



Agenda Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 28th February 2017
19:00 – 21:15 hrs

The Berry Head Hotel

1. Welcome (New Members and Guest Speakers) and Chair's Report for 2016 - JS

1. Welcome

There were no new members to welcome so JS welcomed all members and guest speakers, thanked them for coming and moved on to her presentation, covering a number of topics. This is available on the chamber website and can be found on our website under Chairs Report.ppt

She advised that the Brixham Means Business group has now finished. The money remaining in their bank account, approximately £100, is going to be divided equally between Pride in Brixham and Brixham Does Care.

She spoke of her sadness at the passing of Jackie Robinson, co-owner of the Golden Hind and conveyed her sympathies to her family.

Announcing her retirement from the role of Chair, Jacqui thanked all members of the executive for their efforts on behalf of the chamber. She drew attention to the numerous achievements covered in both her presentation and the end of year report.

Apologies – Liz Pippett, Serena Jury, Jessica Stock

2. Amendment to the Constitution – Lynne Peets

In regard to subscriptions, we have received a request from Lynne Peets, membership secretary, for the following amendment to the constitution:

Lynne introduced the idea behind the rule change and asked for members' opinions as to the change. She explained the new payment arrangements and how much fairer the system would be for all members.

Members then voted on the proposal and the motion was carried. The following wording will now be adopted into the constitution.

1.1. Subscriptions

The subscription to the Chamber is £35.00 per annum (or such other sum as the Executive may from time to time determine at any General Meeting) and shall be payable to the Treasurer upon joining and, in the case of renewal, one year from the date of the previous subscription.

Any Member who wishes to cancel their membership of the Chamber should give 1 month's notice in writing to the Secretary and will not be eligible for any repayment of any subscription paid.

Renewals - Reminders will be posted to members in the month before their renewal date. Any member not renewing their subscription by the anniversary of their initial subscription will be deemed to have cancelled their membership and, as such, will forfeit any voting rights or chamber membership benefits. Their membership listing will remain on the chamber website for one month after the due date of the subscription and will then be taken off.

3. Guest Speakers - 15 minute presentations

George Cowcher, CEO Devon Chamber of Commerce

George spoke to members about the history and infrastructure of the Devon Chamber. He spoke about the various chambers that were part of the chamber 'family' and outlined how the chamber would be changing in the near future, ie new organisations that would be integrated into their existing partnerships. He spoke about the board and its hope that Devon and Cornwall would soon be in a position to exert real economic clout in both political and economic circles. He spoke about its potential for investment, especially given the size of our economy.

He expressed the hope that Devon Chamber would, in the next two years, increase its membership from 750 chambers to 1000. He spoke about the need for a united front, especially in making clear to councils that the business community should not be penalised, through the business rates, or expected to make good expenditure in regard to decisions that should never have been made.

He spoke about the importance of effective meetings, policies and business preparation for such challenges as international trade, digital media, increasing costs etc. He expressed the opinion that, if you were still trading in the same way that you have for the previous five years, then it would be almost certain that you would not be in business at the end of the next five years.

He spoke about the problems of the railway network and the potential loss of the cross country services. This is a matter that the Devon chamber is taking up on our behalf. He also discussed air transport systems and the potential problems of devolution through the mayoral route. The latter has widespread implications for economic growth and funding.

He mentioned the potential problems of apprenticeships and the new system which would see businesses negotiating terms and conditions with various bodies and education providers. He also went through some of the literary resources that will be available to all parts of the county so that all members feel involved and informed.

He congratulated Brixham Chamber for its activity and management, which served the vibrant Brixham community to a good standard.

QA session

Questions were raised as to how the Devon Chamber allocated time and resources to the differing priorities faced by its various constituent elements. George explained some of the decision processes but also pointed out that sometimes different chambers face such divergent demands from their members that it is hard to find any commonality. Jacqui and George then went through the importance of the forthcoming Devon and Somerset mayoral roles in relation to funding, which could be a major issue for all businesses. They expressed the hope, and the need, for people to be better informed as to the potential implications of both roles and expressed their commitment to ensuring that people were properly informed in the near future, certainly before it becomes a major issue.

George spoke about the mayoral roles in relation to road and railway networks, expressing concern that our political representatives are not wholly supportive of the new mayoral roles and the development of such a system. This was worrying in light of the implication that, if they do not support the idea of such a mayor, then funds could be transferred to other areas that do.

Mike Franchi asked about ICT issues to which George referred him to Lauren Edmunds at Plymouth.

