

CHEPSTOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of General Meeting

Thursday 6th February 2014, 6.00pm at The Beaufort Hotel

PRESENT:

Members:

Andrew Griffith - President
Melanie Phillips(MP)
Griff Rogers (GR)
Alyson Hunt (AH)
Julie Le Peltier JLP

Nikki Colley- Priest (NJCP)- Secretary

Guests:

Paul Andrews – Paul's e-learning consultant

1. Apologies Judy Griffith, Dee Griffith , Cllr Paul Rutter, Ben Pugh, Nikola Greening, Marc Le Peltier
2. Approval of Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on November 7th 2013 were taken as read and adopted following a proposal by AH seconded by JLP.
3. Matters Arising
 - a. Joint Chamber meeting with MCC. AG reported that he had attended this meeting held in November but had found the meeting unhelpful. The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and was still going on at 8.00pm when he had to leave. He did however learn Monmouthshire were to host 2014 British Cycling National Road Championships The championships will take place in and around Abergavenny towards the end of June with the time trials taking place on the Thursday 26 and the road races on the Sunday 29.
Sponsorship from businesses would be sought. AH advised that Janet Harris would be organising sponsorship for the event. NJCP to find out more details on this.
At this joint meeting attendees were also informed that an additional warehouse at Newhouse Industrial Site was being rented to accommodate the filming 2nd Atlantis series.
AG also noted Chepstow was not included in 'Severnside' and that Caldicot now had a town team and wondered whether Chepstow would benefit from this. GR commented that if the right people are on board it can work but it could also be a disaster if the wrong people are on board. MP suggested asking Caldicot's town team to a Chamber meeting.
4. **Getting On Line** Paul Andrews He has spent the last fifteen years advising and educating individuals and organisations in the most effective use of free and open source applications, allowing them to work smarter, not harder, without breaking the bank. Over the last five years "Paul's E-Learning Resources" grown to become one of the most popular educational technology sites in the UK and was recently voted one of the top [online college resources](#) in the world. His videos on his presentation can be accessed here <http://bit.ly/getbisonline>. Also on this site are lists of free resources that could be useful for businesses. Also mentioned in the discussion was <https://www.smore.com/> for free software for designing flyers for events, <http://mailchimp.com/features/> for sending out newsletters, <http://www.paulselearning.com/business/resources/make-online-surveys-to-collect-customer-feedback> create forms for producing and analysing on line questionnaires.
AG thanked Paul for turning out in such an inclement weather and for a most informative presentation and felt that those present had gained a great deal from the evening.

5. **Executive Vacancies** Two vacancies had arisen on the Executive Committee. AG proposed Julie Le Peltier as an Executive member seconded by MP.
6. **The Future of Chepstow TIC.** Paul Rutter was unable to attend, however GR informed the meeting that the Town Council had not agreed to financially support the TIC or Museum as requested by MCC. The Town Council had requested detailed financial information with a business plan before any agreement was made. This had not been forthcoming. MCC were making a decision shortly on the outcome of their consultations. MP commented that it was uncertain what restrictions on the covenant for the leasing of the land the TIC building was built on. She wondered whether MCC would lose revenue from the car park if they were no longer using the TIC building.
7. **Marketing Report** GR reported that the monthly 4th Saturday of the month Pedestrianisation of the High Street were to go ahead enabling a larger Farmers Market and other activities to take place. The benchmarking exercise had proved that there was a 11% increase in foot fall on market days and that it was hoped that by making the area for pedestrians only would draw even more people into the town on those Saturdays. An invitation was being delivered to businesses by the town council to a reception at the Drill Hall on March 11th 6.00pm to involve them and ask for their assistance.

There was to be a Flea Market in and around Chepstow on Saturday June 22nd Retailers would have an opportunity to have tables with clearance stock for sale.

As well as the Cycle Championship there was also a plan to hold a half marathon over the Severn Bridge on Sunday 24th August. Permission had been given to close the Severn Bridge briefly at the start of the race. This would be a Charity run and the route was yet to be decided. Although the plan was to limit the numbers taking part this year it was envisaged that this would grow over the years and it was hoped businesses would take the opportunity to encourage spectators to visit the town before after and during the race.

The Marketing group had been looking into branding the town but after much thought it was decided that with such varied activities available in Chepstow this was difficult to do. However the group was looking into different ways of promoting events.

8. **Treasurers Report** MP reported that there was £2250 in the bank but with current membership that after the secretaries wages there was only £24 per month surplus, provided that membership fees now due, were paid. She suggested that a concerted effort needed to be made to get new members. She had noticed that in the bank statement South Wales Chamber had been paid despite cancelling Chepstow's membership last year. AG suggested that before requesting a refund that he discusses this with South Wales Chamber who had requested a meeting with him. NJCP enquired as to whether if we were not covered by South Wales Chamber insurance, should we investigate the cost of insurance cover independently. It was agreed that AG investigate the cost of this.

9. **A.O.B.**

Peter Traynor

It was with sadness that the Chamber noted the death of Peter Traynor, a past president and lifetime member of Chepstow Chamber of Commerce. During his many years in Chepstow he and his wife, June, had actively supported businesses in Chepstow and thoughts went out to June and his family at this sad time.

A Boards It was noted in the Press that MCC were proposing to charge for A boards NJCP to contact Alan Browne for further details.

Severn Bridge AG had received an invitation to London to discuss the charging on the Severn Bridge. The timing of this meeting was late in an afternoon and he was unable to attend.

My High Street AG had circulated the information to this to various businesses However he thought it was something for individual businesses to join and not a matter for the Chamber to be involved with. <http://myhigh.st/> .

Asda in Caldicot MP noted that plans for a new Asda store in Caldicot had been approved and was concerned that this would have any adverse impact on Chepstow. It was felt that the impact would be felt by Tesco more than independent stores in Chepstow.

Lower Wye Community Safety Action Team (CSAT)

MP had attended this meeting. The main concern was with the prevalence of shop lifting in Chepstow and the police were keen to promote Storennet to assist in the reduction of the problem. However, retailers felt that this was rather an expensive system and on past experience it had not been successful.

It was agreed to invite a member to the police team along to a future meeting where concerns could be raised.

Meeting close at 20.15

Date of next meeting Thursday 6th March