

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Cross Party Group on Food held in Committee**  
**Room 5 of the Scottish Parliament on 17 January 2018**

Present

Richard Lochhead	MSP (Chair)
John Scott	MSP
Gail Ross	MSP
Peter Chapman	MSP
Mary Lawton	CPG Secretariat
James Withers	Scotland Food and Drink
Uel Morton	Scottish Food Commission
Aileen Bearhop	Scottish Government
Melanie Weldon	Scottish Government
Neil Davidson	Scottish Government
Robin Gourlay	Scottish Government/ Scot Food Comm
Julia Brown	Pinsent Masons LLP
Claire Hislop	NHS Health Scotland
Jacqui McDowell	CFHS/ NHS Health Scotland
Howell Davies	Interface
Lesley Stanley	Independent
David Watts	Rowett
Jackie McCabe	REHIS
Pete Ritchie	Nourish/Scot Food Commission
Elli Kontoravdis	Nourish
Anna Gryka	Obesity Action Scotland
Ian Land	Seafish
Miriam Smith	QMU
Stan Blackley	QMU
Martin Irons	QMU
Gillian Bell	QMU
Emma Black	Food Train
Martin Meteyard	Co-operative Business Consultants
Tony McElroy	Tesco
Wendy Barrie	Scottish Food Guide
Bosse Dahlgren	Scottish Food Guide
Mona Vaghefian	Cancer Research UK
Karen Barton	Abertay Uni
Jonathan Wilkin	Abertay Uni
Lorna Aitken	Education Scotland
Julie Edgar	Scottish Salmon
Robbie Landsburgh	Scottish Salmon
Bella Crowe	Scottish Food Coalition
Emily Harvey	Forth Environment Link

David Thomson	FDF Scotland
Pete Leonard	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Heather Peace	Food Standards Scotland
Moyra Burns	NHS Lothian Public Health
Peter Brown	The List
Gavin Mowat	Scottish Land and Estates*
Christine Fraser	Food Training Scotland
Helen Welch	Abertay Unit/Food blogger
Leslie Clark	Halogen Communication*
Ewan MacDonald -Russell	Scottish Retail Consortium

To meet requirements of CPGs, organizational non-members (as submitted on re-registration) are denoted by an asterisk.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

These had been received from David Lonsdale, Jeff Justice, Sarah Deas, Douglas Scott, Sara Smith, Phil Thomas, Wendy Wrieden, Viv Collie, Ian Collinson, Brian Ratcliffe, Martin Hunt, Robbie Beattie, Bill Gray, Fiona Bird, David Whiteford, Costas Stathopoulos, Archie Gibson, Graeme Findlay, Ceri Ritchie, Kirsten Leask, Alan Rowe, Peter Morgan, Baukje de Roos, Anne Lee, Lynne Stevenson, Paul Swarbrigg, Ann Packard and Laura- Alexandra Smith.

Richard Lochhead noted that there had been many call offs due to the weather. Presentations would be circulated with the minutes for those unable to attend.

#### 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (20.9.17)

These were agreed.

#### 3. Matters Arising

There were none.

#### 4. **Ambition 2030 and Good Food Nation –Synergies and Tensions**

**James Withers, CEO Scotland Food and Drink (JW)** outlined Ambition 2030. Details are attached. This strategy stands for responsible, profitable growth. He recognized that success needs to be measured now in broader terms and cover not just productivity, innovation etc but also issues such as the effect on communities and the need for industry alignment to help change food culture in Scotland. One of the great paradoxes was the quality of our larder with our rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes, which led to a sicker work force. Tensions with high value/inequalities and value at farm gate needed addressing. He thought that the deeper collaboration would help shift all of these in the right direction.

**Uel Morton Co-Chair of the Scottish Food Commission (UM)** gave a background to the Food Commission. Slides are attached. In particular he listed their recommendations for the Good Food Nation Bill (GFN);

- Need for framework legislation
- Publicly funded bodies and private food businesses to have in place a “Good Food Nation Policy”
- Independent statutory body to be established
- Various recommendations around promotion and marketing of unhealthy food, licensing of food businesses and labelling of calorie content
- Support for those living with food poverty
- Actions around procurement
- Requirement for organisations to measure food waste
- Right to food education and access to good food for 0-18s

**Aileen Bearhop, Head of Good Food Nation Team Scottish Government (AB)** presented on the next steps. The recommendations had been received in December and were now out for consideration by different policy areas across government. They were been looked at for relevance, competency, whether new legislation was needed or whether it was already in place or if there was another way to achieve the goal.

A consultation was planned for early 2018 and **AB** was keen to hear from all. The timings of the Bill depended on the Government’s legislative programme.

#### Open Debate

**John Scott MSP (JS)** asked about exports in particular given the recent achievement of haggis now being sold in Canada. **JW** said that the barriers to Canada had been unlocked but there was still work to be done in the USA and this was also true of red meat.

