



## Spalding & District Area Members' General Meeting

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012, Broad Street Business Centre, Spalding

### Minutes

#### 1. Members & Guests in Attendance (Signed-In)

Jason Rooke (JR), President, Rooke's Pet Products; Phil Scarlett (PS), Vice-President, The Edge Consultancy; Mary Adams (MA), Geo. Adams; Phil Callow (PC), ARC ICT Solutions; Matt Clark (MC), ACTIV; Harry Drury (HD), WLYH; Julie Grant (JG), Butters (Spalding); Philip Hall (PH), Turners; Christine Hanson (CH), Bookmark; Debbie Hough (DH), Chattertons; Jane Martin (JM), Newton Press; C. McKepna (CM), Bulley Davey; Michelle Morley (MM), Spalding Energy; David Norton (DN), Springfields Horticultural Society; Darryl Simpson (DS), Hills; John & Robyn Sinclair ((JS/RS), REM; Barry & Sue Stubley (BS/SS), Occasions Jewellers; Tracy Thomas (TT), Springfields Outlet Shopping; Paul Turnell (PT), Woodhouse Farm; Peter Williams (PW), Punchbowl; Jan Whitbourn (JW), Tulip Radio; Tony Wright (TW), Lance Design.

Simon Beardsley – Lincolnshire Chamber  
Terry Huggins – South Holland & Breckland District Councils  
PC Paul Smith – Lincolnshire Police  
Kevin Mothers – Spalding & Peterborough Transport Forum

#### Apologies

Simon Clarke (Spalding Water Taxi); Anthony Howling (Fun Junction); Steve Mason (Mason's Models); Jill Kirby & Angela Newton (AP Sales); Phil Pell (The Office Shop); G H Scott; Mark Ulyett (Lloyds TSB).

#### 2. President's Welcome & Annual Business Report

Jason Rooke, Area President, welcomed members and guests and outlined the meeting format. He then presented his report which included the following updates:-

##### **SHDC**

There had been a very positive meeting with Cllr. Howard Johnson, Nigel Birch and Mark Stanton (Economic Development). They confirmed that there is sufficient s106 money to fund both the bus stop lay-by and the proposed improvements to the Xmas Lights. Additionally, they also confirmed a strong desire to expedite both these projects.

##### **Retail Forum**

This has been set up by Michael Hopkins, store manager at Beale's Department Store. It had a successful first meeting with 25 people in attendance. The idea is to facilitate an opportunity for town centre businesses to be able to communicate about common issues, events, etc. Future meetings will take place at 7.30am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, at Café Modo in Beale's. The President urged town centre retailers to give their support the Forum and its aims and objectives.

##### **Police**

The President asked PC Paul Smith to provide an update on current issues. PC Smith reported that in general crime in the area was down, although there were still problems related to alcohol and anti-social behaviour. On the question of parking enforcement changes, these were likely to take place in September/October.

The President added that there had been a discussion at the last Chamber Council meeting about the Night Time Economy. It seemed to some members that there was little support from SHDC or the Police for this business sector, despite it being important for the town. Matt Clark and Pete Williams would be taking the lead on this matter, with a view to inviting businesses involved to a preliminary discussion meeting to consider the problems they were experiencing and make proposals on how the situation could be improved.

### **Red Lion Quarter**

The final report was still to be presented to SHDC Cabinet. The President confirmed he would be attending the meeting, when it happened, to ensure that the Chamber's questions and concerns had been adequately dealt with.

### **Holland Market Development**

The President reported that the submission of the planning application had lost some momentum, but he and the Vice President had received assurances that progress was still being made.

### **Highways Update**

The President provide copies of the update sheet he had received from LCC Highways. Work on improving the Pinchbeck Road/West Elloe Avenue junction would be very disruptive, and could take up to 12 weeks to complete.

### **Membership/Voucher Promotion**

The President commented that once the CRASH transfers happened, he expected to achieve his goal of 100 members during his term of office. He also introduced Robyn Sinclair (REM Marketing) who had agreed to take over the role of promoting the Chamber's voucher scheme. She would also be looking at other ways to improve membership recruitment and increase participation.

### **Town Clean-Up Campaign**

Whilst the turnout for the latest Clean-Up, ahead of the Torch Relay and the In Bloom judging, had been disappointing, those that did attend had really made a great contribution to making sure that the town looked its best. The President recorded his sincere thanks to all those that helped.

### **Blooming Spalding**

It was noted that the town is now looking good with various hanging baskets, planters, etc, and the President also recorded the Chamber's appreciation to Cllr. Angela Newton and everyone else who had been involved in making it happen.

