

Axminster Chamber of Commerce

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

(Draft until approved at next meeting)

Held at the Axminster Inn - Monday 16 May 2022

Present: Jane Rockett (acting Chair), Karen Hussey (acting Deputy Chair), Jess Brooks (Treasurer), Barrie Hedges (acting Secretary), Adrian Lausch, Claire Hodge, Pippa Galvin, Amanda Hoden, Nigel Sadler, Steve Holt, Michelle Fisher, Katie Batchelor, Trevor Williams, Gayanath Nanayajkara, Andrew Moulding, Jan Rowe, John Jeffery, Leigh Conley, Andy Richardson, Alison Hayward, Sandie Draper, Matt Smith, Annette Heath-Coleman

1: Apologies: Naomi Eden, Fiona Howard, Chris Williams, Fred Wells, Kelly Apps, Jamie Love, Richard Stenning, Emma Rowe.

2: Minutes

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6 April 2021 were approved as a correct record. Proposed: Karen Hussey; seconded Jess Brooks.

3: Matters arising

There were no matter arising not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

4: Chairman's report

Jane provided a report on the past year which is attached as a separate document.

5: Treasurer's report

Jess provided her report on finances which is attached as a separate document.

6: Election of officers

The following officers were elected unopposed for the year ahead:

- (a) Chair – Jane Rockett (proposed by Karen Hussey, seconded by Jess Brooks)
- (b) Vice Chair – Karen Hussey (proposed by Steve Holt, seconded by Sandy Draper)
- (c) Treasurer – Jess Brooks (proposed by Alison Hayward, seconded by Karen Hussey)
- (d) Secretary – Barrie Hedges (proposed by Jane Rockett, seconded by Adrian Lausch)
- (e) The following were elected to the Management Committee: Sandie Draper, Naomi Eden, Lisa Fifer, Pippa Galvin, Steve Holt, Adrian Lausch, Sophie McLachlan, Andrew Richardson, Emma Rowe, Jan Rowe.

7: 'Community Engagement & Regeneration'

In his capacity as Axminster Town Council's representative on the Chamber, Steve Holt provided a comprehensive presentation on the work of the council over recent months and its plans for the future. He described the changes that were taken place in relation to both staffing and councillors,

the latter having now reached a full complement for the first time in a long while. There was now, he said, a drive to better engage with the community and to spend funds where doing so would strengthen the town. There was general agreement amongst those present that the moves presented a positive picture.

8: 'Building Resilience' initiative

Barrie Hedges outlined a Chamber training initiative that had resulted from discussions with Business Information Point designed to help business owners and managers who were struggling to cope with the personal as well as practical challenges of staying in business. This had resulted in a two-part workshop programme, the first element of which would involve two 90-minute workshops to be held at the Community Waffle House on 7 and 14 June. That would in turn signpost online training sessions to help businesses tackle practical challenges and build new skills. The programme would be promoted via a special Chamber newsletter and social media.

9: Axminster Street Banners initiative

Pippa Galvin and Barrie Hedges gave an update on the street banners initiative and displayed some of the first banners to roll off the volunteer production line. Each banner required many hours of work from sewing of the fabric through design of the imagery, application of the image, painting of several coats and a final sealing glaze. The Banners Group aims to have the first of the banners in place in Trinity Square for the Jubilee celebrations with others following as they were produced. The initiative was enthusiastically applauded by those present.

10: Any other business

A number of points were raised in the discussion that followed, all of which will now be discussed by the Management Committee. In particular:

- Whether a copy of the original Websters Garage mural is available as an image that can become a postcard.
- The need for a physical as well as online business directory to encourage support for local traders.
- Consideration of networking events where traders can socialise and present their businesses.
- The need to make more tourist information available and to ensure that it existed in printed as well as online formats.
- Ideas for a suitable promotional 'strapline' to appear on new signs at the entrances to the town.

Signed as a correct record:

..... (Chair)

Date

