

CHILTERN CHAMBER OF TRADE & COMMERCE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on Wednesday, 21st May, 2014 at 12.30 p.m.
at the Town Hall, Baines Walk, Chesham.

Present: Vee Bharakda – Chairman (Wilkins Kennedy & Co.)
Steve Hayden - Treasurer (Green Telecom)
Jean Pritchard – Secretary
Mike Golding (Golding West & Co. Ltd)
Andy Garnett - Vice Chairman (The Garnett Foundation)
Daphne Clarke (Chessman & Partners)
Michael Clark (Clarks of Amersham)
Robert Havasi (GWS Corporation)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Sandra White, Fred Wilson, Anne Scott, Matt Rogers, Peter Henry Simon Hadland and Kathryn Graves.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vee handed out copies of her address, which she read out, a summary of which follows:

".....this time last year we were the Chesham Chamber of Trade & Commerce. What a lot has happened to bring us now to our new identity as Chiltern Chamber. We are an independent body and look after the towns of both Chesham and Amersham. The impact of this transition has been great and it has resulted in more businesses being part of the Chamber. Both Jean Pritchard and Steve Hayden keep a fantastic record of our 120+ members.

This initiative was discussed in the latter part of 2013 and we began considering the benefits of inviting Amersham businesses to join us, as this would give Amersham town a local voice for business under the banner of the Chamber. With economic development for the whole area in mind we decided to re-open discussions with the Amersham business community, which had first been considered a year or so ago.

History was made in February when our new Chamber was launched under the unanimously-voted name of Chiltern Chamber. A membership drive ensued and our numbers are growing steadily.

Going through the year and since the 2013 AGM, our monthly series of evening events have continued in many different venues. These are not only informative and social but educational and seem to be popular. Our main highlight of the year has been the recently held Chamber Golf Day organised by our treasurer, Steve Hayden of Green Telecom who is thanked for doing an excellent job (also looking after the Chamber's finances!

Last July we invested in Tom Horigan, a marketing consultant, for a 6-month period, to enhance the production of monthly reports, regular newsletters and improving the overall content of our websites. This has now come to an end, and we are indebted to him for his help. The Chamber is currently assisted with some of our website management by Matt Rogers, and Steve Hayden, our Treasurer, has generously given his time to assist in keeping things running for now. We are desperately in need of a webmaster who can provide more regular hours of assistance.

Prior to becoming Chiltern Chamber we joined the Chesham Town Council Partner Scheme together with other organisations with the aim of working more closely with the Council to achieve mutual goals.

The Better Chesham group continues to operate independently and concentrates on community and High Street concerns, leaving the Chamber to focus on economic development. Likewise the Christmas in Chesham group works independently and is now dedicated to the extensive organisation of the Christmas in Chesham street festival with the Chamber's ongoing support. The CiC evening at the end of November was a great success. The Chamber had a stall at this popular event handing out goody bags sponsored by philanthropic local companies.

Our financial year began in October with a new and fairer subscription structure, which had been agreed at the 2013 AGM. It appears to have been well received by our members.

Thanks to Buckinghamshire Business First the Chesham Hub was launched in March at Chesham Library, offering free meeting rooms, wi-fi, hot desks, etc. to Chamber and BBF members. This is of particular help to young entrepreneurs finding their feet as well as sole traders working from home.

Apart from our regular committee, which meets monthly, 5 "ambassadors" have been appointed. These have expressed interest in helping behind the scenes without being formal committee members. They report to our meetings and have achieved much in a short time.

Thanks to their suggestions a new section of the Chamber, which had its first meeting last week, is the Chiltern Traders Association (CTA) consisting of tradespeople such as builders, electricians, etc. who will meet regularly and work together to promote the "Keep Trade Local" ideal.

With Amersham and Chesham now under the banner of Chiltern Chamber, and with the expectation of welcoming more Amersham businesses onto our committee, this announcement was advertised with a specially designed flyer which was delivered to 14,000 businesses and households across the Chilterns. Both Andy Garnett, our Vice Chair, and Peter Henry, one of our ambassadors, worked very hard to write the content of this flyer and design it in a short space of time. A big thank you to them.

