

TUCO Welsh Regional Meeting Thursday 20th January 2022 at 2:00 pm via MS Teams

MINUTES

Attendees:	Jeremy Mabbutt	Aberystwyth
	Angela Church	Bangor
	Aled Closs-Davies	Bangor
	Jason Edwards	USW
	Jane Eve	TUCO
	Vanessa Heritage-Smith	Wrexham Council
	Judith Hoyle	TUCO
	Annabel Hurst	Cardiff
	Hayley Jones	Denbighshire
	Sarah McLoughlin	TUCO Academy
	Andrew Phelps	Cardiff Met
	Martin White	NPTC Group
	Dafydd Aled Williams	Conwy Council
	Sue Williams	Wrexham Council
Apologies:	Ian Kemp	Denbighshire

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Apologies as listed above. Jeremy welcomed all members.

2. Presentation by Mark Lawton and David Roberts of Harlech Foodservice

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

These were taken as agreed.

4. Frameworks Update

Jane explained that as two of her Category Team, Kim Ashley and Carys Hopcyn, had now left TUCO, we have recruited two new staff members – Natalie Phillips as Junior Category Manager who is CIPS qualified and Li Davies as Junior Category Manager who is just completing her CIPS qualification. Li has taken over the Sandwich and Kitchen Equipment Maintenance frameworks and Natalie has responsibility for Meat and Poultry, Light and Heavy Catering Equipment and DipChem.

The new TUCO Delivery App went live in December with OrderPay, who presented to members at the Winter Conference.

The new Temporary Staffing framework went live in on 1st October 2021.

Fruit and Veg is due to commence at the beginning of August 2022 and Jane is starting work on this.

Food Waste Management was launched on 1st November.

Li is working on the new Sandwich framework and has contacted existing Tender Working Party members.

Soft Drinks has been extended until 30th September. Mandy will be starting work on the new tender shortly.

Catering Light and Heavy Equipment – contract review meetings were held during November, the minutes from which are on our website.

On the EPOS agreement – both Zonal and UniWare have been added to the DPS.

Catering Innovation Concept Solutions (CICS) has seen some new tenderers on there who will be added onto the agreement.

Milk and Bread is being evaluated at the moment.

Meat and Poultry – the new agreement commenced on 1st January.

Design and Installation for the Customer Experience is currently at the research stage.

Fresh Fish and Seafood – Hannah is working on the research and strategy documents.

Pricing Update

The DipChem agreement has seen new pricing.

The Soft Drinks annual price increase came into effect in October.

Grocery, Frozen and Chilled has seen significant price increases as from the beginning of January.

Hot Beverage has new pricing on there as from 1st January – increases of 18% on coffee and 9% on syrups and ancillary snacks.

Sustainability

Matt Tebbit from Reading is the new Chair of the Sustainability Group. TUCO Category Managers are having six-monthly meetings with suppliers to review NetPositive plans.

5. Training Academy Update

We had reached 800 qualifications gained by the end of December 2021. Sarah has delivered 7 or 8 courses over the last couple of weeks, the majority of which are compliance and have been held online. We are holding two Study Tours for Vegan and Vegetarian offerings – Newcastle on 15th and 16th March and London on 30th and 31st March with support from both LWC and Vegetarian Express. This is at a heavily subsidized cost to members of £99. We have an upcoming webinar on 24th January on Calorie Labelling, however Sarah stated that most TUCO members as universities will be exempt from this. She recommended the Brakes website for giving excellent information on calorific content.

Graduations for the first cohort of the Masters Degree took place on Saturday 15th January at LSBU. There are places available for the next cohort to commence in January 2023. We are establishing a working party for Menus of Change and one of the things they will be looking at is content to upload to the TUCO website.

The Winter Conference took place on 9th December at the University of Nottingham and we were only down around 8 – 10% on numbers from 2019. All the videos of the presentations are available to view on the TUCO website.

A benchmarking study will be going out to members over the next few days.

Sarah is currently speaking to Highfield about T-Levels which may be a good resource in terms of supplying labour. Annabel enquired about possible apprenticeship schemes.

Jeremy asked about the Global Food Trends Report which is an excellent piece of research. This came out in December and Sarah shared the link to members.

<https://www.tuco.ac.uk/insight/research/global-food-beverage-report-2021>

6. Board Update

TUCO Finance Department has reported losses of around 40% as a result of the pandemic but initial forecasts were far worse than the actual figures. A number of new members have come on board, some of whom were previously contracted out and have brought their operations back in-house. The lease on the TUCO offices in Manchester is set to expire later this year and it is unlikely that this will be renewed. TUCO Academy online courses have proved very successful with the possibility of some courses being held in person in the near future.

7. Sustainability

Jeremy asked members about carbon emissions. Cardiff are working towards carbon neutral by 2030. UN Global Goals are constantly key. Annabel feels that if they can get this then they are heading in the right direction with their carbon. There is also legislation from the Welsh government which members will be working towards.

