

MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD WITHIN 8/10 NEEDLESS ROAD PERTH, ON WEDNESDAY 11th MARCH 2015

PRESENT: Beaton Lindsay, President
Douglas Scott, Chief Executive

President Elect: Paul Boyle

Honorary President: Arthur Matthew

Past Presidents: Ian Faulds, Hamish Deans, Jamie Chapman

Executive Members: Guthrie Batchelor, Neil Cameron, Alan Kennedy

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: George Jarron, Scott Jarron, George Lees, Stewart Dempsie, Adam McLay, Rory Macdonald, James Pender Hugh Pender, Jim Preston, Wilson Ferguson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING 7th JANUARY 2015: The minutes were approved by Ian Faulds and seconded by Alan Kennedy.

MATTERS ARISING: under Christmas trade Emma Wharf is no longer the Copas accounts manager covering Scotland. Her successor will be at the trade fair.

Douglas said the price of bone collection had gone up and even with the price increases Douglas Brae seems to be the cheapest price.

PRESIDENTS REPORT: He said that the World Scotch Pie Club lunch was a good and well presented day. He supplies the mince to the baker who won the overall award, so was very happy.

SAMW lunch was a good event with the business being carried out quickly with most continuing that in the Café Royal.

The President attended the IAAS conference in Carnoustie on 28th February. Alan McNaughton gave a very good presentation suggesting that farmers should produce what the market can sell and not what they want to produce. Douglas asked if the auctioneers were worried by the demise of the market system. Beaton Lindsay said they were talking for it, agreed that the market value is being lost but do not know how to get it back. Beaton said he obtained the log in details for the traceability system for cattle before it goes live. He said that the conference was more about farm efficiency.

PRESIDENT ELECT REPORT: Paul Boyle said he was stunned by the setting of the venue at St Andrews. Everyone was delighted with the array of Scottish produce served up at the dinner. He was made very welcome and was made at home. Douglas attended the presentations at the AGM and everyone he spoke to was complimentary of retiring NFUS President Nigel Miller.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

As per usual the time since my last report has flown. After our last meeting as well as producing the usual two newsletters I attended City of Glasgow College along with our assessor Stewart McClymont to give a Hindquarter cutting demonstration for third year students on Professional Cookery course. The same afternoon I met up with the Scottish Bakers at the Westerwood Hotel at Cumbernauld to rehearse the presentations of the Scotch Pie Club awards which were staged the following day.

The awards day was challenged by some snowy weather on the A9 but thankfully our determined members took note of the weather forecast and travelled south ahead of any problems. The decision to move the lunch from Carnegie Conference Centre in Dunfermline to a bigger venue like Westerwood turned out to be a good one. The new venue looked after every need and in the end came over in a much more professional way with much more important meaning. The weather caused a few cancellations but there must have been close to 240 attendees. Bruce, Gordon King

and Stewart McClymont all attended and gave invaluable support on sound, Twitter and organisation. We can safely claim that the SFMTA role was executed in a most professional manner.

As President Beaton reported he and I attended the Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers Seminar and Lunch on Friday 16th January. Some could view this as an afternoon on the booze but the morning session heard presentations from Geoff Ogle, the new director of FSS and Jim McLaren, Chairman of QMS. The lunch was an excellent networking opportunity with all the key players in the Scottish Meat Industry in attendance.

The third week in January started with a visit to Dalziel in Bellshill, then on to Winston Churchill our game dealer member in Dunoon and then a regional meeting in Oban that night. The following day I attended an Animal Health and Welfare Stakeholder meeting in Edinburgh.

I took part in an SQA external verification visit on 28th January and then February started with a visit to corporate members Dalesman in Bradford. The following day, along with SFMTA members Falleninch Farm Shop, I visited Bolster Moor Farm Shop and Blacker Hall doing a feature on the latter for the March newsletter. This had all been planned around my need to be in York for a Q Guild Executive meeting on Wednesday 4th February.

