



Q Guild Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 8th February 2017 at 11.00am

Ellen Best Room, Dean Court Hotel, York.

Present: Mark Turnbull (Chair), Philip Cranston, Gary Chadwick, Andrew Edmonds, Brindon Addy, John Davidson, Greg Hull, Martin Player, Robert Jones, Gordon Newlands (Guild Manager), Douglas Scott (Minutes).

Apologies: David Lishman, Kathryn Meadows, Simon Osborne (TAC),

Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes of last meeting held on 20th September 2016 were approved.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising that would not be discussed under agenda items.

Election of officers and directors

Chairman: Mark Turnbull, proposed by Greg Hull, seconded by Brindon Addy.

Vice Chairman: David Lishman, proposed by Greg Hull, seconded by Brindon Addy.

Correspondence

Resignations - Lewis of Sunningdale, Pollok Williamson, A Pearson & Son Family Butchers, Simon Osborne has resigned from TAC.

Email from Emily Ansell Elfer apologising for being late arriving at Smithfield Awards due to slow trains.

Finance

DS reported that the financial year ended December 2016 looked like it ended up with a deficit of £1154.

Income in 2016 totalled £215,410 but he recommend carrying forward £5000 of funds from Key Partners into 2017 accounts. Clearly this will be subject to the auditors approval but DS that the case can be fairly made.

Expenditure was £216,565. Promotions and advertising accounted for 13% of the total spend. Apart from the extraordinary expenditure on legal fees - a sum of £7796 - to protect the brand, other costs were very much to budget.

Budget proposals for 2017 were presented. Actual figures for January and forecasted figures for February had been applied to the original 2017 budget which initially set out to break even with a surplus of £2268. Unfortunately since setting the budget there have been items that were not foreseen when the budget was presented to the Management Committee. Artemis Digital Platform £3290 should have been in the budget, Guildsman is now at quoted price, and there was an additional payment to the General Manager for additional hours worked in 2016.

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The finances of the Smithfield Awards is spread over two financial years and somewhat clouds the accounts. The judging costs appear in the 2016 accounts but the presentation lunch is in 2017 accounts.

A separate sheet has been produced to try and explain the economics of the evaluation. That reveals a projected surplus of around £3186 although the postage and stationery costs related to this are under administration expenses.

For the sake of the current year's figures however both the additional income and expenditure in January 2017 cancel each other out. A projected cost for point of sale leaflets has been added to the predicted expenditure.

An allowance of £14,000 has been made for a third of the membership to be audited by Acoura in 2017. You can note the effect on the budget and that might be pertinent when the TAC report is tabled.

The forecast as at 8th February, was a deficit of £6890. It was noted that there was not a lot of scope for savings but the inspections were subject to debate and the printing of Guildsman could be saved by distributing electronically. MT warned that great care needed to be taken with the finances this year.

Membership Update

There are currently 117 members of the Guild.

We have had 4 resignations from the Guild, A Pearson & Son, Pollok Williamson, Lewis of Sunningdale and Philip Warren & Son. The membership of Peter Speaight was terminated as they did not respond in the allotted timescale regarding their zero rating in FHRS scheme.

Philip Warren & Son have applied for their other shop in Launceston to be admitted to the Guild and the process for this has begun. We have also had an application from Rogers & Son, Carmarthen and this is also being processed at the moment. Astons of Covens has expressed interest in joining and nearest member, Allan Bennett has indicated that he has no problem with him joining.

New Close Farm shop are awaiting a date from Acoura for their full audit, and it is hoped that this will happen during February.

We have had various requests for information about the Guild, but no other applications to date.

36 members have yet to pay their membership fees for this year and reminders will be sent in due course.

Terms of Membership of the Guild were circulated with membership renewals and members were signing acceptance when returning their membership form.

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Corporate Membership

C & K group have resigned as Corporate members as they wish their business to follow another route.

HCC Wales have been admitted as an Associate member of the Guild (similar to QMS and AHDB). A Rowcliffe & Son have also been admitted to the Guild as a Corporate Member.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Mark Turnbull reported on behalf of TAC Committee.

