

QUALITY MEAT SCOTLAND

Minutes of the Sixty Sixth Meeting of the Board
12th November 2020, 10am – 3pm, Teams Video Call

Present:

K. Rowell (Chair)
A. Irvine
A. McGowan
C. Milne
G. Milne
G. Wallace
J. Gibson
J. Fitzpatrick
L. Welsh
P. Sleigh
S. Henderson
S. Mackie

In Attendance:

A. Clarke (Chief Executive)
H. Curran (Sponsor Team)
P. Byrne (Accountant)

Minutes:

K. McCormack

		ACTION
1.0	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Kate Rowell welcomed everyone to the sixty sixth QMS Board meeting. There were no apologies.</p>	
2.0	<p>Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>There were no additions to the agenda.</p>	
3.0	<p>Declaration of interests in any agenda item</p> <p>There was no declaration of interests.</p>	
4.0	<p>Minutes of Board update meeting on 24th September 2020</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
5.0	<p>Update on Action Points</p> <p>The action points were reviewed, and Alan Clarke gave updates on two points:</p> <p><u>Agenda Item 10. Bank Short Term Deposit Rates & Amounts</u> Alan confirmed that we have reinvested the last term deposit with Clydesdale Bank. It is for a 6-month period at an interest rate of 0.65%.</p> <p><u>Agenda Item 13.4. Cattle & Sheep Standards Setting Body – 19th August 2020</u> Alan confirmed that he had spoken with the lawyers and they believe that ‘it’s simply a decision for QMS to make, but we need to ensure that we record the reasoning behind our decision carefully’. The lawyers are going to look at the European standard in relation to assurance schemes and get back to us with confirmation, but they feel it is not something we could be challenged on.</p>	

	<p><u>Agenda Item 13.3. Audit & Risk Management Committee – 19th August 2020</u> Alan advised that a biosecurity policy is still to be put together and it is something that is on Alan and Kirsty’s to do list over the new few weeks. Charles Milne suggested that we approach the CVO for the Scottish Government guidance to ensure consistency. Alan and Kirsty will speak to Charles on how we take this forward.</p>	<p>AC/ KM</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Financial Report 7 months to 31st October 2020</p> <p>Paul presented the finance report for the last 7 months to the 31st October 2020 with no areas for concern.</p> <p>He discussed information from the summary of income and expenditure, the balance sheet and the reforecast to March 2021.</p> <p>Paul highlighted the assurance schemes income variance of over £53,000. Alan advised that he is going to speak with Kathryn and Lloyds Register to confirm why this amount is as high as it is and to get confirmation of the total number of members who did not renew their membership this year and to get the current number of new members who have joined the schemes since April.</p>	<p>AC</p>
<p>7.0</p>	<p>Levy Organisation Benchmarking Report</p> <p>Paul presented the report and highlighted that after a comment on last year’s report, he has included information from Bord Bia.</p> <p>The Board expressed how useful this report is and a comment was made regarding how QMS can use this information to show QMS in a positive light. It was suggested that some of the information could possibly be put into the annual report.</p>	
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Membership of Committee’s</p> <p>Alan Clarke presented the paper which listed all final suggestions for new members to join QMS Committee’s.</p> <p>The Board agreed with all final suggestions.</p> <p>Alan advised that term end dates will be reviewed along with the committee chair’s so that not all members terms end at the same time. Letters will be sent to all members to confirm terms dates and meetings dates for the rest of 2020/ 2021 and 2021/ 2022.</p> <p>A point was raised regarding Board term end dates for those who Chair committees and that before a chair is set to step down, a new chair needs to be appointed well in advance so that a shadowing process can be put in place for the last couple of meetings.</p> <p>It was agreed to add QMS Committee Planning onto agenda for Board meetings next year.</p> <p>If any Board member would like to join the Remuneration Committee or Audit & Risk Management Committee, please express interest to Alan and Kate.</p>	<p>AC</p> <p>KM</p> <p>ALL</p>

