



PENZANCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MINUTES OF PENZANCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COMMITTEE MEETING **Tuesday 3rd July 2012**

Present: Dick Cliffe (DC)(Chairman), Olivia Khadka, John Garrison (JG), Margaret Cass (MC), , Hazel Trembath (HT), Stephen Richford (SR), Sally Bodinar (SB), Lucy Kean (LK) (Secretary)

Apologies: Barbara Hanik, Janet Mogford, Arnaud Reutsch, Chris Edwards, Ruth Jenkin, Ruth Lewarne

Item 1 Apologies

Apologies were recorded as above.

Guest Speaker The Chamber were pleased to introduce Olivia Khadka the Business Development Manager from Unlocking Cornish Potential (UCP). UCP matches talented graduates with progressive Cornish companies to fuel innovation, growth, creativity, competitiveness and economic prosperity in Cornwall.

Graduates undertake specific projects identified as key to their company's growth and development, supported by the UCP project team and an experienced mentor.

- Extensive experience of running this programme has proved to be a winning combination:
- Graduates gain invaluable experience, new professional skills and a competitive salary.

Businesses gain an employee with fresh ideas, enthusiasm, and access to access expert industry knowledge and training opportunities.

UCP can make a real, measurable difference for graduates and companies through their graduate placement schemes, business start-up support and work experience placements all coupled with their vast experience. They have recently launched a new website www.gradcornwall.co.uk. On the website you can:

- Search graduate jobs in Cornwall
- Send and manage applications online
- Get advice from recruitment experts
- Find support proven to boost job-hunting success
- Make connections with employers

UCP have provided numerous companies across the county and graduates from all over the world with opportunities and support to provide environments for development and success. Any Cornish business can utilise the strengths of UCP to recruit graduates into roles they may have and all graduates, regardless of their current location can find opportunities through them.

Item 2 Matters Arising

3.1 Signs within Penzance – An outstanding action to provide guidance regarding the use of A boards, signage and items outside shop fronts within the town.

Action: DC to circulate guidance on ‘A’ board use.

3.2 Sainsbury’s - Ruth Lewarne had requested that the proposed pathway location along the A30 be reviewed as she felt that people would feel vulnerable walking along the road.

Action: DC to write to Sainsbury’s to review the path location with a view to bring it within the Sainsbury’s boundary.

3.3 Twinning Association – The Chairman would review the Twinning Association membership.

Action: DC to review membership of Twinning Association.

Item 3 Applications for Membership

One membership request had been received from Helen Venning of the Newlyn Cheese and Charcuterie.

Proposer: Dick Cliffe

Seconded: John Garrison

Three other requests for membership information and forms had been received and followed up. It was agreed that the forms and literature would be amended to recognize the meeting location change.

Item 4 Correspondence

No correspondence had been received.

Item 5 Communication Links / IOS

House of Lords Debate on IOS Transport.

Former Opposition Transport spokesman Lord Berkeley put down a parliamentary question for debate on 25 June asking what action was being taken to create a lifeline passenger ferry link to the Isles of Scilly in line with the Scottish Government's ferries' policy. Lord Attlee replied for the Government (effectively fudging the issue). The question received significant support from other peers. As a result of the parliamentary question there was useful press and media coverage of the issue. Given the likely problems when the helicopter service from Penzance ends in October, it was helpful to have politicians attention drawn to the plight of the Islanders and the existence of the IOS Report that draws unfavourable comparisons between transport provision for the IOS and the Scottish Islands.

Secretary's Note: The Isle of Islay is comparable to the IOS for journey time but an adult return ticket costs £12.35 and there are 4 return ferry journeys a day (3 on Sunday) all the year around.

Transcript of H of L debate: <http://tinyurl.com/d2c9wwd>

IOS Transport Report: <http://tinyurl.com/cs2y5d4>

Penzance Harbour.

The Dept of Transport (Mr Bob Collins) had chaired a meetings in Plymouth on 15 June with all parties involved in the Penzance and St Mary's harbour projects. The objective was to confirm the deliverability of the new projects and determine a way ahead. The Minister required that the two projects (Penzance and St Mary's) proceeded together or not at all. There was considerable uncertainty about the Penzance project being deliverable in time for ERDF funding. The St Mary's harbour project was further ahead and deemed deliverable. Politically it would be difficult to get agreement to run the projects separately. There was

therefore a risk that both projects would fail to proceed and ERDF funds not spent on either harbour project. There were further questions about whether the Penzance project focussed too much on regeneration of the harbour area rather than essential transport infrastructure needed for the sealink.

The Chairman pointed out that many of the current difficulties were the result of the Minister's decision to reduce Govt funding for the IOS Link and place more reliance on ERDF for funding harbour works and total reliance on the private sector for vessel replacement. The private sector operator was not in a position to replace the ferry in the medium term hence the recent announcement to extend the Scillonian III's operational life by 6 years.