Since hygiene audits ceased a FHRs four of five star rating has evolved as an acceptance as a condition of membership. There is no system to govern local authority areas where FHRs is not operated (e.g. Bury). There are no documented rules as to what happens. Policing the suggested submission of local authority hygiene reports has proven difficult.

TAC had to take action when a recently audited member became FHRs zero rated. This member was subsequently expelled.

New members are currently independently audited by Acoura before acceptance into the Guild. Proposed that new members are no longer inspected by Acoura. Admission would be conditional on holding an FHRs four or five star rating and passing a quality standards audit by the Guild manager.

RJ highlighted the inequality of EHO inspections and others had a fear that inspection could happen on a bad day. It was agreed that going forward FHRs (England and Wales) and FHIS (Scotland) should be used.

It was agreed that all members would have to maintain four or five stars, (pass in Scotland). If a shop drops below the rating required then the business would need to be re-inspected by the local authority within four months and would have their membership temporarily suspended pending the re-inspection. Failure to achieve this would result in the business being referred to the TAC under code to decide course of action.

New Q Guild standards have been drawn up but the feeling was that entry level should be to EHO standards. The entry level quality standards would be assessed by the Guild manager.

Inspection process has served in the past as an insurance. There was agreement that in future the Guild manager would check quality standards by visiting every member within three years and every applicant before joining.

TAC should remain in being for the sake of confidentiality. Members should address issues causing them to hold a FHRs rating below four stars (FHIS pass in Scotland) and seek re-inspection as soon as possible. The office would be required to annually monitor ratings and in the case of sub standard ratings the office would refer under code to the TAC to decide course of action.

Exceptional circumstances - e.g. other part of business pulling you down - would be considered as a reason for inclusion even in the case of FHRs below four star. It was recommended that new

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standards are adopted as good practice. Certificates claiming Guild members are independently audited have not been sent out and these would be reworded and reprinted for 2017.

Guild Manager's Report

Two years have passed like a shot and it has been a learning experience for myself and some tough decisions have been made in this period.

Since our last executive it has been a busy time with lots of membership enquiries and corporate members asking for information. Time has been heavily spent on website and Smithfield.

Recipes- It has been an absolute nightmare to gain the Smithfield winning recipes from the membership. I had to use the office also to persuade members in this request as I was struggling. The last recipe came in on the 31st January 2017 having started gathering the recipes in October. Too much time has been spent phoning and emailing members to gain their recipes. I don't think this will happen again in 2018. The recipe brochure was always intended to go out with the "Steps to Quality" manual in January once members re-joined. However, due to the fact I could not get them in, it only went to print this morning. Last recipe came through on Monday night and I am still missing some. NB- we have paid for this in 2016.

Regional Meetings- Regions have all had their AGMs with the calendar updated. Still some dates and venues to be confirmed but I will work on this over the coming weeks. Varying attendances at the AGM's and I sometimes think the members don't wish to come to this meeting in case they get landed with a job? However, I will continue to promote the regional meetings as the place to be and be seen and gain knowledge as they are really important. Chairmen should use me to ensure that the meetings have good content. Brindon Addy is correct in what he says- they will attend if it is something good on the agenda.

Corporate members should be welcomed at all regional meetings as I have sold corporate membership on this fact- if we do not allow them access what other benefits do they have? The correct process is to contact the regional chairman to ask permission to present at a maximum of 10 minutes and 3 in total corporate members maximum to present at any one meeting. This should be encouraged.

Smithfield Awards- The event took place on Wednesday past and was an outstanding success. Tom Parker Bowles was a superb choice of guest. He had time for everyone and liked a red wine and even went to the pub afterwards with the members. He spoke extremely well and I received a nice telephone call and text from him to say- 'Thank you for inviting him and if we ever needed help in promoting the Guild please ask him.'

There is a few points that need to be ironed out for 2018 but I have noted them and will create a solution to them in plenty of time. 127 guests in attendance which was superb. Tom Newitt apart from Heston Blumenthal stated- best guest yet. High praise indeed.

Toastmaster helped keep things flowing and kept the guests in order in time for lunch and I thought was outstanding. We were 13 minutes late in serving lunch but finished totally at 15:35.

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Slick when presenting the prizes and made a big difference in getting the sponsors to side of stage.

