

## MALMESBURY & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 19 May 2009 at 6 pm  
at Malmesbury Garden Centre, Crudwell Road, Malmesbury

**Present :** Stefan Barbaruk, David Butcher, Julian Butler, Judy Clark, Chris Jager, Mark Jones, Lesley Thomas, Michael Thomas, Alan Woodward (Chair) and Colette Mallon (Partnership Manager, Northern Wilts Area Economic Partnership).

ACTION

**1. APOLOGIES:** Alan Cavill.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:** The Minutes of the committee meeting held on 17 March 2009, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**3. MATTERS ARISING:**

**4. May Business Show** – Mark confirmed that there was now some artwork in place on the empty shopfronts.

**5. Alternative Business Show** – Chris had attended this event, an area community show, not specifically geared to businesses.

**11. Future Events (i)** – The Trading Standards talk had been very good but not well supported by members.

**11. Future Events (ii)** – The skittles evening with Wootton Bassett had been successful with around 20 people taking part. Wootton Bassett had emailed to thank us and would reciprocate with a similar event soon.

**4. COLETTE MALLON:** Colette explained that the Northern Wilts area is one of the three in Wiltshire and will cover Wootton Bassett, Calne, Chippenham, Corsham, Malmesbury, Cricklade and Marlborough. The Partnerships act as a bridge between local government and the community and cover planning, transport and housing, the biggest issue being planning, and one of its aims is to ensure that businesses are retained in the county, with sustainability and self-containment in all areas. Colette feels this is a step in the right direction as the new council wanted to follow the successful West Wilts example. Her position is funded for 3 years by Wiltshire Council, which has a representative on the board, but Colette is answerable to the Partnership. Tourism, the MOD, PCTs, Jobcentre Plus and a member from each local business community comprise the partnership. Members from the seven towns are being sought to ensure fair representation, along with a Chairman. Meetings will be quarterly, but all will need to work together on a fairly frequent basis to report to the Community Area Boards, so commitment and time is required. Colette emphasised that the Partnerships look at the economy as a whole and not just the large towns. Stefan confirmed that the North Wilts Consultative Group will aim to meet just prior to the Partnership meetings. Colette's contact details are: [colette.mallon@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:colette.mallon@wiltshire.gov.uk) tel 077346 79600 and she has 'hot' desks at Monkton Park and Browfort. The Interim Partnership Board will be meeting on 17 June and names are sought to put forward to that meeting. There was some discussion specific to the problems encountered in Malmesbury, particularly being an historic town and cases where buildings are listed. The Malmesbury representative would be involved in this. Alan thanked Colette for the insight and felt that keeping jobs in the area, with fewer going to Swindon, was a good thing.

**5. BUSINESS SHOW – 3 OCTOBER:** Alan briefly explained the proposal and the fact that the Chamber has the responsibility of the publicity. Chris explained that the small working group comprising himself, Keith Holdsworth, Cllr Patrick Goldstone and another Council official were due to meet at the beginning of June, and Colette suggested that this group should be able to tap into some funding, but the group would need to act urgently with the forthcoming July and August holiday period looming. Lesley will give more details to businesses when the objectives have been set. Stefan suggested that businesses are concentrating on local business to business networking in the current climate, and that Business Link and the new Wiltshire Council would wish to be part of this show.

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**6. LATE NIGHT CHRISTMAS SHOPPING:** It had been suggested that the school could be involved in providing some music for this event, but as the first Friday of December always clashes with the school concert some other dates were discussed. However, following some considerable discussion, it was decided to keep with 4 December, being the first Friday in the month as usual, for this year. David was communicating with the Christmas committee and felt that a formal meeting was not necessary at this stage.

Whilst discussing the change of date or day, the subject of the market had come up, and as a Chamber we feel that we need to meet with the Town Council. There had been no dialogue between the two organisations for some months and we had been given no information at all about the French market in the town the previous weekend. There was also discussion on the fact that we need to be more positive when talking with the press, giving the whole picture in our comments.

**7. FEEDBACK EASTER BUNNY EVENT:** Alan had been told that it was felt that the Chamber committee should have been out and about on the day, but as it is difficult for retailers to leave their premises and the fact that the Bunny was circulating should show the Chamber's presence. The eggs in windows competition had been very successful. The Chamber had given £20 to the Air Training Corps, in recognition of their help on the day, for the Help for Heroes charity. Lesley would write to Karen and Les Reynolds and Jane Nurden to thank them for organising the event.

**8. NEW BUSINESS COMPETITION:** Lesley confirmed that, as before, each town would need 4 entries to have their own competition. The closing date is 24 September, with Malmesbury's judging to take place on 15 October. The joint presentation would be with Cricklade and Wootton Bassett, and it is Malmesbury's turn to organise this event this year. Stefan confirmed that there would be £500 available for this, and we would be looking at 70-100 people. In view of this Lesley would find out details of hiring the Town Hall, with the Garden Centre providing the catering.

**9. FORTHCOMING EVENTS:** June would be a normal committee meeting as Steve Kenny had not followed up the suggestion to talk to the Chamber. A letter had been received from Highgrove confirming that we are on the two-year waiting list. As well as the Christmas shopping and Business Show events, visits to Tracklements and Hilditch auctioneers were suggested. Lesley would pursue this, and also the funding possibility of Wilts and Swindon Community Foundation (Rosemary McDonald) suggested by Stefan. Following Julian's suggestion, it was decided to open up our meeting on 21 July to Wootton Bassett and Cricklade, looking for items to include on the agenda that may be of common interest to all 3 towns. Colette and Stefan would be there and the idea is to have everyone seated at small tables of 4-6 (no-one to sit next to anyone they know!) and some food will be provided to enable some networking prior to the meeting. Ian Storey would also be asked, in his capacity of Area Director. (note: Ian has since confirmed that he has a previous meeting in Corsham that evening.)

**10. CORRESPONDENCE:** An email had been received inviting businesses to exhibit at the forthcoming Sherston Show. Lesley would forward this to members.

**11. TREASURER'S REPORT:** In Alan's absence Lesley confirmed the balances: Current Account £64.11; Deposit Account £2,362.29. The only liability is the secretary's salary for May. Alan had confirmed that we have received at least 2 payments of £30 from Hilditch over the past two years, which had been unidentified standing orders. It was agreed to simply reinstate their membership with WACC and not ask them for any further money, as they have not been receiving any benefits from this, and despite the fact that they had written to the Chamber in 2006 cancelling their membership they now confirm that they would like to re-join. Lesley had £37.50 to pass to Alan from the skittles evening and also £22.87 from L T Walker as the balance of their membership subscription.

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

- (i) Judy queried what is happening with the town flags, the joint venture between the council and the school. Julian had been contacted a week or so previously and had asked for the proof.
- (ii) Alan had received information that the Post Office within the Co-Op would be closed for refurbishment between 14 and 25 June. Lesley would email members the information, reminding them of where post office services are available and where stamps are sold.
- (iii) Chris had that day attended the Community Area Board information meeting organised by Wiltshire Council. The board would seem a useful forum for discussion of issues and Chamber of Commerce members were being sought. Miranda Gilmour was the Chairman, and Chris explained the community issues sheets, the intention being that issues would be dealt with straight away. Colette confirmed that the Partnership reports to the Area Board. Stefan reported that the WACC board meeting on 18 June emphasised that it is critical that representatives attend these meetings or find a substitute to represent the town.
- (iv) David had approached the Practice Manager at the Health Centre to join the Chamber. Stefan suggested confirming to him that free training is now available for the public sector.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 16 June at 6pm at the Garden Centre. The meeting closed at 7.50pm.

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