

**Q Guild Management Meeting**  
**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 at 12:00**  
Cumbrian Foodhall, Penrith.

**Present:** Brindon Addy (chair), Philip Cranston, Mark Turnbull, Sandy Boyd and Douglas Scott.

#### **Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of meeting held on 18th August were approved. It was agreed that in future Management Meeting minutes would be circulated to all Q Guild members.

#### **Matters Arising**

Tri-Nations interest intimated by Australians to host, subsequently re-offered by New Zealand. EBLEX now appear interested in funding but £20,000 may require to be raised through sponsorship. Discussions are still ongoing through David Lishman and the other two countries. Management Committee felt it would be hard to get the commitment from members or their staff. Benefit to those outside the team was questioned and a watching brief would be maintained. Any decision needs to be endorsed by the Guild's Executive Committee.

SB had visited prospective ME Evans at Wrexham and he advised them that he had work to do to get up to standard required.

#### **Finance**

Up to date figures for the Guild's financial performance were tabled. It was noted that forecast for the year indicated a predicted £8489 loss. Income from membership is below budget despite there being one more member than included in the budget. The way new members will be charged was changed at the last Executive meeting and by collecting one year's subscription upfront should generate more funds and more quickly from members joining during the year.

Similarly corporate members are now just two below budget but timing is not helping this year's accounts. The Smithfield Awards income stands at £19125 and so far there are costs against this totalling £15730. With bills still to be presented for the hire of facilities at City of Glasgow College and for the design and print of Smithfield Awards certificates the costs are on budget and event might just breakeven. It was felt that the event and its associated PR provided good value for the Guild.

On the expense side cost of audits looked like being around budget but the cost of mystery shopping had not been budgeted. Signs have cost £2400 more than in the budget but the cost of these will not be as great next year, unless there is an upsurge in membership. Promotions figure is £1800 above budget due to internal signage sent to members earlier in the year and the Barbecue Championships cost us £1000 more than budgeted.

Overhead costs are forecast to come in £2500 under budget with only General Manager travel and accommodation having the potential to affect this outcome. Bank accounts contain just under £60,000 and it does look like we will start the new year with less than we started 2014, that was £60,823.

Major contributions to the excess costs were Business conference, particularly the second one, and the National Barbecue Championships.

#### **GUILD MANAGER'S REPORT**

##### **October Regional meetings**

Following a successful and well attended visit to Chi Johnson's existing and new shop in September, which also included a visit to see the GPS food group, the October Eastern regional meeting was intended to be the Christmas meeting held at Mountnessing Village Hall, complete with Christmas lunch provided by Kelly's and Copas turkeys.



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The Midlands regional visit went to Walter Smith's new farm shop within a garden centre near Huntingdon, which was both interesting and inspiring. This was followed by a positive business meeting discussing Christmas products and pricing.

The North West region paid a visit to Frank Parker's at Nuneaton and Aubrey Allen's retail shop and wholesale operation. Both businesses made us all very welcome and were very open and honest about what makes their business tick. All who attended found the day both beneficial and enlightening.

The regional AGMs are all booked for January and early February. The South East and South West are holding a joint meeting at Dalziel's Newbury depot with a visit to their new training kitchen as well as presentations by Lucas and Verstegen. The AGMs will be held in separate rooms in the morning with the presentations in the afternoon.

### **Allergen template**

The allergen template has proved to be one of the most responded to projects that I have undertaken to date. Whilst it may be true that the larger companies already have systems in place, it is clear that many of the smaller ones are only just responding to the impending legislation with two calls requesting further information last week. The gratitude that has been expressed for simplifying what is perceived to be a difficult subject has been encouraging both in terms of engagement and that the "quieter" members are seeing a membership benefit.

### **Smithfield Awards**

November has been dominated by the Smithfield awards initially gathering recipes and methods then following them up after the awards presentation. All the recipes have now been gathered and intention is to pull them together into a small booklet, headed by the Corry's recipe for pork pie with a twist. A photomontage of the method will be included with the recipe to ensure that other Q Guild members are able to replicate the Corry's recipe as accurately as possible. The booklet will be distributed with the Guildsman in the New Year.

### **The Guildsman**

All the articles, photographs and information are now gathered the Guildsman, which will go to Mike Connon on Wednesday for design etc. A PDF proof will be sent to Douglas before forwarding on to the printer, so it comes back to the Perth office in time for distribution in the New Year.

### **Hot off the block**

The November Hot off the Block went out covering the Smithfield awards and Butcher shop of the year. It had a 58.5% opening rate, which is just above the average of 57%.

### **Benchmarking**

The new shorter form benchmarking survey went out in November with 5 key questions. It had a relatively poor response about 22% but has been sent out again this weekend, the response rate is up to 28% and we should get some more on Monday and Tuesday. The initial survey results are appended to this report. The proposed subjects for 2015 benchmarking program is contained within the calendar of events.

### **2015 calendar of events**

The provisional calendar of events is appended to this report.

### **Guildsman Project Plan.**

The copy deadlines for 2015 Guildsman magazine is appended to this report, and will be transcribed into a simpler format for distribution to regional chairmen and corporate members in time for the January meetings.

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## Marketing

The website is up to date with all the new stories from the Diamond awards to Butcher shop of the year. The recipes for the Smithfield awards will appear in PDF form on the cloak site, once we have completed the artwork next week.