16 phone calls on the way home from members wishing to convey their thanks on an outstanding day. Emails galore with members stating - the best Smithfield yet!! Social Media went into meltdown - notification from Twitter to say that Smithfield hashtag was 400 tweets away from trending!!

Two members have asked if we include a chicken category as it is the largest of protein sales in the UK and is very relevant to Xmas.
Phone calls from Pat Whelan and Association of Craft Butchers Ireland enquiring where we got the trophies.

Fraudulent Shops- Shop in Fleetwood- David Weardon was notified by two corporate members that this shop had Guild logo everywhere inside and outside. Greg Hull contacted him and played Good Cop and me being the Bad Cop. The butcher informed Greg he would remove it. I have instructed a mystery shopper to check in 2 weeks time.

Domain names www.qbutcher.com and www.qbutcher.co.uk still belong to David Harrison and he has agreed to transfer them all the Prototype and Q Guild ownership. It was agreed that Q Guild should not make any moves to acquire these domain names.

JB Meays- received photograph with Q Guild logo clearly on overalls on twitter and website. Spoke to him last week and he has removed.

Frank Taylor- Photograph on contact page with Q Guild logo visible.

Stephens Butchers, St Ives- has Q Guild logo on website, on marketing forms and internally has the Guild logo displayed.

Howarths- still displayed on his van.

KE Crump, Swindon- website displaying Q Guild Logo was removed after I spoke to him.

GH Baxter, Hanwell in London- still displaying the logo on window and shop inside. GH Baxter was asked to leave some year ago.

I think this is an ongoing problem and fully realise we do not have enough money to chase these businesses through the courts. However, I feel we have to have a clear plan in place when this arises. We are asking members to sign a terms and conditions so we require to administer and protect their rights.

Discussion regards fraudulent shops. It was agreed that fraudulent shops should not be allowed to continue displaying the brand. GH recommended continuing the good cop bad cop procedure.

Members-

East AGM we invited potential members to the AGM and I think we will have two applications within the next few weeks. Both potential members were impressed with our ability to share information and plan a year. Icarus Hines has phoned a couple of times since he was invited to the East meeting. Andrew Prior of West Lynn has also phoned and is seriously thinking about the Guild.

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I get on average about four enquiries per month and the office maybe two or three through the website. We always check the scores on the doors before we send any information.

I think the way to hook new members is to invite to a regional meeting.

Butcher in Chorley- Browns?? has phoned and building a new butchers £230K already a shop owner but has informed me that it won't pass the audit. He wishes to join when the new shop is up and running.

Croft Farm Family Butchers contacted me through Facebook for information after seeing the Smithfield Awards social media.

Bebbingtons of Chester- Stuart Bebbington would like to know more about the workings of the Guild and I have invited him to the next North West regional meeting.

Personally, I have a 98% success rate of butchers I have visited in joining the Guild. It is crucially important that I visit potential member

2015- Members- 107 (5 asked to leave which reduced to 102), Corporate Members 31

2016- Members- 116, Corporate Members- 37

2017 Members 123, Corporate Members 41

French Trip- I am still waiting on an itinerary being sent by Remi Fourier for the French trip in March. I will have to pass on the arrangements so far to the office to organise from now on. Maximum numbers 25.

Young Manager Club- I have had to postpone the young manager club as trying to get a venue in London for under £1000 to hold a meeting was just impossible. I was not going to be at the event and Management felt this should be postponed until August/September. Peter Allen who was going to speak to the young managers is aware and open to August/September meeting. Myself and Ed Garthwaite have come up with a few ideas and objectives for the attendees to complete whilst touring the shops.

BBQ/Business Conference- I have contacted various hotels in the South region who are hosting the event in 2017 all to no avail. Either too pricey or not large enough conference suite. I have contacted Newbury Racecourse who is coming back to me with a quotation. Hopefully, we can get this organised and booked. Douglas will have to be handed over all the information so far also.

Online Entry Form- We are and should be looking into the online entry form that AHDB use which is slick and very professional. At the moment it is very admin reliant and Bruce in the office spends a lot of time on the form he created which is really good I have to add. I have asked Instor Marketing for a price and also other companies for a quote also.

Social Media- Social media has taken off massively for the Q Guild and is engaging with consumers on a daily occasion.

