



Minutes of Committee Meeting

Wednesday 1st February 2023 at 5.45pm in Quay House, Kingsbridge

Chairman: James Spencer
Treasurer: Peter Richardson/ John Gardner
Secretary: Nicola Coulson
Marketing Manager: Kim Willis

1. Welcome & Apologies

PRESENT: James Spencer, Peter Richardson, John Gardner, Kim Willis, Nicola Coulson, Sarah Burnett, Catherine Gillen, Scot Baston, Dawn Blundell, Cllr Mark Long, Cllr Rufus Gilbert, Cllr Nikki Turton

APOLOGIES: Cllr Philip Cole, Alison Theaker, Jane Tyler, Georgie Leonard

2. Minutes & Actions

Minutes from 4th January 23 approved.

JS asked PR how to formalise a new committee member: PR confirmed that they would need to be forwarded and seconded.

It was proposed that Jane Tyler officially joins committee; SB forwarded, PR seconded.

DB updated on A Mangnall's meeting with Kingsbridge councillors and traders to discuss how to bolster the high street.

Actions outstanding from January meeting:

Action #4: Leadership team website update: To add John Gardner and Georgie Leonard - *to be carried over to March* NC

Action #5: KW to oversee Chamber website promotional content eg. photos and generic wording - *carried over; to be completed by March meeting* KW

Action #6: Members' Directory to be picked up later in quarter - *carried over* JS

Action #7: To look for opportunities to host a 2023 event in Modbury All
CG volunteered to host a stand-up drinks reception at The Brownston Gallery, which also has a garden which would accommodate 50.

3. Treasurer's Report - PR

Current cash position:

Bank: current account: -	£13,936.63
Includes Modbury Funds	(£4,950.13)
Kingsbridge Traders	(£5,000.00)
Net: -	£3,986.50
Plus: Deposit account:	£3,167.67
TOTAL : -	£7,154.17

Payments relating to 2022 are now up to date and the cash position has improved as a large portion of subscriptions come in during January.

PR presented the budget for the coming year, explaining that he'd been conservative regarding subscriptions.

He has budgeted £1,500 for 3 Ignite grant awards in 2023.

Donations

Kevin Moore of Axle Tramps runs a regular Classic Car open meet in Market Square on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, between May and September. He has approached the Chamber about funding and PR would like to support this.

PR has also ringfenced £300 for anything that the Chamber feels is worthy of support.

Committee agreed about the proposed spending of up to £1,500 on a new Ignite scheme, but recommended that we review our terms and conditions, including whether we should be offering 12 months free membership as part of any future grant award.

SB will spearhead the next tranche of grants. She asked when we should start promoting - JS suggested from the end of February, with a push at March Business Club.

KW suggested grant awards should benefit one business each from Salcombe, Kingsbridge and Modbury.

There followed a discussion about actively promoting the Jobs Board - 2 x A2 spaces in KIC window, which supports key priority of addressing staff shortages.

NC asked why Business Clubs etc are loss making; PR explained that offering free speaker meals and other costs eg. sound system at AGM have impacted.

On a positive note, JS pointed out that we are up almost 1/5 on membership subs.

PR pointed out that Chamber's grant investment has been heavy and possibly not worth the investment.

4. Council reports

District & County: South Hams District Council and Devon County Council

DCC

- RG referred to a recent report about public food procurement in the SW which pushes for local food to be served in schools, hospitals etc - pushing for more localism in our food chain to help farming/agricultural/food retail businesses.
- He reported that local communities are being invited to apply for street party licences to mark the King's Coronation.
- DCC's **Made in Devon** scheme (madeindevon.org.uk), which aims to help businesses and consumers buy and support local, is proving a great success.
- RG thanked PR for his work as Treasurer over the years, and welcomed his successor, JG.
- He passed on the news that Bob Freeman, former mayor of Kingsbridge and community stalwart, has sadly died.
- RG committed to keep sending us updated grant details.

Rufus left.

Following on from RG's comments about promoting localism in food procurement, PR asked that going forward, we ask all caterers to confirm that they use local food.

SHDC

- On Friday 27th January, a survey went out to over 4.5k businesses on SHDC's database asking for comments on SHDC's budget for the forthcoming year.
- A Council tax increase of £5 will be proposed at a Council meeting on 16 February, to help maintain and improve core services across the district. This will mean that a Band D property would pay £185.42 in 2023/24.
- The Government's Department for Levelling Up has awarded SHDC over £1m through **the UK Shared Prosperity Fund** to help reduce carbon emissions. The funding will support targeted business and community support programmes spanning travel, the marine sector, farming, and business support, among other projects, to work towards the Government's commitment to be net-zero by 2050.
- One of the focus areas is a decarbonisation plan to help businesses to identify their carbon footprint.
- A future 2nd tranche of £800k funding is possible.
- Mark has confirmed that there is support for businesses and asked the Chamber to play a role in working with business members - even if it's just in an advisory capacity.

