

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
BODMIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, TRADE AND INDUSTRY
HELD ON MONDAY 15th APRIL 2019**

The following were in attendance: Geoff Kestell, Lee Keats, Ali Perrin, Paula Hutchins, John Newcomb, David Jenkins, Peter Bray, Chris Wilkes, Tomaz Friedrich (BB member), Philip Taylor, Phil Ugalde, Paul Miles-Rogers, Kim Roscoe, Gill Jenkins, Brian & Lesley Matthews, Jeremy Cooper (Mayor Elect), Joy Bassett, Colin Stevenson, Sarah Horne, Sam Chapman.

Apologies were received from: Martin Lyall, Alan Foad, Phil Brown, Julie Rowan, Ray Veerman, Hannah Jeffery, Catherine Robbins, Hilary Hignell, Tim Williams, Peter Robinson, Christopher Jeffery, Daryn Dodge, Karen Phillips and Edwin Dyer.

Welcome and introduction by Paul Miles Rogers (Chairman, 2018–2019): The Chairman opened the Meeting and thanked all present for attending the first AGM of the new Bodmin Chamber of Commerce. He Reported that it had been a busy first year for Bodmin Chamber and personally thanked those members who had contributed to making the meetings possible. He also thanked The Westberry Hotel for providing the venue free of charge along with the tea and coffee – and for their support over the past year.

Talk by Kim Conchie (Cornwall Chamber of Commerce): The Chairman introduced Kim Conchie, CEO of Cornwall Chamber of Commerce as well as Annie Lucas of St Agnes Chamber. Kim Conchie thanked the Chairman and advised that business in Cornwall is a very important part of commerce generally as some 96% of business owners actually live in the County. He said he got a good vibe that the people of Bodmin wanted the Town to succeed.

Annie Lucas then introduced herself and advised that Agnes Chamber covered an area of 7,500 people. She confirmed that she was a paid employee of the Chamber which had approximately 85 businesses in the Parish of which some 65% were tourist-related. St Agnes Chamber had a number of core objectives one of which was to provide important information for tourists. She advised that Chamber also had measures in place to help protect the environment so that sustainability was key. She said that members were encouraged to suggest events to be held during the year and 2 or 3 would be selected. In addition, 5 business breakfasts were held each year as well as a Christmas Social. Chamber also supplied tourist information to local businesses and from where visitors to the area could collect it.

Annie advised that St Agnes Chamber had been publishing its own Guide for the past 6/7 years along with map graphics and also hosts an annual Sustainability Conference, Shop Local Events and has hosted a Wedding Fayre and various other events.

As to funding, Annie explained that she was taken on to work 16 hours a week but is currently working 8 hours due to the birth of her second child. She explained that the post was initially funded by St Agnes Council and the Parish Council. It also funded a redesign

of the guide and CDC further funded work on the website. She advised that her post is now funded from membership fees and advertising.

In relation to costs, she told the meeting that their Chamber Committee was made up of volunteers. In addition to her own post (£4,800 p.a.), other paid posts included a part-time Finance Officer who worked 8 hours each month (£1,800) in order to chase outstanding invoices. She advised that the St Agnes Guide made a profit of £1,800 from advertising which proved lucrative. Website adverts were charged at between £20 and £150. Members were given a basic listing but could pay to upgrade. Total Chamber income amounted to £14,500 with expenses of £7,500.

Kim Conchie suggested Q&As at this point. The Chairman thanked Annie Lucas for all the helpful information she had provided.

Annie reported that one of St Agnes Chambers major problems have been in trying to engage non-tourism businesses. KC felt that 'Awards' were a great way of engaging and connecting diverse businesses. In response to a member's question, Annie confirmed that they had no specific formal relationships with other local groups.

In response to Phil Ugalde, Annie confirmed that St Agnes Chamber had 85 members a number of whom were property or cottage owners. AGM was generally attended by around 30, monthly meetings by about 10 and around 20 members were properly active. Their website had now been changed to WordPress which was much easier to update and had some 12,000 visitors in the season and 5,000 in winter. She said steps had now been taken to make clear that it was indeed St Agnes Chamber of Commerce website. Chamber also has a Blog that is open to members as well as a monthly Newsletter.

In response to Hannah of The Bodmin & Wenford Railway, Annie confirmed it was their goal to promote social media marketing. She confirmed that Chamber had both Facebook and Instagram Pages and whilst they had set up a Facebook closed group, there had been little member interest so far.

Kim Conchie thanked Annie for her helpful contribution. He advised that Cornwall Chamber had 560 members and advised of the various other groups and organisations that they were connected with. He told members that he had left Cornwall to run his own business out of county but had returned to start Cornwall Chamber which was funded from members' fees, events and advertising. In addition, Cornwall Chamber runs 3 public sector contracts:

1. Developing Skills for Business
2. Export for Growth
3. Marketing for the Growth Hub and Skills Shop

He believed that Chamber of Commerce in Cornwall was important as a large proportion of businesses were in the private sector. Areas where Cornwall Chamber is planning to lead include Sustainability which is a current campaign this year. The second campaign related to 'productivity' which in the UK was very bad and resulted in low wages and was something that Cornwall Chamber was addressing by looking for other ways of measuring productivity.

The third campaign relates to 'Re-Imagining our Towns' and KC asked, 'What is Bodmin going to be all about?' something that all towns should be looking at. The fourth campaign related to 'Women and Leadership' and he advised of a Finance conference organised by

Francis Clark on 25th June. Further activities included a Festival of Business to be held at the end of October and Chamber would be happy to promote any new business with ideas, at the festival.

