

Quality Meat Scotland
 Minutes of the 85th Meeting of the Board
 26th September 2024
 The Gailes Hotel, Ayr

Present:

K. Rowell (Chair)
 A. Irvine
 A. Ivory
 A. McGowan
 C. Ruxton
 E. Buckby
 I. Bentley
 J. Duncan Grant (Virtual)
 N. Jeffrey
 P. Brown
 S. Jarron

In Attendance:

S. Millar (Chief Executive)
 D. Phillips (Standards Officer)
 P. Byrne (Accountant)

Minutes:

K. McCormack

Apologies:

G. Wallace

Detail	Action
<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Kate Rowell welcomed everyone to the meeting. There was one apology from Gordon Wallace.</p>	
<p>Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>The following items were added to the agenda under AOB:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lamb for St Andrews Day 	
<p>Declaration of interests in any agenda item</p> <p>The following Board members declared an interest as being Quality Assurance members and levy payers however these did not conflict with any agenda item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Niall Jeffrey ▪ Kate Rowell ▪ Adrian Ivory ▪ Ann Irvine ▪ Emma Buckby <p>Ian Bentley declared an interest as being 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</p>	

own the rural centre where the QMS office is based.	
Minutes of Board Meeting on the 6th June 2024 The minutes from the meeting on the 6 th June were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
Commercial in Confidence – Update on Action Points The Board reviewed the actions from the previous meeting and updates were given.	
Review of Reserves Policy Paul Byrne presented the reserves policy asking for the Board to review the proposal to maintain our appetite for risk at ‘medium’.	
Mr Fairlie MSP, Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity and Mr George Burgess, Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy joined the Board meeting. Introductions were given around the room.	
Chairs Report Kate Rowell highlighted key information to the Board from her Chair’s report and updated them on key activities since the last meeting in June which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Royal Highland Show 2024 ▪ Andrew Bowie MP at Kepak Macintosh Donald ▪ Richard Baker MP at Alex Mitchell Butchers in Glenrothes ▪ Alistair Carmichael MP at Orkney Auction Mart ▪ Red Meat Industry Profile launch at Turriff Show ▪ Regenerative farming event at the James Hutton Institute ▪ NSA sheep event at Malvern ▪ Opening of SRUC’s Green Shed ▪ On farm filming to help Campbell Brothers ▪ Farming roundtable ▪ ARIOB ▪ Farmers Guardian Column Kate notified the Board of the successful HRH visit on the 24 th September. The visit marks a significant milestone for the company, which has grown from a single retail unit in 1987 to a network of 13 high street shops, a cutting plant, and a factory employing over 150 local people.	
Chief Executives Report Sarah Millar highlighted key information to the Board from her report updating them on activities since the last meeting in June which included the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gilmour’s event at Dover House – Successful launch of Scotch Beef to 	

<p>London foodservice by kind permission of the Secretary of State for Scotland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ World Steak Challenge in Amsterdam – Was part of the judging panel tasting/ judging over 30 steaks. ▪ ABP Amsterdam store visits – Visits opened up export opportunities. ▪ New marketing campaign – went live in September with great feedback. Christmas advert will go live in November ▪ Health and education ambassadors – recruited 30 to help give us some more boots on the ground to support outreach work. 	
<p>Financial Report 5 Months to 31st August 2024</p> <p>Paul Byrne presented the financial report for the 2024/ 2025 financial year to the 31st August 2024.</p>	
<p>Update Report & Implementation Plans 2024/ 2025</p> <p>The Strategic Management Team highlighted some of their key activities since the 23rd May which included:</p> <p><u>Corporate Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Payroll audit - we received a report of "substantial" assurance with no recommendations. ▪ Neva Brown our new Office Assistant started on the 1st July and is fitting in well with the department and the wider team. ▪ ICT tender is going live at the end of September 27th September. <p>Kate Rowell and the Board thanked Debbie for her hard work resulting in receiving a substantial assurance payroll audit.</p> <p><u>Business Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Successful summer MF meetings - Average attendance to date is 56 people with 50% under 45. 29% of attendees were female, 7% increase in female attendance on the previous year. ▪ Environmental Baselining project - Received more than 100 Scottish EOI's with 22 shortlisted. ▪ John Gilmour Butchers launch – Successful London launch with possible business opportunities with 50 – 60 key buyers in London <p><u>Marketing</u></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New marketing campaign went live in September. Successful webinar with stakeholders to reveal the new campaign. <p>Andy McGowan expressed the fantastic job Emma and the team did of revealing the new campaign to key stakeholders from various different aspects and its something that should be done for all new campaigns going forward.</p> <p><u>Communications & External Affairs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In progress, development of Communications & External Affairs Strategy to 2028 ▪ Successful meetings/ visits with MP's and MSP's following general election. We are developing an interactive map for industry to support positive political engagements. ▪ Red Meat Industry Profile was launched to around 40 red meat sector reps at Turriff Show for the first time in August, we continue to publicise the key statistics 	
<p>Levy deposits</p> <p>Debbie Phillips presented the paper on levy deposits and highlighted that it was agreed at last years September Board meeting to review levy deposits annually.</p>	
<p>FOI Costs</p> <p>Debbie Phillips confirmed that there have not been any further costs since the last cost was confirmed at the April Board meeting. Last update confirmed £37.5k had been spent on FOI requests, this cost does not include staff costs.</p> <p>This cost relates to one incident but multiple FOI's. Other FOIs did not require outsourcing expertise.</p>	
<p>People Strategy and Office Proposals Update</p> <p>Andy McGowan left the room for this agenda item as there was a conflict of interest due to him being on the Board of SAOS.</p> <p>Debbie Phillips presented the Board an update on the People Strategy and the office proposals.</p>	
<p>QMS Committee Meeting Updates</p>	

