

Minutes of the BFMD Executive Committee meeting held at 5.00 pm on Thursday 17th January 2013 at the Tiverton Hotel

1. Attendees:

Present: Jim Enright (Chairman), Richard Chesterton (on behalf of Peter Hare-Scott), Kim Knox, John Potter, Chris Prentis, Rhys Roberts, David Disney, Niki Lathwell, Kevin Finan, David Hinshelwood & Stephen Walker.

Apologies: Pene Prior, Peter Shaw.

2. Retiring Members:

Jim Enright noted that both Kim Knox and James Millar were retiring from the BFMD Executive Committee. Kim had been an excellent Secretary.

3. Minutes of the last meeting 20.09.12

- a) The Minutes were approved. Jim Enright confirmed that Rhys Roberts would be taking over as Chairman subject to acceptance by those present at the AGM.

4. Chairman's Report

It was reported that the membership had dropped to 59. One member had closed a business and another moved his business to Exeter. Niki Lathwell said we had some new members coming in. Jim Enright suggested that we needed more press coverage to make local businesses more aware of the BFMD existence. Niki Lathwell said that there is a need to promote the Forum on the basis it isn't just 'another networking event'. The real value of BFMD is in the 'expert' talks, the presence of MDDC and the general culture of friendliness and mutual sharing of experiences and contacts. The valuable networking experience comes out of this.

- a) It was agreed that BFMD would be promoted by MDDC when the business rates invoices were sent out shortly.

ACTION : Kevin Finan

b) See my Local Shop Offer

This provided an opportunity for our own space and to do that free of charge for shops and with products listed free. People check on items and collect locally from the shop. If it catches on there will be some benefits and no cost. The entry could be made either by the MDDC Economic Development department or by ourselves. Richard Chesterton felt it was an opportunity to advance their business. Jim Enright said we could go with a Mid Devon site which would include Cullompton and Tiverton. Richard Chesterton commented there was a need to be confident about who goes on the list. Rhys Roberts added that it was easy to set up a list and BFMD should take the lead. It was agreed that Rhys Roberts would lead the project and get it up and running.

ACTION : Rhys Roberts to get a BFMD site up and running.

c) AGM Arrangements

Jim Enright said that obviously because of the last meeting being cancelled he proposed that the AGM which would be held tonight would be dealt with by voting in the Executive Committee on block. There were no other candidates than those who had put their names forward and individual voting was not therefore required. He said the accounts would be available on a slide. The accounts were very simple. It was agreed that Rhys Roberts would become Chairman following the March meeting, subject to AGM approval.

Robert Hartnell has agreed to re-run his Essential Negotiating Skills seminar in the morning prior to the Advanced Negotiation Skills seminar being presented in the evening at the May BFMD meeting.

Jim Enright suggested we consider having an Expo with pop up stands which could be done free of charge, perhaps at the July meeting. The other possibility was having a stand within the Mid Devon Show, perhaps in conjunction with the FSB. Chris Prentis would discuss this with the FSB and report back.

ACTION : Chris Prentis

d) Software

Niki Lathwell said there was a software addition that would need to be made to the management software which was going to cost £40 plus VAT which would make it easier to follow up on visitors. Also the database would be changed so that all members of an organisation would continue to receive invites (at present when one books or apologises the others stop receiving invites). There is a need to make sure that the data base treated everyone as individuals rather than corporate members.

It was agreed to authorise the software upgrade.

ACTION : Jim to agree the update with Andy Parrott.

5. Financial Report

£3068 in the bank. Two liabilities totalling £54 leaving a net balance of £2979. Ashfords paid twice. 27 members had renewed already.

6. Web Report

Peter Shaw was unable to attend because of a day care operation.

7. PR Report

David Hinshelwood had a telephone conversation with the papers and would aim to get articles published each month. He will speak with Andrew at MDDC to get ideas on copywriting hints and tips.

ACTION : David Hinshelwood to get regular monthly articles in the local press.

8. Twitter Report

Niki Lathwell reported that we had 604 followers. Rhys Roberts said that he was going to talk to East Devon Business Forum about putting themselves into the same sort of format as BFMD.

8. Next BFMD Executive Meeting

Tuesday 19th March 2013 at 5.00 p.m. at Tiverton Hotel.

Rhys Roberts, Kevin Finan and Chris Prentis were all going to be away. Rhys Roberts asked for a new contact list to be prepared.

ACTION : all members of the Executive to supply contact details to Peter Shaw for inclusion on the website. The new members also needed to supply him with a photo and brief biographical details.