



# **BODMIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**

*— Building a better Bodmin in Business for the Community*

## **Minutes of General Chamber meeting held on Zoom on 17th May 2021 at 6:30 pm**

**Present: Joy Bassett, Carol Randall, Phill Gale, Phil Taylor, Andrew Kirk, Jane Tily, Daryn Dodge Balu Madhvani, Rev'd Paul Holley**

**Apologies from Phil Brown, Al Shiner, Rob Wood, Paul Miles Rogers**

### **Welcome**

Joy welcomed Paul Holley, who has just joined representing Bodmin Way, an important social enterprise that is linked to the St Petroc's Church group. Phil Taylor suggested that Paul may have paid too much as we have a £20 offer for new members.

### **Action: Carol to investigate and deal**

Joy also congratulated Andrew on his move to Francis Clark Accountants, based in Truro. Phil T asked Andrew if he could complete a new membership form as his existing GDPR details would no longer be valid. Andrew said that he moved 3 weeks ago and was sorry he had not been able to attend Chamber meetings as he has been very busy.

### **Action: Phil T to send new form to Andrew to complete.**

### **Correspondence**

Joy reported that she had not received any correspondence

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the March and April meetings were accepted as an accurate record by those present. Proposed by Phill Gale and all voted in favour.

### **Matters Arising**

No matters arising other than those on the agenda

### **Treasurers Report**

Phil Brown was absent, but Joy had received no notifications from him and was not aware of any payments made.

### **Membership Report**

Phil T reported that we have 38 individual members representing 29 organisations. Our most recent member was Paul Holley. Carol asked if Phil T had spoken to Phil B about the renewal process as there was discussion at the last meeting about the sending of invoices. Phil T said he had not managed to speak to

Phil B. Joy said that it was important to get this sorted as renewals are imminent. A meeting was arranged for Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May at 11.30 with Joy, Phil T and Phil B to sort renewal procedures.

## **G7 Summit update**

Joy reported that she and Carol had had a meeting with Russell Cosway(from Guideline) and Shane Solomon (from Cornwall Chamber) to discuss how the Bodmin Chamber session might work. The details have yet to be finalised, but the plan is to share the satellite link from Cornwall Chamber's live stream link from the summit's Media Suite in Falmouth. We will be based in the Cornwall Channel studio in Helland and will have interviews with local people for an hour on three themes

- Scientific Breakthroughs
- Climate Change and the Environment
- Building back better

Unfortunately, Flann Microwave are unable to participate but we are hoping that the Principal of Callywith College can talk about the new STEM Centre of Excellence to be built in Bodmin. Scott Mann has also agreed to participate.

Carol added that we will soon be contacting members as part of the preparation for the session. She also mentioned that Shane Solomon is going to join the Chamber as a member and Russell will be joining the Chamber Board as part of the Better Bodmin 'integration'.

## **Business Incubation Research Update**

Carol reported that she is progressing with the plans to get local businesses to complete a questionnaire so that we can find out what support and advice they would like in order to make their businesses more successful. She said that this will help Chamber to put together a plan driven by demand rather than assuming that we know what people need. This might mean that we think outside the box and consider ways to help which differ from the free training and webinars that are offered by other business organisations; example might include discounted suppliers, mutual support mechanisms and/or mentoring.

Carol said that the questionnaire includes questions about the usage of free consultancy such as that provided by Growth Hub, Unlocking Potential and other EU funded bodies, and pointed out that much of this funding will cease after 2022 at the latest, and unless the UK Government replaces that funding these free consultancy services will cease to be available.

Carol said that she will contact the companies that are on the Bodmin Virtual Market Facebook Group and publicise it as widely as possible to get as many businesses as possible to complete it.

Carol reported that she has done a first draft of the questionnaire and sent it to Phil Taylor and Joy for some initial feedback. Joy Bassett has kindly offered that Chamber can use her Survey Monkey account to do the research online and Phil T has kindly offered to help Carol get it finalised.

Once she has this initial feedback it will be circulated more widely among members to get feedback.

Paul Holley said that he had used Unlocking Potential (UP) and he found it a great help at Bodmin Way. Following on from some initial workshops, UP helped Bodmin Way to get grant funding which helped them launch their newsletter. One of the UP consultants also joined the Bodmin Way Board.

Carol also suggested that mutual support groups can be really very helpful, especially for small businesses. Phill Gale agreed and said that as a sole trader he has no team with which to discuss things so having access to others would be welcome. Joy said that Theo Paphitis, of Dragons' Den, started a competition on Twitter and winners were invited to join the SPS Winners Club. Joy was a winner and she said how valuable that community had been to her business.

Jane added that she had been inspired by an associate of hers to find out more about the Apprenticeship scheme as he had success with 2 apprentices.

