

Skipton Chamber of Trade & Commerce

MINUTES OF MEMBERS MEETING

DATE: 25th March 2014

VENUE: Coniston Hotel Skipton @ 8.00am



PRESENT: **Executive:** Chris Hill (Healthy Lifestyle Studio), Dave Parker (STC), Paul Mason (Pearson & Associates) Liz Smith (Nat West Bank), Secretary: Lesley Haworth

Members: Liz Preston (Craven Safety Services), Chloe Greenwood (Manifest Marketing), Rachael Berry (Newton Grange), Amie Capstick & Gillian Venning (The Coniston Hotel & Country Estate), Brett Butler (STC), David Gagen (Airedale Enterprise Services)

Business Spotlight Speaker: Gill Venning – Head of Sales and Marketing at the Coniston Hotel

APOLOGIES: Vice President: Amanda Casey (Rendezvous Hotel), Tracey Weston (Bluefin Insurance), Zoe Clarke (Pennine Cruisers) Treasurer: Billy Moffat (Reid Moffat & Co Ltd), Rachael Berry (Newton Grange), Roger & Shirley Wales (Holiday Cottages Yorkshire) Victoria Whitehead (Tyro Training), April Chamberlain (AWB Charlesworth), Lorna Peniket (Spencers Bistro), Tim Foreman (Tim Forman Consulting), Joanne Metcalfe (Cancer UK)

Meeting opened at 8.00am:

As Vice President Amanda Casey could not be present at today's meeting Chris Hill kindly stood in to chair the meeting.

He welcomed and thanked everyone for coming out so early on such a wet day. He also thanked Gill Venning from the Coniston Hotel for hosting the meeting and providing attendees with, very welcome, breakfast refreshments..

Adoption of the Minutes of the last members meeting held on 27th February 2014 at Healthy Lifestyle Studio.

Proposed by Paul Mason and seconded by Liz Smith.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

Member Survey Responses:

The survey was sent out to ALL members and after 2 weeks, of some prompting and reminders, we received a grand total of 21 responses. The full analysis is available on the website:

Brief overview on some responses:

Why did you choose to join the chamber of trade? Top 2 answers:

76% said they wanted to **Be a part of a business group that engages all parts of the Skipton Business Community**
62% said they would like **Extended Networking Opportunities**

What improvements do you feel the Chamber could make to further support you and your business?

- Focusing on the wider Skipton area rather than just the town centre
- More opportunity for networking
- Encouraging inter member work referrals
- Discussing and resolving key issues that directly affect business
- Parking fee reduction for members
- Offering training/seminars on subjects of interest
- Encourage more members from the Building and Allied Trades

Do you feel there is more that the Chamber could be doing for the Skipton Business Community?

- More networking opportunities
- Greater focus on driving customers towards local businesses, encouraging trade between local businesses
- Speaker at every meeting
- Reaching out to and involving a greater variety of businesses in and around Skipton
- Encourage member participation

Has your business benefited in any way as a direct result of your listing in the Business Directory?

Main reason for 'no' was that many respondents were unsure of whether or not their business was directly benefited by the listing and did not know how to measure/identify any direct links. The general consensus being that respondents felt it was a good marketing tool but did not know how to track any direct benefits.

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Please take this opportunity to read the full results and offer your comments, especially if you did not complete the survey. Your views are important to us and you can still complete the Survey (2mins), it can be resent to you.

It was agreed that we need to implement a push to encourage more members to attend meetings. Comments have been made that the timings are not suited to all businesses. The Chamber in the past 2 years have arranged meetings either early morning at 8.00am, early evenings at 6.00pm and a couple of lunchtime ones. Attendance varies a great deal at each of these timings. We realise we cannot suit everyone's needs, all the time. As it is important for members to attend meetings if they want to influence change and address local issues maybe they could plan to make arrangements within their business to allow them to attend. Meetings are planned in advance. Members are encouraged to offer topics for discussion, ideas for speakers and sometimes offer to host a meeting. The Chamber executive works hard to support its members but in turn they do need members to support them.

It was discussed that perhaps a better use of social media would engage members. The secretary is now adding links to information via the website instead of adding attachments to emails. This will hopefully in turn get members to use the website more frequently. It is hoped that we can actively get out and about to connect with members and encourage new ones. One suggestion was to hand deliver the invoices for the membership renewal, due in April. We are all very busy and have our own time constraints but efforts will be made to interact more with businesses.

IMPORTANT RENEWAL OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

As the AGM gets ever nearer members are reminded that all the Executive Officers are due to stand down and their positions made available for members to either nominate themselves or others for these roles. If anyone is interested in finding out more about what the roles entail please contact the secretary asap. We would ideally like have the new executive officers in place by the AGM on the 21st May.

Officers can be re-elected by the members, but as the 2 year term is complete, we would please like to encourage new blood onto the Chamber Executive.

The current Vice President will stay on the committee as an ordinary executive member but we do have vacancies for 3 more members.

Website Development:

Phase 2 is now complete on the website development. Please check all your business information is correct as this is your marketing tool. We have developed a Business Spotlight feature which will appear on the Home Page. Each business will be invited to produce a marketing profile (including a photo 640 x 237) which will appear on the home page in rotation. Members are also invited to come as a spotlight speaker to meetings and deliver a 5 minute presentation about their services and/or offer of advice to other members. It was suggested that members be encouraged to promote special offers to fellow members whether it be a discount on goods and/or services or offer FREE business support via seminars, mentoring and training.

