

The Midcounties Co-operative Society
Swindon & Cainscross Colleague Council Meeting
Held on Teams
26.05.21
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 of the 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 issued be raised with him direct following the meeting.	
4	Pete ran through questions submitted prior to the meeting and any additional ones for Rupert	
5	Rebekah Brain joined the meeting and gave the reps an update on Grocery Aid and what benefits it has for our colleagues. Reps were encouraged to check Grocery Aid on Colleagues Connect and to drop Bekki an email if extra support is required. Reps are also encouraged to complete the E. learning module. Bekki confirmed that “Every Mind at Work” will be trialed in Support Services before being rolled and will include coping strategies & mental wellbeing. Mental Health champions will also be launched later in the year. Bekki also confirmed that the Pulse Surveys are completely anonymous and encouraged reps to complete them and they help shape our future.	

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> <p>Society – We have had a successful AGM alongside the Your Coop Conversations. We continue to invest in new fridges, refits and have opened a number of new stores. Our focus is on membership Developing our Member App, making sure we ask all customers for their card & if they are not a Member then telling them about how they can become a Member & the benefits of doing so & starting to talk to our Members about the whole of Your Coop & not just the part that they are engaged with. We have good plans in place.</p> <p>Food – At the end of the 1st Qtr. food are where we need to be P1 was a challenge P2 & P3 were better. Food were just short the last 4 weeks mainly due to the unprecedented wet weather and people now spending money in other ways; however overall not bad. Rupert congratulated colleagues for all their efforts over the last 12 months, Post Office colleagues have seen a significant increase in trade as more people shop online.</p> <p>Childcare – Occupancy levels increase however bookings are down as people require less days cover due to more people now working from home. But the team are working up plans that will meet the changing needs of their parents & we continue to look to grow our Childcare Group with one new nursery opening in September.</p> <p>Healthcare – Having now sold the last of our pharmacy branches we can concentrate on our online business.</p> <p>Funeral – Funeral have worked hard in some challenging circumstances, with more people now able to attend funerals; funeral division are able to offer a wider range of services such as cars & flowers.</p> <p>Travel – Guidance changing is a challenge and creates spikes in activity especially as not many countries are on the green list. Bookings being made are for late summer or 2022, our travel teams have dealt with lots of questions and queries, supporting our members as they change holidays.</p> <p>Utilities – Rupert updated that Energy and Phone Co-op colleagues have worked virtually very well. Although new customers are slightly down sales & profit are on track. Colleagues are currently working on ways that we can help kids without tablets and broadband whilst home schooling.</p>	
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7	Question & Answers	
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	With the government set to lift social distance restrictions on 21st of June, do we have our own plan of action? Do we plan to keep the screens up for a while or even long term?	
	Covid is still a thing and lots of people have not yet been vaccinated. We will be led by guidance from the government and can't see much changing this year, screens will remain	😊
	There's a lot of emphasis on getting membership up but so many customers are disappointed with not getting paper vouchers and quite a number of them don't see the point in using the card if it's all digital now even though we try and explain how much better it is now. Just wondering if will see social media platforms used to promote the benefits of membership soon as so much on there from coop group, will we follow suit? It's very difficult at busy times in convenience stores to explain the app to customers.	
	A full support plan will be in place there is an understanding that the distribution of share of profits vouchers was challenging for our members who have no access to digital marketing. We are very aware of the role that social media has to play within the overall marketing strategy, and this is something that is being developed.	😊
	My coop rewards app is continually logging customers out causing delays and frustrated customers at the checkout. Is there a fix that can prevent that happening?	
	Issue has been fixed	😊
	Some customers are complaining that they are having issues accessing the app and are finding that membership are unwilling to help when they call for support.	
	The membership team are helping members to access the app. Sometimes that can take a day or so if they need help from the technical team. If reps have specific examples of members feeling they are unwilling to help then please let us know as the membership team would want to address that.	😊
	Would it be possible to have the head sets instore?	
	There are more slightly more effective things than headsets which will be part of our Safer Stores.	😊
	Only issue that has been raised is about the new guns and not enough training being given on them. Would it be possible for someone to go instore and provide training?	
	Training has been addressed with all store managers, please speak to SM if further training is required.	😊
	Screen protection: As we are coming out of lockdown, will we still be using the plastic screen coverings on our kiosk tills? They act not only to protect our customers and colleagues from Covid-19 but also deter till snatching, theft and other forms of anti-social behavior. It is with the greatest interest I ask if these measures could remain as there are only positives to having screen protection in our stores.	
	Screens will remain in place.	😊
	Face masks: On the 21st of June, following the government guidance on the Coronavirus. Customers will no longer be required to wear face masks when shopping in our stores. Will the same rule apply to colleagues and other staff members? The store environment can differ between each store however, it is still classed as a confined space, and it is still possible for the virus to spread within.	
	Covid is still a thing with lots of people not vaccinated, we will be led by guidance from government and can't see much changing this year.	😊

	With the new card reads is there a way where we can get receipts to print out quicker, it authorises the card machine before our till screen, so customers walk off to quickly	
	Chip and Pin machines were moved from Mastercard to Verifone following issues last year, whilst speed is an issue in some stores a patch is being worked on to correct the issue.	😊
	Reductions on HHT's	
	Hopefully very soon, it is currently being tested and we hope to have it in all stores in June. We will release to some stores first for further testing and then there will be a full rollout to the remainder.	😊
	Could the sign-up form go on the app and could we add fingerprint to log in	
	RN will take this question away for further investigation	😊
	Are we able to add a receipt onto the app	
	Receipts will migrate to the app and will reduce the number of receipts we produce.	😊
	Could we have a poster with a QR Code	
	QR codes will be produced	😊
	Why we sell bags for life at the same price as the compostable ones	
	The price of bags increased in line with the Governments carrier Bag levy in April and we continue to offer alternative non-plastic re-usable options.	😊
	Can we remove the plastic packaging from our bananas or loose stock	
	tCG continue to work on their strategy to remove as much single use and unseen plastic as possible from their Own Brand products and Suppliers are all looking into ways of making their products more recyclable and sustainable	😊
	Can we have an update on the Reduced Printers	
	The new Dynamic RTC app is on its way. Initial testing has been completed and it's trial in one store to get some live examples through ahead of a wider rollout.	
	I think the app is amazing but it's not senior compatible can there still be an option to have paper coupons and dividend vouchers.	
	165K of our members are over the age of 65 and some are most of our teck savvy, we have to accommodate all ages, utility are currently working on a deal for members who don't have a smart phone.	😊
	Guide for Information on development	
	We have developed a guide , describing all the development options we have for our Food colleagues in store and listing by role. We hope this is a useful summary for managers and colleagues during Development or Career Check In's. Please email Cheryl.tree@midcounties if you have any feedback on the guide.	😊
	In attendance	😊
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Margaret Connolly Jonathan Turner Daniel Smith Becki Sanderson Lynn Guilford Cham Wright Kate Woods Jacquie Fletcher Jenny Varney Nick Tandy Hayley Phelps</p> </div>	

	Liam kerrane Toni Bennett Beth Clarke Rebecca Burris Nicky Parkes Asta Page		
	Date of next meetings – Invitations will be issued 24.08.21 PLEASE SUBMIT ANY QUESTIONS BY 6/08/21		