



Minutes of Management Committee Meeting held at TOG, The Gridiron Building, One St Pancras Square, London at 11am on Tuesday 8th October 2019.

Committee in attendance:

Geoff Parsons, Basilico (Chairman)
Richard Harrow, Freiburger
Ian Kent, Stateside Foods
Alan Ribakovs, Whitworths
Julie Sloan, Dawn Farms

Secretariat:

Jim Winship
Sam Day

Apologies:

Maurice Abboudi, Consultant
Richard Thorpe, Ornua
Lynne Utting, Glanbia
Wayne MacDonald, Just Eat
Keith Griffiths, Pizza Hut (Vice-Chairman)

Minutes of the last meeting

These were approved.

Immigration/Employment

Jim Winship reported that the current Government appears to be heeding industry's warnings about labour shortages and has agreed that workers will be able to continue coming to the UK from the EU if there is a no deal Brexit and will be able to stay for up to 3 years.

The Association has responded to the Migration Advisory Committee which is currently reviewing minimum salary levels for workers coming to the UK. In its response the Association has suggested that the level should be reduced from £30K to around £20K but also that it would be better to set levels based on current market rates for specific jobs, on a 'going rate' basis.

The Association has also joined with several other trade bodies in urging that the Minimum and Living wages should be set by an independent body, such as the Low Pay Commission, and not influenced by politicians.

PHE Obesity

The Association has heard nothing further about calorie or salt targets since before the summer but is expecting this to re-emerge as an issue at some point. The meeting discussed the Association's proposals for prominent calorie labelling on packs and agreed this should continue to be pursued once politics settles down after Brexit. It was noted that several retailers/manufacturers had started putting calorie information on the front of packs.

Allergen Labelling

Jim Winship reported that he had been involved in negotiations with the Food Standards Agency and Defra on how the new allergen labelling requirements would be applied to foodservice businesses. Despite initial progress in focusing this around self-service products, lawyers at the Food Standards Agency had argued that the new legislation should apply to all packaged items in a foodservice outlet. Originally the FSA wanted to have guidance published by 1st October but after strong lobbying they backed off on this.

Jim Winship said that he had now been invited to a meeting with Heather Hancock, chair of the FSA Board, to discuss this. This meeting is expected to take place in mid-November.

The concern is that if the FSA lawyer's approach is adopted it will bring a huge range of products within scope of the new legislation, including potentially pizza delivery products.

Listeria

Jim Winship reported that following the deaths of some patients from listeria in the Summer, he had been involved in reviewing current NHS standards on controlling listeria in chilled foods.

Currently meetings are taking place with the Food Standards Agency, Public Health England and the NHS to agree these new standards with the intention of establishing them before the next NHS supply contracts are negotiated in the New Year.

The Environment

The meeting agreed that the Association should organize a meeting of key members with a view to exploring ways how the industry could collectively address environmental/waste issues. It was felt that the focus should be on industry specific areas, such as the use of plastic spacers in delivery boxes and plastic bottles for drinks.

Mayor of London Ban on Fast Food Outlets

The Association has supported other organisations in raising concerns about the proposed ban on fast food outlets within 400 metres of schools/education establishments in the Capital.

Bottle Return Scheme

The meeting discussed this scheme which is being introduced in Scotland from 1st April 2020 and which is expected to be introduced in England and Wales in the near future. While supporting the scheme in principle, the Association has expressed concerns to the Scottish Government about the practicalities of their scheme, particularly the requirement that businesses selling drinks in glass or plastic must charge a deposit and repay this on return of the containers, whether originating from them or not. There are concerns about the cost and logistics for smaller businesses as well as the risks of glass breakages in a food environment and potential food hygiene concerns.

The Association would prefer to see return vending systems used and located at key points on each street.

Awards

Sam Day told the meeting that everything was on track for this year's Industry Awards.

Richard Harrow said that he was concerned that the main judging panel was too small and the meeting agreed that this should be reviewed for 2020.

Industry Report

Jim Winship confirmed that a new Industry Report would be published for the Awards and distributed to everyone attending the dinner. Copies will also be sent to members and made available at the European Pizza & Pasta Show.

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting will be in London on 20th November at 11am. Venue to be confirmed.