MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD WITHIN 8/10 NEEDLESS ROAD PERTH, ON TUESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2012

PRESENT:	Billy McFarlane	President
	Douglas Scott	Chief Executive
	Ian Faulds	Vice President

Honorary President: Arthur Matthew
Past Presidents: David Lindsay, Duncan Mackenzie, John Chapman, Stuart Christie, Adam McLay
Executive Members: Stewart Dempsie, George Lees
Minutes: Bruce McCall

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Hamish Deans, Alan Kennedy, Murray Lauchlan
Jamie Chapman, Wilson Ferguson, Hugh Pender, James Pender, Jim Preston, Beaton Lindsay

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE JARRON

President Billy McFarlane said the Scottish meat industry was shocked and extremely saddened to hear of the death of Past President George Jarron. George was killed in an accident in the loading bay at Scott Brothers premises in Strathmartine Road, Dundee.

Although he retired a decade ago the 75 year old, was still a regular visitor to the business which is now run by his sons Scott and George junior.

Born on 14th April 1937, raised in Dundee where he attended Harris Academy, he devoted his entire working life to Scott Brothers, which he ran with his brother David.

At the age of 14 he started working with his father in a shop in Victoria Road, and then moved to manage his own shop in Rosebank Street, at the age of 16. George then moved into a shop and factory on the Hilltown, until he and his brother, David, went into partnership at the current premises at 206 Strathmartine Road, Dundee.

Together George and David developed the business sourcing the best of beef from local markets and farmers. It is now one of the largest butchers businesses in the UK. David died in March 2010 but both he and his elder brother George were popular figures at Caledonian and Forfar markets.

He was an equally popular business figure in Dundee and within the Scottish Federation. George was a stalwart of the Federation Executive getting involved with a great deal of the representative work, the Scottish Meat Trade Fair and he was still a great supporter of SFMTA's regional meetings. He served as President in the year 1989-90 and was on the board of Quality Meat Scotland for five years from 2003. He also devoted time to the Fleshers, one of the Nine Incorporated Trades in Dundee and was the Chairman of St Andrews Abattoir Company.

George Jarron who was predeceased by his wife Mary in December 2010, is survived by his children George, Scott and Kirsty and grandchildren Andrew, Scott, Thomas, Eve and Ailsa. His knowledge and opinions will be sadly missed by a great many in the Dundee and meat industry business community. The meat trade in Scotland has lost a very good friend.

The meeting stood for a period of silent reflection and respect.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS EXECUTIVE MEETING:. Minutes of the previous meeting held in September were approved by Duncan Mackenzie, seconded by Stuart Christie.

MATTERS ARISING: no matters arising

PRESIDENT BILLY McFARLANE'S TOUR TO THE NORTHERN ISLES

Billy was accompanied by Douglas Scott to

1. Craigies at Tankerness on Orkney. Famous for its helicopter shopping stop by Shetland Coastguards. This is a plant on a farm near the airport. Met Thorfinn Craigie and his staff.
2. Visit Ali Flett at Williamsons in Kirkwall. This is a new shop in East Road since Ali closed his previous small shop.
3. Donaldsons of Orkney. Brief visit on the first day with a follow up photocall the following morning. Met Erik Donaldson and Justin Hay and Darren Dearness – two new partners. And following day Ewan Donaldson who had returned from the Great Taste Awards in London with the top award for a Scottish product for their Hot Smoked Salmon. Donaldsons were very excited about their win and expect business for their product to take off.
4. Dounby Butchers. Met Barbara Sinclair accompanied at night by her husband and farmer/ supplier Ronald.
5. Fletts Butchers in Stromness; met David Garson and Doreen Garson.
6. Regional meeting in the evening was attended by all the members in Orkney.

