

Speciality Burger and Speciality Sausage evaluations: Dalesman have agreed to sponsor this evaluation at the rate of £600. The event will be held at Perth College on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April with entries collected from the usual collection points the day before. Dalesman will make the presentation to the Diamond Award winners in their shops when they are determined. Other awards will be presented at the Regional Meetings in April.

Scottish Beef Sausage and Black Pudding Competitions: The entry form for these competitions were distributed in the March Newsletter. Entries close on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April and again sponsorship has been secured through Lucas Ingredients and Dalziel Ltd. Judging of the West and South West regions will be held at Braehead Cook School on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April, the following night the South East will be judged at Broxburn, East of Scotland at Inchtute on the Wednesday and the North of Scotland on the Thursday night in Inverness.

Personalised Cards: We are currently gauging interest for personalized offer cards to be produced to order for just about any card giving opportunity as possible. Drafts are circulated for your consideration.

Personalised Booklet Template: The Federation has produced a template that members are using to promote their business in their local community. These templates allow members to complete their own details, information and offers and can be emailed to anyone wishing to use them. Members have been using local scout groups, girl guides, boys brigade, community newsletters to distribute these.

Loyalty Card Scheme: This has been discussed at all the Regional Meetings after Douglas discovered that there are 40 butchers in the Republic of Ireland who are operating such an electronic data handling scheme. A presentation was made to SFMTA by Finbarr Malone of Customer Connect. Although the scheme is ostensibly a Customer Loyalty Scheme, it is a customer analysis kit that allows businesses to identify customers who have been missing and incentivise them to return. The scheme also handles Christmas Card schemes and Gift Cards. Set up costs are just for the plastic key fobs or credit card size cards. We believe one Fife butcher has taken up the idea.

Love your Local Butcher Campaign: The Federation is currently working with Dynamic Advertising in Edinburgh to deliver a promotional campaign for butchers. This would involve interesting suppliers to fund promotion of butchers shop through local radio and possibly television.

The aim of this new initiative, therefore, is to build on the previous campaign success but introduce new ads using our own singing butcher – our member from Kinross, Iain Hunter.

Discussions are currently underway with two major suppliers to the trade who are considering dual funding the entire budget. The aim of the campaign is to:-

**1. Encourage potential customers to THINK about their local butcher**

Not only in relation to the superior meat products and service they can benefit from but also in terms of 'supporting the High Street' – a concept gaining momentum with the public.

## **2. Address any misconceptions which may act as a barrier to trade**

Many potential customers didn't realise that you could buy 'kitchen-ready meals' and buy weights according to need as opposed to dictate.

Duncan said the big problem is the cost but if he heard from Douglas earlier it could be split between two suppliers.

**LEGISLATION REPORT:** no report.

FHIS: met in this office on Thursday. The scheme will soon have 100% coverage throughout Scotland, with North Lanarkshire being the last to enter the scheme. The Highland members raised with FSA that the separation they are happy to do in a lot of cases there is concern that the goal posts have moved and will they move again. They need assurances what ever they do is adequate. The Federation needs to know what EHOs are asking to ensure it is fair what they are asking. The guidance notes on the guidance will be issued soon.

REHIS COURSE ON CROSS CONTAMINATION: Alan Kennedy forward a note as follows:

*Like you ,I found the course to be excellent-and quite reassuring,as the new guidance seems to have been taken back to basically the levels of licensing. It struck me that much emphasis will be placed on how "clean and tidy" a premises appears to be-fair enough!  
I was also VERY pleased that the FSA has realised that you cannot change clothes between handling cooked and raw-this was my biggest worry about the whole thing.  
I also thought the course was easily understood-important if you are sending staff.  
Last point-Clare,the EHO who presented the course, is one of our EHOs, and is quite a stickler for the rules-but she seemed quite relaxed about the whole thing, so if this is reflected across the board, we shouldn't be too worried about it-only time and inspections will prove if this is the case.*

### **ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:**

QMS Pig FORUM: Ian Faulds and Neil Cameron attended. Johnathan Honeyman, Aberfoyle butcher presented with John Webber the chef and brains behind the Nick Nairn cookschool. The presentation was on snout to tail with some cooking. It was held at the Marine Hotel Troon. It was excellent presentation, but he felt the whole event must have been very expensive. He said both the butcher and chef were wearing Scotch Beef club tabards with the logos on it and they looked tremendous.

Scottish Bakers Competition: They are running a competition with the daily record but butchers could still get there products voted for. Bruce McCall is helping with judging process.

Jamie Chapman is at seminar on Humane Slaughter today.

Billy McFarlane wished Sandra and her husband all the best for the future.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

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