



**Staffordshire**  
Chambers of  
Commerce.

# Minutes of the Staffordshire Moorlands Chamber of Commerce Local Area Advisory Board

Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Buxton and Leek College at 09:30 hours**

<b>Present</b>	Rachel Buxton	Thompson Wright Chartered Accountants	RB
	Natalie Hewitt	HCA	NH
	Jed Eatough	LSGK Accountants LTD	JE
	Tom Wilkinson	BETA Commercial Finance	TW
	Tony Millar	Great Grounds	TMi
	Tom Malpass	Buxton & Leek College	TMa
	Tamsin Parker	Legs PR Agency	TP
	Adrian Hide	Hide Consultancy	AH
<b>In Attendance</b>	Sara Williams	Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce	SW
	Karena Pawlak	Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce	KP
	Sandra Nixon	Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce	SN
	Steven Hopwood	Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce	SH
<b>Apologies</b>	Wayne Johnson	Klarius	WJ
<b>Distribution</b>			

NO.	ACTION POINTS/DECISIONS	By whom?	By when?
	<b>WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES</b>		
	Welcome and introduction by RB.		
	<b>MEMBERSHIP AND EVENTS UPDATE</b>		
	<p>KP gave an update of Chamber membership, which is now up to 1165 including Patrons.</p> <p>Moorlands membership is now 86, with Stafford and Stoke being on 314 and 578, respectively. Finest has 63 members, while Future Finest has 61.</p> <p>There was 27 Patrons, 50 Start-Up members, and 9 Nexgen Members.</p>		

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	<p>KP gave a list of new members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Goat Soap Company (Start-up Membership)</li> <li>• Jayne Fergusson (Start-up Membership)</li> <li>• Scrumbles</li> <li>• Sam Hughes Counselling</li> <li>• Active Resilience</li> <li>• Cosy Direct</li> <li>• Hello Housekeeping</li> <li>• WSG Fire &amp; Safety</li> <li>• Engage Creative (Start-up Membership)</li> <li>• Ohana Education (Start-up Membership)</li> </ul>		
	<p>RB asked which areas are being targeted for recruitment of new members. KP noted that the Moorlands will be targeted, across all sectors.</p> <p>Karen Palmer has been brought into the membership team, as Declan Riddell has taken up a new role as policy advisor. SN is still acting as account manager for Moorlands businesses, and will be looking at data capture. A new member relationships and sales officer is to be recruited in January.</p> <p>RB asked if any data collected could be fed back to the board. KP noted that infographics, blogs and social media content is to follow.</p>		
	<p>KP gave an update of Events, starting with the Awards, Business Festival and Let's Do Business (LDB). All were well attended, and good feedback has been received from attendees.</p> <p>Uttoxeter Racecourse has been booked for next year's LDB event. Stand bookings will open in the coming weeks – exhibitors are encouraged to book early.</p> <p>RB noted that Thompson Wright held their first LDB stand this year, and had a fantastic experience. SW asked if RB would be happy to be quoted for marketing purposes. RB also noted that Hex Group have expressed interest in holding a stand at next year's event.</p> <p><b>ACTION – SN to contact RB for a quote regarding LDB.</b></p>		
	<p>KP noted that the Moorlands Christmas Drinks will be held at the Foxlowe on 13/12/2022 from 5:30 onwards.</p> <p>The Moorlands Business meet-up will be held on 09/02/2023, at 5:30 in the Stafford Arms.</p> <p>The Moorlands Breakfast and a Speed Networking event are to be held in March and April, respectively. Dated are to be confirmed – RB to meet with Kelly Edwards to finalise.</p>		