### **Christmas Festival 2012**

The President reported that the Christmas Festival planning was being led by Jan Whitbourn, and she confirmed that she had already received a number of messages of support, both from schools wanting to take part in the Carol Competition and from sponsors. The Festival would be on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

### **CRASH**

The President asked Simon Beardsley to provide an update, and he confirmed that the final transfer arrangements had now been agreed, and he expected the current members would be transferring to their new contracts with Chamber at the end of the month.

### **Conclusion**

The President thanked everyone for their support during his two years in office. He believed that the Chamber had galvanised local businesses and encouraged them to work together. This had resulted in both members and non-members benefiting from all the hard work that had taken place to establish the Chamber, which had now become the only credible, (and listened to), voice for the local business community.

### **3. Guest Speaker**

The President introduced Terry Huggins, Chief Executive South Holland & Breckland District Councils. Mr Huggins thanked Chamber members for inviting him to attend and speak about the current challenges facing South Holland and other Councils across the country. He explained the impact of the Government's strategy to reduce the deficit, which included taking £6.5 billion out of local government expenditure in year one, although spend on Health, Education and the Police was "protected".

He expected that local government in its current shape would not be recognisable in 5 years time. Pressures were increasing to meet social care costs and environmental targets. SHDC's overall spend was around £52 million per annum. However, income from central government was reducing year on year, income from services was currently in decline because of the recession, and council tax was frozen. Whilst reserves could be used, this was not sustainable in the longer term.

Currently the Council was responding in many ways including improved procurement; sweating assets; sharing services; innovation and culture changes; and also, unfortunately, ceasing to provide some services.

He suggested that there was a new relationship evolving between Citizen and State as we moved from Big Government to Big Society, as per the Localism Bill. In future, communities would have the right to challenge Council decisions and also to set up alternative structures to deliver some services. He also expected to see more planning reforms and changes to housing legislation.

Mr. Huggins then answered a number of questions from Members, including clarification on proposals to allow councils to retain part of any new business rates they receive, and also changes to the Council Tax discount rules from April 2013, which could affect people in lower paid jobs and those receiving benefits.

The President thanked Mr. Huggins for providing such a frank and open view of the current challenges faced by councils and communities.

#### **4. Confirmation of Approved Minutes of the MAM 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

The Minutes of the Members' Annual Meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011 were approved and there were no Matters Arising.

#### **5. Approval of Area Council Members and Officers**

Simon Beardsley outlined the formal process for the election of the Area Chamber's Council Members and Officers.

- a) Area Council Members – Votes cast at the meeting and ballot papers received confirmed the following:
  - i) Ratification of Area Council Members nominated since 2011 AGM as follows: Harry Drury (WLYH); Michael Hopkins (Beales); Robyn Sinclair (REM Marketing).
  - ii) Ratification of nominations for re-election of members retiring by rotation: Matt Clark (ACTIV); Christine Hanson (Bookmark); Philip Hall (Turners); Kevin Pallister (Calthropes); Peter Williams (Punchbowl).
  - iii) Notification of resigned members: Nigel Baker; David Carroll; Simon Clarke; Peter Smeaton.
- b) Area President: Nomination of Phil Scarlett to the role of Area President unanimously approved.
- c) Area Vice President: Nomination of David Norton to the role of Area Vice President unanimously approved.

#### **6. Any Other Business**

The new President presented the out-going President with a carriage clock, a book voucher and a bouquet of flowers for his wife, in recognition and appreciation of all the work he had done to ensure the Spalding & District Area Chamber had become such a successful and respected organisation. All those members present also expressed their thanks.

#### **7. Incoming President's Closing Remarks**

The new President then outlined some of the many challenges that still lay ahead if the Chamber was to fulfil its role of representing its members fully. They still needed to see improvements in the economic well-being of the area as well as continued dialogue with SHDC and other public bodies. Issues such as the Holland Market development, the Road-Rail Hub, parking, the Chamber's emerging business sector Forums and the development of membership across the wider South Holland area were likely to be just a few of the items that would need the Chamber's input. He thanked everyone for allowing him the opportunity to contribute to the continued success of the Chamber over the next two years.

The President then declared the Annual Members' Meeting closed.

#### **Future Meeting Dates:**

- **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September:** Members' Meeting – Broad Street Business Centre – 5.45pm
- **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> September:** Council Meeting – Broad Street Business Centre – 5.45pm
- **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October:** Chamber Council meeting with SHDC Portfolio Holders – 6.00pm
- **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> October:** Council Meeting – Broad Street Business Centre – 5.45pm
- **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> November:** Members' Meeting – Broad Street Business Centre – 5.45pm
- **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November:** Speed Networking – Broad Street Business Centre – 5.30 for 6.00pm
- **Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November:** Council Meeting – Broad Street Business Centre – 5.45pm