<p>Pigs SSB – 14th June</p> <p>Pete Brown, Chair of the Pig Standard Setting Body gave an update from the interim review meeting which took place on the 14th June 2024.</p> <p>Pete highlighted that the key agenda item was to discuss the changes to the pig welfare codes and changes that would have to be made to the standards as a result.</p> <p>Allan Ward and Kathryn Kerr gave an overview of the changes within the legislation and the changes required to the standards.</p> <p>The committee reviewed and agreed the proposed changes.</p> <p>Kathryn and Bruce McConachie introduced the committee to Brand Evolution, which was well received by the committee and the recommendations suggested are to be included with one existing recommendation to be reworded to include the brand evolution.</p> <p>Sarah Millar took a note of the following actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the Pigs SSB committee members. ▪ Speak to the BI team to make sure, in future, meeting dates chosen is one all or most can do. 	<p>Sarah</p>
<p>Appeals Panel – 17th July</p> <p>Sarah Millar gave an update from the Appeals Panel meeting that took place on the 17th July 2024.</p> <p>The appeals committee discussed the possibility of adding another person to the committee as an ‘on call if needed’ basis however it was felt that it may be difficult as they won’t get the same rapport within the committee. It has been agreed that if the need arises due to conflict, the committee members will have a reserve in mind that they can put forward. Details to be discussed at next meeting</p> <p>The committee reviewed and discussed a mock case.</p>	
<p>Standards Coordinating Body – 20th August</p> <p>Kate Rowell, Chair of the Standards Coordinating Body gave an update from the meeting which took place on the 20th August 2024.</p> <p>Kate highlighted the two main agenda items:</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brand Evolution -Emma Heath gave an overview of where we are with brand evolution. ▪ QA Review - James Withers spoke to the committee about the Quality Assurance Review taking place, what it was looking at as well as the relationship between assurance and legislation. <p>Sarah Millar highlighted that Brand Evolution will be put on the agenda for February's Board meeting.</p>	Kirsty
<p>Processors SSB – 5th September</p> <p>Ian Bentley, Chair of the Processor Standard Setting Body gave an update from the interim review meeting which took place on the 5th September 2024.</p> <p>Ian highlighted the main item on the agenda was UK GI assurance scheme with the majority of the discussion on the Benchmarking work.</p>	
<p>Strategic Indicators Update</p> <p>Sarah Millar presented the Board with an update to the strategic indicators.</p>	
<p>Communications & External Affairs Strategy</p> <p>Holly McLennan presented to the Board the new QMS Communications & External Affairs Strategy which she has developed.</p> <p>Holly covered the following areas in her presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose and vision ▪ Key pillars – 4 objectives ▪ Our approach (how we're going to get there) ▪ Tactics external - Inform levy payers and members ▪ Tactics external - Telling the positive red meat story ▪ Tactics internal ▪ Monitoring and evaluation ▪ 2024/25 Jobs to Be Done <p>Kirsty McCormack is to share the slides with the Board.</p>	Kirsty
<p>July Island Abattoir and Butcher visits and small producer funds</p> <p>Sarah Millar presented to the Board some highlights from her island abattoir and butcher shops she visited in July with Gordon Newlands.</p>	
<p>QMS Industry Groups</p> <p>Sarah Millar highlighted the key information which was presented to the Board the previous day by Lucy Ozanne.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortlisting for group membership is in progress, hope to finalise by the end of October • First meeting taking place in January • First meeting focus will be on reviewing industry strategies and agreeing work plan to bring up to date. <p>As Jilly Duncan Grant missed the presentation the previous day, Kate Rowell agreed to speak with Jilly to update her on the industry groups.</p>	<p>Kate</p>
<p>There being no further business, the meeting was closed.</p> <p>The remaining Board meeting dates for 24/ 25 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wednesday 2nd October – Staff and Board People Workshop ▪ Thursday 3rd October – Board Planning Day ▪ Wednesday 6th November – Board training and dinner with SAMW ▪ Thursday 7th November – Board Meeting ▪ Thursday 23rd January – Board and SMT Planning ▪ Thursday 20th February – Board meeting 	