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1. From the President

We have yet another new Prime Minister and reshuffled Cabinet, so what might that mean for small businesses? Jonathan Reynolds has been appointed Business Secretary – again – albeit the department over which he presides is markedly different from what it was. He is now secretary of state for the new Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade (DBIST) which is replacing both the Department for Business and Trade and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.

Mr Reynolds talks a good game but nothing good of note comes to mind from his previous tenure. He has been quick to reassure senior business leaders that he is a “true believer in technology” and that he would not overlook the needs of science and AI. While we all probably employ technology in our businesses to a greater or lesser degree, I hope he doesn't lose sight of some of the more basic needs of business, especially small businesses – business rates, energy costs, employment legislation and red tape. It's difficult to get excited when you know you're in the hands of someone who is a career politician and has never run a business, or never even worked for one as far as I know. It's difficult to find enthusiasm for the appointment. The junior ministerial appointment for Small Businesses is currently unconfirmed.

Some immediate government announcements include the removal of VAT on electricity bills, but this is primarily for domestic customers, although it does include a very narrow commercial exception. Apparently small businesses who qualify for the domestic energy VAT relief and are not registered for VAT will also benefit. For the vast majority of commercial and registered businesses the temporary cut (running from October 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027) will not apply.

Andy Burnham is certainly getting to the heart of the nation's challenges by capping Bus Fares at £2! On a less cynical note you could argue that may bring more visitors into Boroughbridge. A more meaningful recent initiative is in providing Business Rates relief for Pubs & Hospitality from April 1st; a very welcome move for that sector but let's hope they look at extending that to High Street businesses too, which need just as much help. It's early days for this new government and I suppose we will have to wait for the Autumn Budget in late October/November (date not yet set) to find out what the bigger fiscal picture looks like for business.

2. Member News

A very warm welcome to new Chamber members **H C Townsend & Son Ltd**, independent family Funeral Directors since 1927. With offices

currently at Tofts House, Follifoot, Harrogate and Back Lane Boroughbridge (which will be relocating to Richmond House, 3 Horsefair, Boroughbridge shortly once some renovation work has been completed) they are very much immersed in the community. Contact details are 01423-871110 or 01423-359190 and email hctownsend@aol.com.

3. Local Room Hire for Business Meetings

Mike Collins MBE has recently contacted the Chamber to highlight that The Jubilee Room above the Library on St James' Square is available for hire for a morning, afternoon or evening. There are two hire rates: £25 for an ordinary hire and £55 for a commercial hire. With a view to helping commerce in the town, Chamber of Trade members are being offered the ordinary rate of £25. It is a popular venue for lots of local meetings and events, and there is some availability for regular or one-off bookings. If anyone would like to take advantage of this offer, then please email Mike direct at mike_anne_collins@hotmail.com.

4. Aldborough & Boroughbridge Show

The 111th Aldborough & Boroughbridge Agricultural Show duly took place at Newby Hall on **Sunday 26th July**. The weather was blustery with a couple of brief showers thrown in but generally pleasant enough, which attracted a good number of visitors with so much to see and do.

There were plenty of Trade Stands and exhibitors too including Chamber members Craven-Holmes, Merit Estates and GSC Grays (apologies if we missed anyone else). Several members also sponsored the show as did the Chamber itself, and a number also advertised in the Show Programme.

Huge thanks go to Chamber Committee members Fiona Pratley and Tracey Wrigglesworth for putting together the excellent joint Chamber of Trade/Craven-Holmes gazebo (photo at right) which was staffed during the day by Fiona, Tracey, Karen and Graham Farrer and Derek Hufton. We had a good few visitors

to the stand during the day who had the opportunity to take part in two competitions whilst there – guessing the number of sweets in the jar and also guessing the name of the cow-bear! Both were very popular with the kids and the lucky winners are shown in the accompanying photos at left.

The Chamber has traditionally presented two Cups for specific Show Category Winners. Below left is Chamber Vice President Tracey Wrigglesworth presenting the Cup for “Best Handicrafts” to Dave Birch, and below right Chamber President Derek Hufton presents the winner’s Cup for “Most Points Section 3 – Fruit & Vegetables” to Ron Smith from



Marton le Moor. Ron is turning out to be something of a serial winner of this trophy. Well done to both recipients.



