

TUCO Midlands Region Virtual Meeting Thursday 21st October 2021 at 2:30 pm via MS Teams

MINUTES

Attendees:	Stuart Rutty [Chair]	Wolverhampton
	Rob Bean	Leicester
	Bob Crossley	Nottingham
	Mark Gane	Leicester
	Mike Guest	Halesowen
	Judith Hoyle	TUCO Secretary
	Chris Jarram	Nottingham
	Sarah McLoughlin	TUCO Academy
	Hannah Myton-Wright	TUCO Category Manager
	David Nuttall	Harper Adams
	Nicola Penn	Nottingham
	Richard Plummer	Leicester College
	Louise Sherratt	Birmingham
Apologies:	Dan Brazill	Loughborough
	Gavin Brown	Leicester
	Kate Glynn	Aston
	Ivan Hopkins	Nottingham Trent
	Gagan Kapoor	Loughborough
	Clive Singleton	Warwick
	Audrey Taylor	Wolverhampton
	Matthew Thorpe	Harper Adams

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies as listed above.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

These were taken as agreed.

3. Presentation by Gavin Fowler of Fulfil UK

4. TUCO Board Update (David Nuttall)

David's tenure had come to an end as from the September Board Meeting but he ran through the main points from the Board Report. An article had appeared in the TUCO magazine on the new Board members. Gavin Brown had been talking to Loughborough about their procurement partnership and has been trying to persuade them to take on TUCO Online.

Uptake of ProcureWizard has slowed down somewhat recently. Implications of supplier shortages and staff shortages were being discussed. In the next few weeks TUCO will be sending out a Member Satisfaction Survey and a Staff Satisfaction Survey. Matthew White will be taking over as Chair of the PS100 later next year. The Winter Conference will be going ahead as a face-to-face event on 9th December. Durham University will be going out to tender for their procurement. David has also stepped down as Chair of the Sustainability Group and Matt Tebbit will be taking over this role working closely on the rolling out of Menus of Change. At the September meeting we had a presentation from the Humane Society and David would highly recommend their training.

The lease on National House will expire next year and will not be renewed. Future premises for TUCO will be discussed at the Board meeting. The apartment has received funding for the work on the cladding. The current tenants have paid their rent in full in advance and this will now be treated as an investment.

The Board had discussed Crown Commercial Services at the last meeting and it was acknowledged that they are a TUCO competitor.

5. Procurement Update

White Label Delivery App: The standstill period has now ended so it just remains for Terms and Conditions to be negotiated then this will go live in the next few weeks.

Nicola Penn has requested supplier details

Temporary Staffing: Went live on 1st October and is now in Regional Lots.

Food Waste Management: This goes live on 1st November and comprises nine lots.

- Lot 1 On-Site Food Waste Innovation
- Lot 2 - Lot 2 Waste Disposable Cups
- Lot 3 - Waste Coffee Grounds
- Lot 4 - Off Site Food Waste Collection
- Lot 5 – Food Waste Oil Collection and Disposal Service
- Lot 6 - Catering Packaging Collection and Recycling Service
- Lot 7 - Compostable Packaging Waste Collection Service
- Lot 8 - Food Waste Management Systems
- Lot 9 - Surplus Catering Equipment

Sandwiches: Now extended until 30th June 2022 so the new tender process will commence after Christmas.

Soft Drinks: This has been extended to 30th September 2022.

Catering Light and Heavy: This has now been extended until 12th November 2022 and Hannah is looking for volunteers for the Tender Working Party on this.

Alcohol: This has been extended to 15th January 2023.

Milk and Bread: Has been extended until January 2022. The SQ is live and returns are currently being evaluated.

Fresh Fish and Seafood: The current agreement has been extended until 1st May 2022 and the new one is due to go live on 2nd May 2022.

EPOS: This is now complete and details of all suppliers are on the website. The Access Group have now been accepted onto this.

Kitchen Equipment Maintenance: 3 new suppliers have been added on to this. Sylvester Keal, CMK and William Freer

CICS DPS: This went live on 1st June 2021 with 25 suppliers on there. New submissions will be added after 18th November which is when the SQ next closes.

Temporary Structures: Nicola had advised anyone wishing to book a marquee to book early as there may be double the number of bookings for next year for Graduations etc.

