



# BOSCASTLE CHAMBER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

**Tuesday 12 November 7.30pm Wellington Hotel**

## MINUTES OF MEETING

**Present:** *Peter Dixon, Ross Yates, Chris and Sally Searle, Margaret Pickering, Oli Trepos, Nick Chater, Mary Buchanon, Jennifer Congdon, Richard Parsons, Jackie Parsons, Sue Venning*

**Apologies:** *Jon Scott, Debbie Bezant, Tracy Buxton, Geoff and Shelley Barrett, Peter Templar, Denise and John Tillinghast, Jeff Cherrington, Ian and Carolyn Hoyle-Johnson*

Chairman Peter Dixon opened the meeting and minutes of the last meeting were read by Sue

**MATTERS ARISING** from the last minutes

**PARISH PLAN:** A draft questionnaire has been devised by the committee which will be distributed within the winter edition of The Blowhole to all households. It is important to get a good response as the results will be analysed and used as feedback towards the benefit of the village, both residential and commercial.

**FOOD FESTIVAL 2013:** Chris reported that the event raised an estimated £8,500 with 3.5-4K being earmarked for distribution to various organisations. He suggested a generous donation be given to Age Concern who are in need of a new bus and whose present one is utilised each year by the festival. Also to the Radio Cornwall Appeal who have been very generous in promoting the event. The remainder will be distributed to the various organisations who have helped and been involved in the festival. A request had also been received from the archive room/history centre. It was voted on and agreed that the Food Festival sub-committee will distribute the money as they feel fit and will be put to the Chamber for its approval. Chris will provide a detailed list of the organisations to benefit and this will be e-mailed out to members prior to Christmas.

Approximately £250 will be kept back as a contingency fund. It is not clear whether the festival will take place next year mainly due to the huge amount of work required in staging the event and lack of help. This is a significant event in Boscastle's calendar and it was decided that only the organisations that helped would benefit if it goes ahead next year. The Military Wives Choir had virtually agreed to perform in 2014 so it's important to encourage more helpers.

**CAR PARK & TOILETS** – This is an ongoing saga but to cut a long story short the toilets are being kept open throughout this winter, with a 20p charge. No decision has been made

with regard to future years. The County Council wanted the parish council to take on the responsibility for the toilets but they do not want to take them on due to costs which would amount to 50% of precept. The CC have agreed to give the Chamber a key for the upper car park to deal with overflow at busy times.

**SIGNAGE:** Traders should be advised to look at the guidance notes provided by the County Council and need to be very careful. Boscastle is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and although many have different perceptions and interpretations of attractive advertising signs it is important to ensure that they are in keeping and fit the traditional character and beauty of the village, rather than excessive and imposing.

There is a possible issue arising with official council signs and some parishes have asked for a 25% reduction in signage, this could include the 'brown tourist signs', so businesses need also to be aware.

**CHRISTMAS PENSIONERS PARTY/CAROLS:** The Chamber have agreed to purchase one 22ft tree to be erected in the car park opposite the Cobweb as before. There will be carols around the tree on Friday 13 December at 6.30pm with the school and scouts being involved. The Parish Council will be advised of this decision and views sought if necessary.

No other business tendered to host the pensioners party so The Riverside will again kindly organise it. The Chamber agreed to give a donation towards the food and the Food Festival are also confident they can make similar donations as they did last year. It is very popular and anticipated that it will be over-subscribed again. As the donations do not cover food costs it will have to be done on a first come first served basis for the over 70s.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** At a recent Visit Cornwall meeting concern was raised about the increase of bookings being made through booking agencies such as Bookings.com who charge over 15% in fees which may result in the accommodation providers putting up their prices to cover it and in turn a reduction of visitors due to high prices. In France a non profit making agency has emerged called 'Fair Booking' which takes a lower percentage and maybe an alternative. Some providers in Boscastle already use 'Free to Book'. Malcolm Bell is looking for feedback to gauge if businesses are concerned, please contact Chris if you need further information.

**Environment Agency** – Points are now in situ along the river Valency to give advance flood warning. Businesses are advised to register with the Environment Agency for Flood Warning Alerts, so they can be prepared. Ross has suggested to them that colour coded boards be sited in the river to give visitors an indication of levels and danger as many are unnecessarily worried.

**Walking Week – 28 March to 5 April.** Full programme has been organised but Sally is still looking for volunteers to offer to lead walks.

**Minster Church:** A further meeting is being held on 26 November 7.30pm at the village hall to discuss its future. Donations and help are still being sought.

AGM to be held Tuesday 11 February 2014