



MINUTES

Dorset Chamber of Commerce & Industry Council Meeting at 4.30pm Thursday 15th March, Hermitage Hotel, Exeter Rd, Bournemouth BH2 5AH

Present:

Chris Palmer (CP), Caron Khan (CK), Helen Stacey (HS), Ian Cambrook (IC), Ian Girling (IG), James Akin-Smith (JAS), James Stelfox (JS), Kimberley Davies (KD), Mandy Holford (MH), Paul Collins (PC), Nicola Newman (NN), Simon West (SW), Steve Bendell (SB), Tony Brown (TB), Vicki Hailes (VH), (minutes)

ACTION

- Dorset Chamber of Commerce & Industry will be shown as (DCCI) throughout the Minutes.

Welcome & Resignations

1. (IC) welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that having received apologies from (CS) he would be chairing the meeting. Apologies were also received from James Lattimer (JL) and Board members Phil Popham, Vincent Boni, Warren Munson and James Robinson.

(IC) invited table introductions to formally welcome new co-opted Ambassador, (TB).

Minutes of the Ambassador Meeting held on 18th January 2018

2. (IC) proposed the minutes, these were seconded by (IG) and agreed unanimously by the Council. The Minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

He then invited Jim Stewart, Chair of LEP and CEO of Poole Harbour Commissioners to deliver his presentation.

Update on Dorset LEP Partnerships and PHC developments

3. Jim began his presentation explaining the role of the LEP and why these partnerships were set up by the Government to promote economic growth.

He updated on the various ways that the LEP had invested the 100m in funding that the LEP had received to date and that the LEP had done well to secure such a large amount of funding with Dorset representing one of the smaller LEP's. Moving forward he said that the Dorset LEP could be more ambitious by working with more partners but out of the nationwide network of 38 LEPs, Dorset had done well to be placed third best in its delivery.

Jim said that the LEP was keen to engage with local businesses and (IG) said that DCCI welcomed this opportunity. (PC) said it was vital that businesses had a clear understanding of the role of the LEP. (IG) said that in his capacity as a LEP Board member he was chair of the

ESB but was keen to form a business based on the Dorset Business Alliance.

Jim said the LEP Board comprised of 16 members and advised that they were keen to get a good representation from local businesses. He said any Ambassador interested in this role should contact Lorna Carver, Director, LEP.

Jim asked if there were any questions and (IC) said that businesses should be very clear in letting the LEP know exactly what they need and that connectivity within the conurbation was very poor. Jim said the LEP were asking the Government to task the Department of Transport, DFT, to undertake a strategic study to look at ways to improve the route from the South Coast up to the M4. He said the exact route hadn't been identified but that this would be for the DFT to decide.

Jim then gave an overview of Poole Harbour Commissioners which had been founded in 1895 to manage Poole Harbour. He explained that as a Trust Port, one of 121 set up by the government, there were no shareholders or owners and any surplus was ploughed back into the harbour and port operations for the benefit of the stakeholders of the trust.

He spoke of the commercial activities with PHC seeing more of the super yachts in port as well as a full range of cruise ships. He said that PHC offer embark and disembark services or transit calls for passenger day trips to local places of interest along the Jurassic coast or further inland.

He pointed out that PHC had won the Marina of the year award twice and that they had hosted the Maritime festival in in 2017 which had been very successful before showing a video.

He then updated on the future projects of the PHC and confirmed that the new £10m expansion on South Quay would be completed in two weeks. He explained that this would provide longer and deeper facilities allowing the port to attract larger vessels.

(JAS) asked if PHC anticipated a problem with pollution as experienced in Southampton. Jim explained that Southampton had more volume, with 3000 acres of port space and a high turnover of containers but that this needed to be carefully considered in Poole in order to maintain the balance between commercial, recreational and environmental interests.

Jim asked if there were any questions before concluding his presentation. More details and PHC's annual report can be found here: <https://www.phc.co.uk/>

(IG) reminded the Ambassadors that Jim was an ex-president of the Chamber and a long-standing Business Partner and was pleased to continue working with Jim in this capacity and through their respective roles within the LEP.

