

## **Minutes of Axminster Chamber Management Committee**

Held at 18:30 on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at The Lamb Inn, Lyme Road, Axminster EX13 5BE

Present: Jane Rockett (Chair), Alison Hayward (Treasurer), Colin Hayward, John McFadzean, Mark Dowdeswell, Joely Hopkins (Minutes Secretary)

### **Minutes**

#### **1. Apologies**

- a. Apologies were received from Kate Ridout and Karen Hussey.

#### **2. Minutes**

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were approved as correct. Proposed by Alison Hayward and seconded by Colin Hayward.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

##### **a. Benches Update**

- i. There was an update on the progress of the benches, which are all in hand. The Chamber is going to liaise with Tim from Waffle and Jane is going to have a meeting with the Vicar to discuss the use of the green.
- ii. The Chamber also discussed a document from the PCC which is to be signed. They specified that they require proof of insurance and outlined that responsibility for the benches' management, cleaning, and maintenance, including providing bins, will be Waffle's. The PCC will not cover any costs of the benches.
- iii. Mark said he would look over the document for the Chamber.

##### **b. Date for Workshop**

- i. Sarah Hunt has agreed to hold a workshop about promoting business on social media and the Chamber decided on holding it at 7pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March at Whitty Bar, Axminster. It was determined that the charge for non-members would be £10.00 (and free for members).
- ii. In order to promote the event, Jane has offered to do a newsletter on Mailchimp and Alison will post on social media.

##### **c. Empty Shop Window**

- i. Jane updated the Chamber that we are currently occupying a window at Trinity House following the decision at the last meeting to utilise empty shop windows in the town centre. In addition, Alison said she would take photos of the window.

##### **d. Easter Update**

- i. It was decided there would not be an Easter Bonnet parade given the other events being held around the same time. However, the Chamber will endeavour to do more for Easter next year.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

- a. The Chamber's Profit and Loss Report for the end of the year was presented as well as the report for this month, with Alison highlighting a loss last year of £556.97 and a profit this month of £300.00.
- b. It was also emphasised that the Chamber should look for ways to increase membership.

#### **5. Leaflet and Town Map**

- a. Jane gave an update on the status of the new town map and leaflet, explaining that using Delphine's work would cost £400 and for Kate to redraw everything it would be £570. The Chamber agreed that the best option would be for Kate to do the redrawing. Also, Jane presented several quotes for the printing of the map and leaflet to the Chamber.
- b. Axminster Town Council has intimated that they may be able to help with the cost. Barrie has volunteered to re-write the text for free.
- c. Mark said that he would see if there was a contract with Delphine and to check the copyright.

#### **6. Banner Update**

- a. Jane has spoken to Sarah, who has the last two new designs in hand. Jane also confirmed that the women are prepared to paint the two new banners and do repairs but highlighted that there is no definite plan for next year. The banners will be up in time for the VE day celebrations and Gate to Plate.
- b. Sarah also affirmed that she is willing to do a colouring book and will discuss quotes.
- c. The Chamber looked at options for the banner's trail and decided that the leaflet should include a question about each banner and the shop they represent as well as numbers for the posters.

#### **7. Tennerfest 1<sup>st</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

- a. It was confirmed that the town has been accepted to take part in Tennerfest and Alison has advertised the event. The Chamber underlined the need for more photos and to know who is taking part as well as what they are offering.

#### **8. Scarecrows**

- a. The Chamber agreed that there would not be a specific theme, and the participants would be able to do as they wish.
- b. For the workshop on making scarecrow, Heather Fellows has quoted £100, and the Chamber has decided not to go forward with it.

#### **9. Website and What's In Axminster**

- a. Barrie's briefing on the Business Directory and What's In Axminster was presented to the Chamber and his proposal of free listings for one-man businesses was discussed. The Chamber agreed that listings being completely free would not be possible.

- b. The Chamber will ask Adrian for an up-to-date list of the Business Directory and also possibly engage the council for funding the listings.

#### **10. Repot from Axminster Town Council**

- a. Mark presented the report from the town council, confirming that the Finger Posts are now up. The council tax precept has been set for next year and will be above inflation, along with police and fire, who have put theirs up to the maximum they are allowed. Mark also updated the Chamber on the devolution process, explaining that the district council will be restructured into one of two councils within Devon although not in the immediate future. Due to this, the town council may take over responsibility for car parks and other district council facilities. Additionally, the town council confirmed that they will have a presence at the VE celebrations.
- b. The Chamber was also asked to promote the Parish meeting coming up on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, which Jane has been asked to speak at.

#### **11. Any Other Business**

- a. The Chamber discussed the options for a gazebo at Gate to Plate. One company would allow the use of one for free, with the cost of £35 to send it back, but the Chamber agreed to borrow one instead and print its own logos and banners.

The meeting closed at 20:23. The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.