

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 27th June 2018
At Farnfields Solicitors

Present: Sharon Cullingford, Rob Setchell, Fran Hill, Barry Von Clemens, Rebecca Antill, Janet Pegrum, Jennifer Trim, Julie Cousins

1. Apologies for absence

Tom Kingscott

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meetings held on 30th May 2018 were accepted as a true and accurate report.

3. Matters Arising

There was nothing to report this month under matters arising.

4. Financial Report

Rob reported on the following:

- The current bank balance is £3,439.64.
- The Gillingham Tandori has paid their subscription.
- There is an invoice coming in for the Festive Lighting for £500.
- The domain names have been renewed for the Chamber Website.
- A donation of up to £100 was made available to the Picnic Get Together. Some money has been spent on signs and stickers. Rob didn't think the total amount spent reached £100 but was waiting for an update.

5. Gillingham Town Council

Barry provided the following update:

Hospital: The SGSWWS Reference Group continues to meet and the next meeting will be on Friday 6th July. The purpose of the group is to ensure good communication between the community and the Dorset CCG on the future plans for health care in the local area. The group does not make decisions on the way forward this is still very much in the hands of the Dorset CCG. Shaftesbury town council are in the process of applying to have the hospital site registered on the North Dorset community asset register. Using community rights under The Localism Act, 2011 and The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations, 2012, eligible local community and voluntary bodies and parish councils can identify and nominate land and buildings that are important to them such as a village shop, local pub, community centre or library. They can then nominate them for inclusion on a list of community assets maintained by the local Council. If the nomination is successful, the asset will be listed on the local councils List of Assets of Community Value. If the asset comes up for sale, long term rent or assignment, any eligible body can express an intention to bid for the asset during a six

week window during which the landowner cannot legally dispose of the asset. If this happens it then triggers a pause of up to six months to enable the community body to raise money and bid to buy the asset. This does not however, mean that the community body gets a right of first refusal or that it will have the opportunity to buy the asset at below market value.

A Community Asset is – a piece of land or a building whose principle use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could continue to do so not necessarily in the same way as a previous use. Community assets may be owned by anybody and some assets are excluded including residential property. These are listed in Schedule 1 of the Localism Act.

Moratorium Periods

If the owner of a listed community asset decides to sell it or grant or assign a long lease; (at least 25 years), then they must inform the local authority in writing. If an eligible body* wishes to develop a bid to buy the asset then they can notify the council in writing. This then triggers a 6 week interim moratorium period during which the owner cannot proceed to sell or otherwise dispose of the asset. At any time during this time, an eligible body* can make a written request to be treated as a potential bidder. If no request is made then the owner is free to sell the asset at the end of the 6 weeks.

*See Who can make a nomination? On the previous page.

If an eligible voluntary or community body makes an expression of interest to bid in the interim moratorium period then a full 6 month moratorium will be activated. This period runs from the date the owner notified the Council of his/her/their intention to dispose of the asset. During this period, the owner may continue to market the asset and negotiate sales but can neither exchange contracts nor enter into a binding contract to dispose of the asset. An exception to this is sale to an eligible voluntary or community body that has expressed an interest to bid.

After either moratorium period, if there has been no community interest from an eligible voluntary or community body, the owner is free to sell to whomever they choose at whatever price and no further moratorium will apply for the remainder of a protected period lasting 18 months from when the owner notifies the Council of his/her/their wish to sell.

Bay: Persimmon Homes have had a public consultation on their plans to build on the land off Bay Rd. There has been a great deal of local opposition to these plans and a public meeting has been held by local residents to fight any plans to build on this site. It has to be noted that under the Neighbourhood Plan this land would be designated as recreational land.

Schools: Wyke Primary School has become the latest of our local schools to take up Barry von Clemens invitation to visit the town hall and hold a school council meeting in the council chamber clerked by GTC town clerk. They now have a space on the full council agenda which they can put forward any ideas or questions they wish. They join a growing number of our school councils who have this space on the full council agenda. Barry von Clemens hopes to have all our local school join in this scheme of linking our local school community with the town council.

6th form: The 6th form at Gillingham school are doing some wonderful community initiatives including raising funds to replace a damaged tree in the avenue of trees planted to mark the schools 500 anniversary at Upper Lodden public open space. They have also collected books and donated them to the local charity shops. They are eager to be involved in the community and Barry von Clemens is to have a meeting with them in a few weeks to discuss this further.

TSB: The TSB has revised its plans to close the Gillingham branch and this will now remain open for the present.

Festive Lights: The festive lights working party has gone through the projected costs of the 2018 event which has moved to the last Friday of November rather than the first Friday of December. Finances could be tighter this year as sponsorship is not as high this year as it has been over past years. This is only to be expected in the current financial climate. But it is hoped the event will be as popular as always and that it will continue to come in under budget. Youth issues: Barry von Clemens has spoken to the local police about the concerns of local residents and business on recent events concerning young people. It has been confirmed that the matter is under control and the police are in the process of taking ongoing action.

