

OLNEY CHAMBER OF TRADE
Minutes of Meeting –
Thursday 11th March 2010 at 6.30pm

Present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bill BETHUNE
Deidre BETHUNE
Karen MAYES
Mike REED
Samantha TOMLIN
Nicky WATTS
Ian BREWSTER

TRADE MEMBERS

Peter GEARY – Trustee of Museum
Helen DILLY – New Trustee of Museum
Gavin Mumbsley – Kwik Kerb
Gary TOMLIN – Interior Decorator
David COLES - Architects

APOLOGIES

Kim DURDEN

This meeting was held as an “Open Meeting” for all Trade Members – there were five in attendance. Samantha was chairing the meeting in the absence of Kim.

GENERAL COMMENTS MADE DURING THE MEETING

- Samantha opened the meeting by greeting the Trade Members and thanked them for coming along and that it was greatly appreciated. Samantha explained that there was no agenda for this evening’s meeting but did anyone have any particular subject they wished to discuss.
- David Coles began by saying that he was no longer part of the Market Town Group that acted on behalf of the Chamber and asked if we could find anyone to take his place. He would like someone that has some fresh ideas to help Olney and surrounding marketing towns to be promoted to Milton Keynes. Samantha suggested that David and her could swap details to get a better idea what was needed and then maybe get some more help. David agreed.
- Samantha pointed out that Kim has been speaking to Stony Stratford Chamber and trying to arrange something so that OTC and Stony can try and get together for some ideas etc.

- Samantha asked Peter Geary if he had any agenda's and Peter said he had none but came along to see what exactly what was happening within the Chamber.
- David Coles asked about the fast speed broadband that he had heard about coming into Olney and when we were likely to get it. Peter Geary says that there will be a better transmitter going into Clifton Reynes that will give a better reception. Another idea that David Coles had heard about was a loyalty system based on phone mobiles but this is not up and running yet and it needs to be looked into more.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Nothing was brought up at the meeting regarding any "monies in the pot"

MEMBERSHIP / RECRUITING

- David Coles asked how many members did the Chamber presently have. Dee said that it was verging on 100
- Dee believed that Bob probably crossed off persistent non-members so unfortunately they have lost a lot of the information on old members.
- Dee asked everyone that we can agree with the new membership pack asap. After much discussion it was agreed that it was good to go so that Dee could get it out to new members. We could "tweak" it as we go along.
- It was discussed what was the best way to market the OTC and there still seems to be some reluctance from retailers to become involved with the OTC. It was noted that Rose Court all worked well together, so it has to be looked at what we can do to bring the same sort of "ethos" of working together amongst other retailers. Sophia said that we should push the website to the retailers showing them the high potential in their marketing on both hers and OTC's website.
- Gavin mentioned that on the farmers market days shops appear to be closed when surely it makes sense for them to be open and to gain more revenue
- Samantha said that the events should be on the membership pack along with the benefits of being a member

NETWORKING

- Samantha said that the networking seems to be going well but also said that we will use other venues so that all businesses in Olney get a chance. The April Event will be held at Much Ado. Samantha commented that other venues should be used to benefit all members in the use of their venue. EMC had offered the use of their offices and Samantha was discussing this as a possibility for the May venue.
- Helen Dilly and Peter Geary confirmed that this would be good as it shows we are working together as a community.
- Samantha explained that the morning networking was not a franchise but a way to get people from places such as Milton Keynes to come along and meet the businesses in Olney. Samantha also explained the cost of the membership.
- Samantha asked Gavin if he felt that the Breakfast networking was helpful to him. Gavin confirmed that as a new business to the area he found it positive and enjoys it's informality.

COFFEE MORNINGS

- Gavin went along to the last coffee morning as did Nicky. Samantha asked Helen if it was possible that coffee mornings could be held at the museum and Helen said it could.

EMAILS - WEBSITE

- The subject was brought up about various events being advertised on the Website on behalf of members. It was felt that as a benefit for members they could advertise on the website for free about twice a year for various events that they may be having i.e. Summer sales etc. If they wanted to advertise more then there would be a small charge – yet to be agreed. However, if the member was wanting to advertise a charity event then this will be allowed for free. For example, the Two Brewers were doing a sport relief so therefore they could advertise this on the OTC website for free.
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- David asked whether the Committee could use car stickers again to advertise Olney but Dee said that the funding puts a stop to this. Gavin pointed out that we may be able to get a deal on it.
- Emails were again brought up as being a problem with receiving and sending them. Nicola was going to speak to Andrew about this and try and get some sort of “idiots guide”. Gavin said that he followed how to set up emails on line and he did not have a problem.

INVITING MEMBERS TO OPEN MEETINGS

- Samantha said that due to the poor turn out that we should try and find away to catch members attention in an email advertising the Open Meeting – may be some sort of caption could be discussed

SOCIAL EVENTS

- Breakfast Networking – 23rd March 2010 to be hosted by Karen and Kim
- Coffee Morning on the 12th April 2010 to be held at The Bull
- The BOFF will be on 18th September 2010 and that there were various meetings in place to start organising this.

NEWSLETTER

Nothing mentioned

AOB

- Dee brought up the subject of signage around the town and said that the Town Council have taken it on board and would be dealing with this. We have been asked if we can contact members to help with the Town Council on giving them information about different signs needed in and around Olney – brown signs etc . Also may be if it could be arranged to have a walk around Olney to make notes of signage, cleaning etc and meet with the Town Council to arrange this.
- The by-pass was again brought up. Dee says that the Town Council have agreed to have a poll for people to vote on whether Olney needs' to have a by-pass or to down grade the A509. It was agreed that we must protect the character of Olney and not to take out it's parking etc. It was agreed that OTC should have a voice for the by-pass. Dee agreed to talk about the by-pass at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

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Thursday 8th April 2010 at 6.30pm – Chaired by Kim