

June 2020

## “Zooming” towards July’s first virtual meeting

Monday, 6 July, will mark a first in Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce’s history, when it holds its first ever virtual members’ meeting!

With the last three events cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic, coupled with “lockdown” restrictions being eased to allow shops and some hospitality businesses to reopen, it was felt it was now time to push the re-start button and reconnect with our members, albeit over the internet.

This month’s guest speakers are Harrogate Borough Council Chief Executive, Wallace Sampson OBE, and Harrogate Borough Council Leader, Richard Cooper.

Whilst Mr Sampson will be “looking at the future of Harrogate”, Coun Cooper will be telling us about how the authority is assisting the District with “coming out of Covid”.

Questions to either or both speakers must be emailed in advance to

[ceo@harrogatechamber.co.uk](mailto:ceo@harrogatechamber.co.uk).

The webinar will start at 6pm prompt, and those members wishing to attend again need to email [ceo@harrogatechamber.co.uk](mailto:ceo@harrogatechamber.co.uk) with their name and company details and the login



details will be emailed in advance. With the meeting being restricted to 100, it will be a case of first come, first served.

The meeting is due to conclude no later than 8pm.

## Welcome back from the CEO

Believe it or not, it was only three months ago since we last met, but somehow it seems a lot longer than that. And dare I say, it is a very different world we are occupying now, compared to the one we left behind when coronavirus struck!

For many, “lockdown” has been anything but easy, but as we start to emerge from isolation I feel a renewed optimism for the future. Only last month the country marked

the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day, and the end of the Second World War in Europe. Covid-19 has been called an invisible enemy, and had resulted in a large number of casualties, including in the world of commerce.

Whilst a number of businesses remain closed – including my own – others have begun to emerge, which is terrific news.

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## **CEO's message (continued)**

There are also those that have been trading throughout, but perhaps in a totally different way of working, and sadly with fewer staff. And with our retailers now re-opening, let's hope it's the start of the District's economic revival.

I'm delighted that for our guest speakers at our inaugural webinar are the Leader and Chief Executive of Harrogate Borough Council. I'm sure this will be of significant interest to every single one of you, and there will be no shortage of questions to the pair, which may I remind you must be submitted in advance.

And if this format proves a success, then we will continue in this vein until October, when hopefully we will be able to physically meet, and more importantly network!

Looking ahead, our August meeting is usually a "team building business safari", but as this won't be possible, we are now looking at an alternative version. One possibility is to meet in smaller groups via Zoom, with each person giving a short presentation about their business, in addition to answering questions from other members.

I'd like to personally thank all of my colleagues on the Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce board for their support in these challenging times.

And to all our members, I look forward to seeing you 'online next month.

**Sandra Doherty**

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## **"Different" approach taken to communications**

Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce has a new communications officer. Chamber member David Simister, from Different PR, has taken over the role from Vicky Carr, who has stood down after a stint of seven years.

For those of you who don't know David, he is a seasoned journalist, having cut his teeth at the Harrogate Advertiser back in the 1990's, before joining the Yorkshire Post. From newspapers he moved into the world of PR, working in the Yorkshire Water press office for eight years. In 2006, he and former Ashville College classmate, Richard Chew - another former regional journalist and PR professional - launched Different PR.

Sandra Doherty, Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce's Chief Executive, said: "I'd like to thank Vicky for her wonderful contribution over the last seven years. She has been a brilliant communications officer, and we will miss her.

"I'm delighted that David has filled the void. He's already well known to many of us, and in the short time with us he's already responded to a raft of media enquiries."



# Coronavirus business support

Harrogate Borough Council is currently accepting applications for financial help from small and micro businesses across the district, that have not been able to access other, national, support schemes. These additional grants are up to £10,000.

Information, including eligibility criteria, is available from the council's website, found at [https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/info/20001/business\\_and\\_investment](https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/info/20001/business_and_investment)

Additionally, for those shops and businesses reopening, HBC has created a Covid-19 "toolkit", which is a checklist of practical measures to help control the risk from people visiting buildings. This, together with other useful information, can be found at <https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/toolkit>

Harrogate BID (Business Improvement District) has also produced a guide, which can be found at <http://harrogatebid.co.uk/guidance-on-reopening-your-business/>

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## Business News

### Chamber member helps firms get back to business

Local photographer and Chamber member, Charlotte Gale, has launched a new Yorkshire corporate card service to help businesses through the transition period as the lockdown restrictions are slowly eased. Businesses can choose from a wide range of Yorkshire and Harrogate designs for the front of the card, whilst the inside or reverse can be fully customised with logo(s) and text.

Charlotte has launched a number of new products, under the umbrella 'Back to Business', to support businesses in this communication. The first, new brand Yorkshire Corporate Cards, is a personalised Yorkshire themed greetings card and postcard service for businesses. Further information is available from her website, [www.yorkshirecoporatecards.com](http://www.yorkshirecoporatecards.com)



### Help Harrogate and Support Local

Harrogate based technology providers Millennia Cloud has launched a free online guide to local businesses offering their services during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Support Local web site was created with details of those businesses known to be open during lockdown. Its original aim was to help the isolating public find businesses open and delivering food (both takeaways and groceries) and other home services.

Millennia Cloud asks Harrogate Chamber members to help promote the site in any way they can, such as encouraging their staff, friends and family to use the web site to support local businesses.

<https://supportlocal.org.uk/>

### Something to share?

We publish members' news stories on our website and in our newsletter. If you have a news story to submit, email details to [ceo@harrogatechamber.co.uk](mailto:ceo@harrogatechamber.co.uk) with a landscape picture.