Andrew Kirk suggested that, as the data starts to come in, we should perhaps have a Chamber team tasked with the preparation to have services ready to go. He mentioned Rob Pendleton, who he understood offered consultancy with a "no success, no fee" guarantee.

Phil T suggested that the questionnaire could also usefully ask about what help the recipient could offer others, not just what help they need.

### **Better Bodmin Update**

Joy confirmed that Better Bodmin is winding down and the Directors have agreed to give their remaining funds, which Joy believes about £1500, to Chamber to spend on providing business support. Russell Cosway has agreed to join the Board of Bodmin Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ltd. Phil Ugalde is also to be invited as an Honorary Director to acknowledge the work and effort that he has made to support the Bodmin Business community, but Joy feels he is unlikely to have time.

### **Town Portal Update**

Carol reported that she has had little progress and the stumbling block seems to be the ability to design a website, with a large database, that allows daily update by non-programmers. Phil T said he did not think that should be an obstacle as the technology certainly exists to make this possible. He is working on a new hotel website with a Polish-based company called WebWave and offered to speak to them about it.

Carol also said that she was waiting for a response from the Visit St Agnes website team. This website does not include the kind of business content that we were anticipating but it was felt that they still might be able to help. She also reported that she had sent the paper to Sarah Sims (the Cornwall Council Community Link Officer for Bodmin) and Amanda Bright (the new Community Services Officer) who has just joined Bodmin Town Council.

Paul Holley also mentioned that he has just interviewed a 24-year-old web designer to join the Bodmin Way team on the Kickstart programme. He was not sure if he might be able to help somehow.

**Action: Phil T to speak to WebWave and report back to Carol**

### **Town Vitality Bid Update**

Joy reported that the Bodmin Vision Group has now become the Bodmin Town Team and Chamber is represented on this team. She said that a bid for up to £100k has been submitted to Cornwall Council to fund feasibility projects that will focus on town regeneration. These projects include work on the possible pedestrianisation of Fore Street, green spaces, reuse of empty premises, education, and health hubs.

We were hoping to find out from Cornwall Council which parts of the bid have been successful, but we learned that decisions have been postponed until after the election and we are still waiting for news.

Joy reminded people to fill in the Neighbourhood Plan survey as only around 300 people have currently completed it online. This sparked a spirited debate about how the survey is being distributed. Phill Gale was unhappy that everyone will not have a paper copy, as was Balu. Joy explained that this had been the original plan, but a few Town Councillors had objected to the cost of providing one per household.

Carol said that she did not feel that sufficient promotion had been done and if people were not on Facebook, they probably would not even know about it.

**Action: Carol to send link to survey to all Members**

### **Logo update**

Carol had circulated Phil Taylor's suggestion to include a map on the logo that Al Shiner had designed so everyone had a chance to see it. Carol reported that she had spoken to Al and he was upset that his logo had been altered, especially as he had completed it for no fee. Jane and Balu understood that he would be upset. Phil T said that no offense had been intended, and it was just produced as a proof-of-concept following discussion at the last meeting.

There was a lengthy debate about why we needed to change the logo, what was wrong with the one we have now, whether using St Petroc could be considered as being overtly religious and therefore inappropriate, Bodmin Beacon and Black Lives matter, why it did or did not need a map, whether it should contain the current strap line. Eventually, a vote was held with 2 people wanted to retain the existing logo while 7 voted to accept the new logo that Al Shiner had designed for us. Carol clarified that the logo would be available in different colour variants, which is normal now, so that logos can be used for different functions.

### **AGM Preparations**

Joy confirmed that the Westberry was booked for us to have the AGM on the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021. This was planned to be a face-to-face meeting, but this was subject to the Covid roadmap and it would be held on Zoom if necessary. She also said that Russell Cosway had agreed to be our speaker.

Running order was agreed that it would commence with business (including voting of officers) and would be followed by the speaker and then dinner. It was agreed that Phil T would provide a menu so that people could pre-order their meal which will save time.

It was agreed that invitations would be sent to local businesses as has been done in the past but confirmed that only members would be eligible and invited to vote.

Phil T said he would update the self-nomination form for Carol to send to members.

Balu suggested that if the current committee were happy to continue to stay then a vote should take place now to save time on the night. It was confirmed that voting should take place on the night and we were keen to encourage nominations from other members.

It was confirmed that the Board of Directors meeting is not included in the AGM and will be held separately, date yet to be decided.

Balu apologised that he could not attend the AGM as he was going to take part in the Rotary-sponsored walk to be held on that day.

### **Any Other Business**

Balu asked how many of the 6 Bodmin Jail candidates got onto the Town Council. Carol responded that two were now on the Council on uncontested seats. Joy said a full list of Councillors was available on the Town Council website.

### **Next Meeting**

The next Chamber meeting will be the AGM, details outlined above.

The next Breakfast Meeting will be on Zoom, at 8 am on the 1<sup>st</sup> June and we are expecting Scott Mann to attend.

**The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.**