



Q GUILD

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Royal York Hotel, Wednesday 22 June 2016 at 11.00am.

Present: Mark Turnbull (Chair), David Lishman, Philip Cranston, Gary Chadwick, Andrew Edmonds, Robert Jones, Kathryn Meadows (TAC), Gordon Newlands (Guild Manager), Douglas Scott (Minutes).

Apologies: Brindon Addy, John Davidson, Greg Hull, Martin Player.

Minutes of previous meeting

Approved and there were no matters arising that would not crop up under agenda items.

Correspondence

Meat Management Magazine awards. Q Guild won the Trade Organisation of the Year and the award was presented at a dinner at London. MT, DL and GN attended the event. DL asked that this is communicated to the members. MT congratulated GN on the achievement and recognised that his hard work had been a significant factor in winning this award. Edward Byford has retired from secretary of the East Region.

Finance Report

Previous year audited accounts are now at draft stage and show a surplus of £24000. This is consequence of an over provision in recent annual accounts for inspections outstanding. This provision amounted to over £12000 so the 2014 annual accounts could have shown a surplus rather than a loss of £10000. Now taken within the 2015 accounts this has created the £24000 surplus. Allowing for losses carried forward this left a taxable sum of £7000 and consequently a Corporation tax liability of £1400. This could be recovered only if there is a loss of £7000 in the 2016 accounts.

The up to date figures to the end of May, currently forecast another surplus for the year ending December 2016. Income and expenditure in 2016 was reviewed. Income is forecast ahead of budget principally due to additional subscription income from new members. In the first year this incurs matching costs especially when it is branch shops that are coming in. On the Cost of Sales side inspection costs are greater again because of new members. PR costs are ahead of budget but Robin Moule's contract to include Product evaluations was agreed after the budget was agreed in February.

Promotions total is showing expenditure well above budget. £11300 as opposed to budget of £3000. This expenditure was sanctioned at the previous meeting when it was agreed that Product of the Month materials should be provided for the membership. The Business Conference shows a net cost of £2250 but the Barbecue event a surplus of £900. Combined this is half the budgeted net cost of these events.

Overhead costs were pretty much to budget with Guild manager travel costs expected to be under both budget and 2015 costs.

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Keurslager Digital Platform

MT reported that Keurslager had failed to deliver the 'all singing all dancing' system that Q Guild believed they were investing in. GN said that by the beginning of May it was becoming clear to him that Keurslager were having great difficulties because the third party external agency was no longer being used to develop the system. MT had success with the screen system (although it is an old flash system). Unfortunately the promised template part of the system did not work.

A Management Committee meeting on 9th June recommended pulling out, negotiating a refund and designing our own screen system and website system with templates in stages.

Keurslager's offer to allow Q Guild to withdraw from the contract with them was unanimously accepted by the Executive. An alternative UK based system has been investigated and is feasible at a price. MT and GN had met and received a proposal from Prototype Creative for a Q Guild website with back office of templates for posters, handbills and tickets to allow members to market their businesses.

GC suggested that other companies should be asked to quote. He felt that Q Guild should provide the technical spec. and he requested time to consider what that should be. He asked to be allowed to set up a brief.

PC pointed out that there was time pressure from two key partners and GN stressed that members are constantly asking when the new system is going to be accessible.

MT summarised the requirements as follows:-

Stage one: a website that members can access with a static page for each member that they can update themselves. An opportunity for members to use the same services to create their own website at their own cost but at a discounted price.

Stage two: introduce back office facility so that members can print out their own materials. This would include templates. This he stressed was untested but would ideally have access for key partners.

Stage three: a screen system.

MT felt that stage one needs to be actioned ASAP.

The meeting discussed the possibility of taking the staged development to tender. GN warned that key partners would feel that they would be due a refund of their investment. RJ proposed, as Midland chairman, to progress without tendering. He suggested that the association with Keurslager should be continued in the background and that everyone felt that was crucial.

GN relayed the views of absent members JD, MP and GH.

GC proposed that Prototype Creative be contracted to deliver stage one. AE felt that any company taking on stage one should be capable of delivering stages two and three. Agreed unanimously that Prototype Creative be given stage one contract subject to revised costs and testimonials of current work.

Stage two would be presented to next Executive meeting. GC will table his suggestions at that meeting.

