



REVIEW

**August
2006**

Review of Chamber Meetings + News Update

MEETING DATES

2006

11 September

9 October

13 November

11 December

2007

8 January

12 February

12 March

HARROGATE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- Chamber made a detailed response to the Local Development Framework
- Key priorities for improvement in the District from a business perspective
- Availability of adequate land and premises of all types and sizes in all areas
- Availability of sufficient employees to fill the jobs created by local business
- Adequate public transport for employees and business visitors to Harrogate
- Increase vocational training and post-graduate employment opportunities

CAR PARKING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

- Chamber made a detailed submission to the Council's Scrutiny Commission
- Strong objection to strict enforcement policy and lack of sympathy on appeals
- Confusion caused by variable time limits and evening/weekend charges
- Concern at maximising revenue generation rather than free-flow of traffic

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Business Safari No 8 at Pavilions of Harrogate rated highly successful
- Next Business Safari is on Monday 11th December – places limited - book early
- Updated Membership Directory enclosed for members only. Check your details.
- Seven new members this month – making a total of 45 this year to date!
- Chamber Table at Pavilions' Christmas party – FREE half bottle of wine each!

Future Meetings

Monday, 11th September - Digital Marketing made easy
A presentation on the latest website design and e-marketing campaigns
by Remo Biagioni of Businets Web Design & Rob Burns of 9xb
at the historic Old Swan Hotel, Swan Road Harrogate -

with £5 million refurbishment completed in February including rebuilding the Garden Room and Ballroom and renovating the conference suites with up to date facilities.

Monday, 9th October - Coaching & Mentoring
- growing your business with the benefit of experience.

*A joint presentation by two Chamber Members:
The Blue Water Partnership and The Trinity Foundation*

PROMOTING HARROGATE BUSINESS

Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, PO Box 8, Harrogate, HG2 8XB

Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025 E-mail: info@harrogatechamber.org Website: harrogatechamber.org

BUSINESS NETWORKING SAFARI NO. 8

The 8th Business Networking Safari was well attended with over 40 companies represented by almost 50 attendees. Everyone enjoyed the informal evening of networking and benefited from making new and renewing old contacts with other Chamber Members.

Discussion of the Focus Group Topics at each table generated numerous suggestions for Group actions.

We would like to express our appreciation to **Pavilions of Harrogate** for their continued support of Harrogate Chamber, generous hospitality and delicious complimentary buffet and refreshments for members.

The next Business Safari will be on 11th December.

HARROGATE DISTRICT NEWS

Local Development Framework Response

Following recent consultation by Harrogate Borough Council, Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce have responded to their Local Development Framework outlining the following key priorities for improvement in the District from a business perspective:-

- Ensure availability of sufficient business **land and premises** of all types and sizes
- Ensure availability of sufficient **employees** to fill the jobs created by local businesses
- Maximise the stock of **affordable housing** for people employed locally
- Provide **adequate public transport** from areas of unemployment into Harrogate
- Improve **access to jobs**, services, transport and facilities in rural areas.
- Improve **rail services** to Leeds and York for employees and for business visitors
- Improve **promotion of Harrogate** Town as a leisure tourism destination
- Improve the prospects of rural and market town economies by more **flexible planning policies** to enable new businesses to replace jobs lost in agriculture.
- Increase **vocational training programmes** covering building and hospitality jobs
- Increase **post-graduate employment** opportunities to attract graduates to Harrogate
- Reduce incidence of **anti-social behaviour** – particularly at night in the Town Centre.
- Care for environment by providing adequate recycling facilities for **business waste**.

Members were also urged to submit their separate responses on this Framework, which were delivered to all homes in the Harrogate District. **Copies of any such responses would be appreciated please.**

If you would like to see the full detailed response from the Chamber, please e-mail the Secretariat for a copy.

Harrogate Car Parking Enforcement Policy

A comprehensive report on recurring problems with the town's car parking enforcement policy was compiled by Brian Dunsby and submitted to the Council's Scrutiny Commission on 20th July as summarised below:

On-Street Parking Charges - no objection to the principle of charging for on-street parking, provided it meets the needs of our business/leisure visitors.

Enforcement Policy - strongly object to the current policy of strict enforcement of parking regulations and very severe penalties for minor infringements.

Out of Town Visitors - visitors from out of town cannot be expected to understand so many different time limits.

Evening and Weekend Charges - a number of streets and off-street car parks are subject to charging during the evenings and weekends, when other parts of the town are exempt from charges. Why?

Disabled Drivers - reports of Parking Attendants being very unsympathetic towards disabled drivers.

Overnight Parking Problems - reports that Parking Attendants often "pounce" shortly after 8am on vehicles parked overnight when the visitors are in nearby hotels.

Business Vehicles - object to the current practice of Parking Attendants "pouncing" on commercial vehicles as soon as they stop to unload or pick-up goods, etc.

