



Cirencester Chamber of Commerce

Best for Business

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting **Held on Wednesday 13th July 2011** **at Cirencester Assembly Rooms**

Present:

Committee

Jonathan Davies (President) , Mike Johnson (Treasurer), Karen Gaisford (Secretary), David Fowles , Roger Brown, Jan Federlein, Simon Musgrove-Wethey

Members

Edward Allsop, Adam Baggs, Vicky Beales, Alison Brown, Benita Cegarra, Leigh Chapman, Nigel Chute, Clare Davis, Roxy Glas, Annie Gould, Kelsie Hall, Jill Lang, Robin Little, Andrea Masek, Simon May, Andrew Miller, Jaqueline Mitchell, Sharon Olsen, Richie Oswin, Andrew Pywell, Clare Pywell, David Roebuck, Rebecca Smith, Diane Stallabass, Hilary Stewart, Colin Wakefield, Kathy Wilson

Guests

Florence Beetlestone, Geoff Carr, Anthony Flynn, Nicola Hurst, Eric Lepine, Stuart Mansfield, Kate Teasdale

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Richard Ashwood, Helen Bassett (Committee)

2. **Minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting**

The minutes of the previous AGM were approved.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were none

4. **Presidents Report (Jonathan Davies)**

Introduction

As is customary it falls to me to provide a brief update on the activities of the Chamber of Commerce over the last year.

I think that the Chamber has made good progress over the year and has focused mainly on delivering activities that benefit our members.

There is no denying that the last year has been a challenge for everyone in business, the continuing economic pressures mean it is essential that businesses look to control costs and deliver innovative products and services to their customers.

The same pressures apply to the Chamber and the committee have worked hard to ensure that the Chamber remains relevant to its members and develops new initiatives that support business and help to promote Cirencester as a great place to do business.

Activities

The main activities undertaken this year include;

a) We launched the Chambers first training session held at Mitsubishi with the focus of the evening being E – Marketing for Business. This event proved to be very popular and is something the Chamber will look to develop in the future.

b) The Chambers website has been redesigned to make it easier to update and also to make access to key areas clearer.

c) Chamber has rebranded itself and publicity / marketing material has been updated.

d) Monthly newsletter has been produced and circulated to all on emailing list.

e) We launched first Business Awards for Cirencester which was very successful and secured significant publicity and press coverage for businesses and the town. This will become an annual event with your support.

- f) The Chamber remains actively involved with the Steering group of Our Future Cirencester and also chairs the Local Business Group of the above partnership. Watch out for the new business pages and business directory that will be appearing on the Town Council website later this year. The Chamber also has representatives on the Culture group.
- g) The Chamber has also engaged with Glos First and has also established links with Gloucestershire Chamber of Commerce as well as Chambers from Tewksbury / Cheltenham / Stroud / Gloucester. It is hoped that this relationship will develop into a partnership where good practice can be shared and the voices of local Chambers can be heard more effectively at a County / Regional / National level.
- h) Network meetings continue to be a popular with members and we have been fortunate to be able to attract good quality speakers.
- i) We have developed a good working relationship with C4B networking group and hope to develop opportunities for joint work going forward.

Membership

Membership has remained fairly constant during the year. 90 businesses have currently renewed the membership and we hope to exceed last year's membership by the end of the year. If you have not renewed yet please do so or if you are interested in joining the Chamber please get in touch.

The Committee

The Chamber of Commerce is run by volunteers (we do pay a small amount for some secretarial support) and everything we put on requires individuals to give up their free time. Without this support there would be no Chamber of Commerce and I do have to remind some organisations / individuals that the Chamber is not a fully staffed and full-time body.

The Future

The Chamber of Commerce will continue to deliver projects and initiatives that benefit our members and businesses in and around Cirencester. We will aim to promote Cirencester as a great place to do business and make sure the Town is seen as an important economic hub for the Cotswolds.

In terms of specifics 3 key projects will be;

- a) Business Awards 2012
- b) Interesting and relevant speakers at our Network events.
- c) Work with Cirencester Town Council to launch the business pages and local business directory on the Town Councils website.

In order to deliver these projects and much more we will need your help. You do not necessarily have to join the committee you could just offer a couple of hours help with a specific project in an area where you have a specific skill such as marketing / PR / Copying Writing / Event organisation etc.

Without support the Chamber will not develop and has no future, I would urge you to get involved and not just think someone else will do it. It is your Chamber so get involved.

Thank you

As always there are many people I need to thank;

- a) The Committee; Simon King, Richard Ashwood, Helen Basset, Roger Brown, David Fowles, Mike Johnson, Simon Musgrove-Wethey, Rachel Wright, Jan Federlain, Karen Gaisford.
- b) I would like to particularly thank Karen Gaisford in her role as Secretary for making it all happen. This role is very onerous and Karen does a fantastic job.
- c) Rachel Wright and Ingleside House for providing us a base in Cirencester.
- d) All the speakers at the networking events.

Conclusion

I think the last year has been a successful year for the Chamber and I am confident that with your support the Chamber will continue to grow from strength to strength. We are already recognised as a well organised and effective Chamber by many of the key players in the area and I hope the Chamber can build on this recognition to ensure that the views of local business are taken into account by local decision makers.

Vote of thanks

Following Jonathan's report, David Fowles thanked him for his first year's service as President and asked for the meeting's appreciation.

5. Treasurer's Report

Mike Johnson talked through the Accounts for the year to 31 March 2011; these have been independently examined by Andrew Miller.

The main points to highlight are:

- Overall a reasonable year to report, with the Chamber's finances relatively stable.
- The Chamber successfully applied for a grant from Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum which has been forwarded to the Town Council to assist with the development of the business database.
- Thank you to Andrew Miller for, again, reviewing the accounts this year.

6. Annual Subscription Rates

Following discussions, the committee has decided that it would be imprudent to ask the membership for increased subscriptions for the forthcoming year (2012 – 13) in the current economic climate. This proposal was put to the meeting, and agreed by a show of hands.

7. Election of Officers

Election of the President:

Nominated: Jonathan Davies

Proposer: David Fowles

Seconded by: Simon Musgrove-Wethey

Elected by a majority show of hands

Election of the Vice-President

Nominated: Helen Bassett

Proposer: David Fowles

Seconded by: Simon Musgrove-Wethey

Elected by a majority show of hands

Election of the Treasurer

Nominated: Mike Johnson

Proposer: Simon Musgrove-Wetjey

Seconded by: Benita Cegarra

Elected by a majority show of hands

Election of the Executive Committee:

Rachel Wright and Simon King stood down during the year.

The remaining Committee Members have agreed to stand again and were duly elected to do so, these are:

Karen Gaisford, David Fowles, Simon Musgrove-Wethey, Roger Brown, Richard Ashwood, Jan Federlein

Proposer: Benita Cegarra

Seconded by: Edward Allsopp

Elected by a majority show of hands

8 Open Forum

No issues were raised

9 Any Other Business

Jonathan Davies ended the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.

The next Network Meeting will be on 14th September 2011.

The date of the next AGM is to be confirmed – provisional date 11th July 2012.

The meeting closed at 8pm