

MINUTES of a MEETING of COUNCIL of  
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
in the Ice Rink, PERTH at 11 a.m. on  
Friday, 8th MARCH, 1991.

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PRESENT: Messrs. R. Doig, J.G.H. Fenton, A.C. Galbraith, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, J.O. Robertson, D. Smith, D.Y. Stewart, Jnr., and A.S. Whitehead, with R.D. Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

The President, Mr. J.R. McArthur, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting.

APOOGIES: The Secretary intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. J.P. Deuchar, J.M. Marshall and W. Nicoll.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the meeting of Council in Scone on 17th January, 1991 (previously copied to each Member of Council) were taken as read. They were duly approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING: (a) "Varieties" sub-Committee and (b) Entertainments Committee - Each forming separate Items later in today's Agenda, both of these matters were deferred for later discussion.

(c) Ingliston Event - The Secretary reported that although the site had been rent-free, the Stand costs of "shell" standfitting, hire of chairs, Association name banner and display "Logo" (re-usable), plus travelling and meals expenses, had totalled £475. In a brief review it was agreed the Stand site had been disappointing but that attendance at the Event, while perhaps low in quantity, had been of very high quality. It was felt that the Association should consider taking part again in any repeat Event (in say two or three years' time) and it was agreed meantime to write to the PMB conveying the Association's thanks to the Organisers.

(d) Council/Membership Liaison - Council considered an earlier proposal that each Council Member become responsible for direct representation of four or five other Association Members should be pursued. The Secretariat was instructed to prepare suggested lists on a geographical basis for pre-circulation to Council Members in readiness for their next meeting.

(e) Agra-Europe - Mr. Blackmore reported having ascertained by telephone that the Annual Subscription to the Agra Europe weekly publication costs £550, but if three or more Association Members subscribe through an Association Scheme, each would enjoy a 50% discount and pay only £275 each. Council Members already subscribing direct to this publication pointed out that such a discount exceeded even the highest-bracket Association Membership Subscription and agreed that the information provided in each week's issue is of very high quality and value and this discount opportunity would be very attractive to Members. The Secretariat was instructed to circularise this information to all Association Members in the next News Letter.

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(f) Press Fund - Mr. Hunter reported that the instructed advertisements had been placed at a total cost within the pre-set limit of £500. Council Members felt this initiative had been worthwhile. In subsequent discussion a possible revival of the Press function was considered and it was agreed to contact Mr. Colin Ley to discuss possible courses and costs.

S.S.P.D.C.:

Copies of the Minutes of a meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council at Ingliston on 7th February, 1991 had been pre-circulated in readiness for today's meeting. Mr. Hunter pointed out that this was the first meeting of that Council following its re-appointment in which, out of the Association's ten nominees, Messrs. J.G.H. Fenton and J.M. Swinton had been re-appointed, Mr. J.O. Robertson had been appointed for a second time and Messrs. A.C. ~~Adams~~<sup>Anderson</sup>, D. Peebles and G. Smillie had been appointed for the first time.

From those Minutes Council noted that current terms of employment of Development Council staff had been tabled for that Council's information. Today's meeting agreed this Association's requirements in this respect had thus been sufficiently met. It was reported that these terms of employment are normal and that "termination" provisions within them operate only in the event of a dissolution of the Development Council. In discussion of the new France Ecosse Plants Co. (FEP), exception was taken to selective offering of Shares to Scottish-based Rights-holding Companies rather than to all SSPDC levy-payers. Mr. Fenton explained this latter course is not possible. Council agreed these views be noted but not pursued.

The Chairman explained the next Development Council meeting (on 22nd March, 1991) is expected to consider the introduction of remuneration of its Members and he sought the Association Council's views. Discussion revealed firm opposition to such remuneration and agreed any payments made should be in reimbursement of expenses only. As guidance only for Association Members of the Development Council meantime, the Chairman (supported by Messrs. Doig and Stewart) moved that it be formally recorded that SPTA Council does not support remuneration of Members of the Development Council.

MEMBERSHIP  
AND SUBSCR-  
IPTIONS:

Council considered a letter from a Member and the Secretariat's Subscription reminder letter to which it referred, both of which had been photocopied for each Member of Council before the start of today's meeting. The Member's letter alleged that the Secretariat's letter was "most distasteful" and, "deploring arrogance", that Member wished to withdraw from Membership of the Association. Council did not share these criticisms of the Secretariat's letter and took note that following an earlier News Letter reminder Item, only nine Subscriptions had remained unpaid seven weeks after Subscriptions Notices were first issued to all Members. In recognition of this Member's longstanding support of the Association, however, and to avoid any undue precipitate action, Council agreed this Member be given the opportunity to re-consider its decision.

