

TUCO Combined South East/South West Regional Meeting
Tuesday 29th March 2022 at 3:00 pm
Hopkins 101 Room, University of Reading Whiteknights Campus

MINUTES

Attendees:	Nick Leach (Chair)	Portsmouth
	Martin Batt	Reading
	Jacqui Beazley	LSE
	Aleksandra Borkowska	Reading
	Steve Charley	Reading
	Graeme Collie	King's College London
	Lisa Connellan	King's College London
	Lewis Haynes	Bath
	Judith Hoyle	TUCO
	Richard Jordan	St Mary's
	Sarah McLoughlin	TUCO Academy
	David Morton	Winchester
	Hannah Myton-Wright	TUCO Category Manager
	Lisa Pritchard	Bath
	Nikhil Santos	St Mary's
	Stephen Swarbrick	LSE
	Matthew White	Reading
	Keith Williams	Kent
Via Teams:	Susie Cullen	Anglia Ruskin
	Edina Dudas	Birkbeck
	Kristian Fernandez-Mitchell	UWE
	Matthew Green	South Devon College
	Nicola Mellor	TUCO Category Manager
	Natalie Phillips	TUCO Category Manager
	Manish Shah	King's College London
	Caroline Wynn	Bristol
Apologies:	Elisa Aylott	Essex
	Ryan Hanson	RAU
	Debbie King	Brighton
	Jemma Morris	Royal Holloway
	Darren Tyers	Essex

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies are as above. Nick welcomed all members.

2. Overview of the Brakes Food Event

The general feeling was that suppliers were happy to be there and it was good to see more produce-based goods. The venue was exactly the right size for the event. Jacqui felt that it was good to get out and about and meet up with colleagues again.

3. Member Updates

Portsmouth

They are trying to finally open their £26 million swimming pool which keeps leaking and is causing endless problems.

Kent

They have merged with the Estates Department and the consultation process for this ends the following week. Hybrid working will affect them far more than the pandemic has. They are finding it very hard to find staff in the South East. At the moment they are looking at food courts and central production.

Bath

Lisa explained that they are finding it difficult to get staff to man the outlets. She is concerned about the price increases which are coming through the system and asked members what they are doing about this – are they absorbing the increases, passing them on to customers or varying their menus accordingly?

UWE

Jacqui is struggling with the recruitment agencies and the supply of staff. Their agency will be trialling a scheme for a Temp to Perm solution whereby the member of staff stays for six months to see how they get on. They are being looked at as a service which costs the university money.

King's

They are currently having issues with suppliers and recruitment seems to be a challenge, with age-old vacancies. Manish asked members what they are budgeting for next year as King's are at about 70% of pre-COVID levels on retail and 50% on hospitality. They have seen an 8% increase in labour costs and 5% on food costs.

South Devon College

They are trying to get back to normal but are having issues with supply and stock as well as problems with labelling. Staffing challenges are not as bad as other universities. There is a lot of blended learning so business is not as busy as it could be. The college term ends on Friday 8th April.

Bristol

Bristol are seeing trading at £60K - £70K again but this has only happened in the last few weeks. They are still around 40% down on pre-COVID levels. Blended working is getting back to normal levels but hospitality is still less than 50%. Catered halls are back to where they would have expected them to be. Staff are returning to campus slowly with several encouraged to do at least 2 – 3 days on campus. Many people are bringing in their own food onto campus, which then leads to problems with spaces for diners who have purchased their food from the outlets.

LSE

Things have looked quite positive this last month and for the first time during the previous week they beat their 2019 retail figures at 107%. Hospitality is just picking up now with some big internal events and some social events. They have opened up a new café and are trying to be plastic-free. They are feeling positive for September but trying to recruit new staff is difficult, with some people not even having the required visa to work here.

4. Procurement Update

We have two new Team members, Li Davies and Natalie Phillips to replace Carys and Kim. Li will manage Sandwiches and Kitchen Equipment Maintenance and Natalie will be responsible for Meat and Poultry, DipChem and Catering Light and Heavy Equipment. Tenders being worked on at the moment include:

- TUCO Delivery App went live on 2nd December and was awarded to OrderPay
- Temporary Staffing started 1st October
- Meat and Poultry went live 1st January
- Milk and Bread commenced 24th January

Frameworks being renewed:

- Fresh Fish and Seafood
- Fruit and Veg (slight delay with the use of STS)
- Design and Installation – out for SQ submissions
- Sandwiches returns due back in April and due to go live on 1st July
- Soft Drinks has been extended to 1st September

DPS Updates

EPOS has 3 new suppliers on there. Food Waste Management is now a DPS. CICS has new suppliers on there including Change Please and Theo's and talks are ongoing with Pizza Plus and Caffee Nero. The next window for evaluation of returns will be 18th May. We are still looking at providing a route to market for the premium brands ie Pret, Costa etc and are looking to get a set of documents together. Costa are already on Lot 10. Details of these are on the website and the monthly page in the magazine.

