

## Sutton Chamber Annual General Meeting 2008

Held at The Holiday Inn , Sutton on Wednesday 7th May 2008

### Agenda

- Welcome
- Minutes & Matters arising
- Chairman's Report
- Committee Reports
- Finance Report
- To appoint our auditors
- To re-appoint the the members of the Board
- Special Resolution
- AOB

### Minutes

#### **Welcome**

Sutton Chamber of Commerce is an independent company, led by a Board of Directors representing the local business community. The Chamber is independent of government, and accountable to its members who are businesses of all sizes and sectors in and around Sutton. According to current legislation we do not have to hold an AGM each year. However the board decided we should have a meeting and present our annual report.

#### **Chairman's Report: 2007/ 8**

During the year the Chamber continued to grow.

Chamber team - The team has worked hard to increase the membership through various events and activities and I wish with you all to thank them for their tremendous efforts. All this work has been achieved on a purely voluntary basis.

Premises - We thank RBI for providing us with the space in their building to run the chamber office. We also thank Brooks & Co for continuing to audit our accounts.

Partners - Through the year we grew our relationships with Business Link London, the London Development Agency and the Learning and Skills Council and continued to work with local groups and Sutton Council to benefit businesses in Sutton.

Events - VIP breakfasts are proving to be very popular every month. Business Forums are held in partnership with the Council and continue to grow their attendance.

Other events - The Innovation Event - Being funded and sponsored by S.L.B. and LDA has been organized and we're expecting a fantastic turnout on Friday. The aim of the event is to support innovation within Sutton and S. London by providing the attendees with inspirational speakers, resources and funding options, and other business's stories and ideas on successful innovation. Speakers include Penta Consulting, S.L.B., and the British Library. Workshop and exhibitors include S.L.B., L.D.A, L.B.S, Business Link, UKTI, London Innovation Centre, IPO, Supply London, Carshalton College, Young Enterprise and more.

We have had tremendous support from SLB & LDA during the organizing of the event and have received praising feedback on the initial registration and planning. Our initial target was for 50 businesses, and we expect to double that on the day. Further, we are hoping to continue to develop and organize other Business Forum events and Business Workshops over the next year to further support our businesses within the borough.

#### Future

We will continue to run VIP breakfasts and training workshops. We have ambitions to form a Forum50 to provide a platform for larger companies, gain the IIP certification and increase our Chamber membership during 2008/9.

#### Finance

In the financial year the Chamber benefited from a growing membership but without subsidy from the Borough or elsewhere. I am delighted that Sutton Council has supported us with our endeavours. We also continued to seek alternative sources of income in order to further develop the range of activities on offer.

People - During the year, Paul Cawthorne continued his role as Chairman and we welcomed a number of new members of our team working on a voluntary basis.

The Board of Directors met regularly during the year and my thanks go to my fellow board directors and members of the Finance Committee for their input to the work of the Chamber. I thank all of our members for their involvement, contributions and for taking up the growing range of services we are now offering.

We move into the next financial year with confidence in the growing recognition of the Chamber's contribution in Sutton through accreditation, award of contracts and an increase in our profile. We will continue to pursue our strategy of business growth and to get the future of the Chamber on a secure footing.

We are a Chamber of Commerce and will always have the membership at the core of what we do. We will work increasingly with businesses who are and who are not members of the Chamber.

Paul Cawthorne Chairman May 2008

### **Committee reports (verbal or written)**

Cathy Endicott-Miles - The Innovation Event - Being funded and sponsored by S.L.B. and LDA has been organized and we're expecting a fantastic turnout on Friday. The aim of the event is to support innovation within Sutton and S. London by providing the attendees with inspirational speakers, resources and funding options, and other business's stories and ideas on successful innovation. Speakers include Penta Consulting, S.L.B., and the British Library. Workshop and exhibitors include S.L.B., L.D.A, L.B.S, Business Link, UKTI, London Innovation Centre, IPO, Supply London, Carshalton College, Young Enterprise and more. We have had tremendous support from SLB & LDA during the organizing of the event and have received praising feedback on the initial registration and planning. Our initial target was for 50 businesses, and we expect to double that on the day. Further, we are hoping to continue to develop and organize other Business Forum events and Business Workshops over the next year to further support our businesses within the borough.

Emily Farhey - I have recently joined the Board of the Sutton Chamber of Commerce. The Director of Sutton Chamber, Paul Cawthorne sits on the Town Centre Partnership Executive Group. I hope that my involvement with the Chamber will ensure that the Chamber and Town Centre Partnership work in closer partnership, building the capacity of both the Chamber and Town Centre Partnership. We could perhaps run a joint programme of activity including projects such as a town centre corporate shopping evening for businesses and staff in Sutton and also pass on offers and discounts to Chamber members. I will be promoting and raising awareness about the chamber amongst employers in Sutton Town Centre.

Chris Wood - Sutton Chamber has a good relationship with the local media, a situation we have worked on over the last two years, since the re-launch of the chamber. We have a regular page of news devoted to the chamber in each issue of South London Business magazine; plus we have the option of supplying our contacts on the Croydon/Sutton/Epsom Advertiser and the Sutton Guardian with stories and images as and when we feel we have strong enough stories to give to them. We have good personal relationships with key editors and reporters. They value the quality of our submitted material, making them more inclined to use the stories we send. The chamber is the voice for local business and we also often have to respond to reporters' enquiries on business issues with the best interests of local businesses at heart. We also regularly update news items on the chamber website and through chamber newsletters. As a chamber, we feel that enhanced, positive publicity is one of the key benefits we can offer to our members.

Graham Willins - In the last 12 months the Chamber has continued to work even more closely with the local authority in promoting and delivering network support activity and playing a part in communicating with and informing businesses. Since its re-launch in 2006 and particularly in the last 12 months with the expansion of the Executive Team the Chamber has moved on apace. The local authority is delighted with how the Chamber has developed and we certainly have a mutual understanding and common ground on i) how the Chamber sees itself as wishing to develop and ii) the role the local authority identifies the Chamber playing. We are always considering ways to help the Chamber develop and we are actively looking at options to increase the capacity. We would very much like to see a Chamber that can play a role in the various centre's in Sutton, increase their business support activity and be a two way communication channel for businesses - a voice for businesses and also informing businesses on developments affecting them whether regulatory or policy and also good practice. I would like to pay tribute to what the Executive team has achieved especially when you bear in mind their efforts and contribution is given on a voluntary basis and when you consider the Chambers in the other south west boroughs Croydon,

Kingston, Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth all have paid officials to deliver activities and services. When judged against their relative achievement is second to none.

### **Finance Report**

Our annual financial report is still to be completed and will then be submitted to Companies House and published on our web site.

### **Appointment of Auditors**

I would like to thank Brooks & Co for their work in the past 3 years and propose that they be re-appointed as our auditors for the forthcoming year. They have prepared our annual return without charging a fee and we thank them for their generous support.

### **Election of the Board**

There have not been any nominations submitted for positions on the Board. I therefore propose that the existing team be re-elected.

### **Special Resolution**

### **Any Other Business**

There being no other business the meeting was closed.