Item 6

Town Centre

6.1 Portas Pilot - The Town's bid for the second round of the Portas Pilot had been submitted. Although substantially the same as the original bid it had been updated to reflect developments with the Discovery Map. A new YouTube video had been submitted featuring Mazey Day and a generally more positive message about Penzance. Winners would be announced at the end of July. As Cornwall (Liskeard) already had one of the first 12 awards and with Penzance performing better than the average town it was not especially likely that Penzance would be successful. The Portas competition had however galvanized the Town to take action and establish a consensus about the measures required to improve the Town Centre environment and retail footfall. This was helpful given that the Town Council was expected to receive ~£249,000 in funding from the Sainsbury's Section 106 agreement and a Penzance BID scheme was now on the horizon which would provide further funds.

Secretary's Note. The Penzance Portas Bid (2nd round) was unsuccessful.

6.2. Discovery Map. The Town Council had agreed that the Finance and General Purposes Committee should examine proposals for a Penzance Discovery Map. The Chairman had obtained 30 copies of the Hayle Maps from SR Studios for dissemination to Councillors to help brief them about the project. There was no reason why a Penzance Discovery Map should not be successful but Councillors were cautious about the Town Council making any new financial commitments given pressure on the Town Council's budget.

6.2 BID Scheme – Even without publicity a Cornishman survey revealed that 59% of people were in favour of having a scheme in Penzance and the remaining 41% was split between 'no' and 'don't know'. The BID scheme running in Falmouth had proven successful. Business people had stated they were particularly pleased with the marketing and publicity that they had received. It was noted that, since the demise of Penwith District Council, nobody was marketing Penzance.

The Town Clerk had received an email from Cornwall Council explaining that Cornwall Council envisaged progressing a Penzance BID in October. They hoped the Town Council might agree to earmark £20,000 from Sainsburys Section 106 funds to contribute towards the BID application costs. The release of Section 106 funds was linked to the start of building works and would occur later than the proposed start date for Penzance BID preparations.

For the Penzance BID to succeed the Town Council needed to agree to allocate part of the Section 106 fund for start up costs and the Chamber (and other business groups) needed to convince more than 50% of businesses (by rateable value) to vote in favour of it.

Secretary's Note: The Town Council voted in favour of £20,000 of Section 106 funds being allocated to mounting a Penzance BID. It is unclear whether the Tesco legal action will be a cause for delay given that it could delay Section 106 monies by as much as a year.

6.3 Shops - There were general discussions regarding the announcement of further shop closures within the Town (Clinton Cards and Stead & Simpsons). The closure of Stead & Simpsons would mean another vacant unit close to several other empty units at the top of Market Jew Street. Both recent closures were driven by national events (the insolvency of Clinton Cards and purchase of Stead & Simpson chain by a competitor resulting in surplus stores). Despite recent alarming closures the overall vacancy rate remained well below the average (~9% versus 14.5%).

Item 7 Parking

An online collaboration (Basecamp) project had been set up to facilitate the Town Teams Parking Working Group. Two proposals had been put forward as objectives for discussion:

1. A parking permit scheme as proposed by the Deputy Mayor.
2. Delaying the start time of the fixed evening tariff from 16.00 to say 18.00 hrs. The tariff discouraged shopping visits at the end of the working day.

The Chamber was awaiting a response from Cllr Wallis regarding the failure of Cornwall Council to implement the 30 minute/50 pence parking option in the Harbour Car Park.

Secretary's Note: Cornwall Council have marked out in blue 28 parking spots for short stay visitors buying the 30 minute ticket. The marked slots are close to the main pedestrian crossing connecting the Shopping Centre to the Harbour Car Park. It is important that these 30 minute slots are used.

Item 8 CCTV

At the 11 June Town Council meeting a group of Councillors voted through a surprise resolution to stop paying Penzance's £10,000 contribution to the local partnership monitoring of the Town's CCTV system. The decision had been reported in the media and had created a storm of protest. The Chairman had written to the Mayor to express Members' concerns about the decision. Not only would Penzance lose the benefit of the service but other towns using this service would have to pay more or accept a reduction in monitoring hours.

There was already a social media campaign to reinstate the service until such time as the public and town centre businesses had been consulted. There was a chance that Councillors would decide to revisit the decision at the next Town Council meeting.

Secretary's Note: The decision to stop funding the CCTV was rescinded at the Town Council meeting held on the 16 July.

Item 9 Any Other Business

9.1 Collaboration with other Chambers - The St Ives Chamber of Commerce had contacted the Chairman to discuss issues of common interest. Public toilets and car parking were examples of areas where Chambers needed to collaborate. The chairmen of St Ives, Hayle and Penzance Chambers hoped to meet soon.

9.2 Public Toilets. Committee Members were concerned about the potential loss of public toilets and felt the topic needed to be a standing item on the agenda until satisfactorily resolved.

9.3 Meetings – The next Chamber Committee meeting was due to be held in September. In August the Chairman and Secretary would meet to review membership information and the accounts. The new meeting location (Wharfside Centre Conference Room) had proved eminently suitable for Committee Meetings but a larger room might be needed for Members' Meetings. The Café area (Manna's Diner) was believed to be available for such meetings. Peter Wood had offered the café for breakfast meetings. Members' meetings immediately after work were another option.

Action: DC to speak to the Pirates RFC to request how much is owed to them.

Action: DC to discuss with Peter Wood, Wharfside Centre Manager, what options existed for Members' Meetings.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 2120hrs



Dick Cliffe
Chairman
6 August 2012