Shetland

1. Neil Watt at Scalloway Meat Co he now employs 24 staff.
2. Visit abattoir of Shetland Livestock Marketing Group in Lerwick. Met Lorranie, Abattoir Manager and John Alex, Chairman.
3. Met Ian and Rhona Anderson of butchers at Whiteness at the Regional meeting but disappointing that only Neil Watt and Don Christie from Scalloway joined them.. Apologies were received from Iris Anderson from Tetley and Anderson in Whalsay who had just returned from holiday, and on morning of meeting from Globe Butchers in Lerwick. Overall the trip was very good.

Douglas said the abattoir company is run by Shetland Island Meat Company and their also a Shetland Isles Abattoir company as well which is run by the same people, they are different entities and they benefited from start up funding to the tune of £500k each. There were the only company in Britain to get a particular EU grant. Douglas was concerned over the long term sustainability of the businesses since it seemed to being run very much for the benefit of crofters. Killing twice weekly, it is £130 to kill a beast.

Douglas said that when Orkney Meats went bust Orkney Islands Council was very keen for the facility to be maintained. Four of the five butcher members there are keen for the abattoir to work. The four of them and the council have come together to work out some arrangement of a company. They are operating one day a week on a Tuesday. They have enough people from the four businesses to go in and help and it is all working well. At this moment in time the council are subsidising them. They are getting rid of the Category 3 and getting money for it even though it is being shipped all the way to Dumfries. The plant is too big and they are going to having to apply for grants and build one the appropriate size as it is currently 20 times the size they actually need. John Chapman's name has been given to them more than once as a source of advice. They are listening to certain people and we know they have had a lot of help with HACCP. The council has given them till the end of the year but no one knows what will happen after that.

David Lindsay asked how they were covered by the Meat Hygiene Service. Douglas said in Shetland they use the local vet on Orkney they have MHS people coming onto the island. John Chapman said he did not think any abattoir operating one day a week was not viable and it is only a matter of time before the existing Orkney plant closes.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT: Douglas Scott reported.

SCOTTISH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE and FSA BOARD MEETING: these were July meetings and were about scientific reviews and reports. Both himself and Ian Anderson SAMW attended but it was not of direct interest.

VISIT TO DALESMAN GROUP: Douglas and Bruce visited the Dalesman plant at Bradford and met Ian Rhodes and his personnel. They are soon to open a distribution centre in Bathgate. They were shown round and it is very much about quality control even with incoming goods going into quarantine control area. The system does not allow anything to move to another area without it going through set procedures. The visitors also saw the test lab, development kitchen and given tastings of some of their products. Dalesman is opening their Scotland base next month and butchers will be invited to celebrate the opening with them. They also invite members to visit their Bradford plant. Dalesman are very complimentary on the value they receive for their corporate membership and keen to sponsor more events in the future. As consequence all the corporate members have been contacted by Bruce to see how they can use the Federation to promote their business. Duncan Mackenzie asked if Dalesman had picked up more business in Glasgow as a lot of members were not impressed by what they tasted. Douglas said that at these meetings they did not put on their basic seasonings; these are the ones which have had a lot of success with butchers. Douglas said what came over was that there is a special way to put together seasonings, they reckoned there are hundreds of ways to make the likes of sausages. The bottom line a lot of people are very successful with Dalesman mixes. They are spreading there distribution and are an ambitious company. Ian Faulds was impressed with the colouring in the beef seasoning when the carmine became very expensive but he did not envisage changing from the one he has used for many years. David Lindsay said that Beaton Lindsay and family were invited up to Walkers Shortbread and look after very well. Walkers were delighted with how well their corporate membership was working.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT REPORT:

We currently have a total of 182 trainees funded through Skills Development Scotland.

61 trainees have achieved their Modern Apprenticeship since 1 April 2012.

Skills Development Scotland Contract: The new contract is now in place for the 2012-2013 contract year and we have a total of 195 trainee places to fill. To date we have inducted 26 new trainees onto the training scheme leaving 169 places to fill. Marketing and direct canvassing will be stepped up since uptake of training places is very slow – if you know of anyone who would like to be on training please let us know. Scottish Meat Training has places for all age groups and for all staff members – no matter how experienced or inexperienced they are.

