



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY 16<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015, ROYAL CHASE HOTEL, 7PM

**PRESENT:** Clive Carter (Thatchwise), David Perry (Shaftesbury Wines), Nicola Carter (Nature's Treasures), Alice Perry (Shaftesbury Wines), Rob Neely (Dorset Store), Pam Goodall (Glad Rags), Win Harvey (Teddybear Corner), Susan Sullivan (NDDC), Craig Hacker (Andrews and Palmer), Caroline Hughes (Swans Trust), Jan Klakus (Glad Rags), Martin Wort (Finns Removals), Charlie Turnbull (Turnbulls), Rachel Caldwell (Swans Trust), Cassandra Thompson-Jones (Fork and Flowers), Tony Morgan (Wessex Group)

**1) WELCOME AND APOLOGIES** The Chair welcomed all attendees. Apologies were received from Jacqueline Flexney-Briscoe, Jo Francis and Richard Keenlyside.

**2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** The minutes were approved. This was proposed by Craig Hacker and seconded by Nicola Carter.

**3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES** There were no matters arising from the previous AGM's minutes.

### 4) OFFICERS REPORTS

Chairman's Report Clive reported upon the year's success, in particular record high membership numbers (at peak 101) and healthy bank balances. He commented on the success of Christmas's events and praised Zandra Rhodes for her input. He mentioned the desire to hold networking events and trade shows in the coming year, and the need for someone experienced in such events to help with their organisation. As ever, if more people do not get involved, the committee will not be able to add to the Chamber's range of events whilst maintaining commitment to current ones.

The Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show and Gold Hill Fair were both successful as fund raising and awareness raising events.

He mentioned the strength of relationships with other local organisations, including the Lions, Rotary, Task Force and Town Council.

Clive thanked James Hughes for his generous provision of the Chamber's website over the past two years, and James Thrift for taking over from him.

He also thanked Dennis Hughes and Malcom Scott-Walby for their work on the Chamber's incorporation. The work which remains to be done will be undertaken by Craig Hacker due to Dennis's resignation.

Clive also explained that due to his reticence to preside over his own and other committee members' re-election, it was decided that the Chamber should appoint a president. After much deliberation it was voted at the last meeting to elect Tony Morgan as the Chamber's first president.

He concluded his report by thanking all who have contributed to the Chamber's success over the past year and urging others to do so in the coming one.

i) Acting Vice Chair/Press David has not yet had to do anything as acting Vice-Chair, as he has only recently stepped into the position. Clive mentioned that James Hughes, as previous Vice-Chair, organised a highly successful 'Meet the Neighbours' event during the year. He also worked incredibly hard on the business section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

As Press Officer David mentioned difficulty in establishing a consistent contact at the Blackmore Vale, and it being harder to get articles published with them. This is also partially due to the Business Matters section no longer being so accessible. Despite the previous Christmas being a hard act to follow due to the huge success of the Hovis Boy's return thanks to Ruth Hughes, he was still able to obtain good coverage of Zandra Rhodes's visits. He thanked Shirley Allum and Heather Best for their contribution to that success.

The Chamber's policy of good press only for Shaftesbury was maintained throughout the year.

The Hovis Bike remains a great asset for press stories, with several celebrities posing with it during the year. Going forward, David would like to see it used further.

David also mentioned that the Chamber has been much more active on social media during the year, thanks to Cassie's efforts with Facebook. In the year ahead, he anticipates this becoming more active.

ii) Membership/Publications Rob pointed out that he only wishes to be acting membership officer and does not wish to take the role back full-time. He praised the success of Christmas events as a highlight of the year, and their contribution to high membership numbers, as they show the Chamber is a pro-active force in the town. He mentioned various benefits members can enjoy. He is sure that the momentum of the previous year will continue into the Chamber's 60<sup>th</sup>.

As regards publications, Rob explained that SP7 has been produced for many years now, and it has always been well supported. It is not only valuable for the revenue it gains via advertising, but for its articles too. Rob reiterated that he is seeking someone to take over SP7 in the not-to-distant future.

He mentioned that despite an increase in costs, prices will remain static this year. He still anticipates making between £900-£1000.

iii) Secretary Since taking over as Secretary in September, Alice has become better acquainted with the people, organisations and goings-on of Shaftesbury. She has got the subscribers lists up to date and is pleased that everyone seems to be getting emails smoothly. She is indebted to the previous secretaries Jan and Judy for their assistance as she gets to know the role.

She hopes that stronger links will be forged with the neighbouring chambers in the year ahead.

#### iv) Treasurer

The audited accounts and financial statement were circulated to members via email in advance of the meeting. Craig thanked the Chamber's independent examiner, Nic Griffin, for his help once again in auditing the accounts. In Nic's absence, Clive presented Craig with a thank-you gift, which he will pass on.

Rob mentioned at this point that a bill for £7,842.16 was received from SSE for the electricity used at Christmas. Rob and Ray have written a letter disputing this and telling them the exact electricity usage. It is hoped that this will be amended to a sensible amount as a result.

**5) INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW PRESIDENT** Clive introduced Tony Morgan as the new President of the Chamber, and thanked him for accepting the role. Tony outlined his history in the local area, from starting Wessex 52 years ago to the present day, including having been a Chamber member for around 40 years.

**6) RE-ELECTION OF OFFICERS** Tony then presided over the re-election of the existing officers. This was done en bloc, as no posts were contested and there were no new candidates. Cassie Thompson-Jones was unanimously elected to join the exec committee, filling an empty position. The position of Vice-Chair remained unfilled, with David agreeing to remain as acting Vice-Chair in the meantime.

As re-elected Chair, Clive outlined his vision for the next twelve months as 'more of the same', emphasizing that new faces and more help with events is still desperately needed, especially within the area of networking. He also hopes that a Vice-Chair with aspirations to becoming Chair will be found in the coming year. Finally, he spoke of his pride at being re-elected to serve as Chair for a third consecutive year.

**7) APPOINTMENT OF NEW HONORARY MEMBERS** James Thrift (Dorset Mac Man) and Rob & Sue Neely (Dorset Store) were made honorary members, and presented with gifts in recognition of their many years of contribution to the Chamber.

**8) ANY OTHER BUSINESS** Tony commented that he agrees with David that the Hovis Bike and its use are a great asset for the Chamber. There followed a short discussion on its use.

Photographs were then taken of all the former Chairs who were in attendance alongside the President.

**There was no further business and the chair closed the meeting at 7.55pm.**