9.0	QMS Committee's	
9.1	<p data-bbox="236 215 1038 253">Audit & Risk Management Committee – 21st October 2020</p> <p data-bbox="236 293 1289 360">Ann Irvine gave an update from the recent Audit & Risk Management Committee meeting and highlighted the following points:</p> <p data-bbox="236 405 496 439">Internal Audit Plan</p> <p data-bbox="236 443 1302 510">The committee agreed to add the HR Recruitment and Retention audit to the plan for year 2021/ 2022, for it to replace the GDPR audit.</p> <p data-bbox="236 544 1286 674">The committee agreed to move the GDPR audit from year 2021/ 2022 to 2022/ 2023 although this would not be final and it would be reviewed in March 2022 to confirm if it will go ahead or not and if it will be an additional audit at a cost or if it will replace an audit that is already in the plan for 2022/ 2023.</p> <p data-bbox="236 707 320 741">GDPR</p> <p data-bbox="236 745 1310 875">Debbie Phillips confirmed that the GDPR consultant who is currently doing work hopes to have everything complete and have QMS GDPR compliant before January 2021. When the work is complete it will be shared with the committee and the Board.</p> <p data-bbox="236 909 440 943">External Audit</p> <p data-bbox="236 947 448 981">RFF Accounting</p> <p data-bbox="236 1014 1302 1081">Paul Byrne and Debbie Phillips had a meeting with Audit Scotland and a format of how to disclose the RFF figures in the annual accounts had been confirmed.</p> <p data-bbox="236 1115 512 1149">Publishing Salaries</p> <p data-bbox="236 1182 1286 1279">Audit Scotland confirmed that Executive Team salaries are not required to be published in the annual accounts. Only the Chief Executive's and the Boards are required to be published as they are the ones who set out the strategy for QMS.</p> <p data-bbox="236 1312 424 1346">Risk Register</p> <p data-bbox="236 1350 1318 1514">The Committee reviewed the risk register format and the detail and it was agreed for Alan Clarke and Debbie Phillips to review the format so that it captures all of the relevant information but displays it in a way which is easier to read and follow. They will also update it so that the detail for each risk is current, words are relevant and possibly put into less words.</p> <p data-bbox="236 1547 1286 1615">Once the new format and detail is complete, it will be reviewed by the committee and will be shared with the Board</p>	
9.2	Remuneration Committee – 10th November 2020	
	George Milne gave an update from the recent Remuneration Committee meeting.	
10.0	Brexit Update from Stuart Ashworth	
	With David Thomson and the Executive Team present, Stuart Ashworth gave a verbal update on Brexit and answered questions from the Board.	

11.0	<p>Brexit Discussion with David Thomson, CEO, FDF Scotland</p> <p>David Thomson, Chief Executive Officer of Food and Drink Federation Scotland gave a verbal update on Brexit which covered the 3 main points below and led to in depth discussions within the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Agricultural Bill • UK Internal Market Bill • Northern Ireland protocol <p>David agreed that he would find out information on the bill that is coming out regarding imports coming from countries who are not respecting climate change and deforestation. David will share this with Gordon Wallace.</p> <p>Andy McGowan highlighted that Carlisle have a major issue with the manual approval process regarding animal health certificates and that they are struggling with requests. Andy McGowan and Julie Fitzpatrick agreed to discuss this further offline.</p>	AM/ JF
12.0	<p>External Affairs Update</p> <p>Sarah Millar gave an update on a few of the key projects that she has been progressing with since starting her new role.</p> <p>Sarah and the Board had discussions around the Food & Farming Report, Farming 1.5 Report and Scottish Government Rural Support.</p> <p>Julie Fitzpatrick confirmed that she would send across the invitation for anyone who would like to attend the virtual Livestock Health & Greenhouse Gases workshop that is on the 17th November and which Julie is chairing.</p>	JF
13.0	<p>Implementation Plans Highlight Report 2020/ 2021</p> <p>Alan Clarke gave an overview of the department's progress towards working through their implementation plans which covered the highlights and challenges for the months of September and October.</p> <p>It was suggested that a point regarding the dangers of policy makers not understanding the agriculture industry be added to the risk register.</p>	AC
13.1	<p>QMS Employee Hub</p> <p>Debbie Phillips presented the new QMS Employee Hub to the Board which holds all links to QMS'S HR programs in one place to make it easier for staff to access. Listed below is the HR programs QMS has in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IRIS HR ▪ Online Payslips ▪ Pension ▪ Death in Service Form ▪ EAP (Employee Assistance Program) ▪ Confidential GP Helpline ▪ Discounted Insurance ▪ Discounted Money Exchange rates ▪ Discounted Shopping 	

	<p>The Board thanked Alan and Debbie for their great work at putting this Hub together and for the support they have given to employee's through this difficult year.</p>	
13.2	<p>Update on Beef Sector Plan</p> <p>Doug Bell gave an update on the beef sector plan which he and his department are progressing with.</p> <p>Doug advised that the first steering group meeting took place on the 2nd November and went well with a good attendance. The second steering group meeting is taking place on the 19th November which then after the first of the focus group meetings will be held and will be chaired by Doug.</p> <p>Doug thanked the Board for those who nominated themselves to be part of the focus groups and for suggesting other key stakeholders to approach.</p>	
14.0	<p>Chief Executive's Report</p> <p>Alan Clarke discussed with the Board a few of the main topics from his report. Discussions were had on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suckler Beef Climate Implementation Group – QMS Representative ▪ Levy Repatriation – The Agriculture Act now enables this to happen and there is a meeting of the 3 devolved nations and the levy boards this week to finalise the last steps ▪ Agri-tech Solutions 	
15.0	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>Kate Rowell updated the Board on the meetings and activities that she has been a part of over the couple of months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming roundtables meetings • NSA Scotland Meeting – Scottish Outdoor Access Code • Rock and Roll Farming Podcast with Will Evans • NFU Autumn Conference • NFUS Industry Insights Meeting with NFUS Staff • Scottish Land & Estates Conference 	
16.0	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business raised</p>	
	<p>There being no further business, the meeting was closed. The next key dates are as follows:</p> <p>Thursday 10th December - Approval of 2021/ 2022 Plans Tuesday 26th January – Extra date if required for Final Approval of 2021/ 2022 Plans Thursday 25th February – QMS Board Meeting</p>	