



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY 10<sup>th</sup> MAY 2018, GROSVENOR ARMS HOTEL, 6PM

Present: David Perry (Chair, Shaftesbury Wines), Rob Neely (Dorset Store), Syd Guppy (Imprint Graphics), Craig Hacker (Treasurer, Andrews & Palmer), Virginia Edwyn-Jones (Secretary, Eden Design & Interiors), Clive Carter (Thatchwise), Nicola Carter (Nature's Treasures), David Taylor (Shaftesbury TIC), Keri Jones (KJ Media Services)

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Members were welcomed by the chair, who thanked the Grosvenor Arms for the use, once again, of the Library room. Apologies were received from Phil Proctor (TC) and Brie Logan (TC), Alice Perry (Shaftesbury Wines) and (GASP!!) the Chamber's own President, Tony Morgan (Wessex Group). At this point, the Chair handed over to Clive Carter to progress the meeting until he was (or, tenterhooks, wasn't....) reinstated as Chairman.

### 2. APPROVAL OF 2017 AGM MINUTES; MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the 2017 meeting having been circulated and approved last year, when they were relevant, were duly skimmed over again in order to for those in attendance to be able to fully assess what fabulous progress they'd all made in the interim

### 3. OFFICERS' ANNUAL REPORTS

**Treasurer** - Craig reported that the audited accounts were better than last year; at this point, Clive politely asked what our amassed war chest was actually for, to which Craig replied that £4,500 had actually been ring fenced for signage, the rest for good causes and general resources.

The subject of the website came up at this point as it was all agreed that it is looking rather shabby, hasn't been updated for a long time and needs a thorough overhaul. The problems of having kind members offer to host and update it for free were acknowledged to mean that it has proved difficult to exert any meaningful pressure in getting regular updates done.

The meeting agreed that a healthy website that was regularly updated with our news, efforts, plans and thoughts was vital to our existence and that the coffers were sufficient to allow someone to be paid to do it. Everyone to have a think who locally might be able to do this.

**Secretary** – Virginia reported that it had not been as onerous a role as she had feared and that she had even, on occasion, quite enjoyed it and that she was happy to continue for another year.

**Social Media** – Alice apologised for her absence but through the conduit of our esteemed Chair (Daddy) confirmed that she was happy to continue. She added that if we were prepared to do Facebook ads, Christmas could be even more successful as the hits so far on Facebook posts are all organic. Who knew Facebook could be organic.



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**Networking – Karen said that it had been a good year for networking, particularly in the last six months.** There then followed a discussion about breakfast venues as it was felt that the High Street Bakery would unfortunately not be big enough, in spite of their kind offer.

**SP7 – Roberto is happy to continue organising the annual publications, with help from Keri on editorial, and heartily glad we were to hear it.**

**Membership – Clive gave a brief overview of collecting monies (without menaces, in spite of his No 1 cut) and the subject of out of town members was briefly debated. Currently, 62 members have paid up for the 2018/19 year.**

## 4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

David recalled his speech last year on taking on the role of Chair, when he committed to:

- Maintain, if not improve, the bank balance
- Maintain, if not improve, the membership numbers
- Create a better relationship with the Town Council
- Delegate effectively

To which large and very fat ticks have been applied; having allowed himself a small gurn of smugness, he stated that he would be happy to continue as Chair for another year unless anyone else wanted to volunteer. Had there been the sound of tumbleweed at this juncture, it would have been deafening compared to the utter silence that followed this rather wistful query. The moment of silence such questions incite having been respectfully observed, there then followed tumultuous applause and cheers of relief and joy that he was prepared to stand again.

