

MINUTES of a MEETING of the COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
in Glenhurst Hotel, SCONE at 2 p.m. on
Thursday, 23rd NOVEMBER, 1989.

PRESENT:

Messrs. G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, R. Doig, A.C. Galbraith, J.B. Hollywood, J.M. Marshall, D. Maxwell, P. Miller, J. Logan Milne, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, J.O. Robertson, D.Y. Stewart, Jnr., and J.M. Swinton with Messrs. R.D. Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

Mr. G.S. Brass took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting, particularly Messrs. A.C. Galbraith, J.B. Hollywood, J.M. Marshall and D.Y. Stewart, Jnr., following their recent election to Council.

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. J.P. Deuchar, J.G.H. Fenton, D.H. Lindsay and A.S. Whitehead.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the meeting of Council in Scone on 16th October, 1989 (previously copied to each Member of Council) were taken as read. Mr. Blackmore stated that Mr. Whitehead's pre-notified apology for absence from that Meeting had regretfully been omitted. Subject to suitable amendment in this respect the Minutes were formally approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Non-payment of Arbitration Expenses - The Secretary reported that the Court Hearing in the Arbiters' Action against Messrs. Glenisla Potatoes was now fixed for 12th December, 1989. The Chairman explained that during this morning's meeting of the Chairman's Committee it had been agreed to seek Council's approval to settle the Arbiters' Fees and Expenses from Association Funds (in the same way that their Clerk's Fee and Outlays had already been settled), pending recovery of these sums from Messrs. Glenisla Potatoes. After brief discussion Council instructed immediate payment be made to the Arbiters.

(b) Joint Liaison Committee - The Secretary read out a reply letter dated 20th October, 1989 from the Secretary of NASPM. The Chairman added background information for the new Members of Council. Ensuing discussion covered possible adverse reflection of continued non-dialogue on SPTA's public image. It was suggested a possible informal meeting of the Presidents of both Associations during Smithfield Week could be investigated and the Secretary was instructed accordingly.

(c) Voluntary Higher Quality Scheme - The Secretary confirmed that in response to a DAFS request to meet Association Members to discuss its proposals, an Open Meeting of Members had been arranged in the Glenhurst Hotel, Scone at 10.30 a.m. on Friday, 1st December, 1989. A good attendance by Members in response to the circularised announcement had been urged.

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There was prolonged, in-depth re-discussion of the many considerations involved in the proposals. It was strongly re-affirmed that SPTA was not party to any "trade-off" between the Seed Support Scheme and pressure for compulsory burning down. The Chairman felt SPTA should continue to be involved in Scottish Working Party discussions on the proposals, but there was firm support for a view that with clearly Minuted SPTA and SSPDC opposition to the proposals, the other constituent member of the Scottish Working Party was in the minority. It was also suggested DAFS be asked to clarify who it regards as speaking for the Scottish Industry.

ELECTION OF
OFFICE
BEARERS:

Before vacating the Chair and following the conclusion of his term of Office as President of the Association on 31st October, 1989 Mr. Brass commented briefly on the salient matters during that time. Recalling the eventual introduction of the Seed Support Scheme and its recent renewal for a further year, the conclusion and outcome of the governmental review of the PMB, he felt the Scottish Working Party had helped in providing a unified Scottish voice, a function which should be continued in connection with the VHQS which may well come eventually. He expressed thanks to Mr. McArthur as Vice President and to all Council Members for their support and, looking to the future, said much still remained to be done. Pressing for progress in spreading the workload among Council Members, he urged particular vigilance by the Association to observe carefully the actions of unfair Breeders' Agents who are inclined to apply unfair discrimination in the distribution and availability of certain varieties, in some cases applying restrictions which verge on breach of the code of fair trading practice.

Mr. Brass proposed and Mr. Miller seconded that Mr. McArthur be elected to serve as President of the Association for two years ending 31st October, 1991 and this proposal was carried unanimously. On taking over the Chair, Mr. McArthur thanked Council for the confidence in him thus expressed and spoke briefly in support of his proposal that Mr. Doig be elected to serve as Vice President of the Association for the same two year term. Seconded by Mr. Brass, this proposal was also carried unanimously.

In the absence of a proposal for a Deputy Vice President, the Chairman asked Council to give this matter further thought for resolution in early course.

Council formally re-appointed Mr. R.D. Hunter as Secretary and Mr. Blackmore as Assistant Secretary. In the light of the impending retiral of Mr. Frank R. Greig, C.A. from business, the firm of Messrs. Craig, McIntyre & Peacock, C.A., Glasgow was formally appointed as the Association's Auditor. The Secretary was instructed to convey the Association's appreciation and best wishes to Mr. Greig on his retiral.

APPOINT-
MENT OF
REPRESENT-
ATIVES:

After due consideration Council appointed the following Association representatives to serve on the following external Committees for the year to 31st October, 1990:-

POTATO MARKETING BOARD -

Joint Consultative Committee

Messrs. J.R. McArthur and R. Doig, with J.M. Swinton as deputy for either

Scottish/

Scottish Advisory Committee

Messrs. J.R. McArthur and R. Doig, with J.M. Swinton as deputy for either

Seed Potato Advisory Committee

Mr. K.A. McKenzie, with J.B. Hollywood as deputy

Ware Potato Imports Advisory Committee

Mr. D.H. Lindsay, with J.O. Robertson as deputy

OTHERS

British Potato Trades Consortium

Messrs. J.R. McArthur and R. Doig, with J.M. Swinton as deputy for either

British Rail/Freightliners

In abeyance meantime.

Joint (NASPM/SPTA) Liaison Committee

In abeyance meantime.

(DAFS') Seed Potato Consultative Panel

Messrs. J.R. McArthur and R. Doig, with J.B. Hollywood as deputy for either.