Recruitment is slow at the moment in shops and we have contacted the Scottish Training Federation for their assistance in locating any funding incentives available through local authorities. These may be beneficial to employers who are holding off on taking on a trainee due to financial constraints. We will circulate this information to members as soon as it becomes available.

E-portfolios: We have had two demonstrations from companies that supply web based e-portfolios – the preferred option is from a company called Learning Assistant. The e-portfolio looked feasible and smart. Benefits could be seen for all members of staff. It would mean that all trainees work would be available on-line.

With Learning Assistant everything is online. Rather than work with paper portfolios all the time, learners and assessors access a web-based e-portfolio that contains all the relevant course material. Individual trainees or their assessor upload evidence to the system allowing each person involved in the learning process to plan, give feedback, assess, verify and finally award the qualification.

The benefits of the e-portfolio include improved learner motivation, faster completions, better visibility, and improved quality and reduced delivery costs. The trainee can work at their own pace through the online portfolio and the evidence presented would immediately be available to the assessor, no matter his location. Wasted journeys would be eliminated and it would be seen as a major benefit for SMT.

Douglas asked for the approval of the meeting to proceed with it. Ian Faulds said it was an excellent idea. Douglas said the assessors would be getting a look through it next Friday before we proceed with it.

Polish Trainees: SMT had requests for Polish trainees to undertake the Level 2 qualification to enable us to do this we have had to translate some of our pathway units into Polish. This will enable us to work in a more competitive market and to recruit more Polish speaking trainees who have limited English.

Improve: Douglas Scott and Helen Johnston have been working with our Sector Skills Council Improve who is going through the process of reviewing qualifications and their pathway. This should have been a relatively simple process but Improve have made this difficult to comprehend their proposed changes. After quite a lot of dialogue we have reached a compromise that will at least mean that Level 2 and Level 3 SVQs are usable for the meat industry.

The ESF Highlands and Islands contract offer came in July and was signed and the "Meating the Challenge" project starts on 1st October 2012.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Douglas Scott reported.

We have reached the end of the financial year. The finance committee are only waiting on the last month's figures but we do feel that both sides of the business will record a surplus. We do want to show a surplus on the accounts because we do not have ESF Lowlands and Uplands in the next financial year. So we have to replace what was £45K from Skills Development Scotland this will be a challenge as numbers in training are down. The next meeting will have a full set of accounts in draft form for approval.

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Convenor Beaton Lindsay reported.
Subscriptions 322 members have joined this year with 99 additional branches.

McCallum Foods Ayr resigned cannot afford to pay the £30 monthly direct debit fee.
Robert MacIntyre, Rosneath no payment received.

3 new members:
The House of Bruar
Gleddoch Family Butchers, Pennilee, Glasgow
Dunnabie Farm Foods, Waterbeck near Lockerbie

Corporate Members 25 have paid.
TPS Scotland Ltd have not paid and given no reason.

VENISON DEMONSTRATIONS
The first venison cutting demonstration evening took place last night was presented by Bruce Brymer at Carfraemill with 28 people attending. Douglas said it was a very good night but there was not a huge interest from butchers. The second takes place at Thistle Hotel, Aberdeen Airport tomorrow evening. Ian Faulds said he gets venison every two or three weeks and makes burgers they walk out the shop and you can get a premium on them. He cannot sell venison steaks. Douglas said one of the butchers there last night said they use all the fore quarter to make sausages and burgers. Stuart Christie said that they sell two haunches a week in the Bearsden shop but the other two shops cannot sell it at all. They have quite a few restaurants which buy venison mince.

George Lees said venison in the Borders is roe deer and it is tiny and it is very labour intensive to get anything from roe deer that why there were fewer butchers there.

Ian Faulds was delighted the House of Bruar had joined as it is certainly a way to get the logo recognised as they get a colossal amount of tourists there.

