

CHEPSTOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of General Meeting

Thursday 6th March 2014, 6.00pm at The Beaufort Hotel, Regency Room

PRESENT:

Members:

Andrew Griffith - President
Griff Rogers (GR)
Cllr Paul Rutter (PR)
Judy Griffith(JG)
Julie Le Peltier JLP
Mark Le Peltier MLP

Nikki Colley- Priest (NJCP)- Secretary

Guests:

Katie Burton(KB) – Chepstow Tourist Information Centre
Annie Rainsbury(AR) –Chepstow Museum
Ruth Waycott (RW) Wye Knot Tourism

1. **Apologies** Melanie Phillips, Nick King, Moira Wearing, Alyson Hunt, Carole Heritage, Bryony Symonds, Dee Griffith, Ben Pugh, Nikola Greening,
2. **Approval of Minutes** The minutes of the meeting held on February 6th 2014 were taken as read and adopted following a proposal by JLP seconded by GR.
3. **Matters Arising**

TIC There were no plans in the immediate future to close the TIC building and merge the services within Chepstow Museum. However, there was a considerable reduction in the budget for both the museum and the TIC this year and savings in the services were being sought.

Executive Vacancy Andrew advised that there was still one vacancy to fill on the Executive committee. Mark Le Peltier said he was willing to stand for this post.
4. **Tourism and Your Business.** KB explained that she and her staff were committed to making the visitor experience in Chepstow the best and was keen to work with businesses to that end. KB outlined the additional service that Chepstow TIC offered beyond the usual advice to tourists. These were
 - Selling National Express Tickets,
 - Accommodation booking service which covered the whole country,
 - acting as a box office for local events
 - Selling 'Made in Monmouthshire' products
 - Offering a left luggage facility in partnership with 'Walkers are Welcome'
 - A mobility scooter was available for those unable to walk up to the town centre.

Chepstow TIC has approximately 40000 visitors a year of which approx. 60% are from overseas and 25% domestic visitors and 15% local visitors. Research has shown that for every visitor enquiry in person, by phone, email to the TIC the gross spend to the local economy is £42.86 with a net additional contribution to the local economy of £12.79. Two thirds of TIC users are staying visitors and 80% of those are in paid accommodation.

Three quarters of visitors to the TIC obtain information on places to eat & drink and attractions and half of the visitors obtain information on events and paid activities. 56% plan to make a return visit in the future. Independent research shows that alongside information gained at the TIC prior knowledge is gained from a previous visit(33%), from websites (27%), from friends & relatives (25%), from Newspapers/magazines adverts (17%) and advice from accommodation (14%).

Across Wales there were 3.8million/yr inquiries at TIC's which result in a gross visitor spend of around £67 million supporting 1500FT equivalent jobs.

Recently a PR contract has been set up for a 5 month period with an option to extend in partnership between WVFDTA, MCC, Forest of Dean Council and Capital Regional tourism to gain PR for Monmouthshire from the media. To that end the TIC need as much information from businesses as possible regarding

- business stories, eg, for a town event, unique stories, special offers
- The Media will be approached in addition to them approaching us.
- An e-newsletter will also be sent out.
- If businesses pass on their contact details to the TIC they can keep you informed.

There will also be opportunities for training such as the new Tourism Ambassador scheme and business support eg food labelling and food hygiene workshops.

Other opportunities for promoting businesses are on the Destination website

www.visitwyevalley.com and promoting events on several kiosks around the county and by using social media and also via Chepstow Marketing.

