

### Quality Meat Scotland

Minutes of the 81<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Board

9<sup>th</sup> November 2023

SARDC Boardroom

**Present:**

K. Rowell (Chair)  
A. Irvine (Virtual)  
A. Ivory  
A. McGowan  
C. Ruxton  
E. Buckby  
G. Wallace  
I. Bentley  
N. Jeffrey  
P. Brown  
S. Jarron (Virtual PM)

**In Attendance:**

S. Millar (Chief Executive)  
D. Phillips (Standards Officer)  
P. Byrne (Accountant) (Virtual)  
H. Curran (Sponsor Team)  
A. Bearhop (Sponsor Team)

**Minutes:**

K. McCormack

**Apologies:**

J. Duncan Grant

Detail	Action
<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>  Kate Rowell welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room as it was Aileen Barhop's first QMS Board meeting since she was part of the sponsor team 10 years ago. Aileen is Head of Industry Growth at Scottish Government and is part of the QMS sponsor team.  There was one apology from Jilly Duncan Grant.  Scott Jarron joined the meeting in the afternoon virtually.	
<b>Additions to the Agenda</b>  PGI and State Aid was added to the agenda.	
<b>Declaration of interests in any agenda item</b>  The following Board members declared an interest as being Quality Assurance members and levy payers however these did not conflict with any agenda item:  ▪ Niall Jeffrey	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kate Rowell</li> <li>▪ Adrian Ivory</li> <li>▪ Ann Irvine</li> <li>▪ Emma Buckby</li> </ul> <p>Ian Bentley declared an interest as being president of Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers and on the Board of Scotbeef Ltd.</p> <p>Andy McGowan declared an interest due to him being a member on the Board of SAOS who established FIA and who are part of the ownership board of SARDC who own the rural centre where the QMS office is based.</p>	
<p><b>Minutes of Board Meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023</b></p> <p>The minutes were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Kirsty McCormack will amend the typo on page 4 – committee should be changed to committed.</p>	<b>Kirsty</b>
<p><b>Commercial in Confidence – Update on Action Points</b></p> <p>The Board reviewed the actions from the previous meeting with no further updates given.</p> <p>It was agreed for Kirsty McCormack to send round the diary invite to the joint parliamentary reception on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024.</p>	<b>Kirsty</b>
<p><b>Financial Report 5 Months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023</b></p> <p>Paul Byrne presented the financial report for the 2023/ 2024 financial year to the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.</p> <p>Paul advised there were no areas of concern.</p>	
<p><b>Review of Reserve's Policy</b></p> <p>The Reserves policy will be reviewed and discussed at Board meetings in September and February. It will be on the agenda at the meetings in April, June and November however will only be for discussion if required.</p> <p>The Board agreed there was nothing for discussion/ no changes to be made.</p>	
<p><b>Levy Organisation Benchmarking Report</b></p> <p>Paul Byrne presented the report which benchmarked against 6 other similar levy organisations.</p> <p>He highlighted that the figures used were from an average from 2 years of each organisations published accounts from 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.</p>	

<p>The Board discussed and agreed for Paul to look at the following requests to include in next year's report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Benchmark levy rates</li> <li>▪ Leverage effect – change the title and give explanation.</li> </ul> <p>Comments were made that this report shows QMS has a very positive story and there may be information we can use for the QMS industry workshops.</p> <p>The Board thanked Paul for this very useful report.</p>	<p><b>Paul</b></p>
<p><b>QMS Direction on Net Zero and Sustainability Work</b></p> <p>Professor John Gilliland joined the Board to present an update on the work that he does on 'Measuring &amp; Managing Farms Towards Net Zero' and to discuss his thoughts on the key issues that QMS should prioritise when it comes to net zero which were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communicate the Definition of Net Zero &amp; correct its Interpretation</li> <li>▪ Baselining Carbon Stocks/Sequestration &amp; not just Emissions..... "knowing my numbers"</li> <li>▪ LCAs penalise by "Averaging." Create a Vision for "Accuracy" delivering TIER 3 factors</li> <li>▪ Make sure Positive Change is picked up by National Inventory &amp; by Scope 3 Declarations</li> <li>▪ The necessity to "Inset" carbon within a farm business</li> <li>▪ Reporting Methane Emissions using GWP*....</li> <li>▪ Respond to DESNZ Consultation..... The Farming &amp; Food Sector is different to other Sectors</li> <li>▪ The Imperative to deliver other Public Goods, as well as Net Zero <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving Water Quality, Biodiversity.....</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>John advised that he does a lot of work with AHDB and he asked on behalf of them that we work together and that when we are approaching Scottish Government, we do it collectively.</p> <p>Kirsty McCormack will share Professor John Gilliland's slides with the Board.</p>	<p><b>Kirsty</b></p>
<p><b>Red Tractor/ Green Farm Commitment</b></p> <p>Sarah Millar gave an update to the red tractor/ green farm commitment since the last discussion at the Board planning day.</p> <p>Sarah advised that for Brand evolution – Emma Heath is going to look at consumer testing. Sarah confirmed that work will be done with the pig sector first. Bruce McConachie and Kathryn Kerr are going to put together a working group for net zero work/ carbon trust.</p>	<p><b>Emma H</b></p>

