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Pre-meeting Reports

1st July 2008

- 28. Police Report.** The Chairman welcomed PCSO Jackie Abbot and Sgt Richard Gubbins to the meeting. PCSO Abbot gave a report on activity and statistics over the previous month (attached). Cllr Howard congratulated the police and the other agencies involved in the recent “impact day” – it had been a good initiative and had acted as a bit of a wake up call to those who needed it. He also asked that more emphasis be put on to the stopping of drinking in the town centre during the day as the few persistent offenders were upsetting residents by sitting outside the shops and spoiling the quality of life of everyone who had to walk past them. Cllr Huxley was pleased to hear that the investigation into the recent theft from the Youth Club was more positive and Cllr Boast asked about telephone fraud and identity theft. Sgt Gubbins pointed out that, although the police were pleased to be informed of attempted (or actual) fraud over the telephone, unfortunately, they could not pursue the cases as the fraud was invariably conducted from a non EU state and, unless the sum was very large, resources could not be allocated from Interpol to look at individual cases. Cllr Mrs Geater, referring to the recently increased incidences of bicycle theft, wondered whether the SNT Partnership could look at installing some lock up points around the town. Cllr Ginger, referring back to “Impact Day” wondered whether the SNT Partnership could recommend that it became a regular, possibly annual, event.
- 29. District Report.** Cllr Hawkins reported that Mr David Ablett had assumed temporary control of the Finance Department at Suffolk Coastal (after Mr Macfarlane’s departure) whilst a new Head of Department was recruited. Cllr Nunn reported that recycling was still improving.
- 30. County Report.** The Chairman informed the meeting that she had received apologies from Cllr Ward who had visited the Council Offices earlier. He had little to report this month and hoped members could pass any queries they had through the Clerk for him to field at the next meeting.

During the above discussions, the time reaching 7.30pm, it was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the public session to be completed.

**At a meeting of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,
1st JULY 2008, at 7.37 p.m.**

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs A. V. Nunn (in the chair)
Councillor D. Bailey
Councillor B. A. Barnes
Councillor D. R. Boast
Councillor A. M. Cooper
Councillor J. L. Geater
Councillor Mrs S. M. Geater
Councillor C.S. Ginger
Councillor T. J. Hawkins
Councillor T. E. Hodgson
Councillor W.H. Howard
Councillor F. R. Huxley
Councillor J. Morrissey
Councillor A. J Nunn

- 31. Minutes.** It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of the 3rd June 2008 be signed as a true record (noting that, during 26b, Cllr Ginger did in fact leave the room).
- 32. Apologies.** Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Cllr Blowers.
- 33. Chairman’s Communications.** The Chairman addressed the meeting thus “June has been one of those months when I, probably like most of you, have been very busy, but at the end of the month there really are very few council events to report on. Most of the councillors attended the open day at Charles Miller Court where we were made very welcome. We were shown around the two apartments that have been modernised. They have taken three of the old apartments and have made them into two. Their plan is that over the next five years or so, all the apartments will be upgraded to better suit today’s requirements. Cllr Howard and I attended the Suffolk Estuary and Coastal Defence Conference held at Southwold Pier on 14th June. This conference was well attended, with good speakers and

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presentations. There were the usual workshop sessions where we were divided into groups and needless to say we were both in the Coastal workshop. One point that came back from them all was lack of communication and everyone needed to be informed well in advance of future events. Leiston is looking very colourful and we wish the In Bloom team the very best of luck when we are judged next week. Solar car park is looking very smart and our Clerk has thanked them for a good job well done. Finally, in these uncertain times ahead with the prospect of new boundary changes, the suspense is almost over, what will be our fate!"

- 34. Film Theatre Fascia.** The Clerk updated members on progress with regard to the refurbishment of the wooden fascia at the front of the cinema. Duncan and Sons had been very helpful in quickly inspecting and evaluating the structure re-assuring the Clerk that, although scruffy, the structure was safe and secure enough not to fall down. The verbal estimate given for replacing the fascia was approximately £7,000 depending on lead prices. Bearing this in mind Cllr Hawkins suggested that any estimates should include a recovery element for the existing lead. The Clerk explained that the verbal estimate had been a bit of a shock as members had only earmarked £5,500 for the complete project. He had contacted two other local craftsmen to give an estimate for the work but had only received one declaration of interest and a written quote from Mr Staff for just under £4,000 which would give members some leeway for the other elements of the project – the lettering and lighting. Mr Staff, should he eventually be the preferred contractor, did point out he could not start until at least September. Members noted that Financial Standing Orders required three written quotes to be obtained for work over £2,000 and, although recognising the difficulty in obtaining these, felt that there was still time to try and achieve this as well as correlating the current information into a recommended plan of action. The Clerk was asked to make temporary repairs for both aesthetic and safety reasons and to bring the plan of action to the September meeting.
- 35. Statue of Richard Garrett.** Members discussed the possibility of erecting a statue in the town to commemorate Richard Garrett's contribution to Leiston. Once it was established which Garrett was under discussion it was tacitly agreed that Richard Garrett's enormous achievements were encapsulated in the the Longshop which was, in itself, a wonderful and unique memorial. It was suggested though that an educational trail around the town on the Garrett theme would be a good idea and could incorporate small sculptures or information boards that may stimulate interest of residents and visitors alike.
- 36. Fairtrade.** Members agreed that it would be beneficial and attractive for Leiston to get Fairtrade status. They noted the requirements and, on a proposition from Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Howard, it was agreed to set up a working group to investigate the requirements further and report back to Council with a plan in September. The Working group was decided upon as Cllr Mrs Nunn, Cllr Howard, Cllr Cooper and Cllr Mr Nunn.
- 37. Blythe Estuary.** Cllr Howard gave a report from the meeting he had attended on 14th June at Southwold which was convened to look at the situation facing the Blythe Estuary (and other estuaries in Suffolk). Mr Schofield (SCDC) had addressed the meeting on Suffolk Coastal's role in coastal defence and how all the many other agencies involved backed them up. The Environment Agency were perhaps the most important partner and the concern was that they were thinking, at the moment, that the estuaries should be sacrificed. Cllr Howard gave some views and ideas expressed at the meeting and members hoped he would represent the Council at any future meeting giving support where necessary. It was suggested that LTC also affiliate itself to the Minsmere Levels Group as a group who are concerned with the effects of coastal erosion in our Parish.
- 38. In Bloom.** Members wished the Leiston in Bloom Group every success on judging day (10th July). They asked the Clerk to write and thank Mrs Ling for the wonderful effort she and her team had made to present the town at its very best. The new Pergola was particularly impressive and had, unfortunately, shown up the seat underneath as being a little tired... Cllr Boast also thought that tidying/cleaning up the road signs/street nameplates would also make a difference to the town.
- 39. August Meeting.** In view of the interesting times predicted for July (Boundary Committee and Sizewell C consultations) it was felt that a meeting on the 5th August would be a sensible precaution to sweep up the summers business before September.
- 40. King George Avenue Recreation Ground.** Members discussed the condition of the play equipment on the KGA Recreation Ground and felt that it needed painting and refurbishing with the redundant roundabout being replaced by another piece of play equipment. The Clerk was asked to try and organise a meeting with the SCDC Officer responsible for the site to discuss a good approach.
- 41. Boundary Committee.** The recommendations from the Boundary Committee on the future local government map for Suffolk was expected to be out for consultation on 7th July.
- 42. Newsletter.** The next edition will be out on 25th July. All articles to be in by the 10th July please.

