



**Fruit & Vegetable Retailers Advisory Committee**  
**MMA Boardroom, Epping**  
**28<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

**In attendance:** Paul Ahern (Chair), Leon Mugavin, Graham Gee, Tony Mecca, John Psarakos, Mark Maskiell, David Whitcheo, Matthew Elliott, Jenna Patan (Minute Taker)

**Apologies:** Jacinta Carboon

**Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Meeting:** The Advisory **CONFIRMED** the Minutes from 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016 were a true and accurate record of the meeting. Quorum was not met on 5 April 2017 and no meeting was held.

### **MARKETING**

- **Green Grocer National Brand Program:** The working group between the facilitator and the CMAA / FMA representatives are currently finalising what the deliverables and timeframes are for year 1. Initial logo and brand concepts have also been developed. This is to be presented back to the Markets and Chambers next month. The ugly fruit consumption campaigns were also discussed and this will form part of the brand rollout strategy.
- **Green Grocer Skills Training:** The steering committee met during May to finalise the course content. It has now been submitted to the Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority and they will provide the recommendation for endorsement. It is anticipated the course will be available for enrolments by December 2017.
- **Student Placement Program: Student Placement Program:** Northlink in conjunction with La Trobe and RMIT are offering to place students into local businesses where they can provide project support (ie: introduction of a new accounting package. Further details can be provided by Matt to any tenants that are interested. The advisory discussed other small business programs that are run for free (ie: ANZ provide help with HR Services to small business). They MMA confirmed they will continue to provide relevant information sessions to the tenants.
- **Drug & Alcohol Education Program:** In conjunction with Melbourne Polytechnic, the MMA will host a Drug & Alcohol education session aimed at business owners and HR Managers. The topics that will be covered include legal obligations, policy implantation and strategies to help encourage discussion about drug and alcohol in the workplace.
- **Advisory Committee Promotion:** The advisory **SUGGESTED** that an open forum could be held annually where all retailers are encouraged to register and submit questions prior to the meeting. They also supported a meeting with all advisory groups annually to discuss industry initiatives.

### **OPERATIONS**

- **Children in the Market:** The MMA will continue to run registered days during the school holidays. Upcoming dates are Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July. The MMA is expecting 100 registrations across both days.
- **Ring Road Speed Limit:** The MMA are undertaking work to ensure traffic management concerns with the forklift crossovers to the south of the site are appropriately managed. MRO's are closely monitoring the speeds of the ring road as the traffic modifications are made for the increase to 40km p/h.
- **Access Card Renewal:** Approximately 9500 cards were renewed as part of the process. Classifications and Parking rights are continuing to be validated with new parking permits to be issued with the current invoice cycle
- **Early Access:** Some buyers have been identified taking advantage of different access categories to gain early access to the trading floor. The advisory agree that time pressures to walk and source the produce and then exit the site before peak hour is the key driver of the behaviour, however all agree that it needs to be a level playing field with no one gaining an advantage over someone doing the right thing.
- **Pallet Dumping:** All pallet drop off locations (14 in total) have now been installed. Feedback from tenants has been positive and the number of pallets left behind after trade has decreased significantly.
- **Organics:** The MMA is now working with Yarra Valley Water to provide organics (with a 7% contamination rate) to their Waste to Energy facility. Foodbank also collect directly from the trading floor and the warehouses and they also provide produce to Second Bite and FareShare.

- **Site Rubbish:** The advisory SUGGESTED that a barrier or increased collections outside Gate 2 would be beneficial. On a windy day Polystyrene and Plastics litter the roads or are trapped in the paddock area.
- **Misuse of Parking Bays:** The MMA is continuing to reallocate bays where tenants are not using them as they are intended.

### OTHER OPERATIONS

- **Undercover area:** The MMA is investigating the installation of 2 x 1.3ha roofing panels which will join to the existing roofline. There are many areas to consider including materials to be used, solar suitability, approvals, permits and then construction timeframes that minimise the disruption to the current market users. The advisory SUGGESTED communicating the plans with the tenants.
- **Covered walkways:** The advisory SUGGESTED that the MMA consider covered walkways in addition to the roof extensions. The MMA advised that the width of the path doesn't allow for additional supports and would require a significant loss of the adjoining parking spaces at this stage.
- **LED Lighting:** In April the MMA Board approved the Business Case to upgrade all the common area lighting to LED lighting. It is currently with the Minister for sanctioning. We anticipate approval before the end of July and that works will commence immediately once we enter into contracts with the preferred supplier.
- **CCTV Upgrade:** This project has now been completed. The MMA anticipate 15-16 produce queries a day can now be tracked from start to finish which is a great result.

### GENERAL BUSINESS

- **Truck Curfew:** The initial weight restriction of 4.5 tonnes was lifted as it limited the ability of many small local businesses to access the shortest and safest routes. The truck curfew trial has now ended and the curfew will be enforced from 10pm to 6am for trucks weighing more than 16.5 tonnes.
- **North East Link Authority:** The North East Link Authority is undertaking community consultation to help the Authority understand what people value in their local neighbourhood and gather information about how and when people travel around the North East Link study area and across the region. Consultation will help the Authority prepare the final Business Case for the North East Link due at the end of 2017. A representative will be in the Market on Tuesday 4 July and the MMA encourage all market users to complete the survey or talk to the representatives about the impact it has on the site and its users. Mark and Matt also met with local MP Bronwyn Halfpenny and reiterated the importance of finishing the North East Link extension.
- **Dandenong Market:** The Planning Permit Application was taken to council on 26 June 2017, and approved with a vote of 8 in favour; 2 opposed. The MMA will seek further advice if there are grounds to challenge at VCAT, in the meantime the MMA will continue discussions with the Defenders of Green Wedge representatives and the Greens Councillor regarding their appeals.
- **Tolls:** The advisory NOTED that the April increase to Citylink tolls is having an adverse impact on many businesses. In most cases tolls for trucks have doubled and for many it will not be sustainable to come to the market as frequently. The advisory SUGGESTED that the MMA lobby the government to change the rates to reflect a reasonable peak / off peak rate or align with larger transport companies that are also be impacted by the increases (Linfox & Nolans etc) to seek change. The MMA will investigate further.
- **Warehouse 7:** The MMA have confirmed that there is now enough demand to proceed with formal drawings and to appoint a Quality Surveyor. Due to the demand for smaller size units there will be 45sqm modules available for retailers.
- **War on Waste:** Many of the independent retailers are introducing more environmentally friendly programs into the business. This includes initiatives to reduce plastic bags and the introduction of reusable bags or recycled paper bags. Harris Farms are a leader in the independent retailer space in this area. The advisory SUGGESTED the MMA consider developing initiatives or a fact sheet for retailers to implement in their own stores. Matt indicated that this could form part of the National Brand Program.
- **Worksafe – Buyers Walk:** Worksafe have issued a notice in relation to physical separation of the pedestrian walkway from the road in the buyers walk. The notice refers to the installation of bollards every 1.5m across the entire length of the buyers walk. The MMA are appealing this notice and have referred the matter to VCAT. We have provided witness statements and expert reports. Worksafe are due to respond by 30 June 2017 with the hearing due at the end July 2017.