

The Midcounties Co-operative Society
Walsall & Shrewsbury Colleague Council Meeting
Held on Teams
25.05.21
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.	

<p>6</p>	<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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Question & Answers		
Staff have asked for an offline mode for the Reward app. Churchstoke and Knighton are both in rural areas, where signal can be poor. An offline mode for customers and staff would mean that they could load up coupons and look at offers no matter the signal strength.		
This will be taken away and looked at - thank you. We are also looking at whether providing member WiFi in stores with poor signal would be a good solution		😊
Are there any plans with the reward app concerning elderly customers? Obviously not all people like to use or own smartphones, so they are unable to take advantage of the rewards scheme. Some staff has suggested a opt out option, where a customer can have offers sent via post or automatically taken off their shops without the need of an app.		
This is currently being worked on as we don't want a 2-tier membership		😊
Are there any plans to help CSA's develop within the company?		
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.		😊
Personal Travel Agents – Why do we not get discount.		
This is currently being looked into by the Travel Team directly		😊
Coop App: Is there a time limit on the stamps you collect via the app?		
Time limit on stamps will be looked into.		😊
On the nectar app I had a scratchcard to win a price. I won 15 nectar points our app seems really boring compared to others. So, would the society consider doing this on the coop app? It may help our food colleagues “sell” this new app to our customer.		
Additional Incentives will be hugely beneficial and is a key area for the Society.		😊
Coop App: On the screen when you first log on it does say “handpicked offers and personalised rewards” As a vegan 50% off double cream and sirloin steak for £3.50 turns my stomach. Even the Quorn mince is not vegan. So, when will the app start “handpicking” offers for the food I actually buy from the coop?		
When we launch the app, we want to make it very clear in store what the value of membership is by showcasing our offers in displays and POS. That means that all members will see the same offers on their app for a while so that we don't confuse them. However, we absolutely need to reach the point where we are using the purchasing data, we have to target offers based on what our members buy. That point will come, and we are very aware that it will help us to make the app much more relevant to individuals		😊
Coop App: Twice now the coop app had made me log back it. Why is this? I dont have to do it with my Morrisons and marks and spencer app?		
When we release new features on the app, we sometimes have to ask everyone to log in again - for instance when we incorporated share of profits vouchers everyone was logged out. However, we have also had a problem recently where some members are being logged out repeatedly - and that is not supposed to happen. We are working with the app provider to find out what the problem is so that we can get the bug fixed. It absolutely must be sorted out before we can launch with all members		😊
Pulse survey: Most colleagues only go on colleague connect to check their wages. So is there any chance the pulse survey can go up at the same time as the wages are released. As I have been told colleagues are more likely to		