Next up was the National Farmers Union's AGM at St Andrews Bay. I attended the afternoon session to hear George Eustice MP - a report is on the Members only website. Along with Paul Boyle I attended the NFUS Annual dinner before attending the next morning to hear Richard Lochhead's address to the farmers. The Cabinet Secretary gave the key address to the conference. He paid tribute to Nigel Miller's term in office as President of NFUS and welcomed his new role looking after animal health.

From St Andrews it was back to Perth to pick up a van for the regional meetings in Carfraemill, Inverness and Aberdeen. On the journey along the A96 Bruce and I dropped in to see members in Forres, Lhanbryde, Fochabers, Huntly, Inverurie and Aberdeen.

I had a meeting with the contract manager from Skills Development Scotland on Friday 13th which was a quality assurance visit. The following week there were regional meetings at Stepps, Ayr and Perth and on Friday 20th February I attended the Scottish Food Enforcement a Committee in Glasgow. From there it was speedily back to the office. Q Guild manager Sandy Boyd resigned on 4th February and I had to meet their new Guild Manager as a handover on Friday 20th as well. The new Q Guild Manager is former SFMTA member and Scottish Meat Training assessor Gordon Newlands.

The final week of the month I try to reserve for writing the monthly newsletter but in the final week of February I also squeezed in an ESF verification visit in this office and a meeting in Durham with Jack Shewring along with Scott Jarron to explore potential abattoir designs for a new build at Forfar.

On the first three working days in March I led a joint Q Guild / SFMTA visit to a tour of ten butchers shops in Northern Ireland. Pictures of all the shops are on the SFMTA Picasaweb album. There were lots of good ideas to take on board and everyone felt the trip most worthwhile.

On Thursday and Friday of last week Gerry Borge of the Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service delivered another two days training for the Scottish Meat Training assessors. I sat in on a couple of sessions which is all about food manufacturing excellence.

This week I visited Caithness butchers in Thurso, Castletown and Wick. That is all in the past now but plans are also progressing for the Scottish Meat Trade Fair, product evaluations and beyond.

Douglas showed Kieran McAtamneys offer leaflet which was interesting to look at. It seems similar to a Wotherspoons menu. He also passed round a pack of crispy onions which he thought may be of interest. When he came back he went into Castletown Butchers and they were selling them.

Jamie Chapman said all the sheep are electronically tagged and the date of birth could go on the tag. If they do not use that system then a lamb born indoors in December would be 6 months old when officially born. Hamish Deans said the splitting is the thing and it reduces the value of the carcass and the reasons for doing that are gone now.

Douglas said that Scott Jarron is still keen to progress Forfar abattoir. They had a quick tour round Spennymoor. Scott Jarron suggested that the Dundee Association may invest their funds into stocks and share for the abattoir. Arthur Mathew agreed it was a good solution to look after the funds. Scottish Government Manufacturing Grants are becoming available again.

FINANCE REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

Bank balances are stronger than they have been for a long time. However, it is a time of the year when money comes in.

SCOTTISH MEAT TRAINING: We are still looking at an income from SDS of just short of £300k. There is still £30k to come from the ESF grant which has been extended till the end of March. This is why in the reports the Highlands & Islands area have been getting special attention in January. Total income in SMT is £360k with expenditure around £350k. We will make a surplus so it is about sticking to the budgeted figures. The meat skills competition comes into these figures. We have had £3k of sponsorship with the costs associated of £6K.

MEMBER SERVICES: £89k is budgeted with a couple of new members. We are now forecasting £90k. We are at the stage of finding out who will not be paying. On the income side trade fair receipts budget is £15k and we have sales of £19.5k.

Overall we have a forecast of £176k on our expenses. Regional meetings are costing us money. Handbook likewise however we will keep the loss to a minimum. Total costs are looking a total £162k. The surplus is looking like £14k. but the task of Q guild admin generates this surplus.

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Bruce McCall reported.

294 members have joined this year so far with 88 additional branches.

