

MALMESBURY & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 18 December 2007 at 6 pm at Malmesbury Garden Centre, Crudwell Road, Malmesbury

Present : Stefan Barbaruk, Bill Blake, David Butcher, Alan Cavill, Judy Clark, Chris Jager, Ray Sanderson (Chair), David Scull, Angela Smith, Lesley Thomas, Mike Tripp (Neighbourhood Police Team Manager) and Mark Jenkins (Police Community Support Officer).

1. **APOLOGIES:** Keith Holdsworth, Mark Jones, John Thomson and Caroline Williams.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:** The Minutes of the committee meeting held on 23 November 2007, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman. Ray thanked David Butcher for chairing the previous meeting.
3. **MATTERS ARISING:** None.
4. **CORRESPONDENCE:**
 - Email from Phil Rice, Deputy Town Clerk, in response to the Chamber's email. Phil has no idea about the legality of the frequency of the Farmers' Market.
 - Everyone had received the Internet link for the North Wiltshire Retail Needs Assessment Needs Study (http://www.northwilts.gov.uk/index/env/planning/ldf_studies.htm). Any feedback to go to NWDC.
 - Caroline Williams had emailed some points regarding late night Christmas shopping and car parking in Cross Hayes. A copy of this had been circulated, with Ray's reply.
 - Bangladesh Association (Swindon) was organising charity events at various Bangladeshi restaurants throughout Wiltshire in aid of the Bangladesh Cyclone Sidr Disaster Appeal. Ray had booked a table for 20 at the Malmesbury event on 6 January 2008 and he would be happy for others to join his party, or people could book their own table. The Mayor was also supporting this.
 - Letter from Chris Major, Senior Parking Officer, NWDC, rejecting the request for 1 hour free parking in Cross Hayes as this does not happen anywhere in NWDC.
5. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ray thanked everyone – committee and traders – for their help at late night Christmas shopping. Lesley would write to Ian Nurden with thanks for his sponsorship of the snow machine, which had been a great success. Barbara Pollard had been thanked for her help in judging the Best Dressed Window Competition and an article would appear in *Wessex in Business*. Ray would be representing the Chamber on 10 January at the President and Chairmen's Lunch to be hosted by Lord Bath at Longleat House.
9. **POLICING IN MALMESBURY:** This item was discussed prior to items 6, 7 and 8 on the agenda. Mike and Mark thanked the committee for their invitation and we introduced ourselves.

Mike explained that, contrary to belief, the Police Station is manned 24 hours a day, with communication via the yellow telephone outside, but the committee felt this needed to be better publicised. By 2008 every town must have a Neighbourhood Police Scheme. Since 9/11 many police have been moved into intelligence but it has now been realised that the best intelligence is on the street (82% proven to come from that source) and it is now necessary to rebuild the link between police and people. Rural areas have a community beat officer, of which there are three in Malmesbury. The team covers Wootton Bassett, Cricklade and Malmesbury. The latter is probably one of the safest towns in the country; the main problem being anti-social behaviour on Friday and Saturday nights from certain pubs in Oxford Street, with youths hanging around, speeding and noise. These pubs have, however, agreed to put their opening back by ½ hour, with last orders now at 12.30am, although the anti-social behaviour is not the pub's responsibility once the customer has left the premises. This is being monitored to see if there are fewer complaints and Pubwatch meetings are working quite well.

The team tries to get out and walk about and this has lessened shoplifting. Malmesbury, being a fairly relaxed town, attracts the criminal element from Bristol, who see it as a 'training ground'. There was considerable discussion on CCTV, which is a deterrent, and has shown a very high

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detection rate in Wootton Bassett for shoplifting and stolen cars, where it is manned and monitored by volunteers. Ray felt that leasing rather than buying the system would be more feasible, as technology progresses. High street retailers and possibly the residents of Cross Hayes could be approached for contributions. It would also help with anti-social behaviour problems such as smashed windows - never a good impression for tourists. (Bill left the meeting at this point.)

There was some discussion over the role of the police and that of the parking attendants. Individual officers use their discretion when booking cars causing obstruction but not on yellow lines. It is necessary to strike a balance between a town not built for cars and not driving trade away. The policy is to advise before prosecuting.

Angela asked for the Shopwatch scheme to be updated and Mark would set this up in a couple of hours one morning. Ray had donated a mobile phone to the police which is always on and can be used rather than the '0845' number, which should be used for all non-emergency calls. The officers felt that the '0845' route does not work in practice and it was hoped that the new Chief Constable would address this. The traders could use the mobile number for Shopwatch.

