

MALMESBURY & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 19 February 2008 at 6 pm
at Malmesbury Garden Centre, Crudwell Road, Malmesbury

Present : Lois Avery (Gazette and Herald), Stefan Barbaruk, Cllr Bill Blake, David Butcher, Julian Butler, Judy Clark, Mark Jones, Keith Holdsworth, Chris Jager, Cllr Simon Killane, Jane Nurden, David Scull, Angela Smith, Lesley Thomas, Michael Thomas and Alan Woodward (Chair)

1. **APOLOGIES:** Alan Cavill, Ray Sanderson.

2. **PRESENTATION BY CLLR SIMON KILLANE ON FAIRTRADE:** An interesting and informative presentation was given on Malmesbury's 'Fairtrade Town' status. This status has already been achieved and signs would be put up around the town, but it was important to promote the concept within the shops and the community. Michael Thomas, Somerfield, the Co-op and the Wild Food Shop sell Fairtrade products, and Michael showed some of the products he sells, explaining how they offer good value and quality. This was followed by some lively discussion and Alan thanked Simon and Lois for attending the meeting and for giving us food for thought.

Jane, Lois and Simon left the meeting at this point.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:** The Minutes of the committee meeting held on 15 January 2008, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING:** None.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE:**

- An email from Tina at the Wilts and Glos Standard regarding the Help for Heroes Big Battlefield Bike Ride being undertaken by her brother. Support for the team can be given by visiting www.justgiving.com/dmrccyclingteam
- An email from John Lawton, Mayor, regarding GWR's 'Green Month' in March, culminating in 'Lights Out Wiltshire' on 29 March from 8pm. This led to some discussion on recycling and waste disposal in general and the specific problems for retailers in Malmesbury.
- Emailed information (circulated in advance of the meeting) received from Kathy Lawton, Mayoress, regarding 'clone towns' and reward schemes.
- New member form and subscription from Abbey Printing. Lesley has also sent new member forms to Lloyds TSB and the Horse and Groom in Charlton.

6. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Alan had nothing to report at this juncture but thanked the committee for their confidence in electing him as Chairman.

7. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** In Alan C's absence Lesley reported balances: Current account £33.02 and Deposit account £1,984.81. In addition there are three or four unpaid subscriptions as well as the sponsorship of the snow machine. Alan will be undertaking a review of our financial position and will circulate his report in time for the March meeting. Lesley explained that she had updated the Membership Directory from the list of paid up members, supplied by Alan C. Fourteen members had written or indicated that they did not want to renew their membership for one reason or another. Six New Business Competition entrants from 2006, given free membership at that time, were not on Alan's list and are obviously still having all the benefits of being members. Lesley still has to contact three members who have not paid or responded to their subscription reminders. Malmesbury Abbey Books' request that they be made an Honorary Member, as they work more like a charity, was discussed, but it was decided that Lesley would write to them to explain that it is the policy of both the Chamber and the Wessex Association that charity members pay as other members, as we ourselves are not a charity. There was discussion on membership generally and it was agreed that marketing of the town should be done jointly with the Town Council. Lesley would write to Cllr Doody to indicate this. Membership and promotion of the Chamber would be on the next agenda.

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- 8. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN:** Ray had put his name forward as a candidate for the position but as he was absent from the meeting it was decided to defer a decision until the May meeting, by which time the committee would have met a few times and the right person would have come to the fore. Meanwhile, David Butcher would continue in the position.
- 9. **AGM:** Feedback from the meeting was good and Alan thanked David Butcher for all his efforts. Lesley had written to thank the speaker and Andy Nurden for allowing us to use the Garden Centre for our Annual General Meeting and for our monthly committee meetings.
- 10. **HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT TRIP:** Twenty out of the forty spaces were filled. Lesley would check with Ray on the final arrangements and would email members to try and fill the twenty remaining places. Meanwhile we would also promote the trip with our friends and family.
- 11. **MALMESBURY WEBSITES:** Chris confirmed that the new Town Council website was now set up. The Chamber website now showed all members, but would need updating against the updated directory which Lesley would send to Chris. It was decided to flag up on the website those members who sell Fairtrade products. Chris will liaise with Cllr Killane on this. There will be a link between the Town Council's and Chamber's websites which will be a way to sell the town.
- 12. **LATE NIGHT CHRISTMAS SHOPPING COMMITTEE:** LNCS will be on Friday 5 December this year. Requests have been made for more than one night, which traders can do, but it is only possible to hold one Chamber-organised event. David Butcher will chair a committee to meet separately to our normal meeting, comprising Judy, Julian, Angela and Mark, with anyone else wishing to join in as they wish. Lesley would attend when required. More help will be needed on the night. There is a potential problem with Lux moving away from the area and it will be necessary to find another source of signage or to purchase some. David Butcher will source a supply and report back to us for funding as necessary. Bill will check when the Christmas lights are coming down and Lesley will follow this up with a letter to chase up the Town Clerk if necessary.
- 13. **FUTURE EVENTS:** Angela mentioned that Jane was planning an Easter bunny event in town and that she had offered to supply the chocolates. We spent some time brainstorming other ideas. Lesley would contact members with these, asking which they would support, or to give their own ideas.
- 14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**
 - (i) Mark asked if any feedback had been received on the CCTV experiment. Bill would check and feed back.
 - (ii) Bill informed us that a sub committee had been set up for car parking and a representative from the Chamber was needed. Problems would then be reported back to the Local Authority.
 - (iii) Bill informed us that the Town Council was about to issue a newsletter, giving opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions.
 - (iv) Bill informed us that the new health centre would become operational on 23 June. The current doctors' premises would then come on the market, with business potential. Out of town traders may be interested.
 - (v) Stefan gave details of two courses being run in Malmesbury: Basic Food Hygiene on 13 March and First Aid on 13 May.
 - (vi) Stefan had been given the go-ahead for the New Business Competition again later this year, which will culminate in a black tie event for the final in November.
 - (vii) Stefan had received information from Ian Pollard, Abbey House, regarding fire extinguishers being installed which did not work as efficiently as they should and for people to be on their guard.
 - (viii) Stefan wished to know of any land available in North Wiltshire for a company with 600 employees.

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The next meeting is on Tuesday 18 March at 6 pm at the Garden Centre.

The meeting closed at 8pm.