

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the ICE RINK,
GLOVER STREET, PERTH at 2.30 p.m. on
Thursday, 30 January, 2003.

PRESENT: Messrs. R. J. S. Doig, D. J. Harley, R. Haynes, A. D. Lamont, V. Lumb, J. Macfarlane, J. R. McArthur, K. A. McKenzie, J. L. Milne, A. B. Pullar, A. J. B. Redpath and D. Y. Stewart along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

Mr V. Lumb, President occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting. Mr J. Grant and Mr J. O. Robertson who had been present at the Annual General Meeting accepted an invitation from the Chairman to remain for the meeting of Council.

- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of A. M. Beattie, T. Halliwell, C. J. Herron, H. Hughes, R. McKay, A. Melrose and P. Peebles.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 21 November 2002 was taken as read approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
 - (a) Entertainment Matters: Arising from Item (3)(a) The Annual Dinner and Dance held on Friday 6 December 2002 was considered a success with 95 attending. Numbers were lower than expected but this had led to greater comfort for those present. Due to reduced numbers there had been a deficit of £43.50. The raffle had realised £290.00 after the prizes had been paid. The President would let Council know which charities would benefit from the proceeds. Mr A. B. Pullar, the Entertainments Convenor opened a discussion on the next Dinner and Dance. A suggestion that a different dance band should be considered resulted in no alternative being proposed. After a wide discussion it was agreed that the Association should retain the event at the Huntingtower Hotel on the same Friday in December. The provisional reservation was to be confirmed with the Hotel and with Willie Simpson's dance band.
Members were reminded that the second round of the Association's curling competition was booked for Perth on Friday 7 March 2003 at 3.00 p.m.
 - (b) SEERAD Matters: Item (3)(c) These Items could be discussed under Item (8) on the agenda.
 - (c) Seed Potato Trail: Arising from Item (3)(d) The Secretary reported that he had received a letter from the Seed Sectoral Group of the British Potato Council acknowledging receipt of SPTA's letter concerning the proposals for a Seed Potato Trail.
 - (d) Training for Arbiters: Arising from item (5) Mr J. R. McArthur confirmed he was prepared to organise a mock arbitration with the assistance of the other experienced Arbiters. This was provisionally fixed for Thursday 22 May 2003.
- (4) ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary confirmed that the Association Accounts for the year to 31 October 2002 had been approved earlier in the day at the Annual General Meeting of Members of the Association.
- (5) 2002/2003 ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS: Council noted that its recommendation with regard to the level of subscriptions for the year to 31

October 2003 had been approved at the Annual General Meeting of Members. The Secretary was instructed to proceed with arrangements to ingather the subscriptions from Members for the current year.

- (6) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: The Secretary had circulated a copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 3 December 2002. Mr Stewart indicated that there was nothing too contentious discussed at the meeting and gave a brief summary of the leading items. It was noted that agreement had been reached between the BPC and WTB of Hannover whereby the BPC would provide WAPS prices for use by the new Potato Futures Market. A blight campaign 'The fight against Blight' had been put into effect. In Holland dump hygiene was backed by statute. The BPC's strategy on the project was based on education and awareness of best practice through this campaign and use of the website. Council were concerned that in addition to dumps another source of blight infection was organic crops. It was alleged that in one area this year that an organic potato crop was the source of serious blight infection. In general blight originated in dumps but it was suggested that the Association should consider writing to SEERAD with a copy to BPC on the subject. SEERAD have a burning down policy for aphid infestation. Perhaps blight could be treated in the same way. A report on the 'Fish and Chip Shop of the Year' campaign was noted and A. Pullar was concerned that potatoes were not mentioned in any publicity of the project. It was also noted that the BPC was concerned that an outbreak of Ring Rot in a crop of Lady Rosetta in Holland had not been reported through the proper channels as required by EU regulations. The BPC would be putting out a Press Release. All other matters were fully reported in the minute
- (7) NASPM RESPONSE TO SPTA: The Secretary had circulated a copy of a letter from the President of NASPM following our Association's comments on the amendments made by NASPM to the proposed constitution. Council was taken aback and amazed by the contents of the letter, which was totally contrary to the outcome of the meeting in York on 7 March 2002. The minute of that JPTC meeting had been prepared by NASPM. It was agreed that SPTA should not be the party to reject further discussion but should go back to the points that NASPM agreed to as recorded in that minute and seek clarification of their current change of policy. The President was to prepare a report for agreement to be put to NASPM.
- (8) SCOTTISH SEED POTATO CONSULTATIVE PANEL: The minute of the meeting of 22 November 2002 had been issued with the agenda for this meeting. The report was very full and all points were well covered but members were asked for their comments. The meeting of the Panel had been updated on progress with the PCN Directive. The current directive had served the industry reasonably well and even if it were not replaced SEERAD would continue to control PCN in classified seed and could introduce control measurers for farm-saved seed under domestic plant health legislation.
- (9) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL PROPOSALS FOR LEVY RATES IN 2003/2004: The Secretary had issued SEERAD's consultation paper on the subject with the agenda. The BPC proposed a two-tier system of levies for both area and tonnage. For payment by the due date they proposed a basic levy of £39 per hectare on planted area and for payment received after the due date a higher levy of £44 per hectare. The basic levy proposed for purchasers is 17p per tonne received by the due date and 19p per tonne for payment after the due date. It was noted that this involved no increase for those who paid on time. Council supported the proposals and the secretary was instructed to write to SEERAD to that effect. Concern was