Mr. Hunter reported that there were 94 Members on the Association Roll on 1st November, 1990 and one new Member had been enrolled on 17th January, 1991. Since that date (and including the Member referred to above) four resignations have been received, reducing the total Roll to 91 Members as at today's date.

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In respect of Subscriptions, a total of £11,300 had been estimated receivable from those 95 Members. The four resignations, together with 6 tonnage bracket changes to date, had reduced this total to £11,100 from 91 Members, of whom 87 have subscribed a total of £10,680 up to today's date. After consideration of the four named Subscriptions still outstanding (one of whom was reported to have ceased trading) Council instructed each be telephoned to urge very earliest settlement.

In response to concern over the continuing decline in the Association's Membership Roll, Council instructed the Secretariat to prepare a list of all non-Member Licensed Merchants in Scotland and send a copy of it to each Member of Council.

ENTERTAIN-  
MENTS  
COMMITTEE:

Council considered a pre-circularised Report on a meeting of the Entertainments Committee in Perth on 28th January, 1991. The Secretary reported the results of subsequent enquiries to date. In readiness for a further early meeting of this Committee to finalise the venue for the 1991 Dinner Dance Function, the Secretariat was instructed to enquire if this could be held in the Huntingtower Hotel, Perth. It was further agreed to press for a reply to the Committee's "Clay Pigeon Shoot/Barbecue" enquiry letter.

"VARIETIES"  
SUB-COMMIT-  
TEE:

Council also considered a pre-circularised Report on a meeting of the "Varieties" sub-Committee in Perth on 31st January, 1991. In response to the sub-Committee's recommendation, Council agreed the sub-Committee remain in being under its Convenor, Mr. Galbraith, to deal specifically with Ware matters.

JOINT  
LIAISON  
COMMITTEE:

Council considered a pre-circulated brief report on a NASPM-hosted luncheon meeting of the Joint (SPTA/NASPM) Liaison Committee held in Ratho on 6th February, 1991. In response to NASPM's request for information on 100% Inspections, Council agreed a copy of the Department's Paper issued to the Consultative Panel (and which the Department had authorised for this purpose) be forwarded to NASPM.

Mr. Scott (NASPM President) had invited SPTA to adopt NASPM's initiative and likewise set up a Working Party to consider the feasibility of a merger of the two Associations to form a British Potato Trade Association. Council's discussion recognised the large seed growing and ware trading interest of SPTA membership, as well as the distinctive Scottish nature of Members' activities and the separate legal system they enjoy. Although not favouring this merger concept, Council agreed the Secretary should write NASPM to convey its welcome for the closest liaison between the two Associations.

Council also noted that NASPM's revision of its Arbitration Procedures was too far advanced to be able to incorporate any items from SPTA's recommended Guidelines. In summary, the Chairman felt the Committee's meeting had clearly been a very useful one.

SEED POTATO  
CONSULTATIVE  
PANEL:

Copies of a Report on a meeting of the Seed Potato Consultative Panel in Edinburgh on 25th February, 1991 had been distributed before the start of today's meeting. The Chairman enlarged briefly on the salient points which Council considered, it being noted that many of these points were to be furthered at a second Panel meeting to be arranged for May, 1991.

JOINT  
CONSULTATIVE  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. McArthur referred to a draft Report and relative letter he had received in respect of a meeting of the new Joint Consultative Committee which he had attended in London on 26th February, 1991. He explained that the whole meeting had been devoted to Ware Standards and he commented that the Chairman's control of the meeting had seemed less strong than formerly.

Drawing attention to Page 4 of the Report Mr. McArthur explained that his statement during the meeting that the Trade and other interests in Scotland are opposed to and will never accept a statutory 50mm. Riddle, had been omitted from the Report. He will write to the Chairman to rectify this. Mr. McKenzie proposed the support of the Scottish Working Party should be enlisted against a 50mm. Riddle and the Secretariat was instructed to arrange a meeting as soon as possible. Council's discussion confirmed the view that tuber sizes should be fixed by the trade in response to customers' demand and the only requirement should be to ensure that actual sizes are marked on the bag. In this same way, the Board should only fix the size of supplies which the Board itself is to buy.

In conclusion the Chairman asked that any points for the next JCC meeting (on 9th May, 1991) be placed before Council's next meeting (on 25th April, 1991).

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Meeting with PMB Licensing Committee - In reply to a letter from the PMB (pre-copied to each Council Member) Council agreed to accept an invitation for an Association representative to attend an exchange of views meeting on 29th April, 1991. Mr. Lindsay proposed that Mr. McArthur attend. In his turn and accepting this proposal, Mr. McArthur sought topics from Council that he should raise at the meeting and the Secretariat agreed to provide him with copies of earlier correspondence with the Committee on Licensing matters.

(b) Date of next meeting - Council confirmed its next meeting will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 25th April, 1991 and the venue to be fixed once the costs of today's meeting are known.

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

