

# CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



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Minutes of Meeting on 6 April 2004 - Annual General Meeting:

CRYSTAL PALACE & NORWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
HELD AT 1ST FLOOR, LORENZO'S RESTAURANT, WESTOW HILL

1. Present

Honorary Chairman - James Slattery-Kavanagh - Quotes  
Honorary Secretary - Lucy Smith - MyMatiz.com  
Honorary Membership Secretary - Mary Kennedy - The Tanning Shop  
Honorary Solicitor - Geoff Harding - Bennett Welch  
Sharon Parry Baldwin - Town Centre Manager  
Andrew Warde FRICS IRRV - Nelson Bakewell  
Steven Palmer MRICS MBEng - Palmer Lim  
Melvyn Harrison - Crystal Palace Foundation  
Mark Allen - Allen's Florists of Distinction  
Lorenzo Nargi - Lorenzos  
Frank Lissimore - Amphlett Lissimore  
Emma Jayne Sheeha - Amphlett Lissimore  
Kevin Carleton-Reeves - Transport Consultant  
Dr Nigel G Harris - The Railway Consultancy  
Ramesh Appadso - Grand Bay Boutique  
Wendy Chow - Croydon Zone

2. Apologies

Honorary Treasurer - Peter Runacres - Thornton Springer

3. Presentation and Approval of Accounts

The accounts will follow at a future meeting. The minutes of the AGM 2003 were circulated in November 2003. No issues were outstanding and the minutes were approved.

4. Chairman's Review

Over the last few months the one way system has been the focus of the meetings. The Chair said he hoped the Chamber would become a networking event with guest speakers on business issues rather than just a talking shop for community related issues.

5. Election of committee members

Ten voted in favour of the proposed committee members:

Honorary Chair - James Slattery-Kavanagh  
Honorary Membership Secretary - Mary Kennedy  
Honorary Treasurer - Peter Runacres  
Honorary Solicitor - Geoff Harding  
Honorary Secretary - Lucy Smith

## 6. Consideration of Resolutions

The Chair proposed at the last meeting that there be an amended constitution to reflect the changes over the last twenty years. Geoff Harding raised a few queries e.g. dissolution. This section remains unchanged but one way to get round this is to have a fall out provision that you can give the money to charity. The proposed changed wording was "...to such a charity as the members should decide". This wording was agreed and the new constitution was proposed and agreed.

## 7. Presentation - Andrew Warde FRICS IRRV: Business Rates

The ratings list is a list of assessments for rating purposes that covers every single non-domestic property in the UK. They are on the VOA web site. The council collects rates on behalf of the treasury and represents half of the money councils actually spend. Rates are a tax set by the government. The assessment will be brought up to date in April 2005 so that values represent current trends in value. You can appeal the new rates and 30% of rateable values were appealed at the last change. An advisor will advise whether it is worth appealing. The rateable value is an assessment of rental value taken at a time. An advisor can tell you whether your charge is right, what it will be in advance to help with your budget and can help you to save rates (apart from empty property or partially empty property). The advisor can make a rate's appeal and can help you obtain the money that needs paying back. Before using an advisor check they are registered with the RICS or IRRV. Most ratings advisors operate on results so beware if they ask for payment in advance.

In October the government will send out valuations to all rate payers.

The new business improvement districts will be paid for by rate payers.

### Questions

Q - How do they take into account improvement works carried out by the tenant?

A - Alterations mean rental value increases, therefore rates increase.

Q - How do they re-evaluate? They can't go round every property?

A - They keep extensive records and when appealing the officer will look at the property and do his valuation afresh. More and more valuations are being done using available technology.

Q - Can they apply to increase if they find they've undervalued the property?

A - Yes, they can, so do your homework before hand.

Q - What are your fees based on as an advisor?

A - Fees are linked to success of appeal.

## 8. 150th Anniversary of the Crystal Palace

10th June is the anniversary of the opening of Crystal Palace. Chamber members can have a stand on the weekend event in the park on the 5th and 6th June. Melvyn Harrison distributed the Crystal Palace Foundation News which contained an application form for this event. The Crystal Palace Foundation is based in Crystal Palace Museum and is open on Sundays. The event will be held on the Italian Terrace and forty organisations have signed up. There will be a marquee and funfair and it is envisaged that the event will not be dissimilar to Lambeth Country Show (Brockwell Park). The Chair said the Chamber would like to have a stand and said that traders would benefit from using the heritage of the area.