Warning Notices - recommend issuing warning notices when a Parking Attendant first notices a breach of the regulations. When the Attendant makes a second tour an hour or so later a penalty would be quite appropriate.

Penalty Value - the penalty of £30 is too high compared with the actual cost of parking. When it increases to £60, it is extortionate. Penalties should more closely relate to the "value" of the time not paid for - say ten times value.

Appeals Procedure - recurring examples of the appeals procedure being harsh and inconsiderate of the circumstances of the appellant. Staff need to be more lenient and allowed to exercise discretion on appeals.

Revenue Generation - the whole scheme seems to be aimed at maximum revenue generation, rather than maximising the free-flow of traffic, coupled with a fair turnover of the available parking spaces.

Disc Zone Problems - a variety of problems associated with the disc zone in between the parking meter area and the uncontrolled residential areas.

Parking Regulation and Publication - concern at the time, effort and money that goes in to promulgating changes in the parking regulations. Need a period of stability, not changing parking time limits unnecessarily.

Portfolio of Evidence - A portfolio of 14 pages of correspondence, press clippings and e-mails illustrating most of the concerns was presented at the meeting.

Hopefully the Chamber's lobbying will result in some changes to the increasingly hostile Parking Enforcement Policy in the town. **Thank you to all members who submitted details of their personal or their clients' experiences of car parking problems in Harrogate.**

SCAMS & SPAMS

Anti-spyware scam e-mail

A scam e-mail is circulating claiming to be from an anti-spyware company which is actually being used to spread a new Trojan-downloader. The e-mail tries to fool people into believing it is from a genuine company - in one case SpysoftCentral.

The e-mail purports to be from the customer service department and claims to be confirming subscription to one of its products and mentions the deduction of £79.39 from the **recipient's credit card account**.

The attachment contains the detailed invoice – when the attachment is opened a Trojan-Downloader.Bancos is downloaded. The Trojan can then be used to download new malware on to the PC. **BEWARE – DO NOT OPEN.**

Full details can be read on-line at www.computeractive.co.uk/2160833

Czech your invoices for a directory scam!

North Yorkshire Trading Standards (NYTS) are warning businesses about International Business & Trade Database. This is essentially a directory and businesses may find themselves **tricked into paying for an entry**.

Local Companies are receiving a pink Reply/Order form from a company called **United Media s.r.o.** of Albrechticka, Most, **Czech Republic**. The form asks the recipient to sign the form and return a cheque for £396.70. They could also be committed next year!

The concern is that larger firms may inadvertently pay this 'order form' believing it to be an invoice. NYTS are advising that all invoices are checked very carefully and you should direct your staff to do the same.

This exact invoice has, in fact, been received recently by Harrogate Chamber and a member The Rocking Horse. It is possible that Harrogate is currently being targeted.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Christmas Party Night Special Offer

Pavilions of Harrogate are offering Harrogate Chamber members a complimentary half bottle of wine per guest on bookings received by 30 October for their Christmas Party Nights on Thursday 14 and Friday 15 December.

A Chamber Table has been booked for the Friday evening, which all members are welcome to join, or you can book a table for your own company. Simply advise Pavilions that you are a member of Harrogate Chamber when you book.

The evening begins at 19.30 with Champagne Fountain and Bucks Fizz Reception, followed by a 3-course dinner, coffee and Christmas Chocolates! The Bar is open until 01.00 with dancing until 01.30. (A quiet bar is also promised!) All this for just £29.50 per person!

For further details or to book contact Karen Sweeney
Tel: 01423 544544 Fax: 01423 551234
e-mail: enquiries@pavilionsofharrogate.com

MEMBERS' FORUM

eSOURCE Group acquire Commpete

The business and assets of Commpete International have recently been acquired in a Management Buyout by the eSOURCE Group. Brian Haines (Past President of the Chamber) will continue in a senior role and there will still be a Harrogate base. The international element of the business is set for growth across the Americas, the Far East & Middle East. Tel: 01423 709092 or 07747 842794 or see: www.esourcegroup.eu then News.

NEW MEMBERS

Aqanta Business Coaching Ltd (Business Coaching)

Sean Keogh, Business Coach
67 St George's Road, Harrogate, HG2 9BP
Tel: 01423 701677 Fax: 01423 701677
E-mail: seankeogh@action-international.com
Web site: www.actioncoaching.com/seankeogh

Catalyst PM Ltd (Executive coaching & consultancy)

Joanne Murphy, Director
PO Box 533, Harrogate, HG1 9AH
Tel: 01423 550809
E-mail: joanne@catalyst-pm.co.uk
Web site: www.catalyst-pm.co.uk

Charles Crisford Fine Art & Chattel Valuations (Fine Art Valuations)

