

Presteigne & Norton Chamber of Trade

Minutes of General Meeting 10th April 2017 - held at The Duck's Nest

Present:

James Tennant-Eyles (JTE) Wendy Toomey (WT) Colin Felgate
(CF) Charlie Kingham (CK), Leon Abecasis (LA), Peter Mace (PM), Kevin Lole (KL)
Ann Wake (AW), David Tennant-Eyles (DTE)
Secretary Liz Joyce (LJ)

Apologies:

Marion Hardman
Graham Harkness

Minutes of January Meeting:

Minutes read and agreed as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising:

None

Discussion on the Future of the Chamber of Trade:

There has been difficulty getting enough members for the COT over the last couple of years so current committee needs to decide whether the Chamber is to be disbanded or reconstituted in a different format or just be rebranded with a change of name. There has been a suggestion that it either becomes an Events Committee or reconstituted with a rebranding and new name such as Traders and Business Association.

JTE confirmed that the COT can change its name as long as the bank account details remain the same.

There was general agreement that the COT had spent a great deal of time and energy on organising events and this may have distracted the committee from its original remit of supporting local businesses. The events have been very successful and have raised money for the COT.

Subscriptions – Some members questioned whether subscriptions needed to be paid to be a member of the COT. JTE felt that paid membership gives entitlement to make decisions.

There was a wide-ranging discussion about the potential shape of a new organisation to replace current COT. The issues and ideas raised included:

- How can a new organisation be more inclusive and open to a wider spectrum of businesses including the self-employed?
- What would be the purpose of the new organisation?
- Need to support traders and businesses rather than organising events.
- The focus of events such as the Christmas Fair should aim primarily to promote trade and businesses in the Town.
- Need for a website to advertise and promote businesses. Better use of social media undertaken by a group of members who can offer ongoing commitment to it.
- Schemes such as 'Shop Local' and 'Walkers Welcome' to promote shops and businesses
- Parking concessions – LA reported that The Salty Dog will be funding a subsidised parking scheme in June and reporting back on how this works.
- Need to find a unique selling point for Presteigne (examples given were music festivals, Tour de Presteigne)

A.O.B : The new committee will need to decide what will be done with the £2065 Grant money awarded to The COT to promote diversity. This was as a result of successful bid to the Big Lottery Fund by AW. JTE felt that this should be sent back due to the time limitation. To be discussed at next meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Next meeting: 24th April at 7pm. Venue to be Upstairs at The Rad.