Other questions were raised about the importance of finding commonality between different chambers. George agreed that this was important but also explained about the difficulties and potential impact of groups that were keen advocates of widely opposing and differing views. Some groups could not be aligned and so, in such cases, Devon Chamber still had to maintain good relationships with all of them, finding areas where they could agree and move forward to the benefit of all parties. Sometimes this involved some necessary neutrality.

He spoke about the importance of post Brexit trade deals.

4. End of Year Reports

A copy of the end of year reports was circulated to members and will be made available on the chamber website. This will be available in pdf form and will include the financial information that Matt went through.

5. Executive appointments for 2017

Executive Constitutional Roles

Martyn Green – Chairman

Secretary role not filled – Jacqui spoke to members about the fact that it was demonstrably unreasonable to expect Martyn to undertake both roles. She asked members to examine their consciences as to whether or not this was a fair demand to place upon anyone and how, in her opinion, it would be detrimental, if not impossible to fulfil both roles to a good

standard. Despite this, no-one has yet come forward to volunteer for taking on the whole role of secretary though Sophie Bower has offered to help. Splitting the role between two people is not impossible but the chamber still needs someone else to come forward please.

Matthew Crabtree – Treasurer

Serena Jury – Retail

Nigel Makin – Town centre regeneration

Lynne Peets – Membership secretary

Ian Didlick will be taking on the role of Sunday Market Manager

Chris Slack – Arts and Crafts Market Manager

Jacqui Shaw - Chamber & Local Government liaison

Alex Foley – Hospitality

Liz Pippett - Tourism

6. Any Other Business

Jacqui spoke about the Mayflower 400 celebrations. She outlined the opportunities available to local businesses and posed the thought that we should be able to give visitors the Mayflower 400 experience as well as Plymouth. She also described how people are developing an autonomous vessel to generate lots of data for shipping companies and the marine community. Preparations for 2020 were also discussed with holiday events from which Torbay businesses could benefit.

31st March 2017 – Wear a brain tumour hat for brain tumour research. Only 1% of funding goes to brain tumour research so could members please get behind this and give it their support.

Gordon Gout spoke to members concerning the business advertisement and publicity brochure that he is producing. He had presented the issue of the guide to the outgoing executive, although unfortunately at too late a stage of development for them to feel able to support it. The primary reasons for this were:

1. That his map, while illustrating Brixham, is primarily intended to direct people towards those businesses advertising within the guide, many of whom are not chamber members. Their private advertisements constitute a large part of the publication. For chamber involvement, we would have needed to be involved at an earlier stage in the proceedings so as to ensure that all of our members had equal access.

2. The map potentially duplicates work that had already been undertaken in three other projects. It just didn't fit with the raft of measures that had already been planned, budgeted for and implemented at this particular moment in time.

3. The guide was undertaken privately through verbal or other agreement with Gordon. It was a personal project, not undertaken on behalf of the chamber and, since the majority of those retailers are not chamber members and are even, potentially, in competition with them, it would be questionable for the chamber to support them through contributing directly towards their private advertising arrangements.

If Gordon, at some future point in time, wishes to pursue a further issue of this guide, he will be free to approach us then, when the executive committee will make clear, as part of a properly costed and documented proposal, the conditions under which we would be prepared to move forward with such a project. We would need to be involved at the very beginning though, not part way through.

South Devon business awards were raised as a good way to attract public attention to some of the excellent businesses that we have in Brixham.

Nigel Makin spoke about how we could, perhaps, work together to achieve unity in Brixham branding. Mike Franchi spoke about the Love Brixham website and branding and how it is going to be supported by the ERTB.

Brixham Heritage Museum was raised and its staff and volunteers praised for all the hard work that they put in on its behalf. Speaking on behalf of the Museum, John Riden expressed his interest in supporting chamber initiatives that had a historical component.

Martyn Green thanked both Jacqui Shaw and Mark Choppin for the hard work that they had put in over the year on behalf of the chamber. He stated that they should feel proud of what they had achieved, exemplifying Mark's efforts in relation to both the Sunday markets and the respect competition and praising Jacqui for the tireless way in which she had lobbied on behalf of chamber members, attending countless meetings and penning innumerable letters and messages to the benefit of both the residents and businesses of Brixham. She will be sadly missed within the role and a hard act to follow.

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Next Chamber Executive Meeting: Monday 13th March, 2017, The Yacht Club, 1800hrs

Next General Meeting : Tues 28th March, 2017, The Berry Head hotel, 1900 – 2100 hrs