This brought the meeting on to the election of the other positions on the Chamber. In short, everyone that was on the Executive Committee stayed on the Executive Committee, plus Keri Jones was voted on to the Executive in the position of Press & PR guru and David Taylor from the Tourist Office gamely stepped in to ensure we had the requisite number on the Executive. Thus, members of the executive are:

David Perry – Chairman  
Virginia Edwyn-Jones – Secretary  
Craig Hacker – Treasurer  
Clive Carter – Membership  
Alice Perry – Social Media  
Keri Jones – Press & PR  
Robert Neely – SP7  
Karen Janes – Networking  
Syd Guppy – Longmead Estate  
David Taylor – Executive without a brief

We are still without a Vice Chair. Given that there should be an Executive of twelve, it was suggested that maybe Wendy from the Wincombe Business Park might like to join. Other suggestions included Mark from Bassetts Estate Agents and Mark or Sharon from Box of Allsorts.



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Our President would also be emailed to ensure he still wanted to stay on in that position.

## 5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Neighbourhood Plan** – Virginia & Keri updated the meeting on latest news from the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee, of which they are both members, particularly in relation to the Town Centre as they were both on that work stream.

It was pointed out by both Clive and David that a lot of work had been done by the Task Force, including appointing a specialist surveyor to consider traffic in the Town Centre and that View From The Hill had considerable information, reports and studies on traffic and one way systems. Keri & Virginia thanked them for this information and said that they were sure Brie Logan had all the information to hand from those organisations but that they would double check with her.

They then carried on to explain the main themes of the Neighbourhood Plan and Keri also told the meeting that he was Chair of the Tourism Work Group that Brie had set up.

Other members also shared interesting data, such as the fact that 48% of high street traffic is erroneously directed through the centre of town by satnavs, when in fact the quickest way would see them avoid it altogether. Additionally, 65% that did stop did so for less than an hour. Of course, one could also conclude that if traffic that wasn't planning on stopping in Shaftesbury did in fact stop for up to an hour, this was more profitable to the High Street than them not being directed through it at all.

David handed over a Traffic Scheme Review from 2005 that he had dusted off from the Chambers' archives, which was gratefully received by Virginia & Keri.

David also confirmed that he was on the Economic Work Group and would feed back any relevant information to the Chamber and Tourist Information.

David Taylor (I think it was our valued TIC colleague who brought this up, I was so interested I forgot to minute it) took this as a cue to talk about the **Visitor/Tourist Experience** and Pam Cruikshank's suggestion of a trail of brass rubbings to tell you about the history of that particular site; DP said that there was no reason why the Chamber couldn't fund this. In fact, if there were any other good ideas along these lines, the Chamber would consider funding them.

**Supermarket** – a brief discussion ensued on the current status of former supermarket sites (Co-Op/Budgens) and forthcoming supermarket sites (Cattle Market). DP said that nationally, only Lidl and Aldi are actively expanding and that there is no way any supermarket would take the Co-Op site for reasons already explained many times. Quite apart from that, Brexit has seen most expansions plans on lock-down. This was followed by a discussion on parking, the lack of it and the paramount importance of it and what would happen to the free car park that is available next to Tesco and the Cattle Market (when it's open).

Keri confirmed that the Civic Society, which he has joined, has applied to have the Cattle Market land registered as a Community Asset. Even more discussion about parking at this point, with



various ideas put forth. Karen then told the meeting that she had directed a workshop she was holding away from Shaftesbury to Salisbury because there was no where she could guarantee her attendees could park for six hours. This was a very interesting point and welcomed by all.

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DP confirmed that the Chamber doesn't have a set position on Lidl taking over the Cattle Market site, BUT the possible loss of car parking is critical.

Keri confirmed that there will be a public meeting to discuss the Cattle Market site on Monday June 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Fringe** – Roberto thanked the Chamber on behalf of the Fringe for funding the purchase of flags and said that the ceremony to install a bench in memory of Rachel Caudwell on May 5<sup>th</sup> went well.

The meeting ended on a high note when Robert told the meeting that the Shaftesbury Fringe was now the third biggest in England after Manchester and Brighton – quite a feat for our small, hilltop town.

The meeting concluded at 20:03, having started at 18:10