Sharon Baldwin asked if the Foundation had secured any funding for the event. Melvyn said Bromley as a borough had been historically unreceptive. Sharon said she is going to a tourism conference on Thursday 8th April and would mention it there. Melvyn said the event relied on stallholders fees. Lucy Smith mentioned the lottery heritage fund. Steve Palmer said the Chartered Surveyors Trust will give time for free. Leaflets are being produced and will be distributed. The Queen's Hotel was interested in doing Victorian teas.

## 7. Parking and pavement survey

A week or so ago the council went ahead and made the one way system permanent. The minutes of a meeting of traffic plans say it makes it safe for all including cyclists. However the cyclists are not happy and have been campaigning against it. There is no money available to make adjustments because of an overspend. Now it is permanent the Chamber have an opportunity to make some changes/recommendations. Ian Simm is the man in charge of the system. The cost of changing it would be prohibitive, so anyone else if voted in would have to make a few changes to work with the system rather than scrap it.

Lorenzo Nargi said parking was difficult in the area and parking officers were very strict even when he was loading from a

loading bay to his restaurant. Steve Palmer said if the issue was enforcement being over vigorous then it might be worthwhile working with others in a similar position in Croydon.

Sharon said the survey will help because it gives the area a collective voice, but if you can broaden the discussion with other areas then it would be good. Mary Kennedy said that delivery people often say Crystal Palace is the worse place for parking and getting a ticket.

The Chair said Croydon's Report said Lambeth have no comment on the report of the one way system. The report says it is open to review, so that's the purpose of the survey. It also asks questions about public telephones and there is free text in the box for other comments. Sharon Baldwin said the council were expecting the survey. The council also want residents' parking.

Sharon said BIDs in terms of Bromley concentrate on Bromley, Beckenham and Orpington. In Croydon they are doing work on Croydon town centre and one or two smaller towns. The Chamber would come up with proposals. Sharon said people should be aware of it. Steve Palmer said if you want a car park then BIDs is a good way of getting it.

The Chair asked people to take bundles of the survey with pens and meet and greet people and tell them about the Chamber. The deadline for survey returns is one week.

#### 8. AOB

Wendy from Croydon zone gave a quick presentation on the aims of the booklet. It provides members with offers, restaurant discounts etc and it's aim is to make Croydon a more prosperous borough. She is looking to add a section for Crystal Palace and would like to attract people who come into Crystal Palace. A quarter of a page in the booklet costs £350 and the smallest business listing is priced at £75. The booklet is produced bi-monthly and 60000 go out (5000) to local businesses.

Ring 020 8405 8006 for temporary membership. The business advertising does not have to offer a discount. They need information for the May/June edition by the week ending 16th April. They need 6-8 businesses doing a quarter of a page. There is a 25% discount on the quarter of a page. The Chair said information would appear in the next newsletter.

Sharon Baldwin said there has been an Upper Norwood district centre shopping survey which she will give to the Chair for circulation. Statistically things haven't changed that much. E.g. vacancy rate was 9% in 2000, 11% in 2002 and 9% in 2004, shops 63% 2000, 57% 2002, 53% 2004 which maps the change from retail outlets to other businesses. The vacancy rates are high but this is due to half of Church Road being boarded up or not in use. Sue Nagel has written to Val Shawcross on behalf of the LGA.

Lorenzo said if ten businesses closed would the council do anything about it? Sharon said the council have taken her on to help boost business and get the vacancy rates down and know that the one way system has backfired. She urged people to use the survey to encourage people to get information and establish dialogue with the Chamber. Sharon has a meeting with Morrisons at the beginning of May re: extra signage for the car park, marketing of car park and other issues.

Frank Lissimore enquired about the French market. Sharon said they were struggling to find a site. Melvin said that in the past there were markets along the parade where the palace actually stood. Sharon said that she wanted to try and keep it central.

Date of next meeting - Tuesday 4th May 2004 at 7pm, Lorenzo's Restaurant (First Tuesday in the Month)