Four new members since last Executive meeting
Townesley Butchers, Kilmarnock
Noble Butchers, Galashiels
Highland Drovers, Perth
Denis Paterson, Aberdeen

Two members resigned
Andrew Gordon, Aberdeen
Dalbeattie Fine Foods – shop closed

A second reminder has been sent to the 24 members whom have still to renew. Services will be withdrawn at the end of March if payment is not received.

CORPORATE MEMBERS

23 Corporate Members have renewed with six members outstanding.
2 enquiries to join – Genfrost UK Ltd and Bell Bakers whom confirmed they will join.

REGIONAL MEETINGS:

The main content of the Regional Meetings was Sausage manufacture. This involved a practical demonstration by Dalziel Ltd. including latest innovations in the sausage market.

Shelf life and market trends were discussed along with filling into natural and collagen casings. Free Sausage and mash was served on the night.

Attendances were Carfraemill Hotel 30, Inverness 30, Dyce 27, Stepps 41, Ayr 11 and Perth 20.

Round table discussion was held in Oban. No one wanted to attend the meeting in Wick on 9th March.

Next regional meeting is being held on Monday 16th March Orkney Hotel, Kirkwall.

TRADE FAIR

The trade fair takes place on Sunday 10th May. 33 companies have booked 47 units. If we receive any new stand enquiries we will try to accommodate but essentially the show is full of exhibitors. Tickets will be printed shortly for distribution to as many people as possible.

SFMTA HANDBOOK

Letters have been sent out to advertisers. Income of £1140 has been committed so far. The handbook will be distributed with the May Newsletter.

Alan Kennedy asked if any invitation to join SFMTA to Lawrie & Symington gone recently. Bruce said yes after the last meeting and went on to suggest that we have a meeting with them about joining. Alan Kennedy said he would come along to the meeting when it is arranged. Hamish Deans suggested if we could get it on the board meeting agenda for them to discuss centrally it would help. He suggested as Alan Kennedy and Jamie Chapman were good customers of theirs it would carry more weight. Alan Kennedy would like his name to go on it through the Federation.

Douglas asked for the branch shop numbers to go the bottom of the number of members sheet.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Douglas reported.

Scottish Meat Training currently has a total of 210 trainees funded through Skills Development Scotland and two through Falkirk ETU.

Ninety-three trainees have achieved their Modern Apprenticeship since 1 April 2014.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND CONTRACT: We have been awarded 102 places for 2014/2015 plus an additional 11 as we have fulfilled our initial contract. We have filled all of these places and have also progressed seven trainees from a Level 2 MA to a Level 3 MA these are additional to the 102 places currently utilised. Skills Development Scotland have set targets for each quarter of the contract year. We have surpassed our induction target of 80 for the first three quarters. We have met the financial claim target set by SDS for the third quarter and will now concentrate on meeting the 4th quarter claim. SMT has tendered for Modern Apprentice contract for 2015/2016 and we will hear the outcome of this tender bid in March 2015.

The Contract Manager for the SDS contract has been making site visits to ensure compliance for training. Paul Annfield has accompanied SMT assessor Gordon King to visit ten trainees and four employers and the feedback to date has been extremely positive. The contract manager has also interviewed Douglas and myself on the content and delivery of the qualification and seems to be satisfied with his findings.

WAGE INCENTIVES: Most local authorities are offering wage incentives for the recruitment of young people. Employers need to contact either their own local authority or job centre to find out what is available. SMT now has a contact list for the local authorities to fast-track queries. This

incentive has proven very popular and over eighty businesses have taken on employees through this incentive.

COMMONWEALTH LEGACY: SMT secured 46 places from the Commonwealth Legacy incentive aimed at 16-19 year olds newly employed and entered onto apprenticeship training. This has provided an additional £1,300 per trainee for employers.

