

PENZANCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



NEWSLETTER



Issue 58

5 February 2012

Editor's Comments.

Important! We have our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 7 Feb 12 at 7.30 pm in the Pirates RFC, Alexandra Road, Penzance. Mike Waters, our Chairman for many years, is standing down and I sure many of you would want to wish him well and thank him for his tireless representation of business interests.

In this edition of the newsletter you will find:

- Details of the Penzance Harbour Public Consultation on Thursday 9 Feb.
- Update on the Town Council's progress with the Sainsbury's Form 106 negotiations.
- Golowan's call for business sponsorship.
- The Town's response to Mary Portas and the future of the Town Centre
- An update on BIH
- Cornwall Councils Core Strategy Consultation.

Penzance Harbour Options Review – Thurs 9th Feb.

The Town Council's Options Review Project is reaching a critical stage with a Public Consultation on Thursday 9th Feb in the Pz Gallery, Coinagehall Street (behind St Antony's Gardens - opposite the Jubilee Pool) starting at 11.00 and finishing 21.00. You can view the flyer for the event [here](#).

(<http://www.pzharbourfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Public-Consultation-9-Feb-12-Leaflet.pdf>)

The consultation event is led by Hyder Consulting supported by Penzance Seafront Forum

It is important the Chamber members and ordinary members of the public attend this event otherwise the public responses captured will not be representative. We know the subject fires up the 'activist' element.

How did the Town Council's Option Review get to where it now is? Well, essentially 15 initial options produced by Hyder Consulting from the 200+ public responses were whittled down to a shortlist of 3 options in mid December 2011. This shortlist was reduced to two (Options 3 & 4A) after costing because Option 6A (Albert Pier) proved unaffordable given Department of Transport constraints even after considering the potential to cut costs back to the minimum.

The preferred option is expected to be an amalgam of the remaining two options. The Management Board needs to understand the public's preferences because this will be an important consideration when it meets on 16 February to select (construct may be more accurate) a preferred option to recommend to the Town Council.

You can view 3 D representations of the two remaining options on the project website www.pzharbourfutures.org - click [here](http://www.pzharbourfutures.org/?p=139) (<http://www.pzharbourfutures.org/?p=139>)

You can download the entire Hyder Consulting Option Shortlisting Workshop Report [here](http://www.pzharbourfutures.org/documents/CompleteShortlist.pdf) (<http://www.pzharbourfutures.org/documents/CompleteShortlist.pdf>)

Editor's Comment. The DfT imposed constraints mean that any project that now gets the go ahead will only cover a fraction of what would have been delivered under the Route Partnership Scheme. For example:

- There is unlikely to be any sea defence of South Pier and the Barbican
- The over-topping issue is unlikely to be addressed because rock armour protection is unlikely to be funded.
- How the IOSSCo replaces the Scillonian and Gry Maritha is a problem the IOSSCo have to solve themselves without public intervention. Capital dredging to widen the range of second hand vessels that the IOSSCo can consider for the link appears unfundable (simply exceeds what the DfT budget for the link).

It is interesting to observe that Hyder Consulting included Option A in the scoring process when the original 14 options were scored. Option A only avoided having the highest score because it was known to exceed the budget and therefore got the lowest score for budget risk.

Sainsburys Form 106 Agreement

The Town Council has had meeting with Sainsburys representatives about the Form 106 being rejigged to give the Town a fund of about £340,000 towards schemes to improve Town Centre vitality. The lump sum includes the £35,000 identified for funding a Business Improvement District. This does not mean that a BID scheme will not be funded, just that it will compete against other priorities. There will be a strong case for pursuing BID status because £340,000 will not last long whereas BIDs provides an income (1% of the business rates) for each year for 5 years. We want to see sustained improvements in Penzance Town Centre and a BID scheme may be the way to fund it.

Golowan (www.golowan.org)

Golowan is seeking help with funding from the public and from business through a Friends of Golowan (FOG) scheme. It needs to do this because the Cornwall Council grant is being phased out and the Town Council does not have the resources to replace the lost grant on a continuous basis.