REGIONAL MEETINGS: The next regional meetings will take place at

Monday 1st October	Swallow Hotel, Bellahouston, Glasgow
Tuesday 2nd October	Waterside Hotel, Inverness
Wednesday 3rd October	Lovat Hotel, Perth
Thursday 4th October	Carfraemill Hotel, Scottish Borders

You will see an exciting new range of added value ideas for the retail butchery market entitled RAPS' Counter Revolution 2012 this will be presented by Viv Harvey. KRH and McDonnells (Queen Street) Ltd. Presentation of the prizes of the Trick or Treat, Bonfire Night evaluations and Slice Sausage competition will take place.

The SFMTA Golf outing took place at the fantastic Strathaven Golf Club. 16 competitors took part in the pairs competition. Jim Preston and Hugh Pender were the winners. The longest drive was won by George Stuart, Dalziel and nearest the pin was won by Robert Watson, McAusland Crawford. Thank you for the attendance of all members and corporate members Dalziel, McAusland Crawford and Walkers Shortbread. Wm Sword donated a couple of bottles of whisky for prizes.

AGM: The AGM will take place on Sunday 25th November at the Park Hotel, Kilmarnock where Ian Faulds will be installed as the new president. Guest speaker will be Nigel Millar, President, National Farmers Union Scotland.

LIVESTOCK REPORT: Bruce McCall reported.

The QMS Market Report was printed in the September Newsletter. Since then deadweight steers slipped back, heifers and young bulls rose last week to their highest level since mid-July. The prime cattle average at Scottish auctions moved back above the £2 a kilo mark as the fall in young bull prices failed to offset higher prices paid for steers and heifers. Heifers set a record high. Compared with the first week of September last year, deadweight prices were up by around 8% while auction values were 6.5% higher.

The lamb trade was relatively stable, but slightly higher volumes than the previous week placed some downwards pressure on the market. Nevertheless, movements matched those of the opening week of September 2011 and values remained around 5-7% higher than one year ago. Meanwhile, volumes remained lower than last year as lambs continued to come forward slowly. Although the ewe market picked up significantly, prices traded 8% below year earlier levels.

Pig prices fell back for a second successive week but continued to extend their gains over last year to 2%. Sharp price rises on the continent suggest that there will be a reduced availability of cheap pigmeat for import and point towards improved bargaining power for domestic producers. In the week to September 2, EU prices averaged higher than those paid to UK farmers.

Jamie Chapman tells us hides are £33 and lamb skins £2.30/£2.50.

John Chapman said that Jamie had holidayed in Wick in the summertime. There were three different supplier plant numbers with Norfolk, Somerset and somewhere in the Midlands. Tesco kill their beef in the North of Scotland ship down south and back up again. Douglas reminded the meeting that the last time we highlighted this kind of ways of working we lost Mitchells of Letham.

There was a planning application for a Premier inn 65 bed hotel and retail store on the site of St Andrews abattoir. The work could start in spring of next year with the M & S opening in October and the hotel in spring of 2014 reported the St Andrews Citizen at the end of August. Douglas asked Hamish Deans when he called today what the plans were for the replacement for George

Jarron as chairman and he was advised that Gordon Young was interim chairman. Hamish had said to him the decision was made that it would be sold if planning was granted. Looking at the draft figures there would be no dividend this year. It will be impossible to keep St Andrews running in the long term. Hamish suggested the kill could be taken up by Paisley, Wishaw and Shotts. The reaction from the Fife Food Network was to commission a report looking at an alternative facility and how they go about it. Douglas did not know how far they had got with it.

PROMOTIONS REPORT: Duncan Mackenzie reported.

The Speciality Burger and Speciality Sausage Posters were distributed to members in July. Judging by those used it is apparent that a number chose to use the versions sent without the descriptions of the award winning products. Electronic versions were sent to members on email along with a re-sized version to fit LCD screens.

In August McDonnells of Dublin sponsored a Trick or Treat evaluation which was a search for innovative Halloween and Bonfire night products. There was a good entry for this evaluation that was held at Dunfermline on 23rd August at the same time as the regional heats of the Sliced Sausage competition were held.

