

**PRESTEIGNE CHAMBER OF TRADE, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
MEETING HELD AT THE DUKES 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2010**

**Present:** Jenni Simpson, James Tennant-Eyles, Colin Felgate, Eddie Taylor, Malcolm Davidson, Tony Wood, Rosamund Black, Paul Charles, Barry Meredith, Ann Wake, Paula Bowen

**Apologies:** Mrs. Wood, Judy and Mike Ridgeman, Liz Charles, Debra Oswald

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

1. The Minutes of the last Meeting were approved and signed.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

A prototype silk/plastic flower arrangement was brought in by Paul who suggested that several could be used throughout the town during the Summer Season. The attractive artificial flower displays should be low maintenance and could prove an effective alternative to real flowers.

Costs were discussed and Paul said that there would be no charge for the first year as he considered this to be an experiment and trial. After that time he estimated each display would cost between £35/40.

Concern was expressed on the longevity during our unpredictable weather conditions. Paul hoped that some would last between 2/3 years.

It was agreed that 10 displays would be made ready for the middle of April and these would be positioned until October. They would then be cleaned and stored during the winter.

James to check on the insurance costs.

Best Dressed Shop Windows was again discussed and it was decided that if one dressed window was looking particularly good it should be brought to Eddie's attention and the Committee would take whatever action they considered appropriate.

### 3. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

James provided the following information:

|                             |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Balance in Current Account: | £2,195.97 |
| Balance in Savings Account: | £3,035.95 |

James explained that the Current Account looks better than it actually is because £450 has to be paid back to the Council and there are still a few outstanding expenses to be paid.

He produced a Christmas Fair Analysis which showed that for 2009 there had been a loss of almost £300. However, it was stated and agreed the Christmas Fair has never been staged with the sole purpose of making it a profit-making event. It is to provide the opportunity for the population of Presteigne and its surrounding neighbours to join in the celebrations and promote our heritage and facilities.

Tony Wood thanked James for all his hard work in producing the report and organising the marquee.

### 4. **CHRISTMAS FAIR**

It was acknowledged that in general the new decorations had proved to be successful and these would be used at the next Fair in conjunction with Christmas trees and lights.

The flag has disappeared from the Chemists – we will ask Godfrey if he knows the whereabouts as we would like it back.

Paula to write to Giles thanking him for use of his premises for Santa's Grotto.

5. **TOWN DURING THE SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS**

Ann reported that 'How the Town Council had dealt with the Snow' during the recent adverse weather conditions was under review.

6. **TOWN TOURISM PROJECT**

James is looking to collect subs at the beginning of the year and the organisation is carrying on as usual.

There is the same level of activity, but no Sheep Music event is taking place this year. Items relating to fund-raising to be discussed at the next Meeting.

Ann did suggest a 'Supermarket Dash' and it was agreed that this would be further discussed at the next Meeting.

Paula to visit Manager of Tuffins to discuss the possibility of using his Supermarket to stage this event. She will also identify what restrictions may be imposed.

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

7a. **Little People's Play Group:** Ann said that the Little People's Play Group is short of money due to the fact that their funding has been reduced. The children have cultivated a small vegetable patch and they are in desperate need of any left-over seeds, and she requested that all donations are forwarded to the Play Group to keep their project going. Barry offered to supply soil and compost for the garden.

7b. **Chairman and Treasurer:** James read out the following statement:

*"I have now been Secretary and Chairman, Chairman or Treasurer of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce for more than 12 years. Jenni has been Chair for five years. Taking into account our considerable other commitments on behalf of Presteigne, and our joint feeling that it is time for others to take*

*the reigns and inject new energy and enthusiasm into the Chamber we have decided that we will not be standing for re-election in April, although we will remain members.”*

Eddie thanked them for the splendid job they had both done and it was agreed that a letter requesting volunteers for these positions would be sent out accompanying these Minutes. An Application Form would be enclosed and also a brief Job Description for each post.

Should no replacements step forward then the Chamber of Trade will fall into limbo.

7c. **Christmas Light Account:** James went on to say that he is still prepared to carry on looking after the Christmas lights for the time being, although the lights themselves are now 11 years' old and beginning to show signs of their age. The structural testing of the anchorages must be carried out in 2011 before December. The cost of this will be in the region of £1,000 but he believes that an application to the Town Council could result in them paying for this. At current prices the replacement costs would probably be in the region of £1,754.86p. (£298.70 plus VAT per 100 metres). If low energy bulbs are to be obtained at the same time this would cost a further £1,327.75 (£2.26 @ plus VAT). A total of £3,082.61p.

He also said that if we are retaining about £1,000 in the current account as our working capital, we have a reserve of approximately £3,000 that has been created by the efforts of the Chamber for the specific purpose of providing the funds to replace the lights when this becomes necessary. If a new Chairman and Treasurer cannot be found we are concerned that these reserve funds should be ring fenced so that they are available when required for new lights.

This could be done by putting them in a separate account called “Christmas Lights Account” requiring both James and Jenni's signatures in order to release the funds.

Ann proposed that we set up this specific account, and it was seconded by Paula.

7d. **New Bunting:** At the Town Council Meeting it was agreed they would pay £500 towards the costs of new bunting. They

considered the vinyl material to be the better option as it appears to be better value for money and something that would last longer.

7e. **Kays:** James asked if anyone knew what was happening regarding the future of this Company. There had been reports about the Company's employees and future prospects. The Chamber will write to Kirsty and Roger Williams expressing our concerns and the consequential impact on our community.

8. The next Meeting will take place on **MONDAY, 1<sup>st</sup> MARCH at 7.30 p.m. at THE FARMERS ARMS**

***Meeting finished at 9.45 p.m.***