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Membership Report

There are currently 116 members of the Guild.

Recent additions to the Guild have been John Mettrick, Grasmere Farm at Market Deeping and Stamford plus John Davidsons at Dobbies Garden Centre, Jon Thorners at Frome and Farrington Gurney.

Honeywells at Brock and Bents Garden Centre have become members along with Simpsons Butchers at Stamford, Lincoln, Spalding, and Pennels Garden Centre. Owtons at Country Market have also become members, as has Jesse Smith Farm Shop at Cirencester.

Acoura have also confirmed on 20th June that Simpsons, Sleaford and Tilehurst Village Butchers at Shinfield and Mortimer Common have also passed their audits.

Brendan Anderton Butchers at Longridge underwent their pre-audit on 1st June and Cranstons Orton Grange have also had their audit.

We have confirmation that McMurchie Meats will have their pre-audit on 20th June after they had to cancel their initial audit due to staffing issues and Griersons at Castle Douglas are due their audit in July, after issues at their pre-audit.

We have received no word from Holloway Meats regarding if they wish to continue with their application for membership. This will be followed up shortly.

Corporate Membership

Caldecotts Turkey Farms Ltd has recently joined the Guild as a Corporate member and membership currently stands at 41.

Technical Advisory Committee

Kathryn Meadows as the new Chair of the TAC reported.

First TAC meeting was held in May. The committee expressed a desire to keep standards as high as possible. Quality Standards had already been updated but there was a need to review and update the Hygiene Standards to encompass new legislation such as allergens. On completion of review a new Steps to Quality manual would be circulated to all members via email and available on Guild website.

GC suggested a 'Butcher's Bible' booklet for members that was more than just terms and conditions. Agreed that this should be a separate document.

TAC recommended re-introduction of hygiene self audit to be completed and returned when subscribing annually. After discussion it was agreed that self audit was unlikely to be completed and returned, this would not be pursued.

A reminder has gone out to members seeking submission of current EHO reports. A fair number of replies have come as a result of a recent request for these but a deadline of 2nd July has been set.

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It was agreed to employ Denise Islip to make a detailed update of the Q Guild hygiene standards at a cost of £600.

Managers Report:

GN submitted a written report and added verbal comment

I have been working on lots of topics in the Q Guild Office and also on the road visiting new members and ensuring that the quality of the produce is up to standard. I have to say that the standard of the new branch shops have been outstanding so far.

BBQ Finals/Conference;

As a requirement of the competition it was clearly set out to the finalists of the Regions that ALL finalist recipes must be submitted to the Q Guild. This is for the sharing of ideas concept that we are meant to be about. I have received 4 so far.

In future if a product does not have a recipe with it, it should be marked down automatically to a Silver. (Management have asked that recipes be sent with entries)

Some members did not even send their products to be judged.

NB- These businesses did not gain Runner Up certificates.

Regional Heats- Some regions were very poorly attended. Categories split between each member that attended.

Audit Timescales;

The timescale of the Audits is far too long. A recent case with Brendan Anderton Butchers saw them pay their money on the 21st April and they just got their date for audit on 1st June!! This was only after I received irate phone calls from Brendan Anderton (Emma) to complain that we already cashed their cheque and what was the hold up. I am trying to arrange a meeting with HAS at end of July to try to speed this process up.

I am meeting with Director Stewart Hall on 14th July to discuss communication problems and spell out to him what is expected of the audit organisation.

Regional Meetings;

Corporate members have been complaining about the lack of attendances at the Regional meetings.

South tour to DB Foods - 7

Midlands tour to Yorkshire- 7

AVO Trip To Germany- 5 (cancelled).

I have lost count of the phone calls from corporate members asking me what I am going to do about the attendances. South Coast Systems who were regular attenders last year stated- It is the same faces and poor attendances. I am sure that we will lose corporate members in 2017 because of this fact, however I will keep trying to satisfy them with information.

Could do with feedback from the Regional Chairmen about this issue. Agenda- Ideas?? North East- 1 minute please has been really well received.

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EHO Reports;

At a recent TAC meeting I highlighted the fact the membership had not sent in any of their latest/current EHO reports to the office. 4 members had sent in previous to this mail. This was a requirement under the dropping of the Audits and TAC felt that a deadline should be communicated to them. I sent an e-mail to the membership and to date have varied response!! 21 have been communicated to the office.

