

CHAMBER REPORT

It was only at the beginning of the meeting on the 4th March that members realised it was 3 months since we had last met due mainly to illness of the main participants.

From the Minutes of the last meeting the Chairman was able to tell members of the decision of STC that the switching on of the Christmas lights would be on the evening of the 15th November. Members hoped that traders would be interested in having a late-night shopping and some research would be carried out by the Chairman in the next couple of months. It was hoped that at the Christmas Festival it could be arranged that at the specific time the lights could go on as the countdown is part of the festivities. The Chairman explained that he had hoped the zigzag lights could go on separately to the ornate lights but had been told that such was not possible although one member was of the opinion that the switching had been separated a few years ago and would do some further research.

The funding of the 2024 Christmas Festival was also discussed as the Treasurer pointed out that 2023 had only just broken even and he was concerned that this is no basis for it to continue as the Chamber does not have reserves to cover a loss should it happen. The Chairman pointed out that STC had increased its maximum festival funding from £1500 to £2500 per day (members thanked STC) and this would help but also said that a forum had been set up to look at funding for the 3 main festivals, Regatta, May Fair and Christmas, as all 3 found funding tight.

As it had been 3 months since the previous meeting, members were updated by the participants present of the ongoing work/funding etc. of Town Team, the substantiated rumour re. the location of the Banking Hub, the event for the Connectivity Project on 30th March. On this last item the use of community buses rather than private sector vehicles was raised by a member. Members recognised the difficulty for the private sector to compete pricewise as drivers had to be paid whereas with community bus services there were often volunteer drivers. The member explained that there was now a national campaign building to have the whole sector looked into.

Other updates were given about the Tamar Bridge Tolls and members with relevant businesses were asked to take part in the Smart Survey re. the items for Fore Street.

Finally, discussion took place as to the date of the next meeting which was due to be on Easter Monday and it was agreed to defer by 24 hours.

End of Report
Chairman Saltash Chamber