The top two ideas from Trick or Treat Evaluations were Ogre's Eyes in a Swamp Sauce for Halloween and Catherine Wheels for Bonfire Night. The members collecting the £500 prizes for the winning ideas are Pauls Quality Butchers in Kilsyth and Scott Brothers in Dundee.

These products will be professionally styled and photographed this Thursday at Abertay University with an objective of getting the final posters and recipes out to members before the end of this month and in plenty time to prepare for promoting these products.

SFMTA hopes that members use this opportunity to boost sales at these calendar events and a website selling "Trick or Treat, Give me Meat" merchandise including aprons, hats, T-shirts and lots more has been highlighted to members as a source of material to support this promotion.

Also during October members will be encouraged to support "Pink Fridays" for Breast Cancer Awareness charity. The Federation has a limited stock of pink aprons so that everybody can go pink! Duncan managed to raise £1500 wearing pink boxers, aprons hats and shoes.

At the last Executive meeting we heard a presentation from Jan Deans and Graeme Patullo of Dynamic Advertising on the idea to run a "Love your Local Butcher" campaign.

This was well received and a campaign committee was set up including myself, Ian Faulds, Alan Kennedy, John Davidson, Pamela Hunter and Scott Jarron. Our job was to point Dynamic in the direction of potential sponsors. Douglas and Graeme went to see David Darroch at Dalziels. David was pleased to hear that this had been confirmed by this Executive as a good idea. He offered to go away and canvas support from companies like Lucas, MRC, Verstegen etc. Douglas has followed this up but David has not been as successful as we need him to be.

Dynamic also sounded out QMS who indicated that this was not something that they could support.

So at the moment everything is very much up in the air with the "Love you Local Butcher" campaign. Hopefully Dalziel will receive more support and something can come out of this but we fear possibly not of the scale that Dynamic initially envisaged. Duncan felt the figures they were talking about where beyond achievable considering the state of businesses at the moment. He did not know whether it would come off or not. But if it did come off it would be very much reduced.

Looking further ahead, we have stocks of Christmas and Burns Night posters which can be spent nearer the time Christmas and St Andrews Day posters will go out with the Halloween posters.

Previous posters that we had in stock for the Scottish Food Fortnight were sent out with the burger and sausage promotions and Eat Venison posters were also made available to members from stock for Eat Scottish Venison Day on 4th September.

Douglas said the two winners of the Trick or Treat and Bonfire party only found out this morning. There will be a press launch of that the week of the regional meetings. Douglas thanked Stewart Dempsie for his help in organizing the slice sausage final at Drumpelier Golf Club which they took seriously. The overall winner will be announced on Friday 5th October. Ian Faulds asked how McDonnells had been involved with the sponsorship. Douglas said they will make the presentations at the regional meetings and visit butchers during the day. They seem genuinely interested in getting business.

Hamish Deans suggested to Douglas that the corporate members could have a bolt on levy to go to promotional funds but Douglas said even at that it would not make a huge amount of difference. Stuart Christie said they give enough already. Ian Faulds said we need them to support our trade fair etc.

LEGISLATION REPORT:

SCOTTISH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Douglas said the Strategy Charging for meat official controls paper was included in the agenda which will be considered tomorrow. Ahead of that meeting the SFAC can feed in from their representative. Chairman Jim Wildgoose intimated the change at the top of FSA. Tim Smith has left and Catherine Brown will take over as Chief Executive on 16th October. In the interim the Director in Scotland, Charles Milne is acting Chief Executive Elspeth MacDonald has moved up to be acting Director in Scotland during Charles absence.

Jim Wildgoose also commented on the route towards a separate FSA in Scotland. He admitted that the timescale is rather protracted. A consultation will be issued towards the end of this year. A 12 week period for responses would follow and then legislation might go through in the Autumn of 2012. Royal consent could take to 2014 and so FSA Scotland as a separate entity might come into being in Autumn 2014 but could be spring 2015.