<p>It was noted that we should invite John Gilliland if we talk with NFUS Livestock committee. Sarah Millar will contact NFUS.</p>	<p><b>Sarah</b></p>
<p><b>Highlight Report &amp; Implementation Plans 2023/ 2024</b></p> <p>The Executive Team presented highlights and challenges from working on their department's objectives since September, this included:</p> <p><u>Corporate Services – Debbie Phillips</u> Debbie highlighted that we had received 28 applications for the Health &amp; Education coordinator role. Inviting 8 to interview on the 16<sup>th</sup> &amp; 17<sup>th</sup> November. Debbie is joining the interview panel along with Tom Maxwell and Laura Clark.</p> <p><u>Business Development – Tom Gibson</u> Tom highlighted it was a great 2023 Anuga show with 160 delegate meetings taken place during the show. Currently collating feedback.</p> <p>Tom agreed to share with the Board, pictures of the stand at Anuga.</p> <p><u>Communications &amp; External Affairs – Tom Maxwell</u> Tom highlighted that comms have gone out for the QMS Industry workshops. Bookings are done through Eventbrite.</p> <p>Tom confirmed that he is going to be doing a infographics project which will include 'what is net zero'.</p> <p><u>Marketing – Emma Heath</u> Emma presented the QMS Christmas advert to the Board and confirmed that it airs from 20<sup>th</sup> November – 24<sup>th</sup> December. The full version is 30 seconds but there are also 10 seconds clips that will be aired.</p>	<p><b>Tom G</b></p>
<p><b>QMS Committee Meeting Updates</b></p>	
<p><b>Cattle &amp; Sheep Industry Advisory Group – 28<sup>th</sup> June</b></p> <p>Niall Jeffrey gave an update for the Cattle &amp; Sheep Industry Advisory group meeting which took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> June at SRUC Easter Howgate.</p> <p>Niall highlighted the main topics which were on the agenda:</p> <p><u>SRUC Easter Howgate visit</u> – Group were given an understanding on SRUCs work on feed efficiency, looking at how diets are monitored and some of the outcomes of trials. Discussion on breeding for methane efficiency was discussed as well as how SRUC are working to capture GHG and establish effective ways to mitigate them.</p> <p><u>QMS Strategy</u> – Kate gave an update on the new 5 year strategy that had just been announced.</p>	

<p><u>Monitor Farm Programme</u> - Bruce McConachie gave an update highlighting some of the successes of the programme engaging large numbers of farmers.</p> <p><u>Meat Eating Quality</u> – Bruce gave an update which resulted in the group discussing a potential for evolving the Meat Eating Quality Work in to a project to trial where we could measure objective qualities for verifying eating quality and establish a framework for this.</p> <p><u>Industry Development further work</u> – Bruce gave an update on genomics proposal and antimicrobial use pilot.</p> <p>Kate Rowell highlighted that perhaps SRUC Easter Howgate would be a place to visit for next year’s September away day.</p>	
<p><b>Audit &amp; Risk Management – 18<sup>th</sup> October</b></p> <p>Ann Irvine gave an update from the Audit &amp; Risk management committee meeting which took place on the 18<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p>Ann highlighted the two main topics which were on the agenda:</p> <p><u>Review of risk register</u></p> <p>Ann advised that Debbie Phillips had issued the updated risk register that week which confirmed what changes had been made following the committees review.</p> <p>Ann highlighted that there had not been many responses from the Board on comments against the risk register and asked for more input going forward.</p> <p><u>Review of committee terms of reference</u></p> <p>The committee agreed to make some small changes but nothing significant to highlight.</p>	
<p><b>Scottish Red Meat Industry Resilience Group – 30<sup>th</sup> October</b></p> <p>Kate Rowell gave an update from the recent QMS Scottish Red Meat Industry Resilience Group meeting which took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> October at Moredun.</p> <p>Kate highlighted the main topics which were on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>QMS Strategy Update</u> – Sarah Millar gave a presentation on the QMS strategy work</li> <li>▪ <u>Biodiversity</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Current industry issues</u> – All members highlighted issues which they are facing within their sector</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Chief Executives Report</b></p> <p>Sarah Millar highlighted key information from the report to the Board since the last meeting in September.</p> <p>Sarah presented to the Board on potential future recruitment following the recent SMT planning session.</p> <p>Sarah advised that the following new posts/ changes are going to be looked in the coming months and asked for Boards approval.</p> <p>The Board approved the direction of travel.</p>	
<p><b>Chairs Report</b></p> <p>Kate Rowell updated the Board on the meetings and activities that she has been a part of over the past couple of months which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Farming Roundtable meetings</li> <li>▪ Farmers Guardian Column</li> <li>▪ Scottish Agriculture Awards</li> <li>▪ School meals event in parliament</li> <li>▪ Dublin – European roundtable for sustainability</li> <li>▪ ARIOB Meeting</li> <li>▪ Meat Business Women event in Leeds</li> </ul> <p>Kate recommended Meat Business Woman to Ann, Carrie, Emma and Jilly as it's a great network of ladies working throughout the meat industry.</p>	
<p>There being no further business, the meeting was closed.</p> <p>Future meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024</li> <li>▪ Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024</li> </ul>	