



**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2024**

**PRESENT**      Bruce Penson (Chair)      Boris Rusen      Zo Khan  
                         Cllr Dale Roberts

**APOLOGIES**    Dave Peet      Rebecca Charlesworth      Richard Field  
                         Beverley Kuchar      No reply – Steve Hall

| ITEM | DETAIL  | ACTION |
|------|---|--------|
| 1.   | <b>Apologies:</b> The meeting was opened, and apologies noted.  |        |
| 2.   | <b>Minutes of the October meeting and any matters arising:</b> Went through the action points and the minutes were approved. Outstanding items are included on the Action Points page at the end of these minutes.  |        |
| 3.   | <p><b>Woking Borough Council report:</b> Dale updated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Centre – there is a strong performance in retail. Wolsey Place is fully occupied, with W H Smith &amp; Sports Direct renewing their lease. Bags Shack and Turner’s Furniture have recently opened. There is a short-term Christmas Let – Rayner Fashions.</li> <li>• Victoria Place – now fully occupied.</li> <li>• Commercial Way – there is one vacant unit, subject to let this will be Adventure Golf.</li> <li>• Events – last week was the Christmas Light switch-on by Christopher Biggins. This saw a 10% increase in footfall on the previous week, a 15% increase on the prior week to that.</li> <li>• BBC Radio Surrey will be in Woking on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December to chat with people and do some live hits for the BBC bauble tour.</li> <li>• Market Walk, a new trader has taken a licence – Malaysian food stall.</li> <li>• Farmer’s Market will continue to trade as usual during the Christmas period.</li> </ul> |        |
| 4.   | <p><b>Treasurer’s report:</b> Boris updated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good news - we have less than 5 members outstanding for renewal and are hopeful to get all outstanding payments cleared before the New Year.</li> <li>• 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event was well attended, around 128 people. There was a small loss but to be expected.</li> <li>• We have 78 current members.</li> <li>• We are still behind on preparing the annual accounts – DP &amp; BR to do.</li> </ul>  | DP/BR  |
| 5.   | <b>Planning, Property &amp; Retail committee report:</b> postponed until after meeting of 05/12/24.   |        |

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| <p>6.</p> | <p><b>Business Development committee report including Membership update and upcoming events:</b> Bruce updated on Rebecca’s behalf.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event at the new Hilton Hotel was very successful, with 128 people paid and attended. Members and guests enjoyed, and the feedback was positive.</li> <li>• There was an informal social evening at Mokka Bar last week, less than 10 people attended.</li> <li>• We need to work out the best way of publicising events and asking members what they want from the chamber/what would encourage them to join. Perhaps it needs to be a phone conversation with members to ask for their views.</li> <li>• OneSurrey funding – Bruce involved with the committee that decides how the funding is spent, £8 million. We need to liaise with members and publicise this potential opportunity.</li> <li>• Breakfast event on Thursday with Will Forster at Woking Football Club – less than 10 booked so far. It was suggested this might’ve been better at the Hilton Hotel.</li> <li>• Plans to see if we can do another House of Commons event in Nov 2025.</li> <li>• Would be good to see the photos from the Anniversary Event and do a showcase page on the website, and put on social media/linked in/Facebook etc.</li> <li>• Look for a college student to help with marketing of events - perhaps to help with pictures, give them a brief etc to get uploaded.</li> <li>• Action for the committee: Discussed how to re-engage the existing membership and demonstrate that there’s still a need for the local business community to work together and help each other, and how the chamber can help them.</li> </ul> |  |
| <p>7.</p> | <p><b>IT and website update:</b> Bruce updated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email problems – have a quote from Chris &amp; Onboard365 to fix the email and provide a central place to store Woking Chamber’s documents etc., also the ability to use Microsoft Teams to catch up with members etc. Timing-wise Bruce feels that we should get this sorted urgently, however Boris would prefer it was left until after the membership renewals. The Executive discussed and the general feeling was that we should do this asap, but Boris’s concerns were noted. Bruce to discuss with Dave, Rebecca and Richard to get their thoughts before the go-ahead is given.</li> <li>• CRM/Website – bookings/renewals/sign ups... this is the second issue. Boris raised the point that the person maintaining the website is a one-man band and it has been custom written for us. The first option Bruce had discussed with Andrew is to move away from Rubi to Hubspot which is free and use this purely for bookings. We had prices put together for that. However, Bruce has since spoken to other Chamber membership organisations, and they are all using Rubi, very successfully. Bruce then spoke directly with Rubi who were surprised at the way we are using the system and advised we are not using it properly or to its potential. If used properly Rubi would be able to properly manage memberships, bookings – including multiple tickets, events, and would give a better look to the Events page.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Continued...</b></p>  |  |

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| 7. cont... | It could also link to MailChimp through which you can send better looking Newsletters etc. The downside is that there would be a higher cost to that. Rubi could also integrate with Xero. Gilly commented that whichever system we use, GB/CC must have proper training through the supplier.  |  |
| 8.         | <p><b>Any other business:</b></p> <p>Dale - Could we engage with bigger companies that joining the chamber would work well within their Environment &amp; Social Governance (ESG) responsibility. Perhaps a project for 2025, he would be happy to be co-signatory on a letter to members on the importance of local commercial communities. Need to research on can we tie this to ESG, would it be meeting the ESG commitment?</p> <p>All – Rebecca, can we see the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary pictures within the Executive please that Chris Mann took.</p> |  |
| 9.         | <p><b>Next Meeting:</b> Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December. Location tbc. A more informal meeting rounding up the year. Have apologies from Bruce, Rebecca, Boris.</p>  |  |

| ITEM | ACTION POINT  | DONE? |
|------|---|-------|
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive committee members to think about providing a raffle prize for the December networking being hosted by Mike Harvey's family on 13<sup>th</sup> December. It was suggested that Rebecca could speak with the Hilton Hotel to see if they could donate something.</li> <li>Rebecca to discuss with the Business Development committee the request from Westbrook Data Protection to sponsor an event to celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.</li> </ul> |       |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Development committee: to discuss how to re-engage the existing membership and demonstrate that there's still a need for the local business community to work together and help each other, and how the chamber can help them.</li> </ul>   |       |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bruce to investigate why the system still can't take card payments.</li> <li>Bruce to come back with a proposal for improving Rubi/Website, although this will be potentially more costly if we stay with Rubi.</li> <li>Bruce to liaise with Dave/Rebecca/Richard on their consensus re when we should move to Microsoft365 for emails. This is a different issue to Rubi/Website.</li> </ul>   |       |
|      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rebecca to speak with the new Hilton to see if we could host the WMB Exhibition in October 2025 there.</li> <li>Dave to speak with Paul about the £80 wine bill. Usually this is provided free of charge via sponsorship.</li> </ul>   |       |