Exports were doing well and **JW** felt this shift was due to collaboration and their focussing on 8 markets. Working with SDI and Scottish Government there were now people on the ground in 11 cities worldwide. Developing a national brand for Scottish produce in export markets had made a real difference. Brexit had also seen a boost to exports due to the devaluation of the pound.

**UM** said that the Irish were allowed to export beef to North America but the actual amounts were small. He saw the export of Scotch lamb to Canada as an opportunity.

**Martin Meteyard Co-op Business Consultants** referred to the parallels with Fairtrade Nation and GFN. The key point was that they knew how to be a Fairtrade Nation and asked how we would know when we are a GFN; would there be targets? He also asked whether the metrics had really changed since the Scottish Diet Action Plan and whether learnings from that review would inform the process. **UM** said they were currently focussing on the “what” and then will look at the “how” and “where to” and agreed this meant targets. **AB** said this was a difficult process but targets would be important. **Pete Ritchie** noted there were also parallels with Climate Change Bill which had annual targets and monitoring.

**Bella Crowe Scottish Food Coalition (BC)** asked if the Sustainable Development Bill would be referenced as part of the framework legislation. **UM** said he thought targets could not be met if we carried on as we were and they would have to “walk the walk”.

**Christine Fraser Food Training Scotland** said when she met farmers they were angry about Brexit and exports. They felt they should produce more for this country and not export so much. **JW** said that growing more for the local market did not preclude exporting. He said for every £1 sold beyond the UK, £4 was sold within. The work on public procurement had led to 49% of food being offered being Scottish. He pointed out that this included food not available in Scotland such as bananas. All red meat was Scottish. **Robin Gourlay Scottish Government (RG)** agreed there had been an enormous improvement in procurement and said there were opportunities still there.

**Peter Chapman MSP** commented farmers saw the SFD strategy as a success that was not reaching the farm gate. It was essential to see how value could be added back to the farms. He asked why mackerel caught was being landed in Norway where they got a better price in the premium market of Japan. **JW** thought it was about building a brand. Norway had put serious money into promotion, had an office in London and huge amounts of produce. The Asian market was growing particularly for Scottish Salmon which was a premium product.

**Wendy Barrie Scottish Food Guide** found that when she went to France with producers, they were uninterested when they thought it was British beef but sales rocketed when they knew it was from Shetland. Whilst being heartened by GFN she had concerns that not all Scottish food could be regarded as “healthy” and asked about the tensions there. It was also important to think about local food communities, ensure these were robust and not take action that endangered them such as closing abattoirs. **UM**'s view was that in terms of healthy food education was key and more domestic science teachers were needed.

**Jackie McCabe REHIS** suggested that if food premises were licensed then there could be mandatory nutrition training so workers would understand about healthy

foods. **RG** agreed and said the density of fast food outlets in an area could also be considered. **UM** noted that they couldn't tell people what to sell but at least they would do it consciously if trained.

**Elli Kontoravdis Nourish** said that the power of GFN was its cross cutting across all portfolios. **BC** asked about plans for sustainability. **AB** said that this was not specifically in the Food Commission recommendations – though sustainability could be an element of the proposed statutory Good Food Nation policies - but the consultation would reach out to as many as possible to get views.

**JS** asked if packaging would be covered by GFN. **UM** said some parts were covered elsewhere but there was a need to reduce waste and maybe items such as plastic wrapping needed to be looked at. **RL** said the consultation would be an opportunity to influence the Bill.

**RL** asked about the boundary between the free market and GFN. **JW** said that in Scotland there had been a history of public sector intervention; eg seat belts, tobacco but he was not sure food fell into this category. It came down to whether Scotland wanted to change its food culture and would legislation help this? The obesity consultation was out and may lead to marketing restrictions. **UM** said consumers will buy what they want and industry will provide this. He thought the key was education to make better choices. **David Thomson FDF Scotland** said they were currently involved in discussions with companies and Scottish Government on the obesity strategy. It was essential not to create legislation that adversely affected producers in Scotland, such that they might consider whether to continue to produce here. It was vital that the Obesity strategy /GFN do not adversely affect prosperity.

**Lorna Aitken Education Scotland** said that the Curriculum for Excellence had entitlements for children for food and health. Given that this was the Year of Young People she asked whether they could be part of the consultation. **AB** agreed this should be considered.

**Ewan MacDonald- Russell Scottish Retail Consortium** said he was surprised that Brexit was not mentioned in GFN as this could mean the food environment changing. He welcomed parts of the GFN, in particular noted good work that industry had done already on reformulation and waste reduction. However some parts he felt were nebulous and not strategic or evidence based. For example he had concerns over the right to food and the setting up of a statutory body. He agreed with the concept of GFN but did not see it as cohesive strategy yet.

5. **AOB**

There was no AOB.

6. **Date of Next meeting**

This will be Wednesday 28 March on the obesity consultation and ways forward. The dates for the next meetings are 23 May and 19 September.