

CHEPSTOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of General Meeting

Thursday 3rd April 2014, 6.00pm at The Beaufort Hotel, Regency Room

PRESENT:

Members:

Griff Rogers (GR) Vice President
Melanie Phillips (MP)
Alyson Hunt(AH)
Julie Le Peltier (JLP)
Mark Le Peltier (MLP)
Bryony Symons (BS)
Harry Kear (HK)
Rob Hancock (RH)
Nikola Greening (NG)
Moira Wearing (MW)

Nikki Colley- Priest (NJCP)- Secretary

Guests:

Cllr David Dovey (DD) – MCC
Kelly Griffiths (KG) – Premier Manager Barclays Bank
Marian Lewis(ML) – Rotary Club
Carol Hobday(CH) – Dragonfly Vintage
Terry Laverty (TL) – Abundant resources
Stuart Martin (SM) – Castlegate Recruitment
Paul Richings(PR)

1. **Apologies** Carole Heritage, Dee Griffith , Ben Pugh, Andrew & Judy Griffith, Richard Cobourne, Robin Craine.
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 MLP.
3. **Matters Arising-** None
4. **Small Businesses and Banking – Moira Wearing – Business Manager at Barclays Bank for Chepstow, Caldicot & part of Newport & Kelly Griffiths – Premier Manager for Barclays Bank Chepstow.** MW gave a presentation in 2 parts:
 - **The importance Business websites and Social Media were to help businesses grow.** MW explained that 82% of small businesses have a websites, 22% of shoppers are using the High Street less and are using alternative channels to purchase goods. 60% of customers use social media sites every day. Of the Mobile audience 69% of people in Wales have smart phones, 76% in London and 66% in South West of England. It is important to have the right name for your website so customers can easily find you. Facebook, Twitter & Pinterest are all types of Social Media that can be used to promote and grow your business the important thing to remember is to be yourself, follow to be followed, post pictures, give a gift, share your HAPPY thoughts. Barclays bank has a Facebook page Barclays Business UK where Barclays Digital Eagles answer any questions on all things digital. Pinterest is becoming popular and seems to be driving significant sales and traffic to retail websites.
Market places like , Amazon, eBay & Etsy are alternative to selling via your business website.
Networking on line is another useful tool. Barclays Connector is not just for Barclays customers and enables businesses to connect with like-minded business community to find knowledge, customers and business opportunities. It provides forums for businesses and a business directory.
 - **How to use online banking tools to manage your business better** 40% of small businesses have cash flow worries, Online banking is convenient, and available 24/7. Cash is no longer king, more and more payments are being made by credit/debit cards, by mobile and by Barclays Pingit, this is free to Barclays businesses customers and their customers do not have to hold a Barclays bank account. Barclays Pingit enables customers to pay you with just your mobile number. Businesses can also opt in to Paym – giving you yet

another easy way to get paid when the new mobile payments service launches on 29 April.

Barclays Cloud It enables account holders to upload personal documents for safe keeping.

Staying in touch Barclays also offer courses on social media £75 + vat for Barclays customers but attendees also get £400 of vouchers to spend on appropriate sites.

Barclays are also offering space in their banking halls for pop up shops.

GR thanked MW for a very informative presentation and commented that he was very impressed by the digital services being offered by Barclays.

- 5. Marketing Report** GR reported that plans for the monthly 4th Saturday of the month Pedestrianisation of the High Street would commence on Saturday 26th April. In addition to the Chepstow Festival, plans for the Half Marathon on August Bank Holiday Sunday were well underway. 'What's On Chepstow' Facebook page is becoming very popular with locals with almost 1000 followers at present. The construction of the new Chepstow Town Council website was progressing and links to 'What's On Chepstow' Facebook and twitter accounts would be available from this too. Castell Roc music Festival would be taking place at the end of August. MP reported that they were looking for 10 sponsors for the sum of £120 for Castell Roc. The sponsors would get 2 free ticket and banners displaying their business would be displayed at the concerts. NJCP to circulate the information to members and also put on Chamber Facebook page.

6. A.O.B.

- **Rotary Club Breakfast meeting** Marian Lewis informed the meeting of the planned monthly Breakfast meeting at The Beaufort Hotel on the second Tuesday of every month. The aim of the meetings would be to inform businesses of what was being planned The Rotary Club do things for the community projects /events in Chepstow throughout the year. There were a number of projects they need help with. She distributed leaflets and asked that the information be distributed to those not present.
- **Increasing footfall in Chepstow** HK from Kear & Ku - Mens & Ladies fashion, who have been trading in Chepstow since February, noted that he felt during the week the footfall in the High Street was poor. In fact he was getting less trade than when he was trading in Taurus Crafts. He commented that the town needed to attract more customers from the Forest of Dean, who at the moment either shopped in Monmouth or Bristol. He felt Chepstow had the potential to be a vibrant town and urged the Chamber to canvas the Town Council to do something about it. He suggested that lock up stalls could be put up in the town without the need for road closures at seasonal period during the year. These could be run by a professional person organising franchises. This would bring more people into the town and retailers in turn would benefit.
JLP commented that what was needed was to engage more retailers to overcome Chepstow's identity crisis. It was suggested that retailers under the umbrella for the Chamber of Commerce get together with the Town Council to discuss this. MLP offered to lead on this if the Chamber wished to go ahead with this. The item will be discussed at the next Exec meeting.
- **Meeting closed at 19.50**

Date of next meeting Thursday 1st May