

Date of Meeting : 30 September 2020

Venue : Zoom

Committee : Next Generation

Present : Peter Moss (Chair), Duncan Morrison, Ben McClymont, Iain Livesey, Andrew Neilson, John Howie, Robert MacKinnon, John McCulloch (SAYFC), Catherine Sloan (SAYFC), Jenny Brunton (NFUS Policy Manager)

Apologies : Matthew Steel, Michelle Stephen, Hamish Logan, Ian Dickson, Ryan MacLean, Chris Scott-Park, Zoe Symington, Andrew Jardine, Andrew Taylor, Martin Kennedy (NFUS Vice-President)

NEXT GENERATION

1. Next Generation Chair Peter Moss (PM) welcomed the group and congratulated Duncan Morrison and Ben McClymont on their recent engagements. The Chair also extended well wishes To Iain Livesey and his wife Sarah on the recent birth of their daughter.
2. PM provided an update on the activity of the Board of Directors who continue to meet every second week and reiterated to the group that he is happy to raise any issues flagged to him on their behalf.
3. PM provided an overview of the planned upcoming webinar of the UK Unions Next Generation Groups titled 'Financing Future Farming' to be held on the 25 November. This focuses on the green economic recovery from COVID-19 and emphasise that this can be achieved through climate friendly agricultural practices. The webinar will explore how accessing green finance can support the next generation to improve their business efficiency and productivity within the context of the green recovery, linking to what buyers are then looking for when sourcing products.

4. The Chair highlighted an opportunity to engage with the Royal Bank Business Builder which has been developed to support businesses and entrepreneurs at all stages (whether just starting out or an established business looking to make a change). The online programme is free of charge and supports idea validation, business essentials, entrepreneur development and growth strategies.
5. The Next Generation Regional Representatives are asked to provide an update on any regional activity.
 - 5.1. Ayrshire – John Howie: A number of branch meetings have been held with guest speakers. A lot of work being put into online meetings but disappointingly little uptake from Next Gen. Next Generation focused meeting featuring a dairy enterprise in New Zealand had good engagement and a positive message.
 - 5.2. Lothian and Border – Iain Livesey: Key issue has been the need for a level playing field and ensuring standards in future trade deals. Also, an interest in educational posters encouraging responsible access.
 - 5.3. General view that meetings are not well publicised and more needs to be done to ensure all members feel included.
6. The Next Generation Invitees to Commodity Committees are asked to provide an update on any relevant committee activity.
 - 6.1. The group noted that there were a number of upcoming committee meetings taking place via Zoom. Some members noted that agenda items can be somewhat repetitive and result in the same points being discussed. The group were reminded that they can feed in agenda items to the relevant Committee Chair and Policy Manager.
 - 6.2. Legal and Technical – Catherine Sloan: There have been several ad hoc meetings to discuss the Scottish Land Commission proposals on regional Land Use Partnerships. CS encouraged all to engage with this and take the opportunity at the upcoming Autumn Conference on 22 October to find out more
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/7615989731481/WN_rIWQUnrHRM-iF8lQRnVC2Q

- 6.3. Milk – Ben McClymont and Andrew Neilson: A huge amount of work was undertaken with the recent milk contract consultation which involved good uptake and participation from the next generation. The group noted that it was positive to see collaboration from the UK Unions on this issue and hoped that individuals were not put off due to fear of contract breaches.
 - 6.4. The group queried developments with ScotEID and the need for clarity on UHF Tagging. The group were provided with the following FAQ (https://www.scoteid.com/Public/Documents/eid_faq_final.pdf) and it was agreed that John Howie would report back after the next Livestock Committee meeting.
7. Members of the group were asked to consider how they can increase promotion and uptake of NFUS family membership and agree a role for the group in approaching and signing up new family members.
 - 7.1. The group felt that the current application system is overly difficult and could be improved to allow easier sign up by creating an online form that can be easily completed with the required details. This would also allow for family membership to be more easily promoted via a single link.
 - 7.2. The group noted that NFUS must work to representing all demographics and feels that more needs to be done to promote inclusion.
8. The group was asked to consider how to build engagement with the Next Generation of NFUS at a branch and regional level.
 - 8.1. The group expressed their concern in building engagement with the next generation at a regional level and on how to do this in a meaningful way to build long-term engagement.
 - 8.2. The group expressed some reservations at open WhatsApp groups which could quickly become a burden and dominated by vocal individuals.
 - 8.3. The group felt that often the next generations views are overlooked, and this discourages individuals from speaking up or continuing to engage.
 - 8.4. The group felt that the majority do not attend branch meetings and that meetings in the future need to be more engaging, for example – on-farm visits.

- 8.5. The group agreed that the most practical approach to building regional networks is by securing next generation branch monitors. These may begin small but in the long term should secure wider buy in to NFUS.

ACTION – Ensure Next Generation Monitors are to be appointed at branch AGMs.

9. The group discussed the recently launched Sustainable Agriculture Capital Grant Scheme (SACGS).
 - 9.1. The group felt that this was a potentially positive scheme, and it was good to see a capital grant scheme, but it was too blunt a tool without sufficient flexibility to deliver meaningful change within the industry. Those who are progressive and have significantly altered practices and invested are unfairly penalised as few options available to them.
 - 9.2. The group noted the heavy emphasis on livestock and that most arable farmers would already have investment in the eligible items. A retrospective cut off date would be more inclusive and include those who have recently invested, for example in the last 12 months.
 - 9.3. The group felt that many of the items would improve farm safety but that this should have been a separate focus to improve health and safety on-farm.
 - 9.4. The group queried the standard cost figures and felt that the prescriptiveness of the eligible items penalised those who were willing to invest in 'better' equipment such as hydraulic cattle crush.
 - 9.5. The group noted that many young farmers and new entrants who rely on seasonal lets and contracting work would not be eligible as contractors and mobile equipment were ineligible.
 - 9.6. The group agreed that going forward, future schemes should be linked to data usage where claimants must demonstrate that they are improving efficiency via usage of such capital items. Equipment only improves efficiency and mitigates GHG emissions if used and acted on.
 - 9.7. The group discussed the need for future support to be linked to training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to ensure that potential improvements and efficiencies are acted on.