



BODMIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

— Building a better Bodmin in Business for the Community

Minutes of General Chamber meeting held on Zoom on 19th April 2021 at 6:30 pm

Present: Joy Bassett, Carol Randall, Phil Gale, Phil Taylor, Phil Brown, Jane Tily, Daryn Dodge. Paul Miles Rogers

Apologies from Andrew Kirk, Balu Madhvani

Minutes

The minutes of the March meeting were accepted as an accurate record by those present who had received them. However, not everyone had received the minutes, so Carol will re-send them to members, and the March minutes will be reviewed again at the May meeting to ensure there are no errors.

Matters Arising

Town Portal/ Business Directory project update

Carol reported that she has spoken to the CIOS Growth Hub who made recommendations of web developer companies to help with the costings. She had also contacted CLLD and Cornwall Development Company (who oversee CLLD) who confirmed that they could not help with funding. Carol has contacted Swanky Pixels, Paddle Creative, Peaky Digital and AI Shiner for advice re costings. They are all based in Cornwall. She reported that she had yet to hear from Peaky Digital and AI Shiner but the other two had said that they would get back to her when they had considered the work involved. Paddle Creative can't get back until the beginning of May as the owner is on paternity leave. So, this is still a work in progress and the costing is proving a challenge. Carol said that she appreciated that this is not a simple website as the database and search engine need to be very robust to support a portal of this complexity. It also needs to be built to allow non-programmers to add and change content daily. Carol mentioned that she had considered whether it might be possible to co-develop with a web design company a site template that could be marketed to be used by other towns. Just a long shot to spread the cost.

Phil T agreed that this could be used Cornwall-wide and not just in Bodmin and might be worth exploring. Jane thought it could be designed like a Virtual Town Hall, especially as we do not have a Town Hall building in Bodmin. Paul liked the idea of the Virtual Town Hall but questioned if the companies on the industrial estates would be interested if they do not sell to Bodmin residents or tourists. Phil B and Phil T agreed that this could be an issue and it would be important to find the right marketing hook and the costings will need to be carefully researched. Phil T suggested that we should explore syndication to expand the range of exposure to a national or international audience. Phil also said that he would estimate that a minimum of 85% of the cost of this portal would be the development cost. Carol asked if she and Phil T could discuss this, and this was agreed. Jane and Paul both mentioned contacts they knew who might be useful.

Joy proposed that Carol should continue to explore this, and it was agreed.

Action: Carol and Phil T to discuss and Carol to continue researching

Action: Jane and Paul to send Carol contact details

Logo update

Carol said that Al Shiner had very kindly sent variations of a new logo, taken from the window sticker that he had designed. These had been sent out to members on the afternoon of the meeting. Phil T said that he liked it as an abstract concept – that it was smart and modern but that the logo itself lacked any connection with Bodmin and suggested that it might be possible to add St Petroc to the ‘b’ in the logo. Carol said that the current logo looked more like a Freemasons’ lodge than a modern business-related organisation. There was some general discussion about what might symbolise Bodmin. The Beacon was felt to be unsuitable as it has been listed by Black Lives Matter campaigners as an offensive monument. Paul suggested that the map of Cornwall was very recognisable, and Phil T said he would try layering the map of Cornwall behind the logo to see if it would work.

Phil Brown asked why we had wasted 15 minutes talking about logos when we should be talking about the survival of the Chamber.

Action: Phil T to try layering the map behind the logo

Treasurer’s report

Phil B reported that the current balance was £2,716.05.

Membership report and issues

Phil Taylor reported one new member had joined this very day – Al Shiner, of *Design by Lead*. Joy reported that Paul Holley at Bodmin Way was in the process of joining. She also mentioned the new person at Bodmin and Wenford Railway who has replaced Hannah Irwin as their head of marketing. Carol said she would follow up with her.

There was some discussion about who should be sending out the invoices for renewals and how this should be done. Phil B and Phil T agreed that they would have a discussion and clarify how they would deal with this year’s renewals.