Facebook is not been updated with the same information that this has generated a reasonable response from the general public, but doesn't appear to have attracted much attention from Q Guild members that is difficult to see who's looking at the information. There has been good reaction to the stories on twitter with several members, now quoting @q\_guildbutchers.

MT commented that he would like to hear of how members made Facebook work for them.

## International visits.

Following the successful visit to southern Ireland, Douglas has been asked to organise a trip to Northern Ireland which will be a national invitation, but on a first come first served basis. We have also drafted a plan in conjunction with David Smith at Dalziel to visit Holland via Verstegen. This will also have to be on a first-come, first-served basis as there are only 10 places available. However, David Brough of Innovative Food Ingredients has offered a similar visit to Germany to be hosted by one of their suppliers, Avo-Werke.

## Smithfield Awards

On the 2014 evaluation there were 479 entries, 8 diamond, 231 gold, 118 silver, 66 bronze, 53 awards, 3 no shows. The judging at the City of Glasgow College had gone smoothly with great assistance given by Judith Johnston and Steve Derrick of Lucas Ingredients, Simon Nicolson of MRC, Keith Fisher of BPEX and former Guild members Gordon Newlands and Edward Byford. The awards ceremony was well attended with a sell out of 100 seats at Butchers Hall on 13th November. The presentations were made by Matthew Fort from the Great British Menu and subsequent PR had been good. Top award for the best product had gone to Corrys of Bramhall for their Pork Pie with a Twist.

It was noted that Butchers Hall will not be available as a venue for the presentation luncheon for the next five years due to re-development in the area but this created an opportunity to take the event outside London. However it was felt that London was the simplest place for all members to access and Smiths of Smithfield was suggested as a possible venue but other options would be seriously considered.

## Membership Report

There are currently 110 members of the Guild. Two new members joined recently - Black Barn Butchers in Godalming and Walter Smith Fine Foods at Huntingdon. Peter Speaight and J E Baty have had their pre-audits and we are awaiting them informing us of when they will be ready for a full audit. Considering the current time of year, this will likely be early 2015.

Applicants:- Honeywell Meats have been in contact and their audit is arranged for 3rd December, Laverstoke Park Farm Shop no response so far. Disappointingly Archers (Norwich) are not progressing with membership at this current time, due to other constraints.

Enquiries were made from Farmers Cart, Trowthorpe and Hanley Farm Shop, Chepstow and information sent out to them regarding the Guild, but we have yet to hear back from them. EW Coates, Nr Matlock made a tentative enquiry regarding the Guild, but have yet to contact us again. Contact will be made again with first two enquirers to ascertain if they wish to progress with membership of the Guild.



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We have recently acquired another Corporate member, Thomas Ford (Smithfield) Ltd. With PR Duff paying their subscription this now takes the total number of Corporate members to 33.

We have had no response from Carron Lodge, Cheesemaker regarding information sent to them about becoming a Corporate Member. SB will now progress an alternative cheese supplier as Corporate Member.

### **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Robert Jones has resigned but following an invitation to join TAC made in a recent Hot off the Block, Simon Osbourne of Blagdon Farm Shop has joined the committee. Katherine Nicholson has intimated an interest in joining as well. Management Committee agreed that despite all three coming from the same region it would be an appropriate way forward.

Time limit on audits was discussed. BA felt that it was already established that a month's leeway would be allowed with exception made for December trading. If no date is agreed after the month is up, HAS would be entitled to set a date.

Hawk Systems. It was noted that HAS were using their contact with Q Guild to sell this product but they have been advised by SB that they should not be using this privileged position to sell. This was on grounds of conflict of interest.

Following TAC meeting on 13th November, amendments to audit scoring system were recommended and HAS will insert two new questions into the audit to cover allergens and Ecoli O157.

The Steps to Quality Manual and the Hygiene Standards Guidelines circulated in January 2013 were reviewed and it was agreed that the TAC would re visit the Standards so that all the requirements could be combined in the one file. This may mean that members would receive new inserts for their folders in 2015.

Since all who had been involved found the ASI mystery shopper survey useful, it was felt that those who had not been mystery shopped might like the opportunity to take part. It was agreed to go back to ASI to ask if they can offer the same Mystery Shopper service - a hands off approach - that members could opt into and at a lower price than if engaged individually. The results of this would only be available to the member and not the Guild. Q Guild will continue to annually survey 20% of the membership unannounced.

The Guide for Regional Chairmen as amended on instruction of last Executive Committee was tabled and agreed.

### **Any Other Business**

George Payne had noticed Q signage in an online photo in a shop opened by an ex member. MT and DS would investigate this further to see if this was a new image or possibly an old library photo.

### **Filming of judging criteria**

DS explained methods used to inform judges in both the British Pie Awards and the Scotch Pie Awards where the head judges talked the judges through the judging process explaining the criteria that they were being asked to judge against. In the latter case this had been crudely videoed and played back. This had also demonstrated the potential to inform entrants, just what



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the judges were looking for. It is agreed that this would improve consistency and be a good approach for the Smithfield Awards and indeed any competition in the UK. DS will ask BPEX if this is something they could provide.

#### National Butchers Week

It was unanimously agreed that Q Guild should support MTJ's Initiative again in 2015.

#### Great Taste Awards

Agreed that members should be encouraged to enter these awards.

#### Date of next Management Meeting:-

Dean Court Hotel, York. Wednesday 4th February 2015 @ 9.00am

#### Date of next Executive Committee:-

Dean Court Hotel, York. Wednesday 4th February 2015 @ 11.00am

Meeting Closed at 15:10



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