

Minutes

Meeting at Portwell Cellar on Monday 8th February 2010

Present	Nick Elwell, President, Fiona Flint, Paul Brame, Sarah Allen-Stevens, John Davis, Simon Tiensa, Jane Haynes, John Naish and Bryan Orchard of Wantage Chamber of Commerce
Item 1	Apologies Christopher Marriott, Tony Fecher, Cllr. Margaret Barker, Sarah Steel, Denise Palmer, Andrew Brown, Paul Seabrook, Steven Clark – Thames Valley Police
Item 2	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting & Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes from the last meeting were agreed and signed as a true record.</p>
Item 3	<p>Working Together</p> <p>Nick welcomed John and Bryan from Wantage Chamber of Commerce to the meeting and said that working together will bring benefits for both Chambers.</p> <p>Nick asked John to explain the Wantage Chamber’s view on how Sainsbury’s had affected the town centre retail trade. John replied that there are diverse views on Sainsbury’s and there is a huge difference with what Faringdon is facing with Tesco. Sainsbury’s arrived in Wantage following two years of land collection and banking. They built several retail units of varying sizes for stores such as Argos, Focus, WH Smiths. John explained that this had shifted the centre of shopping in the town, to ensure that people still visit the Market Place shops, the Chamber were involved with the design of directional signage. Retailers who moved towards the supermarket looked at the items they sold against the increase in footfall. Wantage Chamber thinks that overall this has been a good thing for the town. Waitrose are now looking at the possibility of expanding their current store to provide for the increase in population of Wantage and Grove.</p> <p>A discussion followed about how the two Chamber could work together and it was agreed that Lobbying of the District Council is an area that we can support each other, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed changes to Wantage Market Place to make a pavement culture. • Car Parking • Tourism • Continental Markets <p>Nick explained the history of Focus On and it’s involvement in tourism promotion in the Vale. It was felt that other events could be mutually supported.</p>
Item 4	<p>The Tesco Issue</p> <p>Sarah and Jane explained the Chamber’s involvement with the Town Council working party – Our Faringdon, Our Future. The Chamber has been asked to develop an employment land report and also to start a Town Centre Health Check. Sarah has made a start on the report and following some discussion it was agreed that we should advise the Town Council that it was thought that serious help is needed from “professionals” to do the Town Centre health check.</p> <p>A discussion followed about the Tesco proposal. Nick is putting together a response to the Vale District Council. Ed Vaizey attended a recent FBBC meeting and in response to a question from</p>

	<p>Nick replied that he is happy to facilitate meetings with Tesco to make sure that the town gets what it needs.</p> <p>A discussion followed and it was agreed that::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The loss of B8 employment land needs to be resolved • We need to decide what we want the town centre to look like – Sarah stressed that we need a professional to do this. • The Chamber will approach the Town and District councils to request a town planner is sought
Item 5	<p>Membership Report</p> <p>Twenty eight businesses have so far renewed their membership for 2010. Leaving 17 members from last year still to do so. The highest sections of the membership are commercial companies who make up 32%.</p>
Item 6	<p>Financial Report</p> <p>Chamber assets total £7981.51. Membership receipts - £1204.00. The Christmas Ball made a profit of £305.00 this was following a donation of £500.00 to the Faringdon Family Centre and £50.00 to the British Heart Foundation. The profit will go towards the £130.75 cost to the Chamber of the 2009 Christmas Trees that includes a £100.00 contribution towards the delivery of the large tree.</p> <p>2009 Accounts are currently at Bunting & Co.</p>
Item 7	<p>Faringdon Area Project</p> <p>No report available.</p>
Item 8	<p>Presidents Remarks</p> <p>Nick said that there has been ongoing support for Budgens in their campaign against Tesco. There has been a successful bid by JEFF to SEEDA for funding for the skate park, Folly Tower and Community Buses projects. Nick will be involved in the 2010 Arts Festival that will be from 5th – 11th July. Any members who would like to volunteer should contact Nick.</p>
Item 9	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>Next Meeting: Annual General Meeting Monday 8th March at Sudbury House Hotel from 6pm. The Speaker will be Mary Thomas of Concise Training. Nominations are sought for the Election of Officers. Nominations for President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary should be sent to Jane as soon as possible.</p>
Item 10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Traffic Advisory Group – John reported that the buses issue was raised again. Studies will be carried out with the bus companies and the results will be reported back to a future meeting. Other points of discussion at the meeting included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slip road and the obligation for deliveries • Faringdon Association of Residents representation regarding buses • The de-restriction of the A420 • Speed humps in Lechlade Road <p>John also mentioned the VWHDC parking report that shows a year on year decrease in visitors using the town centre car parks since 2004. John will forward a copy of this report to Sarah and Jane.</p>

The advertising slot in the Faringdon Advertiser has not attracted any new members it was agreed to withdraw the advertising and to provide the editorial to the Folly newspaper instead.

Diary Dates:

Faringdon Business Breakfast Club Monday 1st March at 7:30 am at Brunel House.

Wantage Chamber of Commerce Summer Garden Party Wednesday 9th June

French Market Sunday 28th March in the Market Place

Meeting closed at 20:10pm