Action: Phil B and Phil T to clarify invoice process

Action: Carol to follow up with Bodmin and Wenford Railway

Research about Business Incubation models

Carol reported that she is going to do some research with some of the start-ups and smaller companies in Bodmin to see what assistance and support would help them to grow their businesses. This has developed from conversations that Joy and Carol have had with Fin Irwin about a project to help start-up retailers get established in a shop that is currently empty. Fin has some funds he would like to use for this purpose, and it was felt that it would be useful to find out what there would be demand for.

Carol asked for Phil T’s help with an online form.

Paul suggested contacting Outset as they are the agency currently supporting start-ups.

Carol also said that Sarah Sims had sent them details from Anna Gordon, who runs the School for Social Entrepreneurs programme in Cornwall. Joy and Carol are arranging a meeting with Anna to learn more

about it. Paul mentioned that this is only for people running community projects, but that one of his clients had been on the programme and was very impressed by it.

Action: Carol to contact Phil T to discuss an online research option.

Action: Carol to contact traders on Bodmin Virtual Market when research is ready.

Town Vitality Bid

Joy reported that the Bodmin Vision Group had recently worked with consultants Clifton Emery to prepare a bid for monies from the Town Vitality Fund to work on regenerating the town centre. Paul asked who had paid for the consultant and Carol said that the Town Council had paid a fee of around £2000. Joy said that she and Carol would be attending a Vision Group meeting on 20th of April so hoping for some positive news.

Paul mentioned that Tim Bagshaw, at Bude Business Voice, prepares bid applications.

Tour of Britain

Joy asked for ideas of what Chamber could do at the Tour of Britain event. Joy said that she is on the BTC committee dealing with this. Phil T suggested a pedal challenge as this was something he had done at an event and it was very successful. It is done using a static bike and the challenge is to find the person who can do the longest distance in 30 seconds. There was a lot of enthusiasm for this idea and Joy said she would speak to Angie Squires at Sustrans to see if they could help.

Paul asked if we could activate the Cornwall Channel connection and get something on there that could be broadcast.

Action: Joy to speak to Angie Squire at Sustrans

Action: All to think of ideas to share at the next Chamber meeting

Action: Joy to contact Shane at Cornwall Channel

Cornwall Chamber Update – G7 summit

Cornwall Chamber has contacted the Chambers and asked them to suggest three businesses in their area to showcase. Suggestions made included Flann Microwave, Bodmin Jail Hotel and Resort, Proper Cornish, and Cornish Lime.

Better Bodmin

Joy said that at the Better Bodmin AGM there would be an announcement of the winding-down of the Better Bodmin company. It has been agreed that the sum of around £1600 that is still in their account would be donated to Chamber and ring-fenced to be used as seed-funding to regenerate business in the town. In return, all Better Bodmin members will be offered free membership for a year and the Executive Directors – Neil Pendleton, Russell Cosway and Phil Ugalde will to be invited to join the Chamber committee. Russell has already said he would be happy to get involved with Chamber. He mentioned that he is based in Lostwithiel and Joy said that if we wanted to expand into that area as there is no Chamber there. Paul said that the business community there is very strong and active.

Any Other Business

Nightclub in Bodmin

Jane mentioned that she had met a young DJ who felt that Bodmin would benefit from a good nightclub. It was felt that the Eclipse is not well located as it is in a residential area. Jane was wondering if there was anyone to whom he could speak about this idea. Paul said that, in his experience, it was very difficult to run a financially sustainable nightclub unless you have a clientele with high disposable incomes. Unfortunately, Bodmin's young people tend to drink at home or in cheaper pubs before going to the Eclipse, so they are unlikely to spend sufficient money in a nightclub to make it viable.

Annual General Meeting (AGM) Preparations

Joy confirmed that we are planning to have a physical meeting at the Westberry on the 21st of June. Phil T said he needed to check that the hotel had made the necessary booking. Joy suggested that we have a business speaker for the meeting and Phil T thought that Rajesh from Bodmin Jail would be of interest so Joy asked Carol if she would contact Rajesh and ask him.

Action: Carol to contact Rajesh and invite him to speak at the AGM

Breakfast Meetings

Joy reminded everyone that we now have only one Breakfast meeting per month, on the 1st Tuesday of the month. Our next meeting will be at 8 am on 4th May 2021 when Scott Mann MP will be attending.

Next Meeting

The next Chamber meeting will be held on Zoom at 6.30 pm on Monday 17th May 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.07 pm.