KB asked that you keep the TIC up to date on any new products you are stocking, new services or special offers and special events/ celebrations at your business. Contact details

katieburton@monmouthshire.gov.uk tel: 01291623772 or Chepstow.tic@monmouthshire.gov.uk

KB also provided a list of useful information below

- What's On Chepstow – a new Facebook page listing all the events taking place in and around Chepstow (twitter @ChepstowWhatson)
- Visit Wye Valley and Vale of Usk – Twitter and Facebook sites
- Chepstow Town Crier.org.uk
- Visit Chepstow Facebook page
- For PR stories, special offers contact kevinford@monmouthshire.gov.uk and these will feed through twitter (3991) and Facebook(770 likes) for Wye Valley and Vale of Usk

4.1 **Ambassadors for Monmouthshire.** RW distributed leaflets and explained that they were looking for people who were passionate about Monmouthshire and were willing to train as local experts and help visitors have the best possible experience in the area. There would be several courses running organised by area and by theme so the choice would be for which suited each ambassador. She asked that the information be passed on.

4.2 **Sights Of inspiration** AR told the meeting about this important exhibition planned for Chepstow Museum commencing on 28th September. The exhibition was all about Tintern Abbey and would include art and artefacts from the abbey, the Tate Gallery including paintings by Turner. There would be other activities , such as day schools, community engagement work, activities and talks etc taking place. This exhibition should draw a considerable amount of visitors to the town.

5. **Marketing Report** GR reported that the monthly 4th Saturday of the month Pedestrianisation of the High Street would commence on the 4th Saturday 26th April , not March as originally intended as preparations were taking longer than expected. Invitations had been 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.

As well as the events mentioned last month plans for the festival commencing June 20th were underway as was Castell Roc at the end of August.

As part of promoting Chepstow to local people to encourage them to visit the town more frequently a What's On Chepstow Facebook page had been set up to run in conjunction and additionally with the printed leaflet. This was in the early stages but was already receiving good response. It was hoped that businesses would post events they were planning on this page so they could be promoted.

6. **Treasurers Report** In MP absence Andrew presents a financial report for the past year (attached) AG also reported that despite several letter South wales Chamber had not reimbursed that Chepstow Chamber with monies take from it's account by SWC in error. NJCP to forward correspondence to PR for him to take up with South Wales Chamber.

7. **A.O.B.**

- NJCP had been asked to raise the issue that a street market and entertainment planned on 4th Saturday of the month would be concentrated in the High Street and could not something be organised for Welsh St and Moor St. PR commented that Moor St was a particularly difficult place to organise anything due to traffic. The

road could not be closed because of the bus services and the narrowness of the pavement for activities there was a serious health and safety risk. It was suggested that this should be raised at the meeting on 11th and at the next Marketing Group meeting.

- **Bus Station WC** . PR reported that the Town Council had negotiated a lease with the Co OP Shop and a Public toilet and meeting room would be provided shortly
Meeting close at 19.40
- **April Meeting** The planned Networking meeting will not take place until June now a revised programme(attached) has been posted on the Towncrier website

Date of next meeting Thursday 3rd April

Chepstow Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

Financial Statement for March 6th 2014 Meeting of Members

Opening Balance at 31 st January 2013	£1907.60
Income	£2151.92
Outgoings	£1831.81
Surplus of Income over Outgoings	£320.11
Closing Balance at 2 nd February 2014	£2227.71

Chepstow Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Programme 2013-2014

Meetings take place at 6.00pm in the Beaufort Hotel, Chepstow unless otherwise stated

October 3rd 2013

Google + and your business – Ben Pugh of First Stop Stationers

November 7th 2013

Top 5 things businesses need to think about (tips on finance and legal matters) – Griff Rogers of Clifton Nash & Paul Rutter of Keith Evans & Co

Tuesday December 10th 2013

Christmas Social Evening hosted by Peter Mills at Severn Quays. Donations to Chepstow Street Pastors.

January 2013

No meeting

February 6th 2014

The easy ways to get your business on line

March 6th 2014

Tourism with Chepstow Tourist Information Centre and Wye Valley Tourism

April 3rd 2014

Banking for Businesses

May 1st 2014

Visit to Hanley's Farm Shop (TBC)

June 5th 2014

Meet the Members networking at St Pierre

July 3rd 2014

Dinner at The Golden Lion, Magor

August 2014

No meeting

September 4th 2014

AGM - followed by How to manage your time