

The Midcounties Co-operative Society
Oxford Colleague Council Meeting
Held on Teams
Chairperson: Pete Hopkins
Minutes: Louise Edgar-Kerrigan

NB – Bold Font indicates most recent response

☺ signifies item dealt with and therefore completed

1	Welcome Pete welcomed all representatives to the meeting.	
2	<u>Minutes from the last meeting.</u> Nothing outstanding.	
3	Pete introduced himself and ran through the agenda Communication – Pete advised the reps that he would be unable comment on any issues relating to Pay, Union or Personal Grievances. Pete asked that any issues be raised with him direct following the meeting.	
4	Pete ran through questions submitted prior to the meeting and any additional ones for Rupert & Olly Next year the first meeting will be face to face – reps asked to advise of suitable location. Reps asked to check emails weekly for any communications and to log a service call if they currently do not have a Midcounties Email address.	
5	Imogen give an overview of the recent Executive Colleague Council Meeting. The main aspect of the meeting was to hear about the changes to the Attendance & Absence policy Jan 2022. 1st stage absence policy will now be less formal with more emphasis on support, communication physical and Mental Health. Formal proceedings will now commence at 6 months. Reps are reminded to inform colleagues that Grocery Aid do offer emotional and physical support. There will be more support for colleagues going through the Menopause with a policy to be introduced which is a positive change in retail, there will also be training for Managers. There will be Options for greater learning and development as we have 20 confirmed new stores next year with a further 61 stores in progress.	

	<p>Members app is working well with 3 times as many members signing up, please use the QR code and make sure colleagues are aware. Imogen urged other colleagues to attend Exec Meetings as they are informative and a good opportunity to meet other resp from across the business.</p> <p>Olly Wiltshire joined the meeting to give an overview of Christmas & Supply Chain.</p> <p>Headlines 2020 was our biggest Christmas ever with Ambient and Non-Food sales of £5.6m and Fresh & Frozen sales of £1.9m, sales are currently performing below those of 2020 but more in line with 2019.</p> <p>Ambient Key Deals Terrys Chocolate Orange - £1 / £1.50 Cadbury Dairy Milk Selection Box - £1.50 Irresistible Festive Crisps (Hog Roast / Pigs in Blankets) – 2 for £2 Tins and Tubs in large stores – Various sizes and prices Terry’s chocolate orange crispy pouch – £1.50 (Member Deal) CP Shortbread Fingers - £1</p> <p>Fresh Headlines Opportunity to build sales on Party Food & Cheese as more families gather for Christmas this year More lines to be free orderable as well as allocated.</p> <p>Fresh Key Deals New chilled desserts such as Orange Bells & Baubles Gro chocolate Brownie Ice Cream Pioneer 3 for 2 Party Food Irresistible 3 for 2 Customer can shop across ranges enhancing the 3 for 2 offers</p> <p>Supply Issues We have seen many disruptions to the supply chain this year caused by Covid and Brexit, Suppliers are still having significant issues with meeting volume demands and driver shortages. This is mainly because of import of raw materials international shipping and production line capacity (social distancing).</p> <p>Andover Due to issues with pickers we have moved 80K of pick from Andover to Coventry which should help stores serviced by Andover who have seen availability issues.</p> <p>POS We understand that the kits have been split so stores should see more landing in P16.</p>	
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6	<p>Rupert Newman joined the meeting to give an overview of all the trading groups, Rupert welcomed new reps and informed that he can’t wait until reps can meet face to face.</p>	
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	<p>Food – We have seen a challenging 8 – 10 weeks with some stores having availability issues, customers shopping habits are changing and working arrangements (from home). This has led to action being taken regarding overtime. We have a great Christmas package so with a good Christmas and if we all do a good job hopefully this will only be a temporary thing. Our plan for next year will be shared with the board we hope to open 14 new stores hopefully in Qtr. 1, we also plan to invest in our stores that have for example poor refrigeration or require building work. We should be in a position in January / February next year to share with Managers and stores what the Board have approved. Following feedback from Reps and Managers regarding Xmas opening hours the decision was taken to close early on Xmas Eve, please rest assured your voice is heard!</p> <p>Childcare – The need for childcare provision has not increased as we would have hoped, whilst the number of children is there the amount of care required is not. The new nursery in Cheltenham is going well with a new nursery planned in January</p> <p>Healthcare – Have been busy giving out flu jabs across the Society and are currently formalising a plan for next year.</p> <p>Funeral – The planned move to Central Midlands and other societies has gone well with colleagues having a smooth transition helped by Mark Adams who has moved with them.</p> <p>Travel – Whilst not back at the levels we enjoyed confidence is growing with bookings for Christmas and Cruises being seen.</p> <p>Utilities – Are having a tough time mainly due to the current situation that the energy market finds its self in is in. They are however helping 119 people via the Electric Dreams car scheme.</p>	
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Question & Answers		
	Question regarding waste from allocated lines that do not sell. As stores do not want to be at fault from high wastage if allocated too much Xmas stock	
	Allocated lines based upon forecasts and these will be looked at regularly if waste becomes an issue.	😊
	Shrink warp is not a sustainable option to wrap cages, any update on when this could change?	
	There is a whole piece of work being done regarding sustainability including Delivery vans – change to electric Film re-cycling LED lights Bottle returns scheme	😊

