



## **MINUTES OF 2019 AGM & JUNE MONTHLY MEETING**

### **THURSDAY 13TH JUNE 2019, GROSVENOR ARMS HOTEL, 6PM**

Present: Tony Morgan – President, David Perry – Chair (Shaftesbury Wines), David Taylor (TIC), Karen Hardwick (Cranbornes), Karen Janes (Natural Healing Energy), Virginia Edwyn-Jones (Eden Design), James Thrift (Dorset MacMan), Craig Hacker – Treasurer (Andrews & Palmer), Syd Guppy (Imprint), Alex Chase (Shaftesbury Town Council), Andrea Jenkins (The Shaftesbury Group)

#### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Keri Jones. Members and guests were welcomed by the President who thanked the Grosvenor Arms for the use of the Assembly Room.

#### **2. ELECTION OF THE 2019 COMMITTEE**

David Perry stood down as Chair; Virginia Edwyn-Jones was voted in as Chair

David Perry was voted in as Vice Chair

Syd Guppy stood down from the Executive Committee and of the Chamber, in anticipation of imminent retirement (ish). The Chamber wished him well and thanked him for his years of cheerful service to the town. Craig Hacker stays as Honorary Treasurer (a mighty hurrah was heard throughout the land).

Membership – this will be an open post that will be rotated through the Exec Comm, as Clive Carter has stood down.

Keri Jones continues to head up Press & PR

Karen Janes continues to look after Networking

James Thrift was elected in as Head Honcho for Events (he is Mr Shaftesbury, after all)

Honorary Secretary – it was agreed that this position would be outsourced to a professional; Fran Hill will be approached.

Karen Hardwick of Cranbornes and David Taylor of the Tourist Information Centre were voted onto the Executive Committee.

#### **3. IDEAS FORUM**

In a departure from previous meetings, Virginia proposed that interesting ideas and updates should start the main part of this and future meetings to engage people's interest and encourage greater participation. The ideas forum part of each meeting would then be followed by approval of last month's minutes, matters arising, update on action points (if not covered earlier) and AOB.

Six ideas were covered at this point:

1. Pop-Up Licences – Virginia updated the Chamber on where she'd got to with this and confirmed that she was still committed to putting a package together which could go to Landlords. The purpose would be:
  - i) to encourage new entrepreneurs by giving them a taste of running their own business or a new business through a retail outlet;
  - ii) to have empty shops usefully employed which might also be an added selling tool in finding a long term tenant;

- iii) to encourage Landlords' cooperation by offering a ready-made legal package that covered their interests, insurances and, possibly, making the premises cost neutral for the period of the pop-up.
- 2. Plastic-Free Shaftesbury – this is a project to encourage shops to research ways of limiting their plastic usage in relation to the bags they use for their sales to customers. Shaftesbury Wines researched fully bio-degradable paper bags that are sufficiently strong to support the weight of 2/3 bottles of beer/wine and implemented this change some time ago. There was some discussion about how best to formulate a plan of action and who would be involved. James was very keen, as is David, and there was talk of trying to bring Lucy of Coconut & Cotton on board. Roberto said that the Fringe had been putting in a lot of effort to try and find a solution to plastic beer glasses that would work for all Shaftesbury's town centre pubs.
- 3. IndyShaftesbury Town Map – this is an initiative that came from last year's inaugural #indyshaftesbury project, where various shops in town were interviewed, photographed and posted up on Instagram. They enjoyed it and found it beneficial but it was hugely time consuming for those organising it. The Town Map would have a good visual of Shaftesbury Town Centre with each individual shop numbered and then lists down each side of their names, grouped by genre: food & drink/ gifts/ clothes etc. There would then be space at the top and bottom for those who wished to advertise. The ensuing discussion covered design, location of possible signs, costs of printing etc. DP to spearhead as he has already done an exhaustive list of all shops in town in their respective categories, Exec to support.
- 4. SP7 App – this will replace the SP7 guide. It could cover Where to Eat, What's On, Where to Find, Nearest .... Etc. JT to drive this forward with the support of the Exec.
- 5. Sunday Markets – what ideas does the Chamber have to support and help build on this monthly market? Themes highlighting a particular service or product which could be marketed; The Big Lunch, with a communal eating table in the centre of the High Street for people to bring picnics or eat food bought from food stalls; live music; Under 30/Young Entrepreneurs free pitches. VE-J to head up but all welcome to contribute.
- 6. Networking – Karen told the meeting that she had had a meeting with Virginia and it had been decided that it was time to create a wider offer. Ideas include a Women's Wednesday Lunch once a quarter – women enjoy supporting and being supported by other women and might respond better to this format than a more formal gathering; yearly social event at the end of June; a seminar/workshop once a quarter; specific coaching once a quarter. Craig also suggested resurrecting the Meet The Neighbours idea, organising get-togethers with neighbouring Chambers. Karen to progress with Virginia's support.
- 7. Membership – Tony asked if the Chamber had considered instigating 'Official Partners' of the Chamber and having a recognised Affiliate Membership scheme, for organisations like Dementia Friends as an example. The answer to which was no, but all agreed it was a jolly good idea.

