

Flower Industry Advisory Committee Meeting

MMA Boardroom

13th June 2023

8:00am – 9:00am

In attendance: David Whitchelo, Margaret Burdeu, Rob Rotondi, Di Templeton, George Ambatzidis, Mark Maskiell, Amanda Miceli, Malcolm Lum & Georgie Christerson (via Teams, Minute Taker)

Apologies: Vince Cidoni (Chair), Lauren Kitchener, Amy Dyer, Michael Pavlou & Ilayda Kaplan.

Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Meeting: Head of Projects welcomed everyone to the June meeting. Minutes were approved from the meeting held in December 2022. Margaret Burdeu, Board Director joined the meeting at 8:10am.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (December 2022)

- **Flower Market:** Speeding trucks (vehicles) on the southern side of the flower market has been identified as hazardous for pedestrian traffic. Management will immediately implement surveillance and enforcement of operating rules and consider alternative routes for ridged and heavy vehicles.
- **Flower Market Trolleys:** Committee discussed the weight of the flower market trolleys being an issue in getting them out of storage each day. Management to further investigate.
- **Flower Market roses:** Flower market tenants have been cutting roses on the market floor causing slip hazard, as opposed to being done in a store. Management further investigated although it appears the issue has been rectified.

AGENDA ITEMS

- **Gate 1 and National Flower Centre Traffic Management:** Head of Projects, David Whitchelo discussed the improvements to be made on the market site regarding the traffic Management plan, and noted the changes already made with further developments to occur. In particular, the changes being implemented to the Flower market carpark include solid barriers being installed within the next few weeks.
- **Flower Market Trolleys:** The flower market trolley issue previously discussed has now been closed off and rectified.
- **Market Trading Hours:** Head of Projects updated the Committee regarding the Market Hours Project currently being undertaken by Consultant, Fiona Whitworth. Management mentioned this project is still in progress and no decision or formal recommendation has been presented. Committee discussed the different challenges experienced by growers, wholesalers and retailers and how this relates to market hours. Management will further investigate gate entry data of those attending the market at different time periods and how we can assist.
- **A Better Choice:** The Retailer of the Year award is yet to be announced although Management confirmed a Victorian business is expected to take out the award.
- **Cultural Transformation – “Stronger Together”:** Management confirmed the MMA induction has now been updated, including diversity and is bilingual. Management discussed moving forward, the induction process will be available via mobile phone to streamline the entry process onsite. The new stronger together campaign will be presented to the Board at the June Board meeting for their approval (20 June) and shared once approved.
- **Digital mobile access cards:** Currently being worked on and moving forward, access will be provided for market entry via mobile phones.
- **Safety Campaign/ WorkSafe restraints - Electric vehicles:** As a part of the new Safety campaign, safety videos and further content is currently being created. The Worksafe directive of installing restraints in all electric market vehicles and buggies is to be completed by 30 June 2023.
- **Solar Canopy Project:** On 12 May 2023, the solar canopy panels were officially connected to the grid, on the roof of the Melbourne Market. Overall, this will produce 1.8MWh and with additional roof capacity, this could potentially take us to 15MWh.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- **Rent increases:** Committee discussed the challenges experienced by market tenants at present and are anxious of the annual rental increase. Management confirmed CPI is relatively high at present although will take this into consideration.
- **Flower Market:** Committee discussed the impact that market tenants could potentially have on buyers coming into the market, in terms of the produce quality and level of interest and at times, the attitudes towards those buying. This opened up quite a robust and informative conversation between the MMA and Committee members on the issues faced and how we can work towards overcoming these issues.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM CURRENT MEETING:

- **Rent increases:** Committee discussed the challenges experienced by market tenants at present and are anxious of the annual rental increase. Management confirmed CPI is quite high at the moment although will take this onboard.

David Whitchelo, Head of Projects closed the meeting at 9:00am.