



Cirencester Chamber of Commerce

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 26th January 2009

Present: Simon King (SK), Karen Gaisford (KG), Simon Musgrove-Wethey (SMW), Jonathan Davies (JD), Simon Large (SL), Peter Stringfellow (PS)

1. Apologies for Absence

Mike Johnson, David Fowles and Roger Brown.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes from the December meeting were approved and accepted with any points raised being covered below.

3. Correspondence and Feedback from President

Re: Future Strategy

Two meetings have now been held, with good attendance and positive input. A further 1 or 2 meeting(s) are planned, with a view to the process being complete by the end of February when membership renewals are sent out. Stephanie Allison from Corinium HRM has been facilitating at the meetings, and has offered to provide this service FOC. It was agreed that their contribution should be acknowledged in the final documentation.

SK attended a Gloucestershire Chamber Networking meeting in December. There was a relatively lower turnout than he expected and no formal speaker. He did not have the opportunity to discuss the benefits of us continuing as an affiliated Chamber.

4. Updates

Cirencester Community Plan (formally Market & Coastal Towns Initiative):

A second round of workshops has been arranged by Hyder Consulting on 29th January. As many as possible of the committee will attend.

Cirencester Town Council:

Nothing discussed

Cotswold District Council:

DF – to arrange for **DN** to meet with the Chamber committee and speak at a forthcoming network event (which could be held at the council chambers)

DF – to forward **DN** contact details to **KG** so that he can be added to Constant Contact (from December meeting).

JD was recently asked to comment on the proposed increase in Car Parking charges, based on the Press Release issued by CDC. **DF** confirmed that the increase is one of the ways CDC plan to make up a budgetary shortfall. As previously discussed, it was agreed that prior consultation would have been welcome. **JD** will arrange a meeting

with Mark Tuffnell to discuss this issue, and hopefully establish regular contact. PS, MJ, SL, SK would also like to attend.

SL has added Siddington to the list of applications. There are very few planning applications going through at the moment.

There was no consultation over the trees in Catalpa Square being cut down.

Gloucestershire County Council:

Nothing discussed

Other external organisations:

Nothing discussed

5. **Committee Structure and Roles**

PS confirmed that he has now sold Crocodile, and so no longer has a business in Cirencester. SK asked PS to remain on the committee if he is willing to do so, and PS agreed. PS will also continue to represent the Chamber on the Business Group for 'Our Future Cirencester'. JD will take on the role of Press contact.

There is still a need for new committee members, and once the Strategy discussions are complete it should be possible to identify specific roles to be filled and identify individuals who may be willing to take them on.

6. **Finance**

KG handed out an up to date financial summary. There are three new members and a few interested people.

The Invoice for renewal of Gloucestershire Chamber has been received, and there was further discussion of whether it is worth continuing with this membership.

7. **Advent/Other Events**

We are still awaiting the final sum from the collection tins.

SK, MJ and KG attended a meeting with CTC on 19th January.

Our position concerning future events was confirmed, i.e. As the event has grown and is now a community event, the Chamber as a business organisation is no longer able to take on responsibility for organising the event and fundraising. CTC appreciated this situation, and will look into the possibility of the Festival coming under the auspices of 'Our Future Cirencester' as they have already been discussing Festivals and community events. They will get back to us asap, and we confirmed that any funds we currently hold would be transferred to them, and that it is likely that a number of people who have been involved in the past would continue to do so.

It was agreed that if their response is negative we will fulfil our commitment to the 3 year plan which included a ceremony for 3 years (2007-9), but that the switching on ceremony would consist of carols around the tree only.

8. **Membership**

There are 3 new members.

9. **Marketing**

To be discussed in detail following the strategy meeting

10. **Events and Networking**

There was a very good turnout for the January meeting (35).
Andrea Pellegram will speak in February about 'Our Future Cirencester'.

11. **Communications**

There have been a number of contacts with the Press.

PS commented on the economic downturn and the closure of Woolworths.

JD commented to the Standard and BBC Radio Glos re. Parking charges.

We were asked for comments on the CTC pay awards but were unwilling to make specific comments without full information.

JD is meeting with the Police, CTC, CDC re. Empty shops in the town. Will report back at next meeting.

It was agreed that we need to let businesses know what we are doing/commenting on, and so anyone taking any action or making a comment on behalf of the Chamber should forward brief details to KG. Information will be sent by Constant Contact as and when necessary, and added to the 'News' page of the website.

SL commented that we should be working to encourage the Standard to be more positive. It was suggested that we should hold regular press briefings, and this could be a role for a new committee member.

SK commented that we shouldn't rely just on the Standard and could make more use of CBN.

12. **Website/IT**

This area will be discussed in detail following the strategy meeting.

13. **Any Other Business**

SMW mentioned the discount 'passport' again.

There was concern that we may not have the resources to co-ordinate this. Suggestions were made that it could be passed to 'Our Future Cirencester' to develop, or that Cirencester College students might be able to take it on as a Business Studies project.

14. **Dates of Future Meetings**

| <u>Network Meetings</u> | | <u>Committee Meetings</u> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Wednesdays 6 - 7.30pm | | Thursdays 6 - 8pm |
| February | 11th | 26th |
| March | 11th | 26th |
| April | 8th | 23rd |
| May | 13th | 28th |
| June | 10th | 25th |
| July | 15th (AGM) | 30th |
| No meeting in August | | 27th |
| September | 9th | 25th |
| October | 14th | 29th |
| November | 11th | 26th |
| December | 9th | 17th |