



## **MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD ONLINE AT 11AM ON 14<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020**

### **Committee in attendance:**

Camilla Deane, Norseland (Supplier) – Chair

Dan Silverston, Soho Sandwich Co. (Producer) – Deputy Chair

Georg Buhrkohl, Subway (Sandwich bar chain) Frank Boltman, Trade (Independent)

Robert Potts, Greencore (Producer) David Winter, Street Eats (Producer)

Anthony Minto, Ginsters (Van Sales) Ben Newby, Freshfayre (Supplier)

Peter Mayley, La Baguetterie (Independent) Martin Beaver, RAP (Supplier)

### **Apologies**

Neil Wood, Woods (Independent)

Simon Parton, Compass (Catering)

Antony Minto, Ginsters (Delivery)

David Ross (Greggs)

### **Coronavirus**

Jim Winship outlined the work the Association has been doing to support members and the industry, particularly in relation to persuading the Government to address issues around the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan scheme and banks. With most sandwich bars and cafes closed and manufacturing volumes reduced to around 25% of normal, the industry has been particularly hard hit.

While the Treasury is proving reluctant to address specific industry sector concerns, the Association has been stressing the unique position the food to go sector is facing, particularly with regard to manufacturing.

Throughout the Association has been working closely with other trade bodies.

Jim also reported initial results from a survey the Association has been undertaking. Although at the time of the meeting the survey was still in operation, the results from 220 responses had revealed that 9% of businesses had less than a month of liquidity rising to 67% saying they would run out of liquidity in less than three months. 24% of respondents had made staff redundant rather than furloughing them.

One major concern that the Association is currently seeking to address is the increasing level of aged debt. Some members had reported that their aged debts had increased by 75% and there are serious concerns about businesses using invoice discounting finding themselves facing recalls of the advances they had received.

Jim Winship urged members to come forward with their concerns so that the Association can represent issues to the Government that are worrying the industry.

Frank Boltman reported that some landlords were threatening winding up orders if tenants did not keep up with their rent payments.

Dan Silverston said that furloughing of some staff was causing unrest amongst other staff as the furloughed staff were receiving 80% of their average pay while those unfurloughed were working shorter shifts, without overtime opportunities, and were consequently worse off.

Frank Boltman also said that he was concerned about how businesses would cope with a slow return to work, particularly if social distancing was still operating. He pointed out that for restaurants and sandwich bars to be viable they needed a steady volume of daily trade. If tables have to be widely spaced and customer volumes controlled, they would find it difficult to achieve the levels needed to break even.

Jim Winship said that he would pass on these concerns to the Government via BEIS.

### **The Association**

Jim Winship reported that action had been taken to reduce the Association overheads by furloughing staff and also ceasing contracts with both Gavin Rothwell and Sally Higgins until the country emerges from the current crisis. The aim would be to re-appoint both as soon as the Association's finances allow this.

### **BSA Awards Dinner**

The meeting discussed the BSA Awards and the precarious financial situation the Association is in as the dinner accounts for some 50% of its annual income. In addition to the loss of revenue, the Association's contract with the Royal Lancaster means that if it cancels it will be liable for a £33,200 commitment to the hotel in addition to around £10,000 it has spent already on the event.

It was agreed that with the industry on its knees, it was not going to be viable to run the dinner in July and Jim Winship proposed the following action:

1. Since most of the work has been done on the awards, including regional competition heats etc, the Association should publish a results brochure highlighting the winners in each category and supporting the sponsors. This to be circulated around the industry and to sponsors, winners, media etc.
2. That the Association will try to re-structure the agreement with the Royal Lancaster to convert the booking into a formal dinner or luncheon in the Autumn with the aim of bringing the industry together.

The meeting agreed on this way forward, which means that sponsors will continue to get value for their support and the Association has an opportunity to recover at least part of the investment it has already made.

### **Next Meeting**

The meeting agreed to hold a further online meeting in May. This will take place at 11am on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2020.