

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the QUEENS
HOTEL, LEONARD STREET, PERTH at
10.00 a.m. on Thursday, 5 May, 2005.

PRESENT: T. Halliwell, D. J. Harley, C. J. Herron, A. D. Lamont, V. Lumb, J. Macfarlane, J. R. McArthur, R. McKay, A. B. Pullar, N. Pullar and A. J. B. Redpath along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

The Association President, Mr A. J. B. Redpath, occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting. Before commencing the meeting the President intimated the death of Ken McKenzie. He asked Ron McArthur to say a few words. Ken was elected to Council in 1978 and served until May 2003, a period of almost 25 years. He was President from 1985 to 1987. He was a stalwart and active member of the Association and will be sadly missed. The Secretary was instructed to write a letter of condolence to Mrs McKenzie and family.

The Chairman intimated that the Secretary had been asked to let Council know that NASPM were organising a Summer Business Outing to Hungary. Leaflets with application slips on the event were available from the Secretary. It would last from Wednesday 6 July to Friday 8 July. The Secretary also had brochures on the VTSC Growers' Association outing to Poland from 16 June to 19 June if anyone was interested in going.

- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of R. J. S. Doig, R. Haynes, H. Hughes, A. Melrose, J. L. Milne, P. Peebles, A. Skea and D. Y. Stewart.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 10 March 2005 was taken as read approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
 - (a) Entertainment Matters: Arising from Item (3)(a) – Curling, the Secretary had received an application form for ice for next season from Perth Ice Rink. It was agreed the Secretary should apply for the same ice as in past years for Friday 3 March 2006. A. B. Pullar, Entertainments Convener, said that arrangements for the annual golf outing at Pitlochry Golf Course were confirmed for Friday 27 May 2005. The entry forms were already out to the membership and he anticipated a good turnout from his contacts with most companies. Annual Dinner and Dance, he also confirmed that the Carnoustie Golf Hotel had been booked for the Annual Dinner and Dance on Friday 11 November 2005. The room cost for overnight stay would be £65.
All other matters were on the agenda.
- (4) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: The Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 4 March 2005 was issued with the agenda. D. J. Harley gave a resume of the report. He said the meeting had been re-scheduled to accommodate the announcement of the outcome of the Ministerial Review of the BPC. The agenda was dominated by consideration of the review. The report on the review was available on the Defra website. A large part of the meeting was taken up by discussion on responses and the way forward. Mr Harley said that Ministers had made clear their intention to carry out a fundamental and wide ranging review of the five main agricultural and horticultural levy bodies, although at the time of the meeting, there had been no statement as to who would lead this process. It has

since been announced that Rosemary Radcliffe who is an economist would lead the review team. A paper on the Review of Levy Collection Methods was considered and it was recommended that serious consideration should be given to either a tonnage only levy or income drawn from the Single Farm Payment scheme. The future role of the BPC consumer marketing strategy was debated. Activities where levy funded promotion linked to national origin or brands, such as in store promotions, competitions, recipes etc were contrary to the State Aids legislation and would not be continued. National Chip Week was the exception and would carry on although the Chief Executive reminded the Council that it had been decided to transfer funds to the health campaign, thereby reducing the 2005 National Chip Week budget by 50%. The Council had agreed that there should be a fundamental review of its R&D strategy. The Chairman, in summarising the discussion, said that this would be carried out in the context of the wider review, and take full account of internal and external changes. The aims would be to define what they needed to know; to identify people and organisations who can help; to specify gaps and opportunities; and to translate these into major project ideas. The process would include examination of potential sources of funding, as well as opportunities for European and international co-operation. On Statistics and Market Information the Chief Executive had said that this remained an area of the BPC's work where there was less than industry unanimity on what was required and beneficial; this was reflected in the report on the Ministerial review. A number of issues had been identified for detailed examination including, collection of price information, contract with futures market, statistics, collaboration with other levy bodies and grower panel. A presentation on Field Activities had been given and the introduction of a map-based planting return, based on their GIS system, had resulted in enormous improvements in terms of quality of data. Accurate field identification was an essential element in obtaining good planting information, and so far the level of accuracy had been increased from 40% to 65%. The map-return system, which had been piloted in 2004, would be rolled out nationwide in the current season and the Field Officers were confident that, as a result, a 99% level of accuracy was realistic. The Council received an update report on Acrylamide. It was noted that the information had been made available to the industry via email bulletins and the BPC Website. The BPC was in a unique position to be able to act as an intermediary and facilitator for industry debate and action. All items were well reported in the minute and any member wishing a copy of the report should contact the BPC or the Secretary.