I have to stress it is only myself that reads them and stores them, so we know when the next EHO report is due in. However, it allows us to see if the standards have dropped or are indeed improving. Not a witch hunt but an information gathering project that could prove useful to the membership.

Spreadsheet is being compiled to act as a trigger to know when businesses are due next audit.

Corporate Complaints;

My phone seems to be ringing a lot of times with corporate complaints!! There is never a day goes by that I do not hear a complaint from a corporate member about a member not using their services or are using a non- corporate member!!

MRC- Complained that they were not given the option of becoming a Q Guild Key Partner and felt that as long standing members they should have at least been consulted. Meeting Stuart Niven on 13th July to discuss.

Product of the Month- Dalesman complained about the take up of the product for June. Pre-ordered packs were poor:- April- 51 members, May- 42 members

I am trying my best to placate these members but difficult if members cannot be bothered to take part. Dalziel will send starter kits to all members for their next Product of the Month promotion.

It was felt that there required to be more development of Product of the Month possibly with the membership at Regional meetings.

Fraudulent Use of Guild brand;

I am in the process of gathering evidence to name and shame these businesses. I only have one confirmed case at the minute- Howarths of Flixton. He has Q Guild emblazoned on the side of his van.

There has been another 4 cases, however I have no evidence to go ahead and blast them on social media. Trading Standards are unhelpful. Scottish Q Guild wishes us to take an advert in their local paper and embarrass them that way?? Cost implications in that way.

Brindon highlighted John Crawshaw displaying a logo outside- I phoned John and he has informed me he will take it down. Good chat ensued and I have to go and see him when down that way. I have spoken to the firm we registered the trademark with and he will be writing to the businesses this week threatening them with legal action. Ultimately, if they do not comply we have to sue and make an example of them.

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BBQ/Venue ;

BBQ event very successful event and everyone that attended took useful ideas away from the weekend.

Venue to be arranged for 2017 or as some members wish it to be scrapped and re-invented for 2018.

Proposal for Scotland to host the BBQ Conference/Final in 2017. Looking at gaining prices for hotels in Edinburgh. Potential to tie in with Scottish Craft Butchers Trade Fair in Perth on 14th May 2017.

Shoppers Anonymous:

I have had a request from Shoppers Anonymous to integrate their services into the Guild auditing. Costs are as follows: 12 member shops visited per year- £80 each.

I think this would add value for the members and they should see it as a benefit from the Q Guild. Agreed that they should be invited to put together an offer to circulate to the members.

Smithfield Awards:

Ironmongers Hall, London has been booked for the awards luncheon on Wednesday 1st February 2017. City of Glasgow College will be the judging venue again for this year. Judges are being refreshed for this year and we have some food critics, food bloggers, chefs, catering students, butchers and consumers. We have several Food Bloggers that have a huge following on social media which I hope will promote the event also.

Celebrity to be confirmed at a later date.

Social Media:

- **Twitter- 3052.** Continues to be growing and growing at a steady pace of 20-30 per week.
- **Facebook- 1451.** Videos are very well received and followers spike after I post a video.
- **Instagram- 133 Followers.** It is not my main stream or platform for social media, however there is a lot of high profile chefs that use this platform.

Overview:

Lots to do and work on and my timetable is fully booked till the end of August. I am on holiday from 24th June until 8th July. I will be accessing my emails during this time and can be contacted the w/c 04/07/16.

I will be attending the National Federation of Meat and Food Traders AGM on 6th July in London. I have lots of shops enquiring about joining the Guild and plan to visit them when I am in their areas. South particularly has had a lot of enquiries. To date I have 30 businesses that have asked me to visit. NB- Before I attend I always look up on EHO reports and websites to see the standard and if I don't think it is high enough I do not go and tell them why.

Moving in the right direction and plenty of work still to be done.

RJ and GC commended GN on his work.

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2016 Events Programme

AVO trip to Germany has been called off, the South visit to DB Foods was very good. The North East smoking course was really good ten attended and the Midlands trip to Yorkshire had been first class.

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 20th September
Royal York Hotel, York

AOCB

DL suggested that a library of photographs be created.

A further suggestion to take out advert in a national magazine should be considered.

Quotes would be obtained.

Meeting closed at 3.10pm

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