

CHEPSTOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of General Meeting

Thursday 2nd June 2011, 6.00pm at The Beaufort Hotel

PRESENT:

Members:

Melanie Phillips - President
Griff Rogers
Andrew Griffith
Judy Griffith
Cllr Jacqui Sullivan
Steve Sullivan
Brian Colley-Priest
David Burton
Michelle Dalley
Jane Probert
Mick Merrick
Dee Griffith
David Eisenhofer

Guests:

David Cummings – Chair- Monmouth Chamber
Marc Bishop
Alyson Hunt
Vivienne White

1. **Apologies;** Richard Cobourne, Paul Rutter, Ben Pugh.
2. **Minutes** The minutes of meeting held on 12th May 2011 had been circulated and approved by Griff Rogers and Brian Colley Priest
3. **Introduction to New Members and Guests.** Melanie welcomed new members and guests to the meeting.
4. **Matters Arising** Melanie reported that no further information had been received from MCC re consultation on Car park Charges. No response to questions on the amount of money gained from change not given in car park machines had been received. Cllr Sullivan agreed to submit question on behalf of the Chamber if requested by 13th June for MCC meeting on 23rd June.
5. **Marketing Update.** Griff reported that a working party had met to examine activities for the town centre over the summer and this was still at the organisational stage.
Chamber representatives on Marketing Group. Melanie reported that the Chamber had two representatives on the Marketing Group, Griff Rogers and Leah Ashby. Leah was now unable to represent the Chamber on the Marketing Group and suggestions for a volunteer to take her place were sought from the meeting. It was agreed that David Burton would now be a Chamber representative.
6. **Presentation. Sales Techniques to boost your Business** In a PowerPoint presentation Mick Merrick detailed the important items to consider in boosting your business whether in retail or other. He detailed what businesses need to consider in five areas:
 - **What and why clients buy**
 - **How to be different**
 - **Identifying the ideal clients**
 - **Building trust**
 - **Cross selling**Melanie thanked Mick for his excellent presentation, providing members with 'food for thought'.
7. **What do you want from your Chamber?** Melanie asked members for their suggestions for the way forward for the Chamber. Did members want to continue in the same format as at present or actively take on more campaigns, focusing on, for example, "Better Trains for Chepstow"(BT4C) and getting empty shops filled in High Street.
It was felt that the Chamber was going in the right direction and should carry on with what they were doing. The Chamber had welcomed new members recently, and with that, new energy. However there was a limit to how much the chamber can do. However in supporting campaigns such as BT4C they should not get sucked into random detail.
The Chamber was a platform to create trade in Chepstow enabling businesses to work together to improve Chepstow. It was agreed that the Chamber should endeavour to recruit more retailers to enable a more joined-up approach to help Chepstow survive as a vibrant town. The Chamber should try to

promote itself via other avenues such as "Chepstow Voice" and "Best of Chepstow".

The Chamber should look into lobbying MCC and landlords to remove window boarding in empty shops and fill windows with posters, banners and Pop ups to improve the look of the streets.

Monmouth Chamber had identified three main aspects that their members identified as important these were Support, Lobbying and Networking.

8. **Back 2 Business Week.** The Chamber was having an exhibition stand at the Launch of B2B on Monday June 6th and members were manning the stand at various times of the day. The Chamber would not only be promoting itself but also members businesses. Melanie requested that any business that had not already done so let her have leaflets posters about their businesses that could be displayed on the stand.
9. **July Social/Networking Buffet** The next meeting would be a networking Buffet at the Beaufort starting at 7.00pm. The cost would be £10 p.p. Melanie requested that businesses book their places as soon as possible. The secretary would be sending out details shortly to members and all those Chepstow businesses on the database. She asked those present to let colleagues know about the event.

10. A.O.B.

South Wales Chamber B2B David Cummings reported an opportunity to promote the County and Chepstow to the outside world have arisen. MCC have agreed to pay for the Monmouthshire Enterprise 3m x 2m stand at the South Wales Chamber exhibition on 13th July and provide a large screen that is PC compatible. The content of any presentation should illustrate the excellence of local companies, the natural environment, infrastructure and opportunities for inward investment. "Invest, develop, and prosper". The presentation will give adequate profile to the three Chambers involved and their towns. Alyson Hunt has already put in a bid for £400 for funding for the presentation. However additional funding for design of presentation is needed. The Chambers, Monmouth, Abergavenny and Chepstow, have been asked contribute funding of £100 towards promoting their individual towns at this event. It was agreed that the Chamber request financial assistance with this from Chepstow Marketing Group for promoting Chepstow

Brown & White Tourism Signs David Cummings explained the complexity of the regulations on this. These vary from local roads to trunk roads. The South Wales Trunk Road association are going through a consultation process at present. Monmouthshire is deemed as not being a tourist sensitive centre at present. Monmouthshire County Council is to make suggestions to WAG on trunk road signage. It was noted by members present that there was no sign off the motorway to Chepstow castle. This needed to be addressed. Replies to consultation needed to be forwarded by 29th of June.

Meeting closed 19.15

Next Meeting Thursday 7th July 7.00pm