



President's Foreword

In the last issue of our newsletter I wrote about Crawley being no sleepy town, and this certainly remains the case for the past few weeks. There have been many behind the scene meetings, and some public ones all with the focus of Rejoicing with Growth.

I attended the quarterly Local Economic Action Group meeting at the Arora last week. The key focus point for the meeting was to discuss to need or otherwise of a Science Park. There were mixed views, and the geographical restrictions that Crawley's boundaries present make unmoveable obstacles. Housing developments are progressing as in fill projects, but space for real quantities is tough to find. We wish to develop a university status, perhaps build a science park and allocate space for potentially a second runway. How will it all fit in? What's the right mix for Crawley? There are more questions than answers at present as all needs must be considered.

Coast to Capital our local LEP has been busy with workshops in their quest to allocate funding to enterprises that can illustrate that they are both sustainable and generate employment. Developing opportunities for exports is also key to the revival of the UK economy. Take a look at www.coast2capital.org.uk for more information. Nationally I look forward to seeing the effects of the 'One in Two out' regime, which should reduce needless bureaucracy faced by companies, which in its self should help business develop new ideas.

Finally the Hestletine Report. Michael Heseltine has always been an interventionist, so it is no surprise that his report on growth suggests a more active role for government. The former deputy PM wants to see UK firms benefit from better-designed public procurement, the devolution of money and power to the regions through Local Enterprise Partnerships. He also suggests compulsory membership of Chambers of Commerce. I'm of 2 minds on this, as are other countries of Europe that already have this in place.

Interesting times ahead.

Steve Rham, President - Crawley & Gatwick Chamber of Commerce
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Always there to lend a guiding hand

Many of us give to good causes and charities but few of us can claim to make it our specialism.

Accountants and auditors Richard Place Dobson certainly can – aiding more than 100 charity and not-for-profit clients and commanding years of experience in doing so.

For one charity, Crawley Open House (COH), this is "harvest", a critical time of the year when it collects food to give out to needy people over the next 12 months – and they turn to Richard Place Dobson for help and advice.

Founded in the early 1980s, the charity is a gateway to support services for those suffering the effects of homelessness, unemployment, loneliness, discrimination or forms of social exclusion.

The Crawley hostel runs 24 beds and a day centre attracting more than 50 visitors a day. The service is manned round the clock by 30 employees, who provide over 100 meals daily as well as copious cups of tea and coffee.

Richard Place Dobson are not only the accountants for Crawley Open House but also sit on the quarterly sub-committee meeting and provide the venue for the meeting at their offices. "We constantly try and look at new ways in which we can help and encourage them to never

hesitate about picking up the phone to us." comments Director Darren Harding. "We try and offer additional help to the charity by providing useful contacts for marketing and have also produced and further developed tailor-made Sage reports for the charity as well as assisting with grant claims" Darren adds.

The charity specialist supports COH in other ways, reveals Michael Bolton, Crawley Open House Trustee. "Their staff donate food for our harvest, when we try and collect food for the following year, such as non perishable items, tinned food, tea and coffee. This year the food donated lasted from October until June and, in total, more than 150 organisations donated food. Richard Place Dobson are definitely charity experts and are always on hand to guide us."

Darren Harding adds: "If we are unable to help with a particular matter, we either put them in touch with the relevant party or in some cases have contacted them ourselves."



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Mervyn's new toy

Recent speeches by Mervyn King and other members of the MPC have sought to downplay what can be achieved by monetary policy in the current environment. Research published by the Bank of England itself suggests that the asset purchases have had a positive economic effect, but there is also a widespread acceptance that this impact diminishes with each successive dose.

In any case the QE programme has grown to such a size that most of the conventional gilts issued by the government are now in the vault at Threadneedle Street. Which means that there is limited scope for doing any more without encroaching into the area of index-linked (inflation-adjusted) gilts, which are largely the preserve of the pension funds. Finally, the MPC now has a shiny new toy to play with in the form of the FLS, which was launched in August.

The FLS has some important advantages over asset purchases. In its operation it is more akin to the Special Liquidity Scheme, which was used to channel the thick end of £200 billion to the banks in the early stages of the crisis, and so doesn't involve the Bank of England having to crank up its magical printing press. Quite apart from being less unconventional, the FLS is also more closely targeted at getting money to commercial banks with incentives for them to lend it onto households and businesses.

It may simply be that, since QE was dreamt up in the dark days in the closing months of 2008 as the economy plunged off the proverbial cliff, thinking has evolved and that new ideas have emerged. After all, this is all uncharted territory.