	Replace refrigeration Minimize packaging with fewer deliveries.	
	POS SELS have increased date on, could this not be originally sent with the lengthened date as it creates more workload	
	We did raise this with Group the problem we have is we set up what group put in that file, if they tell us a deal is ending and then send a new one through, we will set it up. Also, the odd product does come and go from deals so if we set it up for longer, we run the risk of promoting something that should no longer be on.	😊
	When will we see an increase in frozen availability?	
	Frozen has been impacted by issues at the ports as we struggle to import pastry lines from France. There was also an issue with a consolidator being subject to a cyber-attack, so stock was not able to move, and orders not fulfilled. ISB lines showing improvement including cookies.	😊
	When are masks going to be removed from society policy?	
	No movement on this as constantly reviewed. Winter means we require masks as flu and other bugs spread predominantly in winter. Emphasis on keeping staff safe.	😊
	Some stores are working with aspire what impact will aspire be having on the Coop and will we be promoting aspire through posters or adverts.	
	We currently have a partnership with Aspire in our store in Cowley where we run both a work experience programme and also an employment hub. The work experience has been really successful so far and resulted in 3 people earning a permanent contract with Midcounties. This not only benefits Aspire and people who need a chance in life but also really helps us in an area where recruitment is notoriously hard	😊
	Staffing levels are not great can you expand why?	
	Sales decreased due to change in shopping habits- people buying less items. Because of this the society cannot afford to keep staffing levels at previous levels as Sales just aren't there, not cost effective for society so overtime hours are being kept short with colleagues in some instances offered an option to temporarily reduce their contractual hours or an option of a career break. These are both operational measures – however these are both optional for the colleague and will not be imposed	😊
	How will deals work with home delivery customers as we can't scan an app?	
	Please log a service call if app not scanning.	😊
	Will we look to reduce store opening hours?	
	Yes, this is another option we have for stores who are not busy in last hours of trading, this is being constantly reviewed.	😊
	Are Zero-hour contracts still something the society wishes to have in these circumstances?	
	Great thing for the society as flexibility is important. Currently overtime isn't available around Christmas due to the strict budget, colleagues who have contracted hours or regularly work for us will be considered in the first instance for additional hours before we utilise our zero-hour resources.	😊

	Can we look at re-cycling tin foil	
	There is a whole piece of work being done regarding sustainability including: Delivery vans – change to electric Film re-cycling LED lights Bottle returns scheme	😊
	The volume of parcels in Post Office is increasing where is it going in the longer term, will it be assessed.	
	Yes, the volume is increasing, it is one of the key reasons that Post Office Commission is increasing which is great for the viability of Post Offices. We need to keep building both parcel services and additional services to ensure that Post Offices continue to thrive. We will be reviewing different service providers in the future to see how we can reduce the task in store around parcels and are looking at automated services	😊
	Can we be given a day to increase member participation	
	Helen will pick this up with CC and feed back	TBC
	In attendance <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> Eynsham Long Hanborough Chipping Norton Moreton In Marsh Winchcombe Bidford Hazlemere Chinnor Walton St Prestwood Fairford Leys </div>	😊
	Date of next meeting Tuesday 1st March 2022 10.00 - 12.00 The Executive Colleague Council Meetings will be held on Tuesday 5th April 2022 and Tuesday 8th November 2022 Location Warwick Time 11.00am – 2pm Please make a note in your diary	