A few more suppliers have been added onto the KEM. Contract review meetings have been carried out on Soft Drinks, Vending, Catering Light and Heavy and Alcohol. The minutes for these meetings are available on the website.

Price Changes

These changes are since we last met which include Cost of inflation; raw materials; shortfall in harvested crops; transport and shipping costs; duty; cost of living (National Insurance/minimum national wage). We are expecting an influx of additional changes due to fuel hikes (28p per litre increase over 9 days) and raw materials impacted by the War in Ukraine.

DIPCHEM – The annual price increase was due in December. Some suppliers have deferred prices such as Bunzl who are currently uploading a new agreed price list and Diversey.

Soft Drinks- Annual price increases received in October. Again, some suppliers deferred such as CCEP.

Convenience Retail- Bi-annual price increases received in January 2022. Expect to see significant increases.

Alcohol – most suppliers have submitted new pricing effective from March/April. Looking at 4-6.5% increases on basket of goods.

Wine shortages coupled with demand is going to see prices increase. Expect shortages of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, Pino Grigio, Burgundy & Chablis. Customers will need to be flexible going forward on the wine varieties they buy – especially with entry level wines. £2.23 duty protection on wine (currently under review) and will be devastating for the sector and won't reduce prices like the government are saying.

GFC - New price lists from all by 1st January 2022. Expect to see significant increases.

- Blakemore – 4% Cost to serve plus manufacturers increases
- Brakes – 3.2% Cost to serve plus manufacturers increases
- Harlech – Overall 4.6% across TUCO spend
- Philip Dennis – Overall 2% across TUCO spend
- Bidfood – 2% cost to serve plus manufacturers increases
- H N Nuttall – 3.1% overall

Hot Beverages – New pricing due from all 1st January 2022. Expect to see significant increases.

- Bewleys – Overall 18% against coffee & 9% on syrups/teas/ancillary/snacks (5% on syrups)
- Tchibo – Overall 21% against coffee & 10% on everything else.

Vegan and Vegetarian – None reported

Fresh Fish – All 3 suppliers have submitted new pricing for March.

Catering Light & Heavy – impacted by soaring raw material costs like Stainless Steel (39%) Aluminium (51%) Churchill products will be around 2.25 times higher than 2019/20 due to soaring energy costs, clay, labour, packaging. Mirrored by other manufacturers. Again due to fuel hikes, expect more increases on crockery!

Sandwiches and Associated Products – Sandwich King has put price of the egg related products up due to their egg price has gone by 50%. It was caused by shortage of eggs due to Avian Flu outbreak across the UK & Europe which has seen over 2 million laying birds culled.

Milk & Bread – Expect hikes on bread lines due to the price of wheat affected by War in Ukraine.

War in Ukraine – In terms of what action is being taken by TUCO in response to sanctions on Russia.

- Credit Safe have been approached by NEUPC. Details of all UKUPC Framework appointed suppliers have been provided. Credit Safe are running a report, free of charge, to identify the percentage of Russian involvement in the supply chain. Data should be available next week. At this stage it is not known what the report will look like and what information can be shared. NEUPC have asked for details of a charging mechanism in case the information is required in a different format.
- Will be contacting suppliers, for most impacted commodities - to comment on supply chain impacts coming from the Russian invasion of Ukraine

The TUCO Sustainability Group met on 10th March and we are looking into a swap shop for pre-loved equipment. The MSC scheme is still operating. On the subject of carbon reduction vs offsetting, Hannah asked if any members have directives in place to reduce their carbon footprint and is this reduction vs offsetting? On NetPositive, 195 suppliers out of a possible 286 are now using this.

Reading are looking at ground sourced heat and will be digging into thermal springs. The university have tightened up on travel, particularly international. Matt noted that at the event today there were lots of re-usable containers in place. Portsmouth's Vice Chancellor would like the university to be carbon-neutral by 2025 which will stop academics travelling around the world. Bristol's Vice Chancellor has declared a climate emergency and plans to be carbon-neutral by 2030. Caroline has submitted a business case for software from Klimato and this is looking very positive. The Catering objective is to map this this year and to look to reduce it by 25% in two years.

