

Tavistock Chamber of Commerce
Evening Meeting: Mon 09 January 2017

Attendees:

Clair Wellsbury-Nye, Leanne Elliott, Mike Harper, Martin Hawkins, Joanne Macasnie, Kate Royston, Richard Smith, Richard Cosgrove, Tim Randell, Phil Ruse, Ross Ayling, Richard Searight.

Apologies:

Neal Taynton Young, Michelle Handley

Membership update:

1 new member: Annette Baskerville-Smith Certainty Recruitment

Town News

Kate asked if anyone new what is happening with the Co-Op building? (Kate) It is thought that the lease is up on the old Co-Op Bank building and that Venus Hair & Beauty may be in talks to take the whole building. (Leanne)

Discussion around future plans for building near church. Although it is being refurbished no-one is certain what it will be used for on completion. It is privately owned.

Martin/Andrew are involved, maybe we could ask them to give us a talk? (Tim, Kate)

Tavistock Town Council were asked to do a presentation on heritage buildings and development, but this has been postponed twice. (Mike)

No news on the LACC. Believe the decision has been postponed, but this has not been reported locally. (Mike)

THE FUTURE OF THE CHAMBER (led by Leanne)

People are reporting the Chamber has gone quiet, the committee want to change that.

Need to expand the committee - should be 7 members, is currently 4 to 5.

New Chamber structure diagram shows members at the top - committee report to members.

New Lobbying Secretary post to be created, working with Chair/Vice-Chair. Social Media Secretary post to continue (created earlier this year).

List of expectations of committee members has been written in draft and will be circulated asap.

Chamber objectives going forward are lobbying and networking - Chair and Vice-Chair to take lead on one each, according to the strengths of the people appointed.

These proposals will be put forward at the committee meeting on 17 January – if agreed by committee drafts will be amended and circulated.

Nominations for committee posts proposed to be received by 31 January.

Nomination forms and articles of association document to be circulated to members by email.

Would like to consider a education sub-committee in the future, to help local students learn about business, led by Phil (Tavistock College).

Consider changing date of evening meetings, to avoid clashes with other local events such as Rotary Club meetings. Proposal put forward to change to first Tuesday of each month. Seconded. 10 votes in favour, carried. Members to be advised of change by email.

Discussion re Aims and Objectives and Articles of Association

Leanne: The aims and objectives of Tavistock Chamber are reviewed by each new committee. They are available on the website. I suggest that they are made more clear and concise.

Tim: Are there any measures against them for last year?

Mike: They're not particularly measurable, but that could/should change for the future.

Martin/Tim: We should shout about our achievements.

Leanne: Less aims and objectives may help. We should add 'working more closely with the BID'.

Richard Cosgrave: That should be 'become an alternative to the BID'. We should emphasise covering a wider area than the town centre, and having greater opportunities than the BID to make changes (eg Section 106 wishlist - BIDs remit is too narrow for that).

Mike: The S106 wishlist will be looked at after the AGM. We need an action plan of how to move the Chamber forward - what should we lobby for?

Martin: Ask the shopkeepers what they want.

Leanne: Some shopkeepers are Chamber members and don't like the BID as it's compulsory. There is a new BID chair, so hopefully it may change.

Mike: Would like more meetings with BID, West Devon Borough Council, Tavistock Town Council, Devon County Council, etc. Not being able to attend BID meetings as the Chamber is a problem.

Martin: Only BID directors can attend the meetings, members are only allowed to attend the AGM.

Richard: Chambers and BIDs across the country are in conflict. Need to try and resolve that locally.

Mike: Need proper data on how businesses are doing in the town. Other towns are doing well.

Richard Searight: Need to encourage people to use the independent shops.

Mike: A previous idea for marketing Tavistock shops was 'the supermarket you never knew you had'.

Tim: Need to encourage employers to set up here.

Mike: I suggested approaching big multinationals when I was a WDBC councillor, but it didn't happen. A Tavistock Business Manager was suggested, to drive this sort of thing.

Richard: Need a one-stop-shop to make it easy for employers to move here and set up.

Martin: Who's at Kilworthy Park (WDBC offices)?

Mike: Mostly low-paid jobs, not the £40k WDBC jobs there used to be.

Richard Cosgrave: What's our local multiplier?

Mike: The average salary for the town is £13k.

Leanne: There are key people here with good ideas, I encourage you to come to the AGM and the March evening meeting to drive them forward. Our education links can help get things done. We must make action points in our meetings from March onwards, to ensure things are done.

Martin: suggested a press release to encourage attendance at the AGM. Richard Cosgrave agreed to do this.

Martin: We should do a press release about attracting apprenticeship companies, it's difficult to attract and manage apprentices here.

Leanne: 2 different apprenticeship companies have presented at Chamber meetings and I'm unaware of any company that have taken this any further. Further press releases on various subjects to be considered for the future.

Martin: Bere Peninsula are creating a night landing site for the Air Ambulance, is there one in Tavistock?

Leanne: This idea could be put on a list of things we'd like to achieve, but we need to carefully consider what we're going to put our time and effort into. The Chamber is mostly for business support and we need to ensure that we have help in place to see things through from beginning to end.

Mike: We could create subgroups of members to carry out community events.

Leanne: We're not short of ideas, but we need to ensure we have sufficient committed people from all of the membership to see things through. Need to finish one thing before we start another.

Renewal due for affiliate membership of Devon Chamber of Commerce.

Discussion was completely against renewing - members felt they did not get value for money, our meeting with them was underwhelming, the Devon Chamber overall is not working well (Richard).

It was noted that one of the aims and objectives of Tavistock Chamber is to support local charities - it was thought that would be better use of the sum required for affiliate membership of Devon Chamber.

Proposal put forward to not renew affiliate membership of Devon Chamber. Seconded. 10 votes in favour. Members to be emailed with this information, final vote to be held at AGM.

AOB

Kate: We now have an 0800 number for energy advice, and funding to help vulnerable people.

It was suggested that this information be presented to the College to help parents who may be in need.

Leanne: Tavistock Business Show is in April, stand bookings now available on EventBrite. A charity rate is under discussion. The next breakfast meeting is 19 January, the presentation is by Devon Contract Waste. The next newsletter will be sent out around 20th January.