

CHAMBER REPORT

At the Chamber meeting on the 2nd September we welcomed two new members and thanked one of the new members, Floorsite UK, for their offer to encourage more businesses on the industrial estates to join as the Chamber membership, although not totally so, had become town centre biased. It was, however, acknowledged that the Chamber does make representations in matters which affect the whole business community e.g. traffic issues at Carkeel roundabout and the cost of bridge tolls.

Members were given an update on the progress of matters relating to Town Team and the Connectivity Project. The Chairman explained that, to ensure the Chamber always had two members at the Town Team meetings, there was the need to have a third member within the circulation list and Steve Baker agreed to take on the role so that the 3 members would be Steve Miller, Peter Ryland and Steve Baker of which 2 would attend meetings but all 3 would be fully up to speed.

Hilary Frank gave an update on the funding for the Christmas Festival and the Chairman explained that it was unlikely this year, due to lack of overt support from retailers, to date, that the late-night opening event will happen. The lights will still be switched on, on the 15th November and there will be carols in the park with the Mayor riding up Fore Street with Santa on the Rotary sleigh. However, members would still like to think of this event happening and perhaps starting the processes in the next couple of months would result in it happening in 2025.

The two main items of discussion were related to the situation with Newquay Airport and the disruption that is likely to be caused in Saltash from the imminent works in the Saltash tunnel. With respect to the Newquay Airport, members acknowledged its importance to the County and were concerned as to the decision-making processes in County Hall whereby it seems that a select few of the Councillors (The Cabinet) make the decisions on major issues and do not have open discussion/consultation. The Chairman explained that he had read the press report re. the proposed deal with an operator/developer and said that it seemed to be history repeating itself. In his opinion the same platitudes were given when Plymouth City Council did a deal on Plymouth Airport and look at what has subsequently happened there. The Chairman undertook to take some advice and ask questions to the relevant bodies and to liaise with Cornwall Chamber.

On the question of the tunnel works, members were very concerned as to the disruption that traffic, trying to avoid the queues, would cause in the town. On previous works to the bridge, Fore Street regularly sustained queues from Callington Road all the way down Fore Street and the Carkeel roundabout and Latchbrook junction were areas of serious delays. Hilary Frank explained that she would be attending a meeting whereat there would be a presentation by Highways England and she would raise our concerns. One member suggested that it may be worth making Callington Road and Liskeard Road 20mph and have large signs visible from the A38 junctions to try and deter motorists from trying to take the 'shortcut' through the town.

End of report
Chairman Saltash Chamber