So with the FLS now up and running, provided that a meltdown in the Eurozone can be avoided, it is likely that QE has had its day here in the UK. In time, as the economy continues to heal, monetary conditions will need to be returned to normal. That means starting to move interest rates slowly and carefully upwards, and making a start on selling back the mountain of gilts that have piled up in the APF. But all that is going to take several years. It will be towards the end of the decade before interest rates are back at a level which is consistent with a properly-functioning economy, and before all the QE has been unwound.

Ian C HARPER - HCBC

Town Centre gets festive

Don't forget to come and see the new Christmas Lights in Crawley Town Centre and the Snowglobe that is coming to Queens Square on the 8th/9th December and 15th/16th December. Get inside with 3 or 4 of your friends, colleagues or family and have your group picture taken with the added bonus that if you turn up in fancy dress you will have a chance of winning £50 worth of Marks and Spencer's vouchers for your group.

1st December sees the return of the traditional Arts and Crafts Market to Queens Square. Plus don't forget the traditional market on the High Street every Friday and Saturday for your Christmas fare and presents.

The regeneration of Crawley takes a major step forward as work starts on the 'Sussex Road' site in the High Street.

This 70 week, mixed development will see a new Morrisons superstore and a 110 bedroom hotel. The initial works have started on site as it is prepared for this major new development. McLaren Construction has been appointed by Land Securities as the contractors for this work. They will be putting up resident and business board which will provide regular updates and images as work evolves on site.

If you are interested in getting further information or have any concerns contact the Site Manager on alex.donnelly@mclarengroup.com.



Terrina Barnes on Surprise Surprise

Rebecca Platt, 16 and daughter of Chamber member Terrina Barnes, received a wonderful reward for her kindness when she was nominated for ITV's Surprise Surprise.

The Sunday evening TV programme, presented by Holly Willoughby, gives well deserving members of the public the biggest surprise of their lives. Rebecca was chosen for her tireless efforts volunteering and fundraising for Chestnut Tree House, the children's hospice for Sussex. For her surprise she was taken to Madame Tussauds in London for what she thought was a day of filming for an advert for the attractions website. The 'Pop' room, full of various musical artists, was closed off to the public but Rebecca understood this as the location for the filming. On arrival, she headed straight for what she thought were wax work models of her favourite band members, One Direction.

Then, all of a sudden, they came to life and it was the real One Direction who had come to surprise her. Rebecca was able to spend time with all the boys before being whisked off to the Surprise Surprise studios where they joined her on the sofa, where she was interviewed by Holly Willoughby. Rebecca later saw the band perform live.

Her mother, Terrina, works for the hospice and Rebecca was inspired to help out with Chestnut Tree House's Fun and Friendship initiative, becoming a 'buddy' volunteer and befriending some of the young people being cared for by the hospice.

"I love buddying for Chestnut Tree House because it's such a rewarding feeling seeing the children at the house so happy." Said Rebecca. "Recently we went to the circus and I was a buddy to one of the older teenager girls. She cannot talk and to see her smiling, happy and excited was just amazing."

Rebecca also decided to fundraise for the hospice. For her 16th birthday she decided instead of having a big party and lots of presents, she would do a parachute jump and ask people to make donations to Chestnut Tree House. So far, Rebecca has raised almost £600. Rebecca added, "I also enjoy fundraising because it's a way of communicating with new people and teaching them about the charity. I have told my old school all about the charity, encouraging them to raise money and have also helped out at events with fundraising.

"I knew I wanted to do something different for my 16th birthday, and so decided to do a parachute jump for Chestnut Tree House. It was such an amazing experience, but more importantly, so far I have raised almost £600 which will go towards providing specialist care for the children at Chestnut Tree House."

If you have been inspired by Rebecca's outstanding achievements and would like to fundraise for Chestnut Tree House, or alternatively volunteer in your spare time, make sure you get in touch and call us on 01903 871820. For more information about Chestnut Tree House visit our website

www.chestnut-tree-house.org.uk

Toby, winner of entrepreneurial initiative, shares his experience at Penguin

Toby Gillett – winner of the entrepreneurial initiative 'Young Start-up Talent' in the Gatwick Diamond earlier this year recently spent time with Anna Raffety, MD of Penguin Digital on work experience.

Toby's idea for a business is an online e-book library which he has named 'Sobiblio'. The model is based around Spotify but for books. During discussions with the panel of experts at Young Start-up Talent it was suggested that Toby would need to work with a publisher and who better than Penguin.

The Young Start-up Talent team, through their connections, put Toby in touch with Anna Raffety, MD of Penguin Digital and based in the Strand, London. Toby met with Anna who was impressed with him and his idea and since offered Toby to come and work with Penguin on work experience and to further his knowledge in the world of publishing.