Nick stated that Portsmouth are not happy with what is happening at Tchibo – they are getting price increases on ingredients which should not have come into effect yet. More Procurement Departments are being asked about locally sourced produce ie Solent Butchers and Pensworth. Matt mentioned the possibility of a localized agreement amongst several members. We need a drive to get our members to collaborate locally. We really need input from members when we are doing the tenders. Lisa noted that the larger suppliers are all on the regional lots.

5. TUCO Academy Update

We are continuing with online webinar courses at the moment, particularly compliance courses although we are still offering face-to-face and have held some recently in Sheffield, Oxford and St Mary's Twickenham. Prices are not going up. Bespoke courses can be held for a minimum of 7 or 8 people or more and we can offer online or in person. Level 3 and 4 Refresher courses are coming up and charged at cost price of certification. 5-Day courses cost £99 inclusive of everything. Debra Adams will be running a couple of finance course –

Finance for Non-Financial Managers and Cost Control for Food and Beverage Managers, which will be split over two days. Other courses include Project Management, Report Writing and Food Photography.

Study Tours have started up again in March with the Vegan and Vegetarian one in Newcastle. A further tour is being held in London on 30th and 31st March. Going forward we are looking at a couple of UK-based study tours and one European tour. We will continue with webinars, which can either be watched live or at a later date. We will also be holding a food waste one in conjunction with WRAP. There will be a plastics update with the change in legislation, a Tech Day and a session on 'cultivated meats'.

The Menus of Change Steering Group have met twice to look at resources available for members interested in adopting the 24 principles.

There will be some online learning with the CIA and a couple of weeks on site in the USA. We will also be working with their Culinary Team to delivery a Culinary Training Programme. We will be setting up a Recipe Bank on the TUCO website. The Menus of Change Leadership Conference takes place from 14th to 16th June at Hudson Valley including a tour of the CIA. Delegates will arrive back in the UK on 18th June with their last night spent in New York to check out different food and beverage trends.

We will be producing a set of Sustainability Insights podcasts which showcases members initiatives. Members signed up so far include Winchester – package-free shop, beef removed from the menu completely; Chester – garden to table and beekeeping and Reading – local suppliers particularly breweries. These podcasts will be limited to members and will not include suppliers.

We are working on another strategic partnership with Natasha's Foundation who at the moment are pushing for Immunotherapy to be available on the NHS; influencing the national policy about allergens legislation and for Epi pens to be available in university First Aid kits. They also hope to help people with allergens feel more comfortable.

6. Board Update

The Board met in person for the first time in 2 years in mid-March at Manchester, where a Farewell Dinner was held for David Nuttall on his retirement. High on the Agenda was the current strategy, which runs until 2024. The Board decided that this will now be valid until 2023, when it will be revised. New risks were reviewed on such things as supply chain due to the war in Ukraine and staff retention.

The Academy has supported a large number of our members throughout the pandemic. The lease on our offices at National House expires in October but the Board agreed that we should have some smaller office space as a base. The format for regional meetings going forward will be that out of the 3 meetings per annum per region, 2 will remain online and one will be an overnight dinner and networking event.

Regarding TUCO Online, the company will now be targeting members with spend of less than £500K per annum.



The University Caterers Organisation

Three of our Board Directors were due to retire in 2023 but the Board took the decision to extend their tenure.

Crown Commercial Services have approached TUCO to tender for the NHS Procurement System but it was felt that we do not have the resources to adequately manage this.

The LACA partnership is becoming stronger and we also have a new one now with Crescent Purchasing Consortium.

The Summer Conference will be going ahead at Keele University but without the Competitions side.

Cash reserves are looking strong and we forecasted losses of around £122K.

We have acquired 9 new members but lost 4, including University of Essex and Newcastle and Staffordshire College Group.

Manish paid tribute to Nick on his retirement and thanked him for all his work as Regional Chair and great supporter of TUCO.

7. Any Other Business

Matthew Green asked if anyone had any experience with bubble tea, or does anyone have a supplier of this? Lisa Pritchard and Lisa Connellan have both just started talks with Seewoo on the CICS framework but they are having problems with deliveries for Bath and cannot get their vehicles onto campus because of height restrictions. Boba Box from London do all their deliveries via courier.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Late June or early July 2022. This will be an online meeting.