	participate.	
	Pulse Survey is launched on the Friday (pay day). Pete to look at possibility of colleague connect sending notifications to phones.	😊
	Bread stacks are currently coming in over 8 high against health and safety regulations. Can we alter this?	
	Reps asked to log issues like this via Service Now	😊
	Plants are arriving in large quantities, with quite a few of them past their best. Is there anything we can do about this?	
	Plants should arrive in good condition; claims can be made for issues as this depot should be informed in order that the issue can be resolved.	😊
	Is it possible to donate short-dated baby milk to local mother and baby groups?	
	Unfortunately, there are strict rules around this sort of thing and the risk outweighs the lovely opportunity. EG if the milk wasn't used inside the best before end date and a baby became ill, we would potentially have reputational damage and liability.	😊
	Is there anything else we can introduce for staff to use their stamps on as holidays abroad are not practical at the moment?	
	This is something that is currently being looked into we want members to have a really great range of rewards to use their stamps on.	😊
	All of our home delivery customers are returning to the store as they no longer have to isolate. Therefore, is there a necessity to continue with home deliveries as the customers themselves are coming in each day and still wanting a delivery.	
	Work is being undertaken as to where we go with Home Delivery currently, we continue to support our most vulnerable members	😊
	Staff are finding that the re-introduction of passwords expiring after 60 days on Kronos does not work for them. Is there any way to remove this feature?	
	Password expire after 60 days for security reasons; IT will investigate if the rule could be changed.	😊
	Will the new HHT gun be able to produce promotion labels instead of sending them out in a box?	
	Not right now, this will require significant development. But we are working on this as a potential opportunity for Phase 2 as we understand that this will provide significant improvements to instore process.	😊
	Is there any progress with the wraps being added to the meal deal?	
	This will be looked at by TGC in line with plan changes	😊
	We have been accepting NHS blue cards for discount during lockdown. Is this to continue?	
	Blue cards will continue, however come with caveat "subject to change"	😊
	Last year stores closed earlier than previous years on xmas eve to allow colleagues more time to spend with their families. This gesture was greatly received by colleagues. Is this something that will happen again this year and years moving forward?	
	Xmas hours have been agreed and following member feedback some stores will trade later than last years and some will close early	😊
	With the Team Manager position no longer existing in a lot smaller Food Retail stores, it is becoming increasingly difficult for Team Leader's to progress to further positions. What development opportunities are there currently (or in future) to help Team Leader's take the leap to Store Management?	
	We totally understand that colleagues feel their opportunity to progress has now been halted with the removal of the Team Manager role in some of our stores. However, we have examples of Managers who have already progressed from	😊

	Team Leader to Store Manager which were showcased in colleague connect last week so we hope that gives some encouragement to Colleagues that you don't need to be a Team Manager to be the next Store Manager. In the next week, we will be launching our LEAP apprenticeship programmes, which colleagues can apply for the level 3 apprenticeship which will provide the skills and knowledge to aid progression into a Manager role, and also get a qualification. We would encourage any colleagues who want to progress within the Society to arrange a career check in with their manager to discuss what their individual progression needs are and what development is required, some of which will be 'on the job' and shadowing the current manager. We are continually reviewing this and understand it is a hot topic for our colleagues at the moment and so watch this space for future initiatives to aid career progression and development.	
	Once the 10p Bags for Life have been removed from all stores, what other alternatives will customers have to choose from? A fair few were choosing to buy the 10p Bags for Life as they were much better quality, tougher and longer lasting than the 8p (now 10p) compostable bags. Will there be a stronger bag available that isn't too costly?	
	Bags For Life have been identified across the market place as causing more harm than they prevent due to the thicker plastic taking much longer to break down and the lack of easy recycling opportunities for plastic bags. To support the removal of these in stores we continue to stock the Handy Shopper and Teal canvas shopper which can be ordered via the BUNZL website which have a far longer life than any plastic Bag For Life.	😊
	When will we be able to use the new guns for reductions?	
	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.	😊
	An issue has been raised regarding abuse received in store	
	We constantly lobby the Government on the issues around colleague safety and report every incident in stores to local MP,s. We would like to see the fine doubled for people who misbehave in stores we don't want to be a target and are proactively working on this. Investment has been put forward to the board and RN will update on this at the next meeting	😊
	Pin Pads seem really slow	
	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.	😊
	Is there anyway we can make the members card available to those that have a phone but have / want an email address	
	We are investigating how though our utilities business we can create a solution for customers who have no phone	😊
	Any chance we can start to wear Perspex visors instead of face-masks	
	We have both masks & visors colleagues with a specific need should contact HR directly.	😊
	When rewards are used on the app they don't disappear from the list can this be changed.	
	This is a glitch that is being worked through	😊
	Membership for Teenagers?	
	We need to make it more relevant to younger members; look to make it more interactive and in the moment.	😊
	The stamps on the apps feel kind of useless, can't there be a system where the	

	more stamps we have the better?			
	We have learnt lots from the pilot about what works and what doesn't, currently we pause for breath as we sort out any technical issues. The concept of stamps will be looked at	😊		
	In attendance	😊		
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	Date of next meetings – 25.08.21 PLEASE ENSURE ANY QUESTIONS ARE SUBMITTED BY 06/08/21			