



Minutes

Friday, 21st February 2020

wotton-under-edge
chamber of trade

www.wotton.biz

Held at The Swan Hotel, Friday, 21st February, 7:30pm

Present:

(Committee): Martin Tucker (Chair), Trevor Mason (Acting Secretary), Jill Tebb, Jon Turner, Claire Wilkinson, Janet Walshe

Apologies: Linda Cohen, Dave Harrison, Jeff Walshe

1. Last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th August 2019 were accepted as a true record of the proceedings.

2. Matters arising:

a) Trial 'Meet the Manager' style articles on Facebook (Jill)

Jill confessed that she had not been able to progress this. It was agreed that it was a good idea and that it should be held over to a future meeting

Action continuing: Jill

b) Discuss some sort of 'Young Enterprise' business award scheme with KLB (Trevor)

Trevor reported on a meeting between the Chamber (Martin, Trevor and Linda) and KLB (Head Teacher – Tim Rand and Head of Sixth Form – Hannah Khan).

It was very positive and happened to coincide with the Head Teacher's objective to work more closely with the local community and its businesses.

Rather than establish a 'Young Enterprise' Award as had been originally suggested it was agreed that the better way to proceed would be to establish the degree to which the Chamber membership might be able to support a scheme whereby students might be placed in local businesses for work experience with Linda outlining a project with which she is professionally involved at another school.

Linda undertook to compile a note which Trevor would circulate to the membership

Action: Linda and Trevor

Linda cited the changing ownership of the bookshop in town as an example of the possibility for student involvement with a local business in any of a number of relevant disciplines.

(Post meeting note – the new owners have expressed an interest in discussing this proposal further with Linda)

In the meantime, the school will have a think about how they might envisage the next stage and will respond to Trevor after the Half Term break

Janet said that she would ask at the cinema if there was any interest in a similar arrangement.
Action: Janet

c) Canvas opinions of some members in membership discount scheme (Martin)

Martin commented that there has been a form of discount scheme for a few years where some members have been happy to participate whilst others have not, due largely to the harsh business environment which currently exists.

It was agreed that a mailshot would go out to the membership to establish the likelihood of others participating at the same time as Martin visiting the local traders personally.

Action continuing: Martin

d) Establish what local builders might be doing already with new house 'Welcome Packs' (Martin and Trevor)

Martin reported that although most builders do offer 'Welcome packs' to their customers there was a general reluctance on their part to promote specific towns and businesses.

One builder did express an interest in being supplied with one but it transpired that it would simply be left on a table for anyone interested to take away.

It was agreed that the effort involved in compiling a 'Welcome Pack' would not see any return and the suggestion should be closed.

Action closed

Janet offered some of the information that is generally available at the town's Heritage Centre where they hold a list of 100+ charities, clubs, societies and other organisations.

Janet undertook to see if the details were available in .pdf format and, if so, would send a copy to Martin

Action: Janet

e), g) combined Revision of policy statement on Chamber website (Claire)

Claire reported that she has written a new privacy notice which Martin had approved.

Technical reasons mean that it was not in electronic form and so Claire undertook to supply a hard copy with Martin's comments on it to Sue for scanning and forwarding to Martin for inclusion on the website.

Action: Claire and Sue

Mention was made of an earlier suggestion to supply some form of jute shopping bag to encourage and publicise local shopping. It was felt that there were enough similar bags in circulation already.

The £5 scheme and 'Tolsey2' in Dursley was mentioned and how they seemed to be working well.

Martin said that he would try to get over there some time to see them for himself.

Action: Martin

All were encouraged to keep their eyes and ears open for any good loyalty schemes in operation elsewhere. Details to be sent to Martin or Trevor

Action: Committee

3. Treasurer's Report

The bank account contains £3662.

Jill stated that there was a desire to open an online account on the basis that it would always be live and enable accurate and up to date information on the finances: especially membership payments which would stop the stream of renewal reminders being sent out in error.

As a precursor to this she pointed out that there was a need to remove Colin Wright's name from the list of authorised signatories.

She proposed a vote which was seconded by Claire and unanimously agreed.

4. Events

a) Review of Christmas Event

The Christmas stall had been a success with the mulled wine, mince pies and sausage rolls all proving to be very popular (especially the mulled wine!)

A new burner and gas bottle had been purchased.

After expenses a profit of £45 was declared.

The beer had not been so popular and so the decision was to replace it with a non-alcoholic punch. Vegan sausage rolls were also suggested.

Detailed planning would be left until nearer the date (tba).

Disappointment was expressed at the low number of members that visited the stall although it was suggested that some would have been tied up in the event elsewhere. In general it was considered to be a good publicity exercise which maintains the Chamber's image in the town.

b) Events for 2020. What do you want to do? and c) Christmas-under-the-Edge (CUTE) – do we take it on?

Disappointment was also expressed that so few of the members were attending this meeting.

Martin outlined his suggestion that the Chamber takes on the organisation of the next Christmas event. He described how the last event had made a surplus and that it could be made available towards the next one. He then undertook to lead the planning of the event on the behalf of the Chamber but that all communications would be via his personal email address to simplify the technical requirements of GDPR. He considered that this involvement would be

good for the Chamber and its members.

He suggested that any local groups which became involved would then become beneficiaries from any donations made from the proceeds.

All were in favour (in principle) of this proposal and that another meeting would be needed to agree the structure of the event and how the jobs and responsibilities would be delegated.

d) Review of Plastic Free Pledge launch

Martin reported that the launch of the Plastic Pledge had gone extremely well although it was a shame that no press had turned up. The event had been hosted by the local brownies and Wotton's Stroud District Councillor for the Green Party, Catherine Braun had also attended.

Despite no press attending, the launch press release has been published in the Gazette and the Gloucestershire Punchlines business website and is due to be published in the Wotton Times.

It was suggested that more members might have attended had a reminder been sent out a day or so beforehand.

At the time of the meeting, twelve businesses had signed up for the pledge.

e) Events postcard and walking leaflet

Janet distributed the newly published events postcard explaining that constraints on space meant that only the bigger, annual events could be included.

Janet also distributed copies of the Heritage Centre's leaflet which has been refreshed.

Also circulated was a sample copy of the new town leaflet for tourists.

Martin stated that he was to hold back the issue of the new town guide (an A5 document with adverts) as he wanted to use the same map.

Mention was also made of four walking and four cycling leaflets being published as part of the Gateway Project. In addition we can expect to see information boards on local walks going up in the town.

5. Opportunities for sponsorship

This item will be removed from future Agendas as it is considered no longer relevant.

6. Opportunities for publicity, Facebook, etc

Martin explained that the Chamber's Facebook account has been dormant mainly because the access codes to enable its updating have been lost. He considered that it would be best to start a new account and to get it going properly and use it to raise the profiles of local

businesses and any special events that they may be planning.

7. Correspondence

There was no correspondence to report

8. Any other business

Janet informed the Committee of an exhibition at the Heritage Centre entitled 'Let's go shopping'. It describes old Wotton in pictures and features many shopfronts from several years ago. She requested that we publicise it to the members as many may well find it of interest.

9. Date of next meeting

To be arranged towards the end of March and after a meeting on the Christmas event