At Cardiff they are keen to buy local produce with the accent on local fruit and veg, which she is finding hard to obtain. Mark Lawton believes that carbon footprint by product is the way forward. Dafydd is working with Larder Cymru and Coleg Llandrillo on Primary School menu planning to have Welsh Suppliers on there. Angela has also worked with Larder Cymru in the past; however, she is not sure what they are doing and also how they sit regarding competition for TUCO. She does not have confidence in what they are going to achieve over the next couple of years. Mark has also been involved in meetings with Larder Cymru and the Welsh Government.

Jeremy also mentioned Menus of Change and feels that the Welsh region could become more involved in the TUCO Sustainability Agenda. Cardiff have adopted Menus of Change and this is something which the TUCO Sustainability Group are looking at.

8. Updates from Members

Bangor

Aled reported that things are slowly getting back to normal. They are still providing food packs for international students who are having to isolate on arrival back in the UK. Angela is now beginning to focus on the gala dinners and other events for students. They are due to have 3 weeks of graduations this year to catch up. The main student bar and two retail outlets have seen good business recently and they are now looking forward to things returning to some form of normality this term.



The University Caterers Organisation

Cardiff

They are quiet at the moment as it is exam time. They are currently running at around 55% of normal levels. Most of the staff are still working from home but as from this term, there will be no more remote study. Graduations are all 3 cohorts over 3 days week commencing 18th July. Annabel asked members if they knew of anyone who would like to help them out by working there during Graduation Week. Graduation ceremonies will be held at the Principality Stadium with the celebrations on campus later. They opened their first Vegan café, Green Sheets, last year, which is going really well. They also have 'Meat Free Mondays' and are working with Vegetarian Express on 'mock meats'. 2022 to 2023 will see the re-launch of their Conferencing and Events to coincide with the lifting of restrictions.

Conwy Council

Dafydd reported that his immediate issues are staffing with both sickness and recruitment. Both Cook and Kitchen Manager positions have been vacant for some time, which is causing some problems. Otherwise they are back to normal with all schools back. From September 2022 all infants in primary schools will be given free school meal entitlement, then from September 2023 all children will be offered this. This will mean 50% extra meals in 2022 and a further 33% in 2023. On the recruitment side, they are going through a complete re-evaluation process. Unfortunately there are not that many candidates with the desired knowledge of catering so lately all of their workforce has been completely static.

South Wales

Jason has seen a slow start to 2022 but things are looking more optimistic. Restaurants are becoming busier and they have no recruitment issues at the moment. The majority of staff are still working from home. Students can now purchase their own re-usable cup, which has proved popular. Graduations will be held at Celtic Manor this year which will lose the university quite a lot of money. They are currently reviewing their food offer at both Cardiff and Newport campuses. They have also recruited a new 'Life Co-ordinator' which has generated some new events. Overall, Jason feels that things are moving in the right direction.

Cardiff Met

Staff have not fully returned to site. Up until Christmas trade was good but has dropped off in January. Andrew has spent the last year refurbishing a lot of their outlets. They have also taken over the Students Union operation at Llandaff campus. Over the last six months they have refurbished two brand new units and have also introduced a new Rewards system. They are also planning another refurbishment for during the summer. They have been doing a lot of work on their Food Menu, their Grab n'Go offering and Allergens, so effectively using the down time to update everything. Annabel asked Andrew about Cardiff Met's new system of payment and Andrew feels that people seem to prefer contactless now. Students also tend to prefer to do everything through an App.

Wrexham Council

The last 3 or 4 days things have picked up again but the decision to do only online learning from 17th December then not return to the classrooms until 7th January has had an effect on income. They are still on the reduced 2-week menus instead of 3-week. In some cases, some pupils are going back to the counter to collect their food. Some are still in bubbles where staff are taking their meals to the classrooms so all food must be transportable.

At one school the food is prepared in the kitchens in the infant school then taken over to the junior school to be served in the classrooms. They are struggling to recruit staff and there has been no pay rise for two years. They are at Level GO2 for Kitchen Assistants and GO4 at £9.85 per hour for Cooks. They have an NVQ Level 2 Programme starting up again soon and there has been a lot of interest. They are gearing up for free school meals for infant pupils from September this year. The majority of kitchens can cope with the increased demand but there will have to be some changes. They have also lost two members of their Management and Supervisory Team – one to retirement and one who is heading off for pastures new.

9. Ideas for Future Presentations

A list of suppliers wishing to present at meetings will be circulated to members to decide who they would like to invite it.

10. Any Other Business

Jeremy would welcome a face-to-face meeting next time. Annabel kindly offered to host this at Cardiff.

11. Date of Next Meeting

A Doodle Poll will be circulated to ascertain the most convenient date for everybody (possibly early May).