Golowan is proposing a "Bronze, Silver and Gold" scheme for businesses with the charge running from £75 to £500 (Gold). There is also potential for a Platinum sponsor for a business wanting to make a really big sponsorship splash. Each level of sponsorship comes with its own level of advertising on the Golowan website, brochure or even an event.

Sponsorship is important because Golowan will be making applications to FEAST (an arms length arts funding body of Cornwall Council) to fund specific events involving young people. FEAST have already indicated that they are likely to match funding raised by business sponsorship. So, business sponsorship could make a big impact on Golowan. Please email Steve Ryman at golowan@hotmail.co.uk if interested in becoming a Friend of Golowan. Do this in the next 5 working days if possible because FEAST applications need to be submitted by the end February.

Having met with Steve Ryman, the deputy festival director, and mentioned past concerns about Golowan, I have been reassured that the Town Council now has an iron grip on the money. It is also clear speaking to Steve that he would welcome support from business competent volunteers both to help with management and indeed the business sponsorship scheme itself.

Follow-up to the The Portas Review – The Future of our High Street.

As previously reported the Mary Portas Review is now available.

Full report: <http://www.maryportas.com/news/2011/12/12/the-portas-review/>

For her 28 recommendations: <http://www.maryportas.com/news/2011/12/12/my-28-recommendations/>

Following the Chamber's January Committee Meeting your Vice Chair took an action to contact the Civic Society with a view to working with them on a way ahead for Penzance's Town Centre. At the same time the Cornishman decided to initiate a campaign covering five Town Centres in Cornwall. We were able to support the Cornishman's initiative hence a mention on the front page on 2 February.

The Vice Chair was invited by Heather Rowe to attend an informal meeting with the Civic Society on 3 Feb. The Civic Society revealed the result of a survey of members which asked them to list, in order of importance, measures that would improve Penzance Town Centre. Unsurprisingly doing something about sky-high parking charges was top of the list. The meeting went on to discuss a wealth of ideas for a Town Centre Strategy and the establishment of a group to make it happen.

Committee Member, Sally Bodinar, has indicated she would like to be involved in working on this issue and there is certainly space for other members to get involved if minded to do so. Please contact the Vice Chair (contact details at end of newsletter).

BIH Update

On the 16 Jan BIH was pleased to announce in a press release that it had reached an agreement with Sainsburys to continue to operate from the Penzance Heliport until Oct 2012. Two weeks later Tony Jones, BIH Chief Executive, was quoted as saying "*In recent months, BIH has invested significant time and resource into securing the passenger route to the Isles of Scilly for the 2012 season,*" and went on to say "*We will then relocate to Newquay where we will remain for the foreseeable future.*" As the Newquay – St Mary's is not seen as viable in the long term, the conclusion many draw is that the move would be followed by early termination of the service.

BIH's annual reports have quoted declining passenger numbers as a long term trend affecting profitability. The commitment to maintain the service to the IOS stated in past directors reports has been watered down in the most recent report which states that the IOS service remains a substantive part of BIH operations (well – we know that). The pronouncements by BIH may be negotiating tactics or they may be real.

For the full news item click on the link below:

<http://www.thisisexeter.co.uk/BIH-takes-twist/story-15106522-detail/story.html>

Cornwall Council Core Strategy Consultation.

Cornwall Council have initiated a consultation on 'Planning Future Cornwall' a discussion paper that is part of Cornwall Local Development Framework. The document is primarily about housing and economic develop – where should it be located. The controversial aspect is likely to be the proposed location of additional housing. The section dealing with West Penwith is less than 20 pages long and manageable. You can find the document at www.cornwall.gov.uk/ldf

If you have any comments then please email them to the Vice Chairman by Fri 24 Feb. Please put "Core Strategy Comments" in the subject line. The Chamber will provide a response by the deadline of the 2 Mar 12.

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