JS asked about the decarbonisation grant; is there a time scale for launch?

ML confirmed that the plan is to be launched in 2 months and will cover a year, then the 2nd tranche will cover up to 2025.

JS pointed out that it fits with the Chamber's environmental priority and so a discussion ensued about what role the Chamber could play in supporting the scheme, including:

- Hosting a business club to discuss/publicise the opportunities, possibilities, and funding available to assist members decarbonise their businesses.
- Helping to promote the support available if businesses are interested in being assessed.
- Supporting advertising and promotion around launch.
- SB asked if we could we link in the Ignite scheme?
- AGM could possibly be a platform to support SHDC's efforts.

SB suggested a bit of research on what funding is already available - website grants, EV charging points etc.

ML mentioned the Government's intention to deliver more frequent **Business Rate revaluations** - every 3 years, rather than the current 5 years. The hope is that it will be more supportive to small businesses, but we will know more in the April budget.

Town: Salcombe, Kingsbridge and Modbury

Salcombe

- NT listed several empty shops in Salcombe, including the corner of Buckley Street and two units next to Salcombe Meat Company.
- Kudos have moved from their office in Cliff House, so for the first time in a while, there is available office space.
- JS asked KW to add vacant shops and office spaces on Green Room/Facebook.
- Town Council has started to put a Summer Policing Plan in place with police, harbour office and other vested parties.
- The Harris Hawk Programme has been reinstated to deter seagulls (a non-lethal deterrent programme using live birds to alter the gull's nesting sites).
- Town Council are recruiting for a new Town Clerk - interviewing 2nd week in February.
- There have been 18 applicants for the Batson Creek commercial units: 5 are being processed and hopefully businesses will start to move in at the end of this month.

Modbury

- CG confirmed that roadworks have been postponed which gives time for stakeholders to regroup.
- Will now work with retailers, community, and vested parties to ensure arrangements are confirmed at least 3 months before the start of the works.
- There is discussion about resurrecting an old proposal for a bypass and possible vehicular weight restrictions.
- Discussing fundraising campaign to raise £1m to buy 2 properties to provide venues for community projects.

JS expressed support for Modbury's endeavours

Action 1: To keep decarbonisation on the agenda for further discussion

JS/ML

5. Strategic Theme #4 at next event: *Transport links to and through our area*

What's the problem?

What might local businesses do to resolve it?

What can we do to support local business to resolve the problem?

- Committee was invited to discuss the issues to inform the discussion for the forthcoming Business Club with Anthony Mangnall.
- PR raised the immediate problem of Tally Ho withdrawing from providing two local bus routes that will affect Kingsbridge and the outlying areas.
- KW would like to see bus routes running more regularly. She pointed out that timetables aren't regular; they end too early in the evening, referring particularly to the Stokenham/Kingsbridge route.

- ML expressed a need for Sunday services - we are not a “Monday to Saturday economy”.
- Villages are weaker links and bus services are lifelines. If we want to bring elderly workforce back to work, there is a need for good links from villages.
- It was agreed that we need faster and more direct bus links from towns and cities.
- SBa suggested that if we can get the workers, demand would increase, and links would start to work themselves out.
- What can the Chamber do?
- Salcombe Harbour Hotel brings staff in from Plymouth; could other businesses club together to bus share?
- SBa asked what are the problems in finding staff?
- PR asked if it is to do with the lack of affordable housing?
- Regarding the format of the BC, MP will be asked questions from audience members - the other panellists will also be asked to give their view.
- We are looking for in depth answers, eg. why doesn't the Stokenham bus run past 7pm

6. Member forums, general

- JS proposed that we have June AGM on Thursday 22 June and no May BC. Committee agreed.
- A discussion ensued about focussing on the housing crisis - specifically around people needing to live and work here affordably - at the March BC? This could be another opportunity to invite CLT? Nikki suggested she come with Nicky Barclay.

Action #2: SB to follow up with Soar Mill about hosting March BC on Thursday 30th March. SB

Action #3: Upcoming dates to be published on Chamber website SBa

7. AOB

Salcombe Tourist Information Centre (TIC)

- SB reported that they will remain at the Council Hall on Market Street. TIC is open and manned every morning and they are currently looking for a new manager and volunteers. They are also ploughing ahead with the Guide which should hopefully be published by the end of March.

Totnes collaboration

- Chamber has been approached about a possible collaboration with Totnes Chamber.
- JG suggested that even if it was informal affiliate relationship, it might give us more leverage with local MP, although CG would like to see their finances first.
- PR suggested we invite the contact to join the Chamber so we can further discuss collaboration.
- PR mentioned issues at Dartmouth Chamber and their Information Centre is running a limited service.
- DW expressed concern that traders don't feel that the Information Centre serves them.
- SBa expressed concern that if we spread our reach too far, it might become unmanageable, unless it brought in additional revenue to cover the extra costs

Finally, JS expressed a formal vote of thanks to our outgoing Treasurer, PR.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 1st March 2023