Kinetics: Head of Contracts Jane Eve is on the national Tender Working Party for this. Tender documents are being pulled together at the moment and there will be 4 Lots on this.

- Lot 1 Student Accommodation Management System
- Lot 2 Conference/Events Management System
- Lot 3 Catering Management System (delivered catering)
- Lot 4 One Stop Shop

Demonstrations are taking place during October.
Stuart requested an update on dates for this one.

Members were advised that with all DPS' they are required to complete a compliant stage 2 supplier competition. TUCO can assist with this and run the call off on your behalf.

Price Changes

DipChem: Catering 24 and Bidfood have issued price increases. Stephenson's and Bidfood price increases are effective from September. Overall price increases in December.

Catering Light and Heavy: This is due to increasing freight and raw material costs.

Soft Drinks: Increases from October.

Alcohol: Increases from May.

Sandwiches: We are trying to ensure that increases are in line with CPI at 3%.

Grocery, Frozen and Chilled: New increases.

Hot Beverage: New increases.

Other Updates

Sandwiches: Roberts Bakery's cancelled orders for bread causes a knock-on effect.

Heineken: There were problems with Nitrogen shortages but this has all been sorted out now. Statements on driver shortages and regular updates on supplier issues are being posted on the website and in the Newsletter.

New Product Development: We have a new page on our website for NPD. If brand owners and manufacturers are struggling to get a route to market then can showcase their products for a 4 week period for members to order samples free of charge and then give feedback.

Quarterly Spend Reports: These will be sent out this month.

Sustainability: TUCO will be hosting a 'Veganuready' webinar on Thursday 11th November with suppliers showcasing their plant-based products. Bidfood are working towards being carbon neutral by 2050.

Rob asked if it would be possible to get an overview of price rises across the board. He would like some background back-up information for people to understand how prices are continuing to rise and for members to be able to justify price increases at their institutions.

Stuart asked if it would be possible to do this through ProcureWizard. At Wolverhampton, every price increase over 3% has to have the pricing policy document on it.

Nicola asked when the Delivery App would be available and which suppliers are on this.

6. Academy Update

In September we completed nine fact-to-face courses. Before these could take place a Risk Assessment process against COVID had to be done. Other on-site courses include:

- L3 Refreshers
- L2 and L3 Food Safety
- Customer Service
- L2 Healthy Food and Special Diets
- Allergens
- HACCP
- Mental Health
- L3 Supervising First Aid for Mental Health
- Menu Engineering
- Presentation Skills
- Mentoring

Over the last 18 months we have achieved another 200 qualifications for compliance courses. Compliance courses for full members are charged at cost price.

The 'Recruitment and Retention' webinar took place today (21st October) and a tool kit will be made available as part of this.

We also have several other webinars coming up:

- Calorie Labelling (18th January)
- Food Trends (run by the foodpeople) - 9 new food trends will be split down into 3
- Youth Nutrition

The 'Veganuready' Innovation Day will take place on 11th November which will include plant-based products showcased by suppliers. HSI Chef Jenny Chandler will be taking part and registration for this is now live on the website and addresses are needed to arrange the sending of samples to attendees.

We have two new 'plant-based' study tours in the pipeline:

- Newcastle 25th – 26th November
- London 1st – 2nd December

These will incorporate street-food, restaurant food and plant-based breakfasts and both are at a cost of £99.00 fully inclusive. We would therefore ask places to be restricted to two delegates per institution. We are currently awaiting confirmation on numbers then will be looking for a 'Plant-Based Champion' from each institution.

Our 'in-person' Winter Conference will take place on 8th/9th December at East Midlands Conference Centre, University of Nottingham with the theme of 'Food Trends'. This is to coincide with the release of our latest piece of research on trends and we will be bringing copies of the booklet along. Key speakers include Charles Banks (thefoodpeople) and Sat Bains.

We have applied to be a member of the CPD Organisation so that members will receive points for attending such things as Academy courses, Conference etc.

Following a past study tour to California, we are now working with Menus of Change and their research collaborative. There will be some digital training on this with its 24 principles but you do not have to adopt all of them you can pick and choose which ones suit you best.

7. Forum Activity Discussion

Amongst the topics currently on there are Sales 2021/2022 and how they are comparing to pre-COVID days and Food Composters.