expressed at the possibility of reduced BPC income and level of services due to the anticipated reduced level of planting in 2003. A continued monitoring of costs and careful budgeting would be required.

- (10) INSPECTION OF SEED POTATOES IN ONE TONNE AND ONE+ TONNE CONTAINERS: This item was to be raised by T. Halliwell on behalf of members but due to snow he was unable to be present. The President indicated that the Inverurie office of SEERAD had started implementing a requirement where stocks graded into large containers required to have at least one container tipped out for inspection per stock. It was felt that this was impractical, unnecessary and costly especially in the case of VTSC and other small stocks. It was known that the very odd unscrupulous growers had topped out containers but it was felt that all growers should not suffer for the faults of one or two. It was reported that in certain areas this requirement was already being carried out. It was agreed that fuller details should be obtained from the parties concerned before a case is submitted.
- (11) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:

Letters from the Scottish Executive headed:

- (a) "Potato Brown Rot: Import of Potatoes from Egypt".
(Letter sent to Scottish processing & ware importing companies)
- (b) "British Potato Council Proposals for Levy Rates in 2003/2004".
- (c) "Relocation of SEERAD Area Offices".

Letter from SASA headed

- (a) "The Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel".

Letter from DEFRA

- (a) "Amendment to the Potato Industry Development Council Order 1997".
(Copy of the amended order 2002)

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Seed Industry Trail". (Letter from SSG acknowledging SPTA's letter)
- (b) "Potato Newsletter". (December issue)
- (c) "Minute of British Potato Council Meeting of 3 December 2002".
- (d) "The Potato Industry Development Council (Amendment) Order 2002".
(Copy of Notice to Producers and Purchasers)

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Draft Proposals for Harmonised Limits for Tin (SANCO/1034/2002-1)".
- (b) "Food Standards Agency News December/January Issue".
- (c) "Food Standards Agency Open Board Meeting - Invitation".
- (d) "The Plastic Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2002".
- (e) "Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants 35th Session (Tanzania) March 2003: Contaminants".
- (f) "Food Labelling Initiative – Criteria for the use of terms Fresh, Pure, Natural etc in Food Labelling".

- (g) "EC Working Group Meeting – Report".
- (h) "The Kava-kava in Food (Scotland) Regulations 2002".
- (i) Codex Alimentarius Documents distributed by Food Standards Agency Scotland – Document Distribution List".
- (j) "35th Session of Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants".
- (k) "Food Standards Agency Open Board Meeting – Invitation".

Letter from British Heart Foundation

- (a) "Appeal for Donation".

Letters from NASPM

- (a) "Response to SPTA's Letter of 4 November 2002".
- (b) "Thank you letter from NASPM President for enjoyable time at Dinner & Dance".

Letter from Trade Partners UK

- (a) "Time for Trade Magazine – November issue".

Letter from Gilbert McClung Ltd

- (a) "Notifying Association that they have ceased trading and resigning their membership".

Letter from Scottish food and Drink

- (a) "Newsletter – November issue".

Letter from potatocrop.com

- (a) "Giving details of their website and offering their services"

The Secretary was asked to write to Tom McClung thanking him for his years of support and for his service as a Council member.

- (12) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 13 March 2003 in Perth.

- (13) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- (a) World Potato Congress: April 2003: D. J. Harley reported that grant funding had been secured to the tune of £750 per attendee going to the event in China at the end of April. Anyone wishing to go should make application as soon as possible. He said that the BPC report produced in connection with preparations for the WPC had acted as a catalyst and stimulated the GB industry to take an interest in China as a potential export market.

There being no further business the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