"I was hugely excited about the opportunity of working with Anna and her team at Penguin Digital – where better to start off my career" commented Toby.

"I worked on Penguin's new project, a collaboration between Starbucks and themselves on a virtual vending machine that incorporates e-books with the whole coffee experience...a great project for me with my interest in e-books.

Whilst there, Anna arranged a meeting for me and the MD of Digital sales, Tom Chicken, which I found to be particularly beneficial. We discussed 'Sobiblio' at great length; he critiqued it thoroughly but also improved the business plan in areas that I hadn't even thought about.

Overall, I found the whole experience of value and an advantageous few weeks and am very grateful for the opportunity. They even celebrated my birthday by organising a small office party and gave me around fifteen entrepreneurial books. I can't wait to go back for my next phase."

"If you have an idea for a business, I would urge you to enter Young Start-up Talent – as doors may be opened for you too" urged Toby. Visit www.youngstartuptalent.co.uk to find out more.

The Young Start-up Talent team has already delivered workshops and assemblies to many local sixth forms and Colleges for this year's project with a cut-off date for entries in the Gatwick Diamond looming – 31st December 2012.



Media Word Waves are 'Santas on the Run' in aid of Sussex Hospice



Lorraine Nugent, Director of Media Word Waves and family joined hundreds of other 'Santas on the Run' as they ran around Crawley Town Centre in aid of Chestnut Tree House, a Sussex Hospice caring for terminally ill children. Joining Lorraine, were husband Tom, daughter Rebecca and son Matthew. Chestnut Tree House is the only children's hospice in Sussex and cares for children and young adults from 0-19 years of age with progressive life-limiting conditions from Sussex and South East Hampshire.

Completed in 2003, the hospice provides a 'home from home' environment with 10 children's bedrooms plus eight family rooms, a wet and dry play area, computer and music rooms, a multi sensory room and hydrotherapy pool. The house is set in beautiful gardens within an area of outstanding natural beauty.

There are potentially 400 families with life-limited children in Sussex. Chestnut Tree House offers support for the whole family including psychological and bereavement support, end of life and short break care and sibling support.

The hospice costs £2.5 million per year to run. Families are never charged for their care and less than 9p in every pound is funded by the government, the charity rely heavily on the generosity, help and support of the people of Sussex.

"It's a fantastic cause, and it was great to do our bit to help. I recently visited the Hospice and was most impressed with the great work at the Centre which wasn't like a hospital and as you would expect at all. I did come away feeling very moved and had to blink away the tears after meeting some of the children staying at the Hospice. I would encourage anyone to visit" commented Lorraine.

Crawley Town Centre

The recent meeting of the Town Centre Partnership discussed amongst other issues the future development of the town centre. Stanhope Plc have been confirmed as the development partner working with Crawley Borough Council on the Town Centre North plan. Stanhope are very keen to get a preliminary plan completed within a few months with a view to getting a formal plan in front of the council in the early part of next year. Your chamber are fully involved in these discussions and if you would like to submit your views on the development of the town centre please let us know.

The Partnership also looked at the retail offering in the town centre specifically the uses available and the designation of areas as either Primary or Secondary retail frontages. There was some discussion around the upper floors which could be used for either retail or residential use. There is a separate policy for the High Street with the key consideration for the planning team being issues around amenity and disturbance and maintaining its character.

The partnership consists of councillors and local businesses and there is always a good debate around maximising the potential for Crawley Town Centre.

Ian C HARPER

Dates for your diary



Next Chamber meeting

14th December – Chamber Christmas lunch – Ramada Plaza - £25 pp for members / £30 non members

30th January – Members breakfast – Motorline

27th February – Members breakfast – Crowne Plaza

27th March – Members breakfast – New Premier Inn - Gatwick

Please let contact jose@crawleychamber.co.uk to book and/or for more details on any of the above.

Chamber executive portfolio holders:

Steve Rham - President steve@s4b-shredding.co.uk
Lorraine Nugent - Publicity lorraine@mediawordwaves.com
Ian Harper - Economic issues ianharper@hsbc.com
Madeleine Mills - Education madeleine.mills@young-enterprise.org.uk
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Mendes, Alfredo - Town Centre - alfredo.mendes@crawley.gov.uk

Publicity



Lorraine Nugent of Media Word Waves and editor of the Chamber monthly newsletter

If you, as a member, have news that you would like to share with other members of the Chamber in the next newsletter please let me know. If you require more information with regards to the publicity of the Chamber please speak to Lorraine or email Lorraine@mediawordwaves.com

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