Stuart asked about the likelihood of a TUCO Online User Group taking place any time soon – this is in the process of being arranged. He mentioned labelling and the nutritional changes coming into effect as from November. Wolverhampton have gone with Plan Glow but the interface with ProcureWizard is not ready. Nottingham are with Data Code Genie but the API is not ready yet. Data Code Genie are also being used at Leicester. These interface delays means that members are having to manually create labels.

Regarding the portal for allergens, Rob feels that ProcureWizard falls down massively. Product shortages have resulted in different ingredients and substitutions and Chefs are having to check the allergens against the products coming in. The data for the allergens should be live from the portal instead of having to be printed off – we would not be reporting these issues if that was the case. Delays with developments that were promised years ago in some cases. The group also went on to discuss the work involved in setting up the system with Nottingham investing a lot of man hours across all departments to get this done – not as smooth as they were expecting! Training also came up and those who have had PW training, felt the speed at which it is delivered is too fast.

Starbucks

Nicola explained that their tender has gone out and Costa have already submitted. Mark added that Leicester are still looking around the market. Stuart commented that the situation with deliveries was particularly bad. At Birmingham, they are putting their own range of sandwiches in their Starbucks' store as they do not deliver. It is doubtful that they will change over because of the legal complications. At Leicester Starbucks threatened to take staff from there to their other stores. Costa have informed them that the cost of setting up the store will be reduced considerably as they already had some equipment in there. Despite the issues, members agreed that the Starbucks brand remains very popular.

8. Member Updates

Leicester

Mark asked what people's expectations are from a hospitality point of view? Recruitment is proving to be a nightmare and the quality of staff coming through is very poor.

They have reduced their in-house production of bakery products because of Natasha's Law. Rob added that September was a very busy month hospitality-wise but pricing is an issue. They are running at just under 60% of income compared to previous years. The campus is busy with students but there is a huge decrease in members of staff working on campus. Their new food court opened in May and is proving popular. Stuart asked if they had reduced their level of hospitality for another reason or because they do not have the staff to deal with it. They have taken over the previously outsourced catering at College Court.

Nottingham

Chris now has a new role as Head of Catering but they are suffering from a staff shortage. Bob is 9 Chefs short so they had to put existing ones on a better contract. They have over 4,000 students on campus with 12 Halls of Residence. 70% of their cafes are open now but because most of these had been closed for some time, their IT people had turned all the credit card machines off. On their Jubilee Campus the Starbucks outlet is very very busy. For the catered halls, isolation students have meals delivered to their rooms but the students in town have boxes of food delivered to them which is enough to last for 10 days.

Wolverhampton

Lectures with classes of 50 or over either have to be split or done online. They closed many of their outlets but income is now back up to 60%. They have been forced to change their hospitality offering quite considerably by buying platters in from Tiffin and then dropping them off with plates and napkins. However, they only make around 35% profit on this but it comes all boxed and labelled. Their annual Staff Awards had to be done virtually but they did have graduation in September where instead of having a drinks reception they gave the students a small bottle of Prosecco in a goodie bag.

University of Birmingham

Louise submitted the following update:

- Birmingham has been through a Catering Review which has resulted in lots of changes, lost circa 80 staff all voluntary and a few familiar faces.
- We are just starting on our "Food Story" journey which is based on 3 pillars - Inclusive, Authentic, Sustainable.
- Our overarching brand is now known as 'Food Fellows'
- We are working very closely with local suppliers, butchers, bakers, and have partnered with a local coffee roaster which is our premium brand in some of our catering outlets.
- The University has opened (refurbished) the "Old Bank – The Exchange" on New Street which houses a coffee shop and some fabulous spaces for hospitality, conferences and events.
- Completed 2 lots of graduations and now planning for the Christmas graduations which will be held in doors.
- As a department we are seeing the same issues as everyone else - stock issues especially with the brands, reduced trading compared to 2019, lots of vacancies and finding it hard to recruit.
- Working with the NUS to gain Green Impact Award - awaiting the audit
- And of course - we are hosting the Commonwealth games in 2022!

9. Any Other Business

As there was no further business, the meeting was duly closed.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The first meeting of 2022 will be held around late January/early February and will be a face-to-face meeting to visit the new Food Court at the University of Leicester. It will include a networking event in the evening.