

Date of Meeting : 19 November 2019
Venue : Conference Call
Committee : Next Generation
Present : Colin Ferguson, Zander Hughes, Peter Moss, Jenny Baillie, Matthew Steel, Ian Dickson, Ben McClymont, Iain Livesey, Adam Wright, Catherine Sloan (SAYFC), Amy Reid (SAYFC), Jenny Brunton (NFUS Policy Manager)
Apologies : John Manson, David Cooper, Angus Beck, Bruce McConachie, Chris Scott-Park, Charlie Adam (NFUS Vice-President)

1. Regional Updates

- 1.1. Forth and Clyde – A successful Next Generation panel night was held on diversification and embracing opportunities with over 70 attendees.
- 1.2. East Central – Angus Soft Fruits kindly hosted a joint NFUS Next Generation and SAYFC East Area Agri Affairs visit where a diverse group attended for a very interesting visit.
- 1.3. Argyll and Islands – Ian Dickson had recently been appointed as the regional rep and had contacted the regional manager to discuss future work.
- 1.4. Orkney – Planning joint SAYFC and NFUS Next Generation meeting. Has had follow up on issues raised at the Next Generation event in Scottish Parliament including the live shipment of animals from Orkney to the mainland with Peter Chapman MSP.
- 1.5. Lothian and Borders – Iain Livesey will be speaking at the Planning for the Future event in Kelso on Tuesday 3 December. The Tenants Amnesty Meeting was popular and very interesting and informative.
- 1.6. North East – No event has been arranged other than a few branches who have had Next Gen focused events.

2. Commodity Committees

Some members of the group raised that they had been unable to attend many of the commodity meetings due to pressures with work and lack of availability. The group were reminded that substitutes can be sent in their place, but sufficient notice must be given.

3. Tenants Working Group

The group discussed the updated terms of reference for the Tenants Working Group and it was noted that one member of the Next Generation Group would sit on this.



4. Chairman's Report

- 4.1. Colin Ferguson updated the group on recent discussions on convergence and that NFUS had pushed for the inclusion of a £4million pot for National Reserve etc. with unspent monies going to RSABI. The group noted their disappointed that the Scottish Government had not considered this suggestion.
- 4.2. CF informed the group that he had raised the issue of NFUS communications at Board. The group agreed that these could be improved and that publications such as weekly review are not easily read.
- 4.3. CF had attended a CEJA meeting in Brussels where discussions are focused on climate change and future 'green' agricultural policy.
- 4.4. CF and JB had met with the Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy, Fergus Ewing in October for discussion on issues such as opportunities and support for new entrants and young farmers, how changes planning regulations could aid fledgling businesses, the makeup of the FONE Group and need for further discussions with private landowners and how tax incentives can be used to encourage the long term letting of land.
- 4.5. CF gave a summary of the issues discussed at the UK Next Generation Conference in September where the four farming unions came together to discuss areas of collaboration including skills and training, climate change, public perception of farming and how to increase opportunities for the next gen including tax incentives on let land.

5. Agrespect

NFU Scotland has signed the Agrespect Pledge after a proposal was put forward by the Next Generation Group. NFUS President Andrew McCornick published a blog supporting the initiative and stated 'NFU Scotland is proud to sign the Agrespect pledge stating, 'We stand against prejudice and support rural LGBTQ+ diversity, inclusion and enablement.'"

6. RBS Entrepreneur Accelerator Programme

NFU Scotland's Next Generation Group were delighted to partner with RBS, SAYFC and the Rural Youth Project on the Entrepreneur Accelerator Programme which is a great opportunity for inspiring entrepreneurs to get their foot on the ladder or expand on key skills when running their own business with skills developed including business pitches, loan applications and building individuals confidence in making business decisions.

7. Next Generation Survey

The group confirmed that they were happy to promote a Next Generation survey to garner views on priorities for the group, how people engage with NFUS and how to increase this.

The survey can be found at [-https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NFUSNextGen](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NFUSNextGen)

8. AOB – Scottish Land Matching Service

- 8.1. Members of the group requested an update on the Scottish Land Matching Service (SLMS). JB explained that Ian Davidson, SLMS Facilitator, was scheduled to attend the Next Generation meeting but due to this being rearranged as a conference call he was unable to attend.
- 8.2. JB explained the development of the SLMS as a progression of NFUS' Joint Venture Hub which allowed for the funding of a dedicated facilitator for the service. The website is currently the same with a contact number for Ian now available. It was explained that NFUS is currently progressing a separate, stand alone SLMS website including the development of branding etc.

- 8.3. Jenny Baillie gave an update from the SLMS steering group and raised that the Farm Advisory Service were keen to offer additional support and expertise with arrangements.
- 8.4. Members of the group expressed concern over the loss of expertise of the professional partners of the Joint Venture Hub and the lack of information about the SLMS. Members of the group who are registered on the Joint Venture Hub expressed frustration that they have received little communication and were concerned that the service would lose traction.
- 8.5. JB explained that elements were still being developed but would request an update on the service.

9. Membership Issues

- 9.1. Members of the group reported issues faced by some with the membership categories of NFUS.
- 9.2. These issues include;
 - those who are working in the agriculture industry who do not own or rent land who cannot join as farming members,
 - the lack of a student category. It was noted that SRUC students are signed up as student members of NFU England and Wales which is a free category and that they receive all correspondence including a monthly magazine.
- 9.3. It was noted by the group that although farm managers can now be included in a business's family membership, many will wish to represent themselves and it is not currently possible to be a farming member.
- 9.4. It was felt by the group that the current membership structure does not encourage engagement and enable those who are keen to be involved to do so, instead there is a barrier to many potential and aspiring farmers.
- 9.5. JB noted that Teresa Dougall, Director of Regions, was undertaken a branch structure review which may address some of these issues.
- 9.6. It was agreed that the group would put forward a resolution to the Board of Directors regarding the NFUS membership categories.

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