

Chamber of Trade & Commerce Chair Report

Month: November

The following report has been produced by the Chair of the North Shields Chamber of Trade & Commerce for discussion at the executive meeting on the 12th of December 2011.

Membership

- In the past month there have been seven prospective members with this interest being generated in part by the recent newsletter and workshop.
- Angela Carter has produced a document for monitoring membership to the Chamber with this document completed by Angela and reviewed at each meeting.

Finances

The finances of the Chamber remain in line with expectations and will be covered as a separate agenda item.

Members Communication

- The first workshop for members and non members was held at the Saville Exchange on Howard St on the 23rd of November with a total of 37 businesses attending. A feedback form for those attending was completed with a very positive response from all those attending. The presentation from the Tyne & Wear Fire Service informed the workshop of the steps which businesses should take with regards to fire safety and a thank you letter has been sent to the service to thank them for their contribution. The Chair would like to thank all of the team for their efforts in making the first workshop a success. The feedback forms and plans for future workshops are is an item included in the agenda for this meeting.
- In preparation for the workshop an e mail was sent out to all members and the executive should consider how best to use e mail to improve communications with members and to raise the Chamber profile.
- A separate media file with all press cuttings has now been established and any members who sees appropriate press coverage are asked to forward copies to the Chair.
- The Chamber have confirmed that they will contribute to the ABC magazine and the North Shields directory with the next editorial due in January 2012. These journals are a good way to promote the activities of the Chamber as they are distributed free to 9,000 homes and 1,000 businesses and recreational sites in North Shields. The Chamber has confirmed that they will provide two pages of Chamber news for each edition.

Chamber Activities

- Plans for the Victorian Market are progressing well with the market taking place on the 10th and 11th of December. At the time of writing this report it is not possible to comment on the success of the event although it is anticipated that the Victorian Market will again be a huge success and a good way of promoting North Shields.
- The 'Gannin Shoppin in Shields' history exhibition was on display at the YMCA during the Victorian Market.
- New seating has now been installed on Bedford St.
- The Council has now closed the Central Library on Northumberland Square and re-located the library to the location of the old library on Howard St. The exact plans for the library are still being discussed by the Council with a range of proposals now included in the budget proposals for 2012/13 for Council consideration. The Chamber should monitor the effect on the footfall in the town centre and the implications for parking around the library location at Howard St. It should be noted that the library will open during the Victorian Market and thanks to Maggie Richardson for ensuring that this happens.
- The Chamber completed a presentation at the Area Forum on the 5th of December to inform the group of the developments of Northumberland Square including the establishment of a town centre notice board and a history trail in the square. Several meetings have been held with various Council representatives to discuss the programme and the first meeting for the project will be held at the YMCA on the 15th of December at 16:30pm with this meeting open to all. The Chamber would like to thank the YMCA for providing a venue for this meeting.
- The Chamber has been asked to attend a meeting with the Council to discuss developing a programme for schools using 'Pop up Shops' to encourage an interest in retailing. The Chair has confirmed the Chamber's willingness to contribute to this process although at the time of writing the actual involvement is still under discussion.
- The Chamber is currently preparing a response to the Council's parking review across the region with this response to be distributed to members for comment in early January 2012.
- The Chair attended the recent Retail Task Force meeting and a separate note on the meeting is included in papers for the meeting.
- The Chair and Treasurer attended the recent North Tyneside Business Forum event which outlined the positive impact on the local community of the opening of Tyne Tunnel 2.