

CHEPSTOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of General Meeting

Thursday 7th April 2011, 6.00pm at The Beaufort Hotel

PRESENT:

Members:

Melanie Phillips - President
Griff Rogers
Andrew & Judy Griffith
David Burton
Michelle Dalley
Mick Merrick
Martin Firman
Sian Jones
Dee Griffith
Cllr Paul Rutter

Guests:

David Eisenhower
Marc Bishop
David Cummings
Anne Tyler
Vivienne White
Lucy Scott
Patrick Long
Laura Jones

- 1. Apologies;** Cllr Jacqui Sullivan, Steve Sullivan, Richard Cobourne, Brian Colley-Priest, Alison Hunt, Hanna Skehan, Virginia Jones
- 2. Minutes** The minutes of meeting held on 3rd March 2011 had been circulated and approved by Mick Merrick and Michelle Dalley
- 3. Introduction to New Members and Guests.** Melanie welcomed new members and guests to the meeting.
- 4. Marketing Update.** Griff reported that there had been a positive outcome to the recent campaign in support of the Tourist Information Centre. The Marketing group were now concentrating on putting together ideas to promote/advertise Chepstow. An Events workshop had been held with various group and organisations. This had been a very positive meeting with many ideas being proffered. The Marketing Group was meeting on 12th April to review the suggestions and take some of the ideas forward.
- 5. Barry Watson – Let us be Social.**

Barry outlined the transformation from intrusive marketing to search engine optimisation taking place in marketing businesses. Web based email usage was on the decline with a 78% increase in the use of mobiles to check emails. The use of social media such as Facebook, twitter LinkedIn and search engines such as Google are the new, free tools to use in marketing your business. With marketing becoming inbound as opposed to outbound Google is becoming the new business card, with helpful and generous being keywords in the business marketing strategy. Inbound marketing where people are attracted to come to you costs less than outbound marketing with a mind shift from telling & selling to building relationships. Barry advised the meeting that if they wanted to learn more about the new ways of marketing their businesses they could contact him at Letusbesocial.co. There was also a wealth of information available on the internet.

Melanie thanked Barry for his informative presentation
- 6. Feedback on Car park & TIC campaigns**
 - Car Parks.** Melanie informed the meeting that the car park subcommittee had agreed to ask for 2 hours parking for a token charge of 10p . There had been a meeting along with representatives from other interested parties in Chepstow with MCC 2 weeks ago. The outcome of this meeting was as yet uncertain. The petition organised by the Chamber, with just under 2000 signatures, had been handed in at this meeting.

Queries were raised into the impact of £1 parking fee at the Station and Drill Hall car parks on residential areas close by. Melanie explained that if the town were to have a token 10p 2hr parking fee in the main car parks income was needed elsewhere. A business permit of £250 would be available and the Chamber had requested that this should be transferable within the company. The extra parking spaces requested by the Chamber for the area beyond the station were not viable as the cost to rent this from British Rail along with the construction of safety barriers etc. would be

prohibitive bearing in mind the small increase number of spaces it would provide (20). Paul Rutter commented that the Town Council had not yet been formally consulted by MCC regarding the plans for the Car Parks.

- **TIC** Katie Burton thanked everyone for their support in the TIC campaign and reported that the TIC in Chepstow would remain open but would now operate as a mini business. They were now working on an income generation plan, supplying tea and coffee, ticket purchase service (National Express), Touchscreen internet kiosks any many other possibilities. Katie would now take on a new role as Tourism Business development coordinator with the aim of generating an income of £40000. Paul Rutter on behalf of the Chamber congratulated the staff of the TIC for all their hard work in drawing up their business plan and wished them all the best and hoped their venture would be successful.

7. A.O.B.

- **David Cummings** – Monmouth Chamber thanked the Chamber for inviting him to the campaign meetings and felt that the success of the TIC campaign was a good example of cooperation between Chambers.
 - **Smart Water Security** Abergavenny and Monmouth are becoming Smart Water towns. There will be a launch at the Monmouth Chamber meeting on 17th April for those interested in coming along to find out more. Smart Water is the new security liquid for businesses and households. For more information on the benefits of becoming a smart water town visit <http://www.smartwater.com> .
 - **Economic Development Plan** David commented that there had been no economic development plan since 2008 in Monmouthshire. Economic development had now been outsourced by MCC to Venture Wales. David will be meeting with them and will feedback to Chepstow Chamber.
 - **Michelle Dalley – Buy Local Campaign.** Michelle has been working with David to launch a buy local campaign in Monmouth. A survey in the town had been completed and a small steering group was meeting to consider the results. She asked that retailers consider doing a similar campaign in Chepstow and consult Michelle or David to learn more.
8. **Date of Next meeting** Melanie informed the meeting that the next meeting was to be postponed for a week as the original date clashed with the local elections and referendum. The meeting will now take place on Thursday May 12th

Meeting closed 19.15

Next Meeting Thursday 12th May