A video link allowed the Committee to hear Andrew Rhodes present paper on Strategy on Charging for Meat Official Controls. He described this paper as “about what happens next” following the FSA’s proposals for the introduction of full cost recovery for meat official controls not receiving the necessary regulatory approvals.

Andrew described the current system as inequitable and said that three things would now happen

1. Review of the Discount System. He claimed that £11.2m was locked into the system creating disincentives.
2. Review of efficiencies involving National Audit Office.
3. Explore derogations available to see if there are other ways to deliver these controls and provide better value for money.

Carrie Ruxton asked Andrew Rhodes if UK vets working in abattoirs were required to be trained to a higher standard than those working on the continent of Europe. He said that they all had to be trained to certain standards but concede that a large number of vets working in UK abattoirs came from Spain, Portugal and Eastern Europe. In UK public health vets are not a career choice of UK vets so claimed that there was no gold plating of standards in UK.

Carrie also asked if enhanced training was given to Meat Hygiene Inspectors could this reduce the need for as many Official Veterinarians. Andrew replied that EU regulations do not allow this although there would be no practical reasons where MHIs could do an OV’s job.

The efficiency review will need to address the anomalies created at the time when charges moved from headage to time based charges. Some plants have reduced numbers of OV's but still receive the same subsidy because of the historic promise. The scheme is flawed but changes will affect large and very large plants most.

Ian Anderson asked the Committee to remember the case for smaller abattoirs. Andrew Rhodes replied that EU legislation did provide for support for small abattoirs and it could be that some of these smaller abattoirs could be in need of greater subsidy because of their remote nature.

EMPLOYMENT LAW AND HEALTH & SAFETY ADVISORS: We have been look at the provision of these services and a paper is included in the agenda. We have had some discount with the current provider of Employment Law services maybe not the service but not getting what they want to hear and there is a feeling we should move from Peninsula.

David Lindsay asked how these costs compare with Peninsula. David said he knew Beaton and Louise would be sad to lose Peninsula. Douglas said the costs were about the same as the Mentor cost but they might put it up. Douglas said what we did not like was them selling services they do not need. Duncan asked if the usage quoted is realistic. Douglas said the usage is the rate that is currently used. Douglas stated that he preferred the Davidson Chalmers option and felt that it gave us confidence that there was no long term contract commitment. Stewart Dempsie felt that we needed to support Douglas on whom he wanted to pick as he was the person meeting them and Bruce. Douglas said Davidson Chalmers would not start until September 2013 but the Health and Safety would start as soon as possible. The meeting voted in favour of Davidson Chalmers being appointed Employment Law advisers from September 2013.

QUALITY MEAT SCOTLAND: Douglas said a few months ago QMS produced a survey why people did not visit butcher shops. They did this survey in June 2011 they reported the findings in January 2012 and we saw the report in March 2012 but nothing seemed to happen after that. Now they have a desire to get butchers together to talk about the report. SFMTA have eight butchers willing to talk about what they are doing with their business and how things could be better. QMS will go through the survey results, then there will be round table discussions in small groups where QMS will take views from the group, to see if there was a particular formula to take to combat the negativity in the survey. The venues are not fixed but will be held in the middle of November.

Ian Faulds said he had visit from The Chief Executive and Chairman of QMS not for anything in particular but a general catch up. They were visiting other businesses in the area.

Douglas distributed new recipe leaflets from the Scotch Butchers Club and posters were also available. He stated the equivalent organisation launched a butchers club in Wales recently and there is no membership fee.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:.

Stuart Christie said the fish market is closing in Glasgow and the businesses there are moving into the fruit market. The EHO s in West Dumbarton going into all the food outlets wanting hand knee or foot operated sinks. He had been advised if he wants to put in steak pies in the window bed then the divider would have to go to the ceiling to separate the meat. He now has just put the steak pies only in the window bed and got his pass certificate.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 23th October 2012.

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