

## **Minutes of Meeting**

**25<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

### **Welcome to the meeting by the Chairman and aim of the Business Club**

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to the members and briefly reported to the meeting the key aims of the Business Club. Namely, that the club is able to provide a voice for businesses in Lincoln, whilst also being a relaxed environment in which to meet and network with members of the local business community.

### **Member Introductions**

Starting with the committee members, each of the members stood up and introduced themselves and stated which businesses they are from. The Chairman went on to discuss that today's meeting would see the introduction of a Topical Discussion in replacement of one of the speakers. He further invited members to offer discussion topics forward to the committee at the coffee break.

### **Sponsorship for Future Meetings**

The Chairman reminded the club members that to sponsor a meeting it is £50 and that entitles the sponsor to talk for five minutes in relation to their business. The Chairman also reminded the club members that the club is a non-profit making organisation and that for every £2 that they pay each meeting, £1 goes to the football club to put on the refreshments and the other £1 goes into the club savings. The savings are then split between two charities at the end of the year. The charities are decided by the members although the committee encourages the members to go for local charities

In addition to charitable donations, the Chairman commented that the Business Club also uses the money to raise its profile for example, by purchasing the banner which the members were able to see as they entered the meeting. This is for use at events where Lincoln Business Club is raising its profile and that of the businesses who are its members. For example, at a recent recruitment event held at the university.

### **A Word from Our Sponsor: Debbie Lyons – Turner Evans Stephens**

Debbie introduced herself and James Wilson from the Turner Evans Stephens team. Debbie went on to discuss the array of services that Turner Evans Stephens provide, and offered a brief introduction to the members of the team who provide those services to a very high standard. This service standard includes the ISO 9002 Quality Assurance Accreditation.

Debbie also provided information on the various offices that the company have and that between them, these offices can cater for most Estate Agency requirements.

### **Speaker: Professor Brian Winston – University of Lincoln**

After introducing himself, Professor Winston stated that his intention for today's meeting was to provide an update on the status of the University since his last visit to the Business Club. Professor Winston acknowledged that the University has direct impact on businesses in Lincoln and as such, the people in the room.

Professor Winston went on to discuss the original mission statement of the University, to be a 'University of Quality and Distinction by 2005'. He added that although they are not there yet, they are undoubtedly heading towards the statement, providing rejuvenation and sustainability for Lincoln.

The Professor further enhanced on how the University impacts on the City sustainability and aids in improving the quality of life in Lincoln. The aim of the University is to keep talented young individuals in the county. In order to do this Professor Winston stated how they want to ensure the young people coming out of the University, meet the needs of businesses in the City.

The Professor provided members with information on the huge pool of skills within the University that could be of value to businesses in the City. As the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest employer in the County, these include a vast range of services, specialist advice in many business areas, and student placements.

Professor Winston went on to discuss the league table status of the University and said that the University is perceived very low on out of date information, and in fact that they are approximately 20 places higher, and on student satisfaction surveys, up 40 places higher.

The University has made huge improvements since the last league table information and the new results will be out next year to show how far they have come. Professor Winston stated that they are aiming to be the most improved University in the Country. The Professor also informed members that the University of Lincoln has limited funding for research and teaching, and also that the reputation of the University within the sector is much higher than public perception.

Professor Brian Winston concluded by informing members that the University structure is sensitive to the needs of business people, and as such want to work with members and other business people to ascertain where the University is heading for the future.

Finally, Professor Brian Winston took questions from the floor.

### **Speed Networking**

The Chairman encouraged members to change places and sit with people they did not know and where possible to have full tables in order to get the most out of the speed networking part of the meeting. This enables members to sell their business for 1 minute to the rest of the people on their table. This is a valuable opportunity to get to know the members of the club and to swap business cards. We were all reminded to bring enough business cards to circulate round the table as we talk.

### **Topical Discussion**

The Chairman ran through the discussion topics that had been put forward by members and the consensus decided the Rail Network closing Lincoln High Street for around 10 days should be discussed thoroughly. Stacey Murphy put forward the facts, and invited members to discuss how they thought this might affect local business.

Members put forward arguments for and against. Some stated that there is 'no pain – no gain', and that we should accept the closure for the benefit of getting the Lincoln – London direct rail link, as this will benefit the Lincoln community hugely.

There was some further discussion on the road infrastructure of Lincoln and the vast amount of people that travel to work in the Lincoln area every day. Points were raised concerning the fact that there is not enough cash to develop the structure we need and the reasons behind the lack of cash, for example, the main proportion of people using the Lincoln road system do not live within Lincoln City and therefore do not pay towards the care and development of the road system. Also, that the people within Lincoln City are mainly A and B band properties, which do not bring in enough revenue to do what is required on the Lincoln road structure.

Another conversation point raised was that businesses who considered themselves affected by the rail closure should quantify losses and consult a solicitor to take the matter further. However, this was dismissed by others members due to the fact that the closure was due to a statutory requirement of the Rail Network, and also that local businesses were consulted.

A member who was included in the original consultation process, commented that there were valid technical reasons for the closure and the benefit far outweighs any temporary difficulties. It was widely accepted that having an improved passenger link to London would benefit the City.

#### **Card Draw Speaker: Nicola Stocks of Elexus Consulting**

Nicola briefly discussed how important it is to look after the people who drive your business forward, and went on to inform members on the array of business related training courses Elexus Consulting run to do just that.

The courses run right through from NVQ qualification, to middle management and executive development. There are also new leadership and management development courses coming up.

The card draw speaker for the May meeting will be Louise Parker of Right Recruitment.

**Prizes were provided by Peter Connolly of WSI and presented to Bryan Williams from The White Hart Hotel, and Simon Par of AMA Vehicle Finance.**

## **Member Announcements**

There were several member announcements which were as follows:

Chris Trigg promoted a Chartered Management Institute event at the University of Lincoln on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Kate Strawson (Shooting Star PR) informed members of lazy networking at the Orgasmic Cafe on the first Friday of the month, starting 4pm.

Lorraine Setterfield promoted a Young Enterprise event at the University of Lincoln on 12<sup>th</sup> May 08.

Jon Finegold promoted the Newark Jazz Festival on May 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>.

Stacey Murphy, of Lincolnshire Media promoted the Business Awards that are coming up in July and encouraged members to enter.

Steve Bilton informed members of his upcoming seminar on document management

Richard Hare of McKinnells Solicitors discussed his seminar on how to avoid employment law claims at Lincoln Drill Hall on 13<sup>th</sup> May at 5.45pm.

Karl Heard-White of Trisight Ltd, invited members to attend 'Death of a Business – Avoid the Marketing Pitfalls' on 10<sup>th</sup> June and Washingborough Hall, 8-10am

## **Date and Time for Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2008 at 7am – 9am.