CERTIFICATE FOR WORK READINESS: SMT have applied for an interim contract for the above SDS programme. We have been awarded funding for two pilot projects to run in Dundee and Lanarkshire. We have tendered for a full contract for Certificate of Work Readiness and will hear the outcome of this in March 2015. SMT has contacted members to ask if they can provide placements for trainees and we have been delighted with the positive response.

We have had contact with the two training companies who are willing to work with us on our training to deliver the programme and will commence in the new contract year – April 2015.

The purpose of the qualification is to ensure that these youngsters have an understanding of what is expected of them to commence work and to ensure that they have the right attitude to enter the workplace. SMT feel that this is an excellent project to be involved with as we are continually hearing from members the difficulty in recruiting and the difficulty in recruiting suitable youngsters.

SDS have indicated that funding will be concentrated in future on the younger age group, 16-24 year olds, and with this in mind we are looking at other programmes that we could deliver.

FOOD AND DRINK OPERATIONS: FOOD MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE: SMT staff are currently undertaking a 12 day course with Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service to enable our assessors to deliver the level 2 and level 3 qualification Food Manufacturing Excellence. The qualification is aimed at making organisations of all sizes work more profitably and efficiently by ensuring that procedures are carried out as effectively as possible. Scottish Government is keen to roll out these qualifications to all businesses and we will start to deliver this programme in April 2015.

ACHIEVEMENT Rates: Skills Development Scotland are now focusing their attention on achievement rates. SMT's achievement rate for last year was only 59% and we are currently sitting at 70% for this year. Industry standard is 71% and this what we are aiming towards. The achievement rates are based on numbers of achievers v numbers of leavers. Our leavers information shows that the majority of our leaver leave early because of movement in jobs – new career, new area etc. There isn't much we can do to retain these leavers but we need to look at ways to increase our achievement rates. Discussions have been held with our SDS contract manager and we could hold back on registration until the candidates are on the verge of achieving their first units – then push the candidates through the qualification to ensure an achievement. If there are any other views/ideas on increasing our achievement rates please contact me.

COURSES: A waiting list is being held for Intermediate Hygiene please contact Claire if you are interested.

MEAT SKILLS COMPETITION 2015: There have been thirty entrants for the Meat Skills competition. Judging will commence week beginning 9 March 2015 and will end on the 25th March. George Lees and Stewart Dempsie have very kindly accepted the role of judges again this year. They have a very busy few weeks ahead of them. The final of the event will be held at The Scottish Meat Trades Fair on 10th May.

WORLD SKILLS COMPETITION: The competition takes place in London in November and this is the first time meat will be included in it. We have been helping Cambrian training by putting entry forms out. There are no entries from Scotland yet. After 20th April they will make a judgment assessment to select the entrants.

PROMOTIONS REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

The Burns Night and Valentines Day materials appear to have gone down well with members. Electronic versions were sent out and images sized for use on scales and plasma screens are now available from the Federation. These are becoming increasingly popular.

Next materials will be for the Barbecue season and the aim is to have these distributed before the Trade Fair in May.

As already mentioned the Scotch Pie Club Awards took place on 14th January and it would appear that the award winners got publicity although it was hard to deflect interest away from the overall winner who seemed to get endless coverage that affected the coverage for other winners. It would be good to hear others views on publicity they received.

Product evaluations will take place on Thursday 9th April at the City of Glasgow College. This time the evaluations will be for Beefburgers and pastry products. The Beefburgers will be judged by region with regional winners being mystery shopped to determine Scotland's Best Beefburger.

The Savoury Products will also have an overall winner but that will be determined on the initial judging. Prizes for this will be presented at the Trade Fair and although we will take photos and send out press releases we will incorporate facilities for photos to be taken for immediate use on Social Media.

Experience from previous marketing activities tells us that a good picture on Social Media can make a big impact and it tends to target individual business' customers better than other media types.

At the Trade Fair Dalesman will launch their Sausage For Scotland competition. This will be a re run of the contest two years ago. The best six sausages will be selected at the evaluation in August and then presented to the September regional meetings for selection of the best by the members attending. The winning recipe will attract a £500 prize and it will be available to all SFMTA members along with the recipe and supporting poster in time for promotion during Scottish Sausage Week at the end of October.