We hope to support all our member organisations, help local businesses thrive and champion both local and regional economic development. As a business community we are focussed on growth and the pursuance of new opportunities. We will continue to lobby local organisations on issues relevant to both Chesham and Amersham and look forward to helping our members establish new relationships with potential customers.

I would like to thank my Vice Chair, committee members, ambassadors and all who communicated their support for the Chiltern Chamber. I have been overwhelmed by everyone's enthusiasm.

We concentrate in the future on engaging as a voice of business committed to the enhancement of economic prosperity and quality of life in the Chiltern region".

3. RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1: To receive and adopt the Minutes of the last AGM and Accounts for the year ended 30th September, 2013.

The accounts had been emailed to all the committee by the Treasurer prior to the meeting and copies were available. **Steve** reported that the Chamber's finances are basically in a healthy position and thanked our accountant, **Mike Golding**, for his work in getting the accounts signed off.

There is no room for complacency, however, and we must be careful not to overspend this year as we need to keep reserves of between £3,000 and £5,000. With the new rate of subscriptions coming into force over the last year we have a little more money to spend, but we are in urgent need of a webmaster, who would presumably charge. **Steve** himself can help up to a point but within his limits. We are grateful to him for all he does in this respect.

Andy reminded us that what makes us unique is that we do not charge for our evening meetings so when more people attend we are a victim of our own success. The Golf Day does not cost the Chamber anything.

Steve expects the revenue to drop this year due to the Chamber's accounts now being separate from those of Christmas in Chesham. The Chamber is prepared to make some contribution towards CiC again provided it has sight of their accounts.

The 2013 Minutes and Accounts were **proposed by Andy Garnett and seconded by Mike Golding.**

Resolution 2: To confirm any changes to the Committee, and new members to be proposed and agreed.

The committee is now as follows:-

CHAIRMAN	Vee Bhakda
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Andy Garnett
HON. VICE-CHAIRMAN	Fred Wilson
HON. TREASURER	Steve Hayden
SECRETARY	Jean Pritchard
ACCOUNTANT	Mike Golding
COMMITTEE MEMBERS:	Sandra White
	Jackie Campbell
	Heather Dean
	Robert Havasi
REPRESENTING CTC	{ Cllr. Noel Brown
	{ Cllr. Tina Michael

During the year we had committee resignations from Martin Parkes, Emily Culverhouse and Tom Horigan, but were pleased to appoint Robert Havasi, who has been instrumental in setting up the Chiltern Traders Association sub-group. The intention now is to add 3-4 Amersham members to the committee.

The present committee, including Robert Havasi, was **proposed by Vee Bharakda, seconded by Jean Pritchard.**

Resolution 3: To re-appoint Littlestone Golding as Independent Examiners for the Chiltern Chamber.

With many thanks to **Mike Golding** this Resolution was **proposed by Steve Hayden, seconded by Vee Bharakda.**

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Change of name

Steve proposed, and **Mike** seconded, that the new name CHILTERN CHAMBER Ltd. be recorded at Companies House in place of Chesham Chamber of Trade & Commerce Ltd.

Meeting Venues

It has been decided to hold our monthly lunchtime committee meetings equally divided between Chesham and Amersham from 2015. **Vee** has offered a room at Wilkins Kennedy's offices for some, and **Steve** has space at Green Telecom for the rest. We would still appreciate the use of Chesham Town Hall for our AGM in May.

Directorships

Mick Carling has relinquished his Directorship, leaving **Steve** as the sole Director at present. **Andy** has agreed to become a second Director.

HS2

The Chamber was asked by Chesham Town Council for our views on the HS2 project, and **Andy** read out our reply which pointed out the many adverse effects this would have on business in the Chiltern area.

The Annual General Meeting ended at 1.36 p.m.

Vee thanked all who attended.