

REPORT OF THE BUSINESS FORUM MID DEVON MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2011, 6.30pm at the TIVERTON HOTEL

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Jim Enright (JE), Chairman, welcomed the attendees.

JE informed everyone that 70 had booked for today's meeting, and extras had attended too.

JE reported that during the last three sessions (including this one) progress had been made. The website is now up and running and the Directory had taken shape. JE asked all members to update their details on the website, by looking at www.bfmd.org.uk. JE also reported that the Constitution of the BFMD was also available to see on the website.

2. **General '5-minute' networking**

JE commenced this evening's session with a general networking 5 minutes where attendees were invited to introduce themselves to each other on their tables. Much networking took place!

3. **Speaker – Peter Shaw (PS) – Marketing on a small budget**

PS informed all of the attendees that there were many pieces to the puzzle of 'marketing', and so he was concentrating on email marketing. PS advised that his presentation was available at:

<http://www.bfmd.org.uk/assets/documents/presentationPeterShawBFMD201111.pdf>.

In particular PS informed about availability of free email marketing from companies such as Mail Chimp and gave us step by step instructions on how to be using email marketing.

4. **Speaker – James Millar (JM) – Marketing on a small budget**

JM gave us all top tips of how to get a Company message across to Newspapers (and other media), and for them to print it (or tell it). JM's presentation can be found at:

<http://www.bfmd.org.uk/assets/documents/presentationJamesMillarBFMD201111.pdf>.

In particular, JM showed us all how important local media was by showing us the statistics for the sales of the four local newspapers, and informed us that actually for each sale, there were 3-4 more people reading that paper (lending it on to family/work colleagues).

5. **Debates – supermarkets – good or bad?**

There was much discussion over this topic, which led attendees to conclude that we all need to band together to make Mid Devon towns attractive for consumers to visit.

Attendees asked Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) to assist in publicising the fact that parking (long stay) was free on Saturdays (for Christmas shoppers). MDDC said that they would do all they could to assist, but actually it was for the shop owners to try to spread publicity to out of town consumers, using the lessons we had learned from tonight's speakers.

6. **Close of BFMD**

JE asked all attendees to take away some invites to the next meeting with them and pass to people who are interested in coming along. JE said that our aim was to increase attendance to over 100 at each meeting and if everyone brought just one person, the room would be packed with opportunity.

The **next meeting** is to be held on Tuesday 17th January 2011, Tiverton Hotel.

Workshop – Essential Negotiation Skills – Robert Hartnett, Director, Edinburgh Business School.

Please do invite other local businesses you know.

CLOSE at 8.30pm, although almost everyone stayed on to continue their networking.

Kim Knox, Secretary.