

# HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Tourism and Economy Committee** held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November at 7.45 pm in the Corn Exchange Complex, Hungerford

**Present:** Cllrs Crane, Knight, Farrell & Small. Also present Fiona Hobson and Veronica Bailey (Chamber of Commerce).

- 1. Apologies for absence:** None
- 2. Declarations of interests.** Cllr Small – acting chair of Chamber of Commerce.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017.** Cllr Crane, proposed the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Small, all in favour.
- 4. Hungerford Trade Showcase** – The event was well received by companies and appeared to be enjoyed by those attending. Cllr Crane had received a letter from Deputy Lieutenant who had enjoyed the event. Results of the survey monkey were shared with the committee, but no feed-back was received from the school. Some employers had approached HTC to say they would have been interested in attending the event. It was felt that a similar event would be well supported next year, though there was a need to encourage residents to attend. A suggestion was made to hold the next event in the Corn Exchange and compare the attendance.
- 5. Welcome signage update –**  
**Action:** Office to re-contact GWR for the artwork and arrange for the banner to be produced. West Berkshire Council have informed HTC that they are happy to include the welcome signage in their works programme for 2018/19. WBC asked for a smaller sign as the original would be too large. This was well received by the committee. Cllr Crane was meeting with North Wessex Downs and would pass this on.
- 6. Working together with Chamber of Commerce** - Concern was raised about the Chamber of Commerce and the situation that they are facing. The committee felt that the Chamber was essential to Hungerford, but had lost impact. Cllr Crane hoped that the Trade Showcase could lead to an invigoration of the chamber as it showed the number of different employers in the Hungerford area. A general discussion took place about the topic, which included:  
What could HTC/Chamber of Commerce offer businesses; the possible role of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce; timing of the meetings e.g. some meetings held at 6 pm; could a joint committee HTC/ Chamber of Commerce be established?

Fiona Hobson clarified the role of the Chamber of Commerce and some of its achievements including help to reducing the businesses rates, carrying out a survey on footfall, refund to businesses following the gas works in the High Street, promoting businesses in town and encouraging new businesses.

Cllr Small is currently the interim chair with two other members organising the monthly network social. The Chamber has a written constitution, and it was acknowledged that the chamber goes in peaks and troughs in membership. Cllr Farrell asked how much input does the chamber put in to the types of businesses that come into the High Street. Cllr Small replied that they have no input. Some thought was given to who could lead the Chamber of Commerce.

Cllr Knight asked what other towns do.

**Action:** Deputy Clerk to locate other Chamber of Commerce's in the area and send on web addresses to committee.

**Action:** Cllr Crane will speak to Paul Britain.

The mix of businesses in the High Street was discussed as was the level of competition (hairdressers, cafes and hotels). It was also suggested that Hungerford was not actively looking for businesses to enter to provide retail areas that were absent. The lack of parking for cars and coaches was also raised. The use of Visit Wiltshire and the Great West Way was discussed.

**Action:** Deputy Clerk to contact Cllr Farrell, Fiona Hobson and Veronica Bailey to see what they would like from Chamber and what would attract them to become involved.

**Action:** Deputy Clerk to send contact details from Trade Showcase to Cllr Small.

Fiona Hobson asked about the Town Guide and the progress made.

**Action:** Deputy Clerk to organise Town guide to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Action:** Deputy Clerk to ask the sub-committee to bring a mock-up of the leaflet to the next meeting.

Meeting ended at 8.50 pm.