4. **Actions and Matters Arising from the Council meeting held on 18th January 2017**

None recorded.

5. **Dorset Chamber Policy Watch – March 2018**

(IC) presented his policy report Mar 2018 (*a copy of which is attached to and forms part of these Minutes*) to Council prior to the meeting. (IC) began his report saying he would highlight a few points. He started with an update on Brexit with the Brussels summary due on the 22nd/23rd March. He advised that Ambassadors view the BCC website for the business Brexit checklist. http://images.gv-c.com/216/Documents/782/Business_Brexit_Checklist.pdf

(IC) said that Professor Nigel Jump had published his latest Business Intelligence Report and he was pleased to see that this had been covered in the Dorset Business Magazine. He said that key points in the economic data had highlighted that Dorset ranked 32nd out of the 38 local Enterprise Partnerships in terms of output (GVA) and that for the first time Dorset was more than 20% below the national average. (IC) said that Dorset needs to take this as a "wake-up" call to stop Dorset slipping further behind and this should be raised with the LEP. He added that improved connectivity was really important for strategic growth and (IG) updated that he was

already involved with the local authorities around the issue of poor road infrastructure/connectivity in October.

(IC) said that a final decision on the third runway at Heathrow was no further forward but that he was pleased to note that Bournemouth Airport had been bought by Sir Peter Rigby, Regional and City Airports (RCA) owner. (IG) confirmed that DCCI were already engaged with the Chamber and had renewed the Business Partner membership

(IC) updated on the apprenticeship levy and said that there had been a drop in the number of apprenticeship starts and (MH) said Echo-U had found levy overly complex.

He reminded Ambassadors of the new workplace pension with employee's minimum contributions increasing in April. He pointed out that the minimum contribution levels would rise even more sharply in 2019.

(IC) ended his report with special interest item, Reshaping councils in Dorset, and that plans had now been approved to scrap Dorset's 9 councils to create 2 new unitary authorities, subject to parliamentary approval, to come into effect in April 2019.

6. **Monthly DCCI update**

((IG) began his update saying that DCCI was very busy and had produced the first of its new chargeable Business Insights films with Frettons Solicitors. He said the aim was to follow firms with an interesting or unusual story to tell and more films would follow in the future. (IG) said that DCCI had also produced two apprenticeship videos on behalf of the LEP.

He spoke of the BCC conference and said this had been a good day. DCCI had taken a delegation and he had been pleased to see that a number of senior politicians were present and positive about the role that Chambers had to play.

(IG) reminded that as this was National Apprenticeship week, he had attended a couple of events and written articles, namely around changing the perception of the Apprenticeships amongst parents. He asked the Ambassadors to share this on their linked-In Pages.

He said that as April was the time for the bulk of renewals DCCI was very busy. (IG) added that he was pleased with the progress that the membership team were making in respect of new members and renewals and he was also pleased to report that the Business Partner renewals for April were now complete. He informed that only one Business Partner had not renewed but was pleased to report two new Business Partners, BWT Physio and Bluesky Financial planning.

He concluded his report saying that Carmel, Head of Finance, was working on the budget for next year and though finances looked tight he thought the Chamber was in a good place.

7. **Governance**

(IG) gave an update on the current Board members and said that after many years as Honorary Treasurer, Steve Mills had resigned from that post and was now Junior Vice President. Former Ambassador, James Robinson had now stepped into the role of Honorary Treasure and former Ambassador Jason, Gault, was now a non-executive director of the Board.

8. **Any Other Business**

There being no further businesses the meeting concluded at 6.15pm.

Dates of next meetings:

9. **2018 Council Meetings all commence at 4.30pm – venues tbc**

Thursday 10th May
Thursday 19th July
Thursday 13th Sep
Thursday 22nd Nov

Board Meetings all commence at 4.30 pm at Chamber House

Thursday 19th April
Thursday 28th June
Thursday 30th Aug
Thursday 11th Oct
Thursday 13th Dec