Twitter & Facebook:

The secretary's role now includes trying to send regular Twitter and Facebook messages but due to time constraints Lesley is not able to do this effectively. If you have any ideas – up and coming events, new businesses, info relevant to the town etc. please send them through to her. Liz Smith from Nat West spoke about the twitter campaign 'Skipton Hour' each Tuesday at 9pm. She uses this medium regularly and feels there are potential members using this service. Lesley and Liz to discuss how we can benefit from using this time effectively. It was suggested that we try to collect every members twitter address and encourage re tweeting which may lead to engaging new and old members. An option to have a couple of key buddies for tweeting was welcomed by Lesley so Amie Capstick and Liz Preston have offered ideas to support us with future tweets along with the input from Liz Smith.

Please remember to re tweet Chamber messages and Like Us on Facebook.

Future Events:

Cheese & Wine Evening: Following the success of last year's event, we are pleased to confirm Friday 2nd May at Herriots Hotel from 6.45pm for 7.30pm Start. At £17.50 per person - Tickets Are On Sale Now. This will be a ticket only event so get your tickets as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. See the website for more information.

AGM: A reminder about the AGM that will take place on Wednesday 21st May, at 7.30am for 8.00am Start, at the Rendezvous Hotel. We hope that as many members as possible will be able to attend.

Waterways Festival: Weekend 2nd.3rd.4th May 2014. For further details visit:
www.waterways.org.uk/iwa/calendar/event/view?id=1090

Anyone wanting to help out or display posters please contact Zoe or Leanne at Pennine Cruisers on 01756 795478.

Spotlight On Skipton:

Dave Parker reminded us that Skipton is the 'Best Place to Live' in Britain. Skipton was commended for its ideal combination of low crime rates, top-class schools and great transport links. They also praised the area's 'buzzing' high street dominated by independent shops, pretty and reasonably priced property, 900-year-old castle and beautiful surrounding countryside. It is our duty now to keep Skipton thriving.

High Street Parking:

It was discussed that changes are to be made in respect of High Street parking on the setts in the near future. The current restrictions are to be revised. Parking will be allowed on market days where there is a space due to the absence of any market stalls. This will hopefully stop the traffic wardens issuing tickets for parking on market days. The parking time limits will be reduced to 1 hour to allow more people to shop in town. New clear signage will be erected. Confirmation of changes will be made soon.

As from the 1st of April CDC will be charging disabled drivers for parking in the towns car parks. This will see more and more drivers parking on yellow lines throughout the town. The worst stretch is between NatWest Bank and the Pelican crossing on the High Street. This causes traffic problems, especially on market days, as the road narrows at this point. Options to solve this problem are under discussion.

On the 27th March it will 100 days to the Tour de France Grand Depart:

Details of this massive event are still not clear with new restrictions being put in place daily. Many people still haven't grasped the reality of the enormity of this event and the many problems that might occur. It was suggested that we hold another meeting nearer the time to update businesses on the disruption due to hit Skipton and offer advice to those who are struggling to cope with the enormous impact.

Business Crime Reduction Partnership:

Funding has been granted for this new crime prevention initiative. It will encompass the Shop Watch and STAND (Pub Watch) creating one group. Details of how the scheme will be administered will be available soon. Every business in town will be encouraged to join to keep businesses in and around Skipton protected from criminal activity.

Spotlight Speaker:

Gill Venning welcomed everyone to the Coniston Hotel and thanked them for making the journey to Coniston on such a wet morning. Gill gave a very interesting presentation outlining the extensive facilities, activities and beautiful surroundings on offer at Coniston.

The hotel is developing its menus to a 4* quality offering great value for private dining, corporate events, weddings, family occasions and parties. Their Yorkshire Tapas is famous and can be enjoyed around a cosy fire or on a sunny terrace both overlooking the beautiful grounds. Flexible rates on accommodation are available to Chamber members. Please ask when booking.

The hotel and estate is open to non-residents and visitors but bookings must be made for all activities:

Land Rover Experience – As 1 of only 5 centres in the UK Land Rover brings customers from all over the country for this experience. These visitors stay all around the area, visit other local attractions and Skipton.

Falconry Centre, Fishing, Clay Pigeon Shooting, Archery, Segway Activities, Golf Range, Walking and Cycling Trail are also available plus a **Spa** is being planned for 2015. Please go to www.conistonhotel.com or follow this link <http://vimeo.com/39205153> to find out more about the Coniston Hotel and what is on offer.

Chris thanked Gill for her presentation and her offer of an open invitation to Chamber members for a tour of the facilities. Please contact me if you are interested.

Meeting Closed: 9.05 am
Date of next event: Thursday 24th April 2014
Venue: Herriots Hotel | Broughton Road | Skipton
Time: 5.30pm for 6.00pm Start

Guest Speakers: TBC

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY: Friday 2nd May Cheese and Wine Event
 2nd/3rd/4th May Waterways Festival
Change of Date Wednesday 21st May AGM

Please remember all the dates, detailed information of meetings, (agendas and minutes) and events are available on the Chamber website www.skiptononline.co.uk