



WELLINGTON CHAMBER OF TRADE & COMMERCE

**Executive Committee Meeting
Wednesday 25th July 2012 at 6pm
The Town Council Rooms, 28 Fore Street, Wellington**

Minutes

Present:

Sue White, Terry Sanford, John Pragnell, Andy Hunt, Helen Thorne, Judith Goss, Dave Mitton, Alison Stock, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Cathy Wiggan, Ian Stock, Claire (Cheese & Wine), Tony and Lesley Bourne, Michael Coate and Jane Burden (Mins)

Sue White (SW) opened the meeting by welcoming Alex Child from The Planning Bureau Limited to the meeting to update Members on the McCarthy & Stone Consultation in respect of the former Bulford Medical Centre site.

Alex Child outlined the current situation in respect of the consultation, elements of the development itself and concerns in respect of a recent survey undertaken. Schematic drawings were also shown to the meeting, showing layouts including parking and planting, etc.

It was explained that this type of development is classed as a Category 2 Retirement Housing development, which incorporates self-contained apartments and communal facilities for older persons, ensuring residents are able to maintain a sense of independence. Development is likely to consist of 40 apartments over three storeys and that today's exhibition and update to the Chamber was a pre-planning consultation.

Likely timescale for development would be submission of planning application to TDBC by end of August with a decision anticipated around Christmas time. The site is being acquired "subject to" planning consent, so if all goes well and planning approval is received without problems, then works could potentially start of site May 2013, followed by approximately 1 year's build time.

Following a question and answer session, SW thanked Alex for his time, indicating to Members that if there were any queries or concerns to forward these to Sue, so that the Chamber could then respond on behalf of Members.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jackie and Andy Govier and Janet Read

2. Chamber Secretary

Sue White (SW) welcomed Jane Burden (JB) as the new Chamber Secretary, inviting JB to say a few words. JB introduced herself to the meeting indicating her previous work with Taunton Chamber of Commerce and how she would be supporting the Wellington Chamber.

3. **Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 23rd May 2012**

Minutes of the last meeting were circulated prior to this meeting, and SW confirmed the only point outstanding was the clarification of Donna's surname as "Munson".

No issues were raised from the Minutes.

Matteris Arising:

Wellington Street Fair

SW confirmed the Chamber had has a stand at the fair and had raised funds of £90.50 towards the Welly Boot Throwing Competition. Also confirmed would be having a presence at the Wellington Food Town Event.

Wellington Food Town report

John Pragnell (JP) reported that there were now 36 stallholders confirmed and that Relyon was once again a sponsor of the event and that Waitrose were also supporting the event. Gibbins Richards were also looking to be involved, confirmation still awaited and that further sponsors were in place.

JP was also able to confirm that the Silver Band and St John's Ambulance had been approached with a view to being involved, confirmation still awaited, and that the car park at the Conservative Club was being used as a Children's Play Area for the day.

Ian Stock (IS) indicated that not all of the Street Fair food traders were aware of the Food Town event, so perhaps they could also be notified which might increase bookings.

Dave Mitton (DM) put a request to the meeting for volunteers to help on the day.

Michael Coate (MC) confirmed details of the Farmers' Market attending on the day.

Wellington Town Council – Questions from Chamber

The Town Council minutes had been circulated prior to this meeting – no questions were raised in respect of the minutes.

However, the following issues were raised:

SW had received enquiries in respect of the refurbishment of Wellington Rec and it was confirmed that works were due to take place during the Summer months to instal new play equipment, etc.

DM advised that the Environment Committee were looking at issues around dog waste and litter bins and that grass cutting schedules were also being reviewed for the future. Also confirmed that no weedkilling would be undertaken by TDBC and that the Town Council were looking into these issues.

JB queried making use of the Community Payback Scheme, particularly in respect of weeding and litter collecting.

SW raised concerns about Wellington in Bloom funding.

MC raised very strong concerns about issues with regard to the state of the grass verges in Rockwell Green.

Vivienne Stock Williams was able to confirm there were no cutbacks scheduled to Park funding and also put out a request for volunteers to help Friends of Wellington Park.