KC said there were many entrepreneurs in Cornwall and that 'Made in Cornwall' had now been taken over by Cornwall Chamber in terms of management and in which Visit Cornwall, now a CIC, was a partner. KC expressed optimism for the future and advised that Cornwall Chamber worked closely with the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Enterprise Partnership. He was interested to see a real vibe of enthusiasm led by Better Bodmin and believed it was important to ensure that Bodmin spoke with one voice. He felt the town had a lot going for it and should decide which way it intended to go.

The Chairman felt it advantageous to Bodmin not to have all our eggs in one basket and invited questions from the floor.

In reply to Phil Ugalde who asked Annie Lucas whether she thought they would have succeeded without the funding, she replied that the capital was the catalyst but did not necessarily believe that large sums were needed.

In response to Phil Taylor re future events organised by Cornwall Chamber, KC confirmed that they were all on the Cornwall Chamber website. Phil Ugalde asked whether, on the assumption that Britain leaves the EU, KC had a view on how that would work? KC replied that he'd been told at a recent meeting to 'look what the bookies are saying!' He said that whilst the Government had come up with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, he didn't feel Cornwall would do particularly well unless we could prove it to be a worthwhile investment. He also mentioned the local industrial sector as well as some tourism deals.

John Newcombe raised the 2020 Cycle Race and asked what Chamber was planning to do? KC advised that he had already spoken on TV and believed it was a brilliant opportunity for every business and town in Cornwall to support it. The Chairman confirmed that Bodmin Chamber had already started speaking with interested parties.

Re: Town's Vision. Neil Pendleton advised that a project had already been signed up to by many local interested parties and it was hoped to launch a statement in a couple of months.

Chairman's Report on Chamber activities for past year:

The Chairman reported that it had been his intention from the outset that Chamber should appeal to all types of businesses in and around the Town including retail, manufacturing etc. He advised that 20 businesses had initially signed up, the Steering Group was formed and he thanked those members who had sat on it.

The Chairman said he felt that Chamber had tried to run before it could walk. Because its resurrection had been instigated by Councillors, he believed that had allowed Chamber to become involved in much more that was going on in the town e.g. Chamber had worked with both the Town and County Council when the gas works had been going on in the town.

He reported that Facebook and Twitter accounts had been set up and offered a 'business of the week' opportunity to members. During its first year, Chamber had collaborated with many other Groups and Organisations and for 2019, was offering a years free membership.

He further reported there had been problems opening a Bank account but that was overcome. New members' fees had amounted to £620, £130 from subscriptions and the only operating costs had been £30.58 leaving a balance in the account of £2,508.00. Figures to be confirmed by Treasurer.

Chamber continued to be involved in Future Strategy for Bodmin discussions. For Year 2, Chambers objectives included increasing membership hopefully to 100, marketing and PR and a shared strategy for Bodmin's growth. He hoped too that Chamber could be rebranded with a 21st Century look by way of involvement with the College as well as increasing its social media activity along with feedback from 'business of the week'. New articles were planned for publication in the local press.

Shared Strategy for Growth: Chairman reported that it had been difficult to attend some meetings. The Bodmin Vision document was one that it was intended should be revisited. He advised that creating a Town Trust was a long-term goal and something that involved engagement with organisations and Secondary Objectives included collaboration with Cornwall Chamber of Commerce about it.

The Chairman advised that future activities might include a float at the Carnival and continued engagement with other local business groups.

The Chairman invited questions from the floor. Phil Ugalde, in relation to strategy over the next couple of years, felt that patience was required as it was important for people to understand that Chamber was run by volunteers.

Election of Officers for 2019-2020

The Chairman explained the formalities of the Elections and called on anyone with a passion for any topic to consider putting themselves forward, particularly for the Steering Group.

Paul Miles Rogers stepped down and Kim Conchie (Chair of Cornwall Chamber) called for any additional nominations for the position of Chair. There were none and Paul Miles Roges was re-appointed Chair of Bodmin Chamber of Commerce for the year 2019-2020.

Kim Roscoe proposed a Vote of Thanks to Kim Conchie and Annie Lucas and Proposed that they be released. **AGREED**

The following were Proposed, Seconded and Re-elected to the following posts:

Chairman:	Paul Miles Rogers
Deputy Chair:	Joy Bassett
Treasurer:	Phil Brown
Membership Secretary:	
Minute Secretary:	Gill Jenkins

A.O.B.

Phil Ugalde felt that skills in IT and Social Media were needed in the Steering Group and called for volunteers. Kim Roscoe said he was happy to offer his IT experience if required

but was not able to commit to regular meetings. Geoff Kestell suggested asking College students. Hannah Irwin said she would like to be involved and offered her help

The Chairman expressed his hopes for the future that Chamber could help build a stronger business community in Bodmin.

Phil Taylor proposed a Vote of Thanks to the sponsors of the Meeting namely Proper Cornish (Phil Ugalde), Jai Jewellers (Balu), Kelta Systems (Kim Roscoe) and A P Bassett Solicitors (Joy) and the Westberry Hotel for providing the accommodation and finger food.

In reply to Sarah (Roscrea) the Chairman confirmed that free membership did not give voting rights or the chance to be Business of the Week.

It was confirmed that the next Steering Group Meeting would take place on 3rd May and that future Members meetings would take place on the 3rd Monday of each month.