

## **Lincoln Business Club - Minutes of Meeting**

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

### **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.

### **Sponsorship for Future Meetings**

The Chairman reminded the club members that to sponsor a meeting it is £50 per meeting (as of October the cost will be £75) 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 – Nicki Gray - thebestof Lincoln**

Nicki introduced herself and began to tell members about the benefits of membership with thebestof Lincoln. Nicki discussed how people often refer to thebestof Lincoln as a web directory and that the purpose of this presentation was to educate members of the Lincoln

Business Club of the huge array of online and offline services available to promote a small selection of fantastic, highly recommended businesses in the Lincoln area.

thebestof Lincoln provide business support by mixing and matching businesses and people together, whether business to business or business to consumer. Promotional services include a web presence and traffic driver, with fantastic search engine optimisation to ensure businesses get found when people are looking for their product or service, a range of networking opportunities, a business to business magazine that goes to every trading business in Lincoln and the surrounding area, a business to consumer door drop that goes to 40,000 homes in Lincoln, car sponsorship, billboards and much more!!! All this but prices still start at less than £1 a day!!!

Nicki also told members about the money back guarantee that they offer members, and how businesses have nothing to lose by investigating the benefits!!!

### **Speaker – Maria Iliffe – Learning and Skills Council**

Maria introduced herself to members and that she was here to discuss The Skills Pledge. She went on to tell us how skills development and staff recruitment are one of the main issues facing businesses of all sizes. Maria also said that even though skills development is crucial for business, the average spend on training has taken a dramatic downturn in the face of the recession.

Maria provided members with examples of how training and development through the skills pledge had benefited businesses by saving on recruiting costs, reducing staff turnover, promoting more staff internally, increasing turnover, profit and profit margins.

Members gained knowledge on the huge range of qualifications available from customer service to fish frying!! Maria said courses are tailored specifically for businesses needs and not just delivered off the shelf. More businesses are also now eligible for £350 million worth of funding specifically aimed at helping businesses through the recession.

Finally, Maria provided members with contact details for more information on making The Skills Pledge. Businesses can either contact the national helpline on 08000 15 55 45 or contact Maria directly on 07970 782125.

### **First Speed Networking Session**

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.

### **Coffee Break**

#### **First Card Draw Speaker – John Cawdell, The Trent Valley Academy**

John informed members about the new Trent Valley Academy at Corringham Road, Gainsborough. The Academy is a new purpose built educational establishment on a 12 hectare site. John told us about the Special Education block, and the Technology and Performing Arts block which the sponsors and governing body are particularly excited about. One of the main sponsors of the venture is Dragons Den entrepreneur James Caan, with a governing body made up of local business people.

To finalise, John reminded members of a quote by Nelson Mandela – *‘the most powerful tool in the world to improve things is education’*.

#### **Second Card Draw Speaker – Eddie Strengiel, Phoenix Independent Financial Solutions Ltd**

Eddie reminded members about the importance of retirement planning and pensions as well as informing us that he can take care of a range of financial requirements including offshore and onshore investments, savings and mortgages. Eddie also alluded to the financial problems of the time by discussing with members that investments should be seen as long term investments and that investments will always go up and down in the short to medium term.

**Card Draw:** The business card draw was won by Gordon Brearley of Auditel Cost Management Consultancy

### **Website**

Mark Jarvis reminded members that they need to register as members on the website if they have not already done so.

### **Events**

The Chairman informed members that the new events co-ordinator for the committee is Alex Gray.

### **Announcements**

There were several member announcements which were as follows:

Ladey Adey promoted her upcoming Racecourse day , assisted by Andy Walters in order to show that it is for males and females!

Dean Hyde, Chairman of Newark Business Club informed members of their next meeting at Cedric Ford Pavillion on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February, 7am start and £4 to pay on the door

Andy Seymour promoted a pantomime he is starring in 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> February with the Cherry Willingham players.

The Chairman informed members that there are new Lincoln Business Club badges available and if members are interested to see a member of the committee.

The Chairman then went onto announce to members that Emma Clement, the club secretary, would be leaving us today as she takes maternity leave. The Chairman thanked Emma for all her hard work on behalf of the club and presented her with a card and a lovely bunch of flowers. The Chairman went onto say that Nicki Gray would be taking over the role as Club Secretary and Alex Gray would move to Assistant Secretary.

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

The next meeting will be Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 7am – 9am.