(Joint NFUS/SPTA/SSPDC) Scottish Working Party

Same as Consultative Panel above

Scottish Seed Potato Development Council

Six Association representatives appointed by the Minister of State for Agriculture - currently:-

Messrs. J.E. Cook, R. Doig, J.G.H. Fenton (Vice Chairman), J.R. McArthur, I.R. McKenzie and J.M. Swinton.

Following further consideration Council also made the following appointments to the Association's own INTERNAL COMMITTEES for the year to 31st October, 1990 (the President, Mr. J.R. McArthur, and the Vice President, Mr. R. Doig, being ex officio representatives in each case):-

Chairman's Committee -

Messrs. G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, J.G.H. Fenton, R.D. Hunter, D.H. Lindsay, K.A. McKenzie and J.O. Robertson.

Entertainments Committee -

Messrs. P. Miller (Convenor), A.W. Bayne, A.C. Galbraith, D.H. Lindsay and A.S. Whitehead.

Panel of Arbiters and RUCIP Assessors

All Members of Council, together with Mr. J.H. Barr (co-opted)

Press Officers

Messrs. J.R. McArthur and R. Doig

Scotch Seed Potato Exhibitors

Mr. G.S. Brass as Association's Nominee

Ware Interests

Mr. A.C. Galbraith accepted appointment as Council Member with responsibility for Ware Potato matters.

S.S.P.D.C.: Council duly noted the pre-copied Minutes of a meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council in Edinburgh on 2nd November, 1989 together with a pre-copied extending amendment thereof in respect of discussion of the Premium Seed Scheme (VHQS).

ENTERTAINMENTS COMMITTEE: Mr. Miller reported briefly on the meeting of the Entertainments Committee held in Perth on 26th October, 1989 and his subsequent discussion with the Isle of Skye Hotel, Perth regarding the Association's Annual Dinner and Dance. Full details of the Dance and dates for each leg of the Curling Match and the date of the 1990 Golf Outing have since been circularised to all Association Members. Mr. Hunter added that applications for 41 Dance Tickets had been received to today's date.

B.P.T.C.: Reporting on the meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium which he had attended with Mr. McArthur in London on the morning of 6th November, 1989, Mr. Brass highlighted discussion of the unlikely introduction of an E.C. Potato regime and resultant pressure against the unproductive costs of continued Consortium membership of the European Union of Wholesale Potato Trades. Council was reminded of its decision to support the Consortium if it decided to withdraw from the European Union and the possible effect this could have on continuation of the Consortium itself. It was decided to include this subject in the Agenda for further consideration at Council's next meeting.

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: Mr. Brass also reported briefly on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee held in London in the afternoon of 6th November, 1989. The Board Chairman, Mr. David Sinclair, had given details of the composition of the new J.C.C. and had commented on the significant differences of function it will have. There had also been discussion of the desired qualifications of the new Chairman still to be appointed.

WARE POTATO IMPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: In the absence of Mr. Lindsay, the Association's representative, who had attended the meeting of the Ware Potato Imports Advisory Committee in London on 7th November, 1989 and the P.M.B.'s own Report being not yet to hand, a Report to Council was not possible. Mr. Robertson commented briefly on such information as he had received.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMITTEE: The Chairman reported that the meeting of the Chairman's Committee earlier today had considered the now Audited Association Account for the year to 31st October, 1989 and had recommended Council instruct a copy thereof be sent to each Association Member as usual. Council duly adopted this recommendation.

Having given careful consideration to the Budget Estimates for the year to 31st October, 1989 the Chairman's Committee had been particularly concerned that of the present Membership Roll of 98, 42 Members were subscribing within the lowest (0 - 2,000) tonnage bracket and a further 26 Members were subscribing within the next lowest (2,001 - 6,000) tonnage bracket. While this progressive concentration of Membership within the two lowest brackets had increased over the past several years, the Committee had agreed that the concept of 42 Members trading less than 2,000 tonnes of Seed and Ware potatoes each per annum was neither truly representative or acceptable.

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The Committee had therefore recommended that both lowest tonnage brackets be combined for 1989/90 and that the Subscription for this 0 - 6,000 tonne bracket be £100 plus V.A.T., with the remaining 1988/89 tonnage brackets and Subscription rates being unchanged for 1989/90. Following Council's wide-ranging discussion this recommendation was formally adopted for submission to the next Annual General Meeting of Members.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Enquiry letter re transport "back-loading" - The Secretary read out a letter soliciting return loads from Association Members. It was decided not to include this enquiry in the next News Letter.

(b) Council Membership - Messrs. Cook and Hollywood sought Council's guidance on the effect of the relationship of their respective companies on their Council Membership. On Mr. Hunter's professional view, Council accepted that no infringement of Association Rules arose.

(c) Arbitrations Seminar - Mr. Hollywood described a Seminar on Arbitrations which he had attended and suggested a similar event could benefit Council Members. It was agreed this possibility be kept in mind.

(d) Dates of 1990 Meetings - In preliminary discussion Council agreed to continue with alternate evening meetings. It was decided to arrange the next Annual General Meeting of Association Members at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 11th January, 1990 followed by an Open meeting of Council immediately thereafter. It was further decided that Council will meet thereafter at 7 p.m. on Monday, 12th March, 1990; 2 p.m. on Thursday, 24th May, 1990; 7 p.m. on Monday, 9th July, 1990; 2 p.m. on Thursday, 6th September, 1990; 7 p.m. on Monday, 22nd October, 1990 and 2 p.m. on Thursday, 22nd November, 1990.

Before concluding the meeting the Chairman paid warmly appreciative tribute to Mr. Brass's commitment and hard work on Association business throughout his Presidency of the Association and these sentiments received Council's total support.

The meeting then terminated.