Unitary: A shadow authority has now been formed consisting of all current district and county councillors for North, West, East Dorset, Purbeck and Weymouth and Portland councils. This will oversee the transition from our current system to the one unitary authority to cover the whole of Dorset with the exception of Bournemouth Poole and Christchurch which will form a separate authority. Barry von Clemens has enquired of Cllr David Walsh if the judicial review that has been granted to Christchurch councils challenge to the process will slow down the move to unitary and in full council in June, he publicly assured him that this would not.

6. Members Meeting and Events

- Rob advised that the **Gillingham in Gear** event was another success and that it was good for the Chamber to have representation. The Gillingham in Gear team were very grateful for the support and the donation of a £100 of which £60 had been spent.
- Rob felt that it was good for the Chamber **to support local events and activities** and that the Chamber needs to raise its profile to have more of a known presence in Gillingham.
- Barry wondered if the Chamber could sponsor a car, such as the Mayor's Car to display publicity for the Chamber.
- Sharon felt that the Chamber could have an ad in the Carnival Committee and a presence at other local events such as the Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show. The Chamber could perhaps approach Auto Technics to come in with a car.
- Rob advised that a budget could be set aside for marketing for next year to cover advertisements and the Chamber having a stand at local shows and events, such as the Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show. If this proved expensive the Chamber could possibly share with one of the local businesses. Farnfields Solicitors are having a tent with the theme 'Tea and Champagne', Rebecca will speak to Tina at Farnfields to see if there is an opportunity for the Chamber to join with Farnfields.
- There was no **Breakfast Business Club** meeting for June, however, Lucy still wants to be involved and will be back to work in August, so the first meeting will be in September. There is a guest speaker lined up for the meeting and Rebecca will be helping Lucy to organize. Sharon wondered if the Chamber could join Farnfields in co-hosting the Breakfast Business Club. Rebecca advised that she would speak to Lucy when she returned to work. Fran asked that all Chamber members should be invited.
- Rebecca advised that the date of the **Gillingham School** Event had been changed to from 8th November to 1st November 2018. To date nothing has progressed as yet, but Fran and Rebecca are to meet with the person at the school who will be organizing the event.
- Fran felt that the Chamber could try again to organize **Networking meetings and Events** for members and local businesses. Sharon agreed that hosting Networking Events would be a good way for the Chamber to get its name out. A variety of venues were suggested such as Poppins or the Wine Bar. Sharon thought the Chamber should try to reach members to see what they want from the Chamber. It was discussed that the Networking Events could start out informally, perhaps meeting at the Wine Bar, to encourage members and local

businesses to attend. Fran suggested that a regular date be set so that people would know when the meetings are to take place. Sharon suggested the 2nd Thursday evening in every month, therefore starting on Thursday 13th September and to give this a three month trial.

7. Marketing

- The use of Social media was reviewed as agreed when it was first decided to make use of this as a marketing tool. The Business Directory was not a good way to spend Chamber money, it was therefore agreed to use Social Media to put messages out at £150 per month and to supplement with the Directory pull-out in the Gillingham and Shaftesbury Guide.
- It was discussed about how much the Chamber could afford with the limited budget of £4,000 per year coming in. The first approach to Social Media was to do regular blogs and posts. It was discussed whether some variations should be used to update members on the Chamber. Rob felt that a blog was a good way of relating news, and that perhaps a newsletter, as well as flyers and leaflets could also be used as a marketing tool. Sharon will do a Chairman's letter to report on the latest update for the Chamber, it could be taken from the minutes in the form of writing a letter to a friend and will be sent on a quarterly basis.
- It was agreed that the £150 would be used for other marketing activities as well as the social media posts, in the form of other advertisements and website use and maintenance.
- Fran advised that she provided 'hidden extras' in the work she carried out on Social Media, such as work on the Website and additional editorials. Therefore the Chamber was receiving more than social media posts and blogs for the £150 per month, but Fran was able to factor this in at a much lower cost than she would normally charge to clients.
- It was agreed that Fran would continue to manage the social media activities and would apply the variations as discussed but will keep the price at £150.

8. Any Other Business

Officer's Role

The Treasurer's role is available as advised at the last meeting by Rob who is going to be moving away from Gillingham. It was felt that it may be a good idea for someone to shadow Rob as Treasurer. Local accountants are to be approached to see if there is anyone who would be interested in carrying out the role.

Tom is moving to Leeds, so will also be leaving the Chamber Committee. Tom was unable to attend the meeting, so the Chamber wished for Tom to be thanked for all his hard work.

The Secretary's role is also available, so if anyone knows of someone who may be interested in this role, please advise Sharon and the committee. Julie will continue in the interim and will provide a suitable handover.

9. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 25th July 2018 for 6.00 pm at Farnfield's Solicitors