Twitter - 3507 followers

Facebook- 1970 followers

Instagram- 292 followers

I am getting messages through all platforms from consumers and prospective members at all times and I think this will only grow.

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Website Analytics- To date when I ran Facebook analytics yesterday this showed some remarkable results. 4.2 Months in existence.

Website Visits- 5299

Average 3.28 page visits

25K pages visited

31% returning customers

68% new customers

12 enquiries through the website form.

End of Month trend for views.

Key Partner- Key partners have benefited from the product of the month and we really promote the pack being sent out. Unfortunately, it seems that very few members actually take part in the promotion. Repeat sales for the key partners product of the month has not been good and it does not help when members state- 'we are doing it but using a different seasoning.'. Each partner has had the following-

Dalziel- 3, Lucas -3, Dalesman, Verstegen -3, Scobie and Junor-2

Each key partner has received an A4 advert free of charge in the Guildsman three times per annum. Website posting with logos to the consumer and full page on back office for editing as they wish.

Started in April 2016 so has not run a full year yet. However, we require a meeting of the key partners to discuss future promotions.

So Far- Per Key Partner benefits are

Guildsman Advert - x 4 = £800

POTM- x 3 = £3300

Website advertising- £500 per annum

Key Partner Training Day- 45mins-1 hour-
£200

Since its inception the spend on Key Partner activity has possibly delivered £4800 worth of marketing for each.

We initially asked for a £5000 per investment to help the build of the website and the back office. As you can see above the money has been spent on promotional material and we have had to foot the bill for website. Don't really know how long we can sustain this without further investment.

A meeting should be called in due course to explore a way forward. The life time of key partner membership is something that needs set at the beginning.

RJ proposed an idea that could be addressed whereby the Guild works with key partners to develop the ideas but the key partner produces and distributes the promotional materials and their expense.

Stressed that POM had made an impact both with members and on social media.

AHDB- Mike Richardson has been in contact with me to discuss the "meat your butcher" scheme. He has employed several Q Guild Butchers to go into schools and colleges to extol the virtue of healthy eating and meat as part of that diet.

Mike also has arranged to try to promote the online training to members and staff. Meeting has been planned to discuss.

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Time off- My knee replacement operation is planned for 18th February. I am taking 2 weeks of time in hand and will be back on the laptop and phone after this period. Not allowed to drive for 7 weeks and also no flights. Laptop and phone will be off for this period and all requests should go via the office. Works planned for whilst recuperating;

- Guildsman Newsletter- March
 - Survey on Trade
 - Website updating-News
 - Members- Update their pages.
 - Corporate- Update their pages
 - Plan Future Guildsman issues
 - Key Partner - Benefits
 - Quality Standard
 - Rolling Standard to visit members.
 - Re-wording of the steps to quality.
- Plenty for me to be getting on with whilst recuperating.

2017 Events Programme

A new Calendar of Events was distributed. Regional chairmen were asked to check their dates and any changes should be intimated to GN by end of the week. MT told the meeting that Stewart Collins idea of holding a Christmas Planning meeting in June was worth following.

Q Guild Digital Platform

Update was given by Gordon Newlands on 2nd stage and 3rd stage of website. Specialist recipes e.g. Beef Bourguignon Pie, can be printed off from a PDF.

The asset bank contains nine different categories. Images includes 200 food shots with lots of different options. Videos takes you to the YouTube channel. Promotional materials includes everything that has been done in the past. Q Guild brand guidelines are downloadable. Product of the Month are there all print ready. Members will have received a mailchimp inviting them to populate their page. Key partners have the same ability to load their own pages. That is stage two - the back office system - complete.

Stage three is the templates and for that three payments for £3298 will apply to the 2017 budget. Key partners have access to all this site with the exception of other key partners websites.

Any other competent business

The Guildsman would continue to be printed in a hard copy but consideration will be given to changing to an electronic format once design costs are known.

PR

Quotes were considered from Jessica Simpson of Charlotte & Joseph and from Robin Moule. The quote from Charlotte & Joseph was accepted for a period of one year.

GC asked if consideration could be given to taking administration back in house and use Quickbooks since he felt that the Guild should take a closer look at the costs of management of the Guild.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 21st June 2017

Meeting ended with at 3.20pm

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