



MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ONLINE AT 11AM ON 13th JANUARY 2021

Committee in attendance:

Dan Silverston, Soho Sandwich Company (Producer)– Chair
Robert Potts, Greencore (Producer) – Vice Chair
Peter Mayley, La Baguetterie (Independent)
Hannah Pearson, Subway (Sandwich Bar Chain)
Samantha Brett, Waitrose (Retail)
Ben Newby, Freshfayre (Supplier)
Neil Wood, Woods (Independent Sandwich Bar)
David Winter, Street Eats (Producer)
Martin Beaver, RAP (Supplier)
Amy James, Greggs (Baker)
Marc Faulkner, Denton’s Deli (Caterer)
Cathal McDonnell, Deli-Lites (Producer)

Jim Winship, BSA Director
Sandra Bennett, Membership Manager
Caron Parry, Event Manager

Apologies

Anthony Minto, Ginsters (Van Sales)

New Committee Members

Jim Winship welcomed the new members of the Committee.

Minutes of Last Meeting

These were agreed.

Meetings and Calendar of Events

It was agreed that Committee meetings would continue to be online for the foreseeable future. A copy of the dates for meetings in 2020 is attached.

Coronavirus Update

Testing: The Association is arranging for some supplier and manufacturing members to take part in a testing programme being organised by the Department of Health in conjunction with DEFRA. Members who have opted to take part are being contacted by DEFRA to attend a workshop explaining the programme and, if they agree to take part, will get a month’s free testing kits. Tests are done weekly by the company.

Vaccinations: The Association wrote to the Government immediately after Christmas asking for workers at key food businesses supplying to the healthcare sector to be put on the priority list for vaccines. It is understood that the Department of Health will consider this once the initial priority groups have had their first vaccinations. The Association has also approached British Hospitality and the FDF to support this.

Squeezed Middle: With growing concerns over the limited financial support that has been given to those supplying into the hospitality sector, in particular, the Association has written to the Chancellor urging further help for these businesses. This is being coordinated with several other food trade associations.

Tightening restrictions on takeaways

The Association has lobbied the Scottish Government over rumours that it is about to ban takeaways and only allow food deliveries. *We have subsequently heard that they are to allow to allow takeaway services but only through a door or service hatch with no public access to premises. We understand that there are currently no plans in England to curtail takeaways.*

Brexit

Members raised concerns about rising costs and difficulties of getting some ingredients as a result of Brexit. Ben Newby told the meeting that his business was now looking to source more ingredients within the UK as a result and that he expected import prices to rise by around 2-3% to cover the cost of the paperwork now needed. Jim Winship suggested that it was too early to fully assess the impact of Brexit and that it would be a few more weeks before things would become clear. Samantha Brett also pointed out that while some ingredients might rise in price, others such as prawns and tuna from outside the EU could be cheaper due to new trade agreements the UK has agreed.

Budget

The Association is planning to write to the Treasury urging the Chancellor in his March budget to extend rates relief for a further 12 months and to put some protection in place for businesses facing rent arrears bills as we come out of lockdown.

NHS Sandwich Supply

The Association is continuing to liaise with Philip Shelley, chair of the Hospital Food Review, and the NHS/Department of Health with the aim of ensuring that sandwiches delivered into the healthcare sector are as safe as possible with regard to risks from listeria. To help encourage the maintenance of the chill chain, manufacturers have been asked to label sandwiches with clear handling instructions to main them at below 5 degrees Centigrade and for products to be consumed within 30 minutes of coming out of chill.

The Association has also been in contact with several of the commercial procurement organisations working for NHS trusts over their requirements for manufacturers and is in the process of setting up a briefing for them with Philip Shelley to try to establish a standard audit approach across the UK.

HFSS Consultations

Jim Winship reported that the Association had responded robustly to the Government's proposals for banning advertising both on TV and social media for products high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS). The list of such products included sandwiches as the consultation embraced all the categories covered by Public Health England's reduction programmes. While little advertising is done by the

sandwich sector, social media is important to retailers and, particularly, independents. A copy of the response can be found on the BSA website.

During Christmas week, the Government also announced that - from April 2022 - it is to ban HFSS products from being displayed within 2 metres of doors and tills as well as from end of gondolas etc. Promotions, such as 2-for-1, are also to be banned. On this occasion, the consultation only invited comment on the wording of the legislation and its enforcement. Sites of less than 2000 square feet and businesses with fewer than 50 employees are exempted. Again, the Association has responded strongly to this urging particularly that only trading areas should be assessed in relation to store sizes and not seating areas.

Given the political climate around obesity, Jim Winship told the meeting that the Government is unlikely to back down much from these proposals.

Jim Winship agreed to try to establish whether these new regulations would also impact larger pack sizes.

Jim Winship also reported that he had agreed to speak at the Westminster Food & Nutrition Forum Policy Conference on 2nd February to comment on the Government's current obesity strategy.

Waste Group

The Association has set up a new waste group which is currently looking at ways to collect used sandwich packs and deliver them to recycling centres that are capable of handling them. The group includes retailers, manufacturers, sandwich bars, packaging and recycling businesses.

Part of the current focus is on the feasibility of creating collection bins for packs that could be posted to the recycling centres when full. However, there was some concern over the limited space in many shops for placing such bins and it was suggested that their location in office blocks etc. might be more fruitful.

The group is also looking at ways to incentivise consumers into using bins, possibly by making a small donation to charity for each pack recycled.

Jim Winship to report back to the Committee as the project develops.

British Sandwich Week

Dan Silveston asked the Committee to consider ways the Association might use British Sandwich Week in May to do something for charity, perhaps.

BSA Awards & Dinner

The Association is to run the 2021 awards virtually again in 2021 and Caron Parry explained the broad programme of promotion to get entries. Judging is to be done openly on-line for most categories so that members can watch presentations from finalists. Details of these sessions will be circulated to members in advance.

As the awards dinner cannot be held this year, the Association is to hold an industry dinner at the Royal Lancaster Hotel on Thursday 21st October. Patrick Coveney, Group Chief Executive of Greencore, has been invited to speak at this event and there will also be entertainment.

Online Meetings

A programme of online member meetings is being planned for 2021, starting with a presentation from the Institute of Grocery Distribution on 27th January focusing on their vision of the future of the Food to Go sector. In February they will also be doing a special session for manufacturers and suppliers taking a more holistic view of the market.

At least one of these events will take place each month through the coming year.

Haulier Issues

Cathal McDonnell asked the Association if it could assist with issues around deliveries in and out of Northern Ireland. Jim Winship agreed to discuss this further with Cathal after the meeting.

Next Meeting

The next online Management Committee meeting will take place on Wednesday 17th March at 11am.