- (5) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: The Minute of the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group held on 24 February 2005 which was not available at the previous Council meeting had been issued with the agenda. The Chairman had given a fairly full resume of the meeting at the last Council meeting but asked for comments or questions from the floor. Neil Pullar confirmed that the report detailed a breakdown of all the BPC's export promotion activities for 2005/06. He also said that 'Assured Produce' had been signed up as the organisation implementing the accreditation scheme for the 'Safe Haven' project. The scheme would be rolled out by early summer and letters encouraging people and companies to join would be issued. Under the same subject concern was expressed at the rumour that seed had again been brought into southeast Scotland for ware production. Council were interested to know the extent of this and requested that the Secretary write to SEERAD and request information on the number of lots involved and the tonnage.

(6) BRITISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION: A copy of the amended draft Constitution and Rules for the new body was issued to the members present who were all in favour of the terms agreed at the joint meeting on 2 March 2005. It was agreed our Council should now await the decision of NASPM Council on 18 May. If the outcome is favourable the details drawn up by Council should go out to all the membership seeking their opinion.

(7) RESPONSES TO REVIEW OF BPC AND THE MEETING ON 26 MAY 2005: The Chairman explained the reason for the meeting and went over the main points in SPTA's response to the review. After discussion it was suggested that A. Redpath, C. Herron, D. Harley, V. Lumb, A Pullar and L. Milne should represent the Association. The Secretary was to organise that the members select were sent copies of the BPC Business Plan if they did not already have it. Council then had a brief look through the Business Plan and a number of points were noted. Planned activities in R & D reflected the strong support from stakeholders in the review. Investment in R & D was to increase to £1.3m in 2005-6 from £1.17m in 2004-5. The budget for Knowledge Transfer was being reduced by 17%. As regards Marketing they no longer intended funding retail promotion or providing marketing materials such as posters, stickers or recipe booklets. They would concentrate on core benefits of potatoes especially healthy eating and defend potatoes in cases of scares and health and nutrition matters. Market Information was being cut from £119k to £88k. They were also considering ceasing price reporting or moving it to a subscription service. The budget supporting export work was being cut to £186k from £210k currently.

(8) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:

Letters from the Scottish Office headed:

- (a) "Scottish Seed Potatoes Exports to Indonesia".
(Sent to Exporters of Seed and Ware Potatoes).
- (b) "Consolidation of Plant Health Legislation: Industry Consultation on key Issues".
- (c) "Seed Potatoes Fees Regulations – Amendments Required".
- (d) "Proposed Amendments to the Seed Potato Regulations".
(Acknowledgement of SPTA Response and Suggestion of Forum)
- (e) "Ware Potato Exports: Registration Numbers".
- (f) "The Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2000: Regulation 6".
- (g) "Harmonisation of Phytosanitary Certificates".
(By email following discussion with V. Lumb)
- (h) "Colorado Beetle Publicity Campaign 2005-2007".

Letter from SASA headed

- (a) "Inspection of Growing Crops 2005". (Notes to all Growers)

Letters from DEFRA

- (a) "First Report from the Sustainable Farming and Food Research Priorities".
- (b) "Levy Board Review: Notice of Intended Meeting". (By email)

Letters from the British Potato Council

- (a) "Draft Business Plan".
- (b) "Potato Newsletter" (March Edition)

- (c) "Statutory Review of the BPC".
- (d) "Minute of the British Potato Council Meeting of 4 March 2005".
- (e) "BPC Retail Report". (March Edition)
- (f) "BPC – Euro-Potato"
- (g) "Minute of the Seed Sectoral Group Meeting of 24 February 2005".
- (h) "PotatoReporter" (Details of 'Potato 2005' in Emmeloord)
- (i) "Staff Changes Within BPC Marketing".
- (j) "Press Information – End of March Stocks".
- (k) "BPC Retail Report".
- (l) "Promoting the Potato to Caterers".

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Food Standards Agency – News". (March 2005 Edition)
- (b) "Food Labelling Amendment (Scotland) (No.2) Regulations 2004".
- (c) "Commission Working Group on Flavourings – 1 March 2005".
- (d) "The Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Scotland) Regulations 2005".
- (e) "The Food Standard Agency Strategic Plan 2005 - 2010".
(Available on website)
- (f) "Food Standards Agency Open Board Meeting - Invitation".
- (g) "Update on 3-MCPD".
- (h) "SSI 2005/215 The Smoke Flavourings (Scotland) Regulations 2005".

Email from The National Association of Seed Potato Merchants

- (a) "Confirming Booking of Room for SPTA's President at NASPM Annual Dinner".

Letter from Pesticides Safety Directorate

- (a) "The Sustainable use of Plant Protection Products – Draft national Strategy".

Letter from Perth Ice Rink

- (a) "Ice Booking Form". (To be Returned by 27 May)

(9) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the June meeting would not take place and that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 18 August 2005. As agreed at the start of this Council term this meeting will take place in the Forfar area. It was suggested that the Finavon Inn should be tried and the meeting starting at 2.00p.m. with lunch at 1.00p.m.

(10) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

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