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	<p>RB asked that ideas for events and speakers are forwarded before the next event meeting.</p> <p>KP is keen to onboard potential venues for future meetings, and would like any leads to be forwarded.</p>		
	<p>A question from JE regarding Airport parking and AA membership led to a discussion of how best to keep members informed of their included benefits. KP noted the difficulty of keeping members informed. TMI suggested that links be provided in newsletters, and more prominently on the website.</p> <p>SW noted that the benefits package can be difficult to convey to new members, particularly when they have a specific reason for joining such as networking, as they don't tend to take in any additional information. RB noted that each member would have a different focus, and that a lot of information at sign-up can be overwhelming. A members' handbook was suggested, as well as a clearer member benefits section on the website.</p> <p>KP noted that a new version of the More Brochure has been designed, and will soon be going to print. The brochure will also have a digital version, and bespoke versions will follow. There is also plans for a "Welcome box" containing benefit information.</p> <p>SW added that all feedback is appreciated.</p>		
	<p>RB ended the membership update by asking an open question about the future direction of the Staffordshire Moorlands Chamber Board, and prompted all attending to forward suggestions by email to: <a href="mailto:rachel.buxton@twca.co.uk">rachel.buxton@twca.co.uk</a></p>		
	<b>PRESENTATION ON APPRENTICESHIPS FROM TONY MALPASS OF BUXTON AND LEEK COLLEGE</b>		
	<p>TMa gave a presentation on updates to Buxton and Leek College apprenticeship programmes.</p> <p>Main Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been a shift in compliance, rules and regulations. Apprentices are now allowed six hours of off-the-job training as opposed to 20% of their total hours.</li> <li>• Part time courses are now available for part time positions on pro-rata time and OTJ increases.</li> <li>• New apprenticeships being offered in 2022/23, include Level 2 Craft Baker, Level 3 Digital Marketer and Level 4 Hospitality Manager</li> </ul> <p>There was brief discussion of the Apprenticeship levy, particularly how funds have been transferable since 2019 due to a large incidence of lost funds where the levy is not claimed.</p>		

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	<p>Questions –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RB asked about travel links between the Leek and Buxton campuses. TMa noted that an inter-campus minibus is available for students. This important, as different facilities are available at each site.</li> <li>• TMI asked if the campus hair salon is open to the public, and how much of a hairdressing course is covered by the salon. TMa stated that the salon has just rebranded, and is open to the public. The salon is a training facility that is offered in addition to employment as an apprentice, and does not directly employ apprentices.</li> <li>• TW asked if learners are able to join at any time of year. TMa stated that apprentices can begin at BLC at any time of year, and that six induction points are available. This creates cohorts of inductees, which has led to functional skills training opportunities prior to the start of employment.</li> <li>• TW asked about the digital marketing apprenticeship, and whether it could be split with business administration, for example. TMa stated that there is no shortage of candidates for digital marketing, but that COVID had created a demand among employers that had since diminished. With regards to combined subject apprenticeships, TMa noted that these can be arranged on a case-by-case basis, according to employer requirements. Employers must have PAYE and a digital apprenticeship service account.</li> </ul>		
	<b>STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS CHAMBER PRESIDENT'S UPDATE</b>		
	<p>RB gave a brief update. RB would like to drive better engagement with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC), particularly since information was recently released regarding allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Funds (UKSPF). RB expressed concern that the offer seems to focus on High Street and Tourism based businesses, and that there was little engagement prior to the consultation document being produced. SW added that there has been no news regarding progress on UKSPF generally. There was discussion of a general lack of communication and engagement from SMDC. It was suggested that someone from SMDC be invited to a future board meeting to give more of an update.</p> <p><b>ACTION – SN to get in touch with Andrew Stokes or Mark Briand of SMDC to speak at a future meeting.</b></p>		

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	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT</b>		
	SW gave a brief report. There will be changes to the structure of the Chamber over the coming months, as the cessation of European funding streams such as the ERDF will necessitate a more commercial approach to delivering Chamber services. Sponsorship opportunities are being explored. The board has recognised the need for business focused support, and will continue to invest in the Chamber.		
	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>		
	JE would like to thank the Chamber for their continued support of the Dyer's Den competition. The next round has three strong entrants, and a press release is to follow.		
	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>		
	<b>February 2023 – Vicki Hardie will be sending all the invite out shortly.</b>		