Charles Crisford, Valuer
20 Regent Terrace, Harrogate, HG1 4BL
Tel: 07970 414594
E-mail: cecrisford@yahoo.co.uk
Web site: no website

Conference Events Ltd

(Conference & Event Management)
Andrew Macdonald, Managing Director
Wynay Lodge, Station Road, Pannal,
Harrogate, HG3 1JJ
Tel: 01423 810297 Fax: 0870 199 1111
E-mail: andrewm@conference-events.biz
Web site: www.conference-events.biz

Hampden House (Nursing & Care Home)

Lynda Cooper, General Manager
120 Duchy Road, Harrogate, HG1 2HE
Tel: 01423 566964 Fax: 01423 562792
E-mail: Lynda.Cooper@efhl.co.uk
Web site: www.efhl.co.uk

Inktech Supplies (Printer consumables)

Philip Holmes, Director
PO Box 576, Harrogate, HG1 9DJ
Tel: 07786 548460
E-mail: phil@inktechsupplies.co.uk
Web site: www.inktechsupplies.co.uk

The Moko Lounge (Bar, Lounge, Club)

Andrew Billingham, Managing Director
2 Kings Road, Harrogate, HG1 1BT
Tel: 01423 525862 Fax:
E-mail: andy@tocattasolutions.co.uk
Web site: www.mokolounge.com

Pay the bill - or pay the ultimate price

More than a quarter of businesses have sought winding up orders against other firms that have failed to pay their debts, according to the Better Payment Practice Group (BPPG). Statistics show that small firms are three times as likely as large ones to wait for payment. Financial experts say that **applying for a winding up order** is the most extreme measure that can be taken and that firms should first serve a statutory demand for payment before taking that step. More information at:

www.thisismoney.co.uk/small-business/article.html?in_article_id=410231&in_page_id=10

Cash for entrepreneurs

The Government is investing more than £40 million in two new Enterprise Capital Funds (ECFs), which will provide funding for **high-growth small businesses**. The £37.5 million Dawn Capital Fund will provide money for traditional industries. The ECF initiative uses funding from the public and private sectors. The Government said the announcement of the extra funding demonstrated its determination to support entrepreneurs.

Read press release at:

<http://www.sbs.gov.uk/sbsgov/action/news?cat=SBS&toPicId=7000000448>

Guidance for online VAT compliance

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has published new guidance for businesses that want to use accountancy software packages to meet their VAT obligations. The guidance has been produced in association with the British Standards Institute (BSi), and covers the essential features that should be included in **accountancy software** in order to facilitate compliance with VAT rules.

More details in Government press release at:

www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=212700&NewsAreaID=2

Firms reminded of fire regulations

Businesses are being urged to act now to ready themselves for the **new fire safety regulations** that will come into force on 1 October 2006. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2004 puts full liability for fire hazards on the 'responsible person', which will normally be the business owner. The ruling means current fire safety certificates will no longer be valid. Lawyers say firms should have a new fire risk assessment carried out and document the findings so they can prove they have taken all reasonable precautions to prevent fires.

More information at:

www.sourcewire.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=26435&hilite

Firms urged to back up data

One in three small businesses do not backup vital information, according to research by an accounting software company. A third of firms surveyed by KashFlow.co.uk said they had **lost key financial data** due to computer problems or because they had misplaced the paper copies. Small traders and micro businesses are being warned that one virus or error could destroy their data. More information at:

www.sourcewire.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=26228&hilite

Guidance for prospective employers

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has published a free guide providing advice for first-time employers about their **tax obligations when taking on staff**. The advice pack includes information about how to register with HMRC, how to set up and manage a payroll and when and how to file tax returns.

The 'Prospective Employer's Pack' is available at:

www.hmrc.gov.uk/employers/prospective_emppack.pdf

Firms warned about data responsibilities

Firms are being warned that they are still liable for any **data protection glitches** that happen even if they have outsourced their customers' personal information to a third party. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) says businesses must be aware of their responsibilities under the UK Data Protection Act 1998, even if they have outsourced the information to firms based abroad. Find out more at: www.out-law.com/page-7099

Plain-English guide to risk assessments

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has published a revamped guide to **carrying out a risk assessment**. The guide aims to provide plain-English advice for business owners about what is and is not expected of them when conducting risk assessments, including practical examples. HSE's Deputy Chief Executive, Jonathan Rees, said the guidance had been revised to make it more straightforward, in an effort to "save lives, not tie businesses up in red tape."

More from the HSE at:

www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=213433&NewsAreaID=2

Directory of women in business

Women at Work is a business directory that brings together a comprehensive database of **self-employed women** working across a range of different sectors. Users can register and network with each other via the site. The site is also a searchable resource for clients seeking services. You can access the directory at:

www.womenatwork.co.uk/links.asp

Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, PO Box 8, Harrogate, HG2 8XB

Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025 E-mail: info@harrogatechamber.org Website: harrogatechamber.org

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