There was some discussion about late night Christmas shopping and it was decided to keep the Market Cross area free, perhaps for seating and outdoor heaters, and relocate the funfair and burger van to the High Street next year. There had been one problem later in the evening that had been speedily dealt with.

Ray thanked the officers for attending and they left the meeting at this point.

6. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Alan reported balances: Current account £127.25 and Deposit account £2,884.81. Fifty-three subscriptions had been received and twenty-two were outstanding. Alan will pay the Wessex Association their proportion for those received and will send a reminder in mid to late January for the others, before cancelling their membership. £509 had been paid for the snow machine on the day it was collected, which covered the hire and the snow. David Butcher would negotiate with Ian Nurden on how much he is prepared to pay towards it and the *Gazette and Herald* had admitted liability for reporting Andy and not Ian in their newspaper. In future a sponsor would have to pay the whole amount in his/her name or donate the money up front to be paid for in the Chamber's name. Mike Radcliffe of Time Capsule was a possibility as a sponsor next year and Ray would confirm this with him and place the order as soon as possible. £245 had been collected from the stalls, Father Christmas, etc., at late night shopping and £50 would be donated to Burnham House's Amenity Fund. With the economic situation as it is, it was decided to keep subscriptions at £45. There are still members paying less than the current rate introduced in 2006 who had not adjusted their standing orders. No charge had been made for use of the Meeting Room before moving committee meetings to Fielder and Jones.

Stefan advised that Catharina Davies, Wessex Association's finance officer, was leaving on 4 January so any finance queries needed to be addressed to her before that date.

7. **LATE NIGHT CHRISTMAS SHOPPING FEEDBACK:**

- As suggested in Caroline's email, advertising and posters need to be done earlier. Posters need to be A3 size around the villages to be obvious, and a banner was suggested. Ray is aware of where these can go on the roundabouts. Where there are hooks on properties this shows that the owners have given permission for banners to go there.
- There had been a good write-up in the *Gazette and Herald* after the event, and it would possibly be beneficial to pay to have a half page advert.
- As Lux is being relocated barriers and road signs will need to be obtained from a different supplier.
- It may also be necessary to find a new company for the Park and Ride bus.
- Lesley will write to thank Burnham House, Terry Soule, Kennet Vale Band, Andy James, Ian Nurden and Andy Nurden.
- There were strong feelings about the lack of manpower on the night, with David Butcher having to rely on Malmesbury Garden Centre employees and this would not happen again next year.
- The new lights had looked good and would be added to, but Lesley would email Phil Rice to express the committee's disappointment that, despite repeated requests from the Chair and Vice-

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Chair of the Chamber, the lights on the two Christmas trees have still not been put up or switched on.

- David Butcher wished to form a Christmas committee in the new year to include some town councillors.
- Late Night Christmas Shopping will be on Friday 5 December 2008. Traders could possibly do another if they wish later, or every Friday evening in December, and we could advertise this for them.

Excepting some residents and one trader in the Market Cross feedback had been good. The police comments would be noted. (Alan left at this point.)

8. MALMESBURY WEBSITES: A small number had attended the meeting on 27 November but Chris had found it useful. The proposal had now been modified and a mock-up of the website had been done, which Chris showed. Chris would invoice direct to avoid the VAT issue, and would then give a donation to the Chamber. He would not ask for money up front but would need the Chamber's help to publicise and sell the idea, as the more people participating the better it will be. The cost will be c.£50 per year for a weblink, down to £10 for an advert. Stefan advised that the other Chambers are VAT-registered and it could be worth considering for purchases, services, etc. (Judy and David Scull left the meeting at this point.)

10. AOB

- (i) Stefan raised the subject of car parking in response to Caroline's and Ray's emails mentioned in 4. above. NWDC did allow free parking for all sites in Corsham for the two weekends prior to Christmas but Ray clarified that Cross Hayes is a highway and not a designated car park. He had fought long and hard on this and the decision was to put bags over the machines to indicate that they were broken. He realised that a problem had then occurred as people then used the area to park all day and there had been problems with Ford cars parked there. From 2009 all car park monitoring will come under the new unitary authority.
- (ii) Chris confirmed that John Jenkins had agreed to speak at the AGM on the Abbey Restoration Project. It was agreed to have a buffet, as the 2007 meeting, and Lesley would send out the notice, agenda and nomination forms before the end of the year and ask for people to confirm their attendance by Wednesday 23 January.

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Ray thanked everyone for attending a long meeting.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 15 January at 6 pm at the Garden Centre.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.