5. Employment Law Update Meeting

On **Tuesday 20th October** Chamber members Hethertons Solicitors will be providing us with an update on the recent legislative changes relating to Employment Law. This will cover changes to such areas as Paternity Day-one Rights, SSP, Redundancy, Enforcement (Fair Work Agency), Holiday Pay Records, etc. Further changes are also coming in October this year and in January 2027 relating to Harassment and Unfair Dismissal. It's a great opportunity to get right up to date on these topics.

The meeting will be at the Crown Hotel, Boroughbridge. Tea/coffee will be served from 5:30pm with the presentation starting at 6pm and the meeting closing at 7pm. There will be no charge for the meeting and Chamber non-members are also welcome.

6. Race Night



The next Chamber Race Night will be held on **Saturday 12th September** at the Crown Hotel, Boroughbridge. This hugely popular event will have a similar format to previous years, with plenty of races on which to have a flutter, a two-course meal included in the ticket price, the usual bar, and a great atmosphere guaranteed. The Tote will be operating, with all bets cash only.

Chief organiser Barbara Hill is still looking for a few more horse sponsors (at £40 per horse), and while many businesses have already pledged their support there are still a few horses remaining looking for benevolent owners. So please be generous in supporting the event – with all profits going towards funding the Town's Christmas Lights, which are organised each year by the Chamber. Contact Barbara on 07825-214719 to secure your nag if you don't already have one!

It is also worth a reminder that the final race of the evening is a Charity Race, which last year raised welcome funds for 1st Boroughbridge Scouts and Kirby Hill Guides. This year's recipient organisation will be Boroughbridge Junior Football Club.

Tickets are priced at only £17.50 each (including a 2-course meal) and are available from Karen at KM & G Farrer (35 High Street; Tel: 322740) and Sue at Issima (6 High Street; Tel: 325979).

7. Lloyds Tour of Britain Men's Cycle Race

The Tour is the UK's biggest professional road cycling race – a multi-stage event where elite cyclists race over several days across different parts of Great Britain. The penultimate 166km stage of the men's race on **Saturday 5th September** will see the peloton head out into the beautiful hills of North Yorkshire, departing from Helmsley before concluding in the market town of Leyburn near the banks of the River Ure. Along the way the race will pass through Boroughbridge, entering from Milby, skipping off the roundabout in front of the Grantham Arms before heading up to Kirby Hill and beyond. The race could potentially bring in lots of visitors who may well spend money on accommodation, food, transport, and retail, although no great boost seemed evident when the Tour de France came through Boroughbridge in 2014. The event will no doubt be well supported as it passes through. How many visitors linger to spend money will local businesses just guesswork, of course. One thing is for sure, car parking will be at a premium on the day! More race details at: www.britishcycling.org.uk/tourofbritain/men/stagefour

8. Snippets

Just a further brief update on the **Boroughbridge Town Investment Plan** following our recent meeting of 4th June, reported in last month's Chamber Chat. The North Yorkshire Council (NYC) online survey and face to face engagement phase has recently ended and currently the NYC Community Team is working to review all the responses they received and will summarise the information accordingly. They are planning to feedback to the wider community in September. It may be that we arrange something specifically for the Chamber should that be appropriate, so watch this space for further detail should that transpire.

We've been informed by the Town Council that **Back Lane Car Park** will be getting something of a makeover in September. Several areas will be upgraded/re-purposed with the intention of providing some extra parking bays. The car park continues to be a bone of contention with large numbers of spaces often taken up by cyclists and walkers, preventing shoppers and local business staff finding a parking space. Although the extra spaces will not be sufficient to solve the problem any expansion is greatly welcomed.

Footnote: Please note that the various blue email and website links in this document are not live links – i.e. you cannot click on them. To use them simply copy the text and paste it into your browser or email client.

... and keep up to date with the Chamber

News Items are regularly posted to the Chamber website (www.boroughbridgect.co.uk) and we post on Facebook (@BoroughbridgeCT) too.

Make sure you follow and check out these channels for regular updates, useful alerts and information.