Wellington Farmers Market report

MC reported that the recent Saturday market had been very busy with lots of holidaymakers. He confirmed that the Market was experiencing problems with the new traffic wardens not allowing unpacking or packing up again. It was confirmed that this service had now been taken over by Somerset County Council and it was **AGREED** that the Chamber write to John Pallett, Parking Manager, in respect of the Farmers Market and other areas of concern being experienced by traders.

Town Guide App

SW advised the meeting that representatives from the Company producing the Town Guide App would shortly be visiting businesses to take photos and collect information and it was anticipated the App would be up and running by the end of September.

4. Chamber's Future following recent questionnaire

SW updated the meeting on the questionnaire recently circulated, confirming that feedback was positive, with only one negative comment received. The general view was that the Chamber did need to be "freshened up" with a view to doing different things, but that the overall consensus is that the Chamber is there as a support network, to lobby various bodies and to support fellow Members in whatever ways possible.

General discussion then followed about the format of the Chamber going forward and various ideas were discussed including a Forum, more communication via email and hosting more events. The general feeling of the meeting was that it was important not to lose the human contact with members and that the Chamber host more informal networking events where Members and Non Members can have a get together and a chat in a more relaxed, friendly, less structured environment. The favoured option was to organise these in the evenings and alternate such events with the more formal meetings every other month. Suggested initial trial evening events from 5.00 to 8.00pm (see re-branding under "Constitution" below).

SW and JB to put together a draft format for the next meeting – members be invited to host.

5. Welly Boot Competition

SW reminded the meeting that the Welly Boot competition is on 8th September, with "Go Commando" as the chosen charity being supported this year. The Lions are helping out and donations of raffle prizes will be very much appreciated. Judith Goss confirmed donation of a raffle prize.

6. Any Other Business

Taunton Deane Business Fair

SW raised this to establish the thoughts of the meeting in respect of organising another Business Fair, the one earlier this year having been very successful and kindly sponsored by Porter Dodson and TDBC. The meeting was in total agreement that it had been a very well attended and very successful event and that it would be a very positive move to make this an annual event.

Following general discussion it was agreed that a good time of year to host the event is in February, as the majority of the traders are busy in the run up to Christmas, and that if the Chamber standardises the timing and makes this an annual event, people start looking for the date and it will just grow and grow in popularity and success. It was felt that the event could take a different format, with more focus on networking and more careful planning be given to the timing of talks/presentations.

Chamber Constitution

IS updated the meeting in respect of the Draft Constitution which had recently been circulated to Members. The old Constitution was dated August 2003, so was a little out of date, so a new "draft" had been introduced based on the Somerset Chamber model. A sub group had met and prepared the "draft" as circulated, now giving the opportunity for Members to comment.

The following were areas highlighted for immediate consideration:

Name of Chamber of Commerce – name change to be considered if organisation to become more "fresh"

Executive Committee make up

Annual Subs – paragraph to reflect financial accounting period

Para 4.4 – Termination of Membership

Nominations for Officers

JB to send a copy of the "draft" Constitution with the Minutes, allowing all Members the opportunity to make observations on the draft. **ACTION: JB**

In respect of a name change, two ideas were immediately suggested:

TA 21 = Trade Association 21 – reflecting the organisation as representing businesses in the TA21 postcode area

Area 21 Business Forum

It was also suggested that the first “networking event” could be used as the launch event for the “re-branding” of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce. Wellington Motors was suggested as a venue, so as to introduce new, edge of town businesses to the Chamber.

“Re-branding” to be an agenda item for September meeting. **ACTION:SW/JB**

Mary Portas Pilot

IS advised the meeting that the results of the 2nd round funding had been announced with Tiverton being successful in receiving a grant, and that monies were still available for individual projects. SW indicated there seemed to be a lack of interest from those involved with the Wellington proposals.

Town Centre Car Park Signage

DM reported that the Environment Committee had considered 3 designs and was pleased to be able to confirm that the first stage would now be going ahead, which would be the wall mounted sign at Waitrose Car Park.

Sales Rooms

Andy Hunt reported that a new group of small traders was now established in the Sales Rooms, with 9 pitches currently trading.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm.