

MINUTES of a MEETING of the COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
in Glenhurst Hotel, SCONE, at 7 p.m. on
Monday, 16th OCTOBER, 1989.

ACTION

PRESENT: Messrs. J.H. Barr, A.W. Bayne, G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, R. Doig, I. Melrose, J.R. McArthur, T. McClung and K.A. McKenzie, with Messrs. J.B. Hollywood, J.M. Marshall, R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

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

APOLOGIES: Mr. Hunter intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. J.G.H. Fenton, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell and J.O. Robertson.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the Meeting of Council in Scone on 14th September, 1989 (previously copied to each Council Member) were taken as read. The Chairman pointed out that the last sentence of the second paragraph on page 3 could be misunderstood. To avoid doubt, it was agreed to insert "as regards the composition of the J.C.C., in which" between the words "negotiation" and "there is" (deleting "and") in the penultimate line. Subject to this amendment the Minutes were formally approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Non-payment of Arbitration expenses - Mr. Hunter confirmed that Messrs. Glenisla Potatoes had been formally notified of suspension of their membership of the Association and that their further use of the Association's copyright Conditions had been withdrawn. Mr. Blackmore also confirmed the Fee and Expenses of the Arbiters' Clerk, awarded against and not paid by that Firm, had been settled from Association funds meantime and that following receipt of the Arbiters' instructions, Court Action against that Firm for recovery of the Arbiters' Fees and their Clerk's Fee and expenses is now in train.

RDH/DB

(b) Arbitration Procedures - Mr. Blackmore reported that amended guidance Notes for Arbiters had now been circulated to all Association Members. Mr. Barr pointed out that the Notes for Arbitrations between Members will require further amendment to include provision for pre-requisite deposits. It was agreed this will be put in hand.

DB

(c) Amendments to Potato Marketing Scheme - Mr. Hunter read out a letter from Mr. Peck (Secretary, P.M.B.) dated 10th October, 1989 confirming that one seat on the reconstituted Joint Consultative Committee has been reserved for a representative of S.P.T.A. During subsequent discussion it was reported that while no seats had been reserved specifically for the Scottish seed industry or the S.S.P.D.C., the P.M.B. is understood to favour continuation of the Scottish Advisory Committee in a consultative role only.

(d)/

(d) Voluntary Higher Quality Scheme - Introducing re-discussion of D.A.F.S. proposals, the Chairman recalled Council's last meeting had indicated virtually no support for the Scheme as proposed but had very strongly supported 100% tuber inspection of the whole Scottish classified seed crop to current statutory standards. Council had instructed exploratory discussion of these views with the Scottish Working Party, a meeting of which had taken place on 19th September.

At that meeting both N.F.U.S. and S.S.P.D.C. representatives voiced firm support for D.A.F.S.' proposed scheme but for S.P.T.A., Mr. Brass argued strongly that the proposals will not eradicate the small percentage of poor samples that disproportionately undermine the quality image of Scottish Seed. The matter was referred back to the constituent Organisation for further discussions. At a meeting of S.S.P.D.C. on 21st September however, an impression that the Working Party had supported the proposed Scheme had been challenged by both N.F.U.S. and S.P.T.A. representatives. Messrs. Cook and McArthur recounted the S.S.P.D.C. discussions and supported the conclusion that Mr. Bethel's view of the Working Party discussions had been somewhat misleading.

Mr. McKenzie asked for clarification regarding any latitude permitted to Association representatives in respect of personal views. From Council's ensuing discussion it was agreed that in inter-professional discussions Association delegates must promote Council's instructions exclusively but, as Ministerial appointees to the S.S.P.D.C., representatives to that forum could be permitted some flexibility in voicing a personal view also.

In reply to the Chair, Council re-iterated its very firm opposition to any voluntary higher quality scheme that (a) leaves poor quality material unaffected; (b) interferes with existing very high quality commercial arrangements, and (c) relies heavily on impractical and discredited burning down proposals. Notwithstanding this latter point, Mr. McArthur recorded his strongly held conviction that a Voluntary Higher Quality Scheme will be introduced by D.A.F.S. in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. Hunter proposed that in liaison with the Office Bearers, he should write in reply to D.A.F.S. recording Council's almost unanimous opposition to the proposed Voluntary Higher Quality Scheme, with briefly but clearly stated principal objections. In approving this proposal, Council instructed the letter must also re-affirm the Association's longstanding pressure for 100% tuber inspections, to the existing statutory standards, of the entire Scottish crop of classified seed potatoes and the letter should be copied to N.F.U.S. and S.S.P.D.C. for information.