Additionally, Tony said that he thought the Chamber should pay to install flower and Christmas tree brackets free of charge as a goodwill gesture to the town, as this would enable the best visual display of flowers and ensure that the impact of Christmas is as powerful as possible. All agreed that this was a very sound idea. Those in the know about the cost of this to report back to the next meeting with an outline idea of monies needed to get this done.

#### **AGM A.O.B**

Andrea Jenkins from *The Shaftesbury Group* of Artists wanted to thank all the independent shops who had very helpfully put posters in their windows in support of various art exhibitions and initiatives. She told the meeting that local artists would like to be further involved in the town's events, would welcome more opportunities for pop-up galleries, would like to be involved in the Fringe and thought that more could be made of Shaftesbury's artist community as a tourist attraction – there is always an art exhibition on at the Art Centre, which is booked up three years in advance.

However, whilst the SAC is a great venue and is much appreciated as a dedicated exhibition space, it is off the beaten track with financial consequences for artists. Andrea shared some interesting figures with the meeting – footfall at SAC for 1 week is around 200; footfall for one day in the Town Hall is between 300 – 500, with a table top pitch at the TH costing £40. The benefits to artists selling their work, therefore, of being in the main High Street are clear.

Tony said that a new tenant was soon to open at the King Alfred and that marrying food with art for sale would seem to be a winning combination; perhaps Andrea would like to approach the new tenant.

Everyone agreed that it was very pleasing to hear of the Shaftesbury Group's enthusiasm to get more involved and the Chamber is equally enthusiastic to see how it could assist the SG in its aims; Virginia and Andrea agreed to talk at further length.

Cllr Alex Chase then spoke to the meeting to confirm the Council's commitment to supporting a move towards creating a plastic free town, a motion that will be submitted at the July meeting, and that as a board member and trustee of the SAC, would like to see the SAC more involved in the Chamber's activities in supporting the town.

The Chamber was very happy to hear of closer future initiatives and said that it would very much welcome SAC's involvement.

This concluded the AGM. The Chamber thanked its President for attending, together with Andrea Jenkins and Alex Chase. The meeting moved on to discussing the May minutes and matters arising

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## APPROVAL OF MAY MINUTES

David proposed approving the minutes, which was seconded by Karen Janes

## MATTERS ARISING

Self-stick window logos of the new Chamber artwork; all approved, Syd to supply before semi-retirement.

**ACTION – DP**

IndyShaftesbury – see above under AGM minutes, item 3.

**ACTION – DP + EXEC COMM**

## OFFICERS' REPORTS

**Secretary** – no secretary being currently appointment, everyone happily skipped on to ....

**Press & PR** – whilst our Media Mogul was on holiday at the time, his work rate for thisisalfred.com remains unabated. There is no corner of news relating to Shaftesbury, its inhabitants, its businesses, its goals, ambitions or bright ideas that have not been unearthed or winkled out by our intrepid reporter. Jolly good show, Carry On!

**Networking** – Erica Wolfe-Murray was an excellent speaker and the May networking lunch was well attended. June sees Sarah Pickering from Prospect Protect, a local, family run insurance company talking about, well, insurance in all its colours.

**Finances** – so giddy was Cash Gordon at actually having prised himself away from Godzilla, his family's new puppy, that he completely forgot to bring any paperwork. He thought that the Chamber's coffers stood at around £23,790.24. This sounded very healthy and we told him he had a head for figures.

**Chairman's report** – our outgoing Chair (in every sense) told the meeting that, in the immortal words of Vinny Jones in Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels, .....it had been 'emotional'. He was glad to step down but it had been easy really as he had had such a great team. We all cheered.

## AOB

Roberto brought up the subject of Syd's PA system which Syd is selling and was preparing to put on ebay. Noooooo!!!! cried the meeting in unison, let us buy it from you. This was carried unanimously as it will be a great asset to the Chamber and thus the town to have a PA system of such good quality to use for events and loan out to worthy groups. Craig sucked his breath in, but only because he feels it's the very least he should do when Expenditure is mentioned.

There was then some discussion about storage, insuring the PA system etc. The meeting agreed that a central, lock-up location was needed but nothing sprang immediately to mind; the possibility of the Chamber paying for a lock-up was also mooted, as this would be very useful for flags, brackets, Christmas lights and so forth. Someone mentioned the Grosvenor's cellar. Enquiries to be made, although not sure by whom. It was decided that a Chief Operating Officer of the PA System would be needed – James was unanimously voted in.

David Taylor requested, yet again, if an email could go out to let members know about the advertising spaces available on the side of the TIC. Virginia confirmed that she would action this.

Finally, David P told the meeting that rumours had been circulating that the old Co-Op/Budgens store had been sold as developers had been seen looking around. The meeting agreed with him that it was important to keep a close eye on developments as the Town Council had stipulated that any development must include a small convenience store, which everyone involved with Shaftesbury vigorously supports.

The meeting started at 18:03 and finished at 19:50