

MINUTES of MEETING of COUNCIL of
the SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION in the Wheel Inn Motor
Hotel, SCONE, at 2 p.m. on
Thursday, 1st SEPTEMBER, 1988.

PRESENT: Messrs. J.H. Barr, A.W. Bayne, G.S. Brass, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, I. Melrose, P. Miller, J. Logan Milne, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, and J.O. Robertson with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D.I. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

The President, Mr. G.S. Brass, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary reported apologies for absence received from Messrs. J.E. Cook, J.G.H. Fenton, T. McClung, P. Moffat, J.M. Swinton and A.S. Whitehead.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the Meeting of Council in Scone on 7th July, 1988 (previously copied to each member of Council) were taken as read. They were formally approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Membership - The Secretary reported receipt of formal Nominations for Association Membership in favour of Cullen Allen Scotland Ltd. and Gordon Gyle, Esq. After due consideration Council accepted these Nominations with effect from today's date, thereby increasing the total Membership Roll to 100.

Mr. Hunter also reported receipt of a PMB notification that Pluspak Potatoes Ltd., Abernethy has applied for a Ware Merchant's Licence. Council agreed it would make no comment on this application provided the Board's requirements are fulfilled.

In consideration of the latest amendments to the PMB's List of (Scottish) Licensed Merchants, Council agreed not to invite McFarlane Fruiterers, Grantown-on-Spey to consider becoming an Association Member.

(b) SSPDC Database)
) These Items were deferred
(c) Grading Standards Revision) until later in the meeting.

(d) Deputy Vice Chairman - The Chairman explained his enquiries had not progressed a solution to date. It was agreed the urgency of the matter becomes more pressing as the second year of the present Office Bearers' two-year term of Office approaches.

(e) Reviews of (1) Testing & Certification and (2) R. & D. Funding - in respect of (1) Mr. McArthur drew attention to the difference between "The National List" (a governmental obligation under E.C. regulations) and the (more commercially oriented) "N.I.A.B. List". Following discussion it was agreed the Secretariat seek clarification of the respective roles from DAFS. In updating (2) the Chairman outlined Mr. Bethel's report on a London meeting on 19th August, in respect of the government's intention to reduce its contribution to agricultural R. & D. by £10m. by 1990.

(f) Association Donation - Mr. Hunter explained the report to the last meeting of Council on the Consortium meeting in London on 13th June had omitted an agreed presentation (to Mr. Arnold Hitchcock/

Hitchcock, PMB Chairman, on his forthcoming retirement), each constituent organisation contributing £25 towards the cost of this. Payment due by 16th August had now been made and Council formally ratified this payment.

(g) Investments - Mr. Hunter recalled that Stockbroker's recommendations reported to the last meeting of the Chairman's Committee included a further review if interest rates increased. In a further review now requested, a scheme of sale of two holdings and re-investment in one (higher-rate, longer-dated) holding has been proposed. Following appraisal and discussion, Council agreed to decline the proposed scheme.

S.S.P.D.C.:

Mr. Hunter reported that the Secretariat had now been added to the mailing list for receipt of Minutes of SSPDC Council meetings. He also read the content of a reply to Association representatives' requests for clarification of certain Annual Accounts items. This led to prolonged discussion before it was agreed representatives would seek clarification of stated "Pensions Contributions".

That discussion had touched on the future of SSPDC after 1989 and the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the Association's Condition (re a Poll of levy payers) attached to its support for SSPDC continuation to end-1989. It was decided to defer consideration of re-enforcement of the Association's views until the turn of the year.

In respect of the proposed Database, Council's last meeting's decision not to support this initiative (which probably exists already from published sources in any case) had been taken before the Report and Recommendations of the Database sub-Committee (appointed by Council's previous meeting) had been promulgated. After prolonged discussion it was agreed the non-support decision be rescinded to allow the sub-Committee to complete its Report for circularisation to all Council Members in good time for their comments before the next SSPDC Council meeting on 4th October.

SEED
SUPPORT
SCHEME:

In his updating report the Chairman explained his efforts to reach an unequivocal understanding with NFUS regarding discussion of a burning down programme in Scotland (an extra condition for supporting the Seed Scheme which the English NFU has subsequently sought to impose), before Association support for stricter tolerances and grading standards could be given. Mr. Hunter read out two letters which had led to a further meeting of the Seed Potato Working Party in Edinburgh on 30th August. Mr. Brass thanked Mr. McKenzie for attending this meeting with him and for the help he gave from his long experience of the Seed Support Scheme negotiations. The understanding with NFUS cleared the way for changes in tolerances and grading standards to be introduced in this current (1988/89) Season and for a Working party request to DAFS to prepare a Paper on a burning down programme in Scotland for consideration by the Working Party in due course.

P.B.I.
ROYALTIES:

Council considered the recently published increases in rates of Royalties to be charged for growing state-bred varieties of potatoes, (the rights to which were sold in last year's privatisation of N.S.D.O.) from Season 1989/90 onwards. Discussion clearly revealed strong opposition to the very high rate of increases (78%) and the Association's inability to resist. It was agreed the next News Letter would make clear that the Association had at no time been consulted in this matter and recommend that each Member give very careful consideration to his own future growing programme.

ANNUAL/

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ELECTIONS:

Following completion today of the final stage of the merger of ADS Cluny Ltd. and Stokes Bomford Ltd., Mr. Hunter read a letter received earlier from Mr. W.P. Balfour submitting his resignation from Council under Rule 11 of the Association's Constitution and Rules. He also reported that Messrs. J.G.H. Fenton, P. Miller, J. Logan Milne, J.O. Robertson and A.S. Whitehead are due to retire by rotation on 31st October. Following discussion, Council instructed the Secretariat to proceed with the usual arrangements by circularising the whole Membership for nomination of Candidates for election to Council.

SPONSORSHIP:

The Chairman reported receipt of notification of a Scientific Conference to take place in Edinburgh next year and seeking sponsorship for this event. To provide time for further information to be obtained, this matter was deferred until Council's next meeting.

JOINT
LIAISON
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Hunter reminded Council that a meeting of the Joint (SPTA/NASPM) Liaison Committee usually takes place in Edinburgh in mid-October each year. He sought suggestions for a date and items for the Agenda for this year's meeting. After discussion it was felt Wednesday, 19th October would be an acceptable date and the Agenda should include the Scottish Inspectorates' 1988 Visit to England, NASPM's letter to the PMB re the Seed Support Scheme, Burning down and Plant Royalties.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Correspondence - Mr. Hunter reported receipt of three government letters with enclosures (totalling 150 pages) within two days recently, in respect of revision of the UPOV Convention (Plant Breeders Rights internationally), Legal Protection of microbiologically developed Plants and Animals, and Weights and Measures Legislation amendments. This last involves no changes for potatoes - the first two are independent (but inter-related) initiatives, the first having an envisaged time-scale of 7-10 years.

(b) Date of next meeting - Council confirmed its intention to meet again on Thursday, 27th October, 1988 in the Wheel Inn Motor Hotel, Scone and the Secretariat was instructed to make the usual arrangements accordingly.

The meeting then concluded with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

J.S. Brass.