RDH/DB

(e) Joint Liaison Committee - In reply, Mr. Hunter reported that an indicated further letter from N.A.S.P.M. was still awaited and in reply to Mr. Hollywood, the Chairman and Council Members explained the background to the decision to suspend further J.L.C. meetings meantime.

S.S.P.D.C.:

The Minutes of a meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council in Edinburgh on 21st September, 1989 (pre-copied to each member of S.P.T.A. Council) were taken as read and duly noted, much of the content of which had been incorporated into today's earlier discussions. In the event of the continuation of the S.S.P.D.C. into the 1990's, requiring the S.P.T.A. to submit ten nominations from which the Minister would appoint the Association's six representatives, Mr. Cook suggested those ten nominations should be open to and voted upon by the whole Association Membership. This suggestion was generally supported in ensuing discussion and it was agreed to implement it in due course.

RDH/DB

SCOTTISH
WORKING
PARTY:

The Chairman explained that the main content of the meeting of the Scottish Working Party in Edinburgh on 19th September, 1989 had already been reported during today's earlier discussions. In the event that discussion of V.C.U. Trials Sites had not taken place, Council adopted the view that provided the site at East Craigs is retained, the Association would support the position explained in D.A.F.S.' letter.

ANNUAL
ELECTION:

Mr. Hunter reported formally that Nominations of eight Candidates received to fill the eight vacancies that occurred in Council this year had meant all eight Candidates had been elected un-opposed without a postal ballot of all Association Members being required.

In this result, Mr. Doig's recent co-option to Council had been endorsed by the membership, Messrs. D.H. Lindsay, K.A. McKenzie and I. Melrose had been re-elected and Messrs. A.C. Galbraith, J.B. Hollywood, J.M. Marshall and D.Y. Stewart, Jnr. had all joined Council for the forthcoming three years. These results had been announced in the most recent News Letter to all Members of the Association.

Pointing out that this result confirmed the retirements of Messrs. J.H. Barr, T. McClung and P. Moffat from Council, Mr. Hunter added that both Messrs. Barr and McClung are second-generation representatives of company members of the Association, whose respective fathers had also served before them as representatives of the earlier potato trade Associations over many years in the past. In tribute to this record, spanning over fifty years, the Chairman stated the whole trade and the Association in general but Council in particular owed a great debt of appreciation and gratitude to both gentlemen for their efforts over so many years which, in Mr. Barr's case, also included eight years as an Office Bearer of the Association. Their most valued wisdom and experience will be deeply missed in Council. Those others present accorded wholehearted support for these remarks and extended best wishes to both gentlemen.

ANNUAL
ACCOUNTS:

Tabling copies of a draft Association Account for the year to 31st October, 1989 which he had prepared, Mr. Blackmore explained it included a number of estimated items (e.g. cost of today's meeting, further Bank interest, etc.) which will require amendment before finalisation. Commenting briefly on several headings in turn and comparing each with last year's figures and this year's Budget Estimates, he concluded by explaining that the indicated Surplus to date (f111) would reduce the amount of Corporation Tax recoverable by 50% (£74).
Following/

Following discussion, it was agreed to change the Association's printed stationery to A4 size and to incorporate this cost in this year's Account. Council viewed the Account as indicative of continuing close financial control and instructed submission of the Account when finalised to Audit as usual.

DB

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Complaints Period - Mr. Hollywood asked for clarification of the Association's policy on possible extension from ten days to fourteen days of the period specified in the Association's Conditions of Sale for notification of complaints. In reply, Mr. Hunter explained the legal aspects and several members spoke of practical considerations in support of retention of the present ten-day period.

(b) Date of next meeting - Council agreed to hold its next meeting in the Glenhurst (Wheel Inn) Hotel, Scone at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 23rd November, 1989 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the usual arrangements.

DB

The Chairman thanked all those present for a very workmanlike meeting. The meeting closed with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

S Brass