Looking forward QMS have agreed to sponsor the Steak Pie Evaluation in August and William Sword will be invited to sponsor the Speciality Pie Evaluation.

Beaton Lindsay explained about the Buckfast sausage he made for a local hotel. He took photos in the process of making it, got 208,000 views on facebook and over 15,000 comments. It went on sale and someone came from Burntisland and spent £105 in the shop. There were others from the central belt. Now anything good that happens in the shop gets posted up on Facebook. It all came from the social media course on how to approach it. He is making more of these sausages than any other of the flavoured ones. Beaton said some people have said facebook is more important than a website as it is geared straight to the customer. Ian Faulds said they could not make the course but the local traders association is using it and it is having a good impact on the local shops. Douglas said this is why we will have an area at the trade fair where people can take their own pictures of them submitting their products.

LIVESTOCK REPORT:

Alan Kennedy said he had a meeting with Nigel Miller and a couple of Directors of Lawrie & Symington with an idea for Forfar mart. The system would do something similar to McIntosh Donald and get cattle through Forfar with organised transport etc with the farmer getting a cheque. £1000 was put forward to get it up and running and it was advertised in our newsletter twice. The whole thing fell flat and it is disappointing it has not worked. It is no ones fault here as we tried to get something put in place. Alan said he would not pursue this again. Douglas asked if any more cattle came to market. Alan replied it made no difference, he did not know what the farmers did on

their side to get some uptake. Alan said that last week Lawrie & Symington were turning down cattle last week which he found strange. Hamish Deans said Swans had around 100 cattle when normally they had 50 to 60.

LEGISLATION REPORT:

Jamie Chapman went to FSAS for the presentation on the new charging system. There are three types of audits a slaughterhouse, stand alone cutting plant and a co located abattoir and cutting plant with two different sets of charges. There are only two people doing the billing for all the inspectors and there is a flat charge per visit. The more visits you have the more charges you will have. The discounts for abattoirs are the first 1,000 will get 90% discount. 1000 to 5000 units will get 75% discount with 5,000 to 40,000 getting at 25% discount. The small plants will get a large discount as they will always fall in the first bracket. Abattoirs will do there business agreement every 3 months for the time you will have the meat inspector and vet there. The first two months you will get charged what was agreed in the third month this will include all of the overtime across the three months. At the end of every three months you will have a chance to adjust the hours. The inspector out with this time will be used for such things as farm food inspections, plant inspections and even some of the EHO jobs. It will be more straight forward and leaner and we will know in a year whether it works or not.

CARRIER BAGS: We had a meeting with Zero Waste Scotland and Food Standards Agency Scotland to agree how to communicate the revised interpretation of when charges apply. It was confused by the Sunday Mail article which unclear and was filled with inaccuracies. Zero Waste Scotland was upset by this and the matter was made worse by the Press and Journal and Evening Telegraph carrying the same story. We did clarify things on the website and in the newsletter what applies for charging and not. Most butchers understand where we are at with what you can and don't need to charge for.

ALLERGENS: SFMTA produced a shop notice which went out with the newsletter. The material used is washable and you can get tickets made from the company. Jamie Chapman said he heard on the news that chefs were up in arms about the allergens.

SFELC: there was nothing at this meeting which required our attention. Scudamore report on Horsemeat was all about surveillance. Douglas did point out the 1% carry over tolerance is not achievable in a butcher's shop. They do accept that but have not come up with a solution.

The How Safe is Your Food in Your Area. The report findings were flawed and the group were concerned by the findings on how the report can be read. The next meeting will be on 17th April in Edinburgh.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:

Paul Boyle said Paragon Products presentation at the regional meetings was not particularly good but he has since had them in to put a full system in the shops. It is very thorough and impressive. The EHO was very pleased with it and Beaton recommended them as well.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 13th May 2015.