



## WELLINGTON CHAMBER OF TRADE & COMMERCE

**Executive Committee Meeting  
Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2011 at 6pm  
The Town Council Rooms, 28 Fore Street, Wellington**

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Emma Blake, Des Hawkins, Sally Hooper, Sam Parr, Cathy Wiggan, Andy Hunt, Ian Stock, Vivienne Stock-Williams, John Pragnell, Frank Morris, Clare de'Ruyter, Judith Goss and Alison Stock.

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Helen Thorne, Terry Sanford, Sue White, Michael Coate, Andrew Govier and Jackie Govier.

#### **2. Guest Speaker – Donna Statham from the NSPCC**

Donna Statham introduced herself to the Chamber as the local Community Fundraising Manager for the NSPCC, covering West Somerset, Devon and Bath areas. She wanted to speak to members about the current 1600 Club Campaign, but first gave some background information about the organisation which is now in its 126<sup>th</sup> year. ChildLine joined together with the NSPCC in 2005. ChildLine is a confidential helpline which is run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – answered by trained counsellors to support vulnerable children.

Last year ChildLine received approximately 10,000 calls from children here in Somerset, with problems ranging from family problems and bullying to

physical and sexual assault. Unfortunately at this time 1 in 3 calls are still going unanswered because the NSPCC need to raise more money to recruit and train its ChildLine counsellors. It is a charity which relies on voluntary donations, making up 85% of its total income, however they are aware that due to government cutbacks they are going to be up against a lot more competition from other charities for these donations.

It costs £1,600 to recruit and train a ChildLine counsellor. This is where the 1600 Club Campaign comes in. The NSPCC are appealing to businesses in Somerset to join up and pledge to raise £1,600 by the end of September 2011. This can be done as a single business, or groups of businesses can join together as one 'team'.

The NSPCC are organising a thank-you reception in Spring of 2012 for all those businesses involved, which will include an opportunity to meet Dragon's Den star Deborah Meaden who is also heavily involved in the campaign.

As an extra incentive, whichever 'team' or business raises the most by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 will win the chance to race a BMW round Brans Hatch!

The Chamber thanked Donna Statham for coming and speaking about the campaign, and she left some information packs with the Chamber for any interested businesses.

### **3. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of were agreed and signed of by Des Hawkins, who was chairing the meeting due to Sue White's absence.

### **4. Matters Arising**

#### 'Make It Local' map

Vivienne Stock-Williams reported that Wellington Town Council had agreed to provide a bridging loan for the 'Make It Local' paper map for the town as discussed at the previous meeting.

#### A-board for Chamber meetings

It was suggested at the last meeting that the Chamber might invest in an A-board to place outside the Council offices on the day of the Committee meetings with meeting details.

Des Hawkins said that Sue White had passed him details of a quote she had received for £135 + VAT. This would include permanent text on the board, and the ability to clip posters etc over the top to promote other events.

Clare de'Ruyter informed the Chamber that the one she has for her shop was cheaper than this, however it is just plain with no permanent text. She said that she would look up the details of this.

## South Street

Andy Hunt said that he had not received any information regarding the South Street 'events' to put on the Chamber website. Sally Hooper said that she would let him have some details.

Sally Hooper informed the Chamber that the South Street Specialist 'group' were in the process of applying to the Council for permission to close off South Street on the day of the Royal Wedding in April. They are working closely with Reverend Sam Griffiths from the Baptist Church to organise a celebration with lots going on in that area of the town.

Wellington School Band have agreed to play, and Sally Hooper is hoping to have some street dancers as well as other entertainment. They are also intending to organise some competitions for local school children such as designing the best wedding dress and wedding cake, with entries being displayed in the Church hall and winners announced on the day. It is hoped this will help bring parents into the event.

There will be no charge for stalls, and any local business/trader can have a stall (not just for South Street traders). If anyone is interested they need to contact Sally Hooper at Mad Dog. The South Street traders are holding a meeting at the beginning of March to begin finalising the details.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

As Helen Thorne was not present at the meeting no Treasurer's Report was available.

## **7. Any Other Business**

### Food Town

John Pragnell informed the Chamber that the Wellington Food Festival is to be held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2011. The High Street will be closed off, and letters of invitation for stalls will be going out shortly. Stalls will be at a cost of £45 this year, which is up £5 on last year – however traders who attend a lot of these kind of festivals feel that this is still very cheap in comparison to others.

The Food Town will still be receiving support from Waitrose, and they are hoping to be able to get hold of their mobile kitchen and support from celebrity chefs.

John Cottrell has stepped down as Chair of the Food Town Committee, to be replaced by Donna Munson.

### Farmer's Market

Michael Coate was not present at the meeting, however had submitted a handwritten report which was read to the Chamber by Des Hawkins.

The Farmer's Market has started off the year fairly quietly, but are hoping that things will pick up with the warmer weather.

Michael Coate did bring up the subject of the empty shops in Wellington, particularly the old Woolworths store. He questioned the possibility of filling the windows with paintings by local school children, advertising for local businesses or advertising local events for the year.

Viviene Stock-Williams reported that the store is in the hands of administrators so the Council are unable to gain entry. However, she said that it would be best to contact David Evans, the Economic Development Manager at Taunton Deane Borough Council as he is looking into ways to brighten up empty shops in the area.

#### Rockwell Green public toilets

Viviene Stock-Williams informed the Chamber that although this had been brought up again at the Wellington Town Council meeting, it would cost a massive amount of the budget to repair and restore these toilets for re-opening. She felt that the council were looking at the restoration of the North Street car park toilets as a priority as there is more need for these to be open.

#### Next Meeting

The next Chamber Committee meeting, to be held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011, will see another guest speaker – this time from HMRC with a question and answer session, which should be very informative for the local businesses.

#### Local servicemen/women

Viviene Stock-Williams told the Chamber that she had recently attended an event hosted by the forces. From speaking with servicemen and ex-servicemen she felt that the community as a whole could be doing more to make them feel welcome within the town.

It was suggested that local businesses could display some kind of badge of poster to let service people and their families know that we are in support of them.

The Chamber felt this was a good idea, given the closeness of 40 Commando in Norton Fitzwarren. It was agreed that this could be discussed in greater detail in a future meeting.

**The meeting closed at 8pm.**