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43. Finance.

- a. **Accounts for Payment.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Cooper and agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £14,105.45p along with £9,529.68p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment. Cllr Boast declared an interest in cheque number 309212.
- b. **Allowances.** The Clerk drew members' attention to the report regarding allowances. Members noted that the Chairman's Allowance was £600 which Cllr Mrs Nunn confirmed (on questioning) had been sufficient the previous year to cover all expenses incurred during the course of her duties. Those Councillors who had not declined their allowances for out of pockets expenses by letter would receive £100 (taxable).
- c. **Presentation of accounts for year-end 31 March 2008.** The Clerk had distributed a comprehensive pack of evidence to members to demonstrate the correctness of the Balance Sheet for 07/08 at the June meeting. Many members had been in to the Clerk's Office to discuss and confirm the accounts and everyone agreed that they were content that the Balance Sheet, the Annual Statement and the Annual Governance Statement, as presented, could be signed as a fair reflection of the financial position of Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council for 2007/08. This was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Cooper and unanimously agreed. The Chairman asked the Clerk to minute members' thanks to him for the clarity of the presentation.

The meeting was suspended for 20 minutes for a natural break from 8.40 pm to 9.00 pm

44. Planning.

- a. **C08/1050 – Proposed loft conversion including roof extensions/alterations at 11a Victory Road, Leiston.**
RECOMMEND APPROVAL
- b. **C08/1155 – Erection of two-storey side extension (existing garage to be demolished) at 124 King Georges Ave, Leiston.**
RECOMMEND APPROVAL
- c. **C08/0991 – Erection of two storey front extension, side extension & detached garage & erection of rear conservatory, 7 Queen Elizabeth Close, Leiston.**
RECOMMEND APPROVAL

During the above application Cllrs Boast, Cooper and Hawkins declared an interest, remained in the room but took no part in the discussion or vote.

- d. **C08/1006 – Erection of two storey side extension to form new garage with bedroom and bathroom over, 31 Sylvester Road, Leiston.**
RECOMMEND APPROVAL
- e. **C08//0313 (and 0314) – Fit a VSAT satellite dish to the south facing wall of the building, 3-5 High Street, Leiston.** There was some confusion as to the South facing wall as the detail seemed to indicate erection of the dish on the west facing wall. Members considered that this could not be allowed to happen in the conservation area but that they would have no problem should the applicant wish to erect the dish anywhere on the rear of the property (where there is a south facing wall). The refusal is for the front of the premises should that be what was requested.
RECOMMEND REFUSAL
- f. **Waterloo Avenue - Pedestrian Crossing.** Members noted the reply from SCDC with regard to their decision not to take enforcement action against the Colonial Hose developers for their breach of planning control. Members felt that this sent out the wrong message and gave big developers no real desire to comply in the future. It showed double standards in many members view, as they were sure a small householder would have had enforcement action taken against them in comparable circumstances. The meeting drew away from replying to SCDC immediately but felt that the planning officer would need to explain himself if no crossing was apparent by the August meeting. The Clerk was asked to enquire as to how the entrance to Waterloo Mews stood now that Colonial Hose was occupied.

45. County Matters.

- a. **Middle School site.** Cllr Geater reminded members of the imminent decisions regarding the future of the town's schools as the County finalises its two tier education strategy. He felt that the Middle School site was an important and quasi central site in the town and that Leiston Town Council should be fully involved in discussing its future use. He wondered whether, should the Health Centre not be on track, it could maybe incorporated into a large community project on that site. Members agreed that LTC should definitely be

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involved in any discussions and the Clerk was asked to write and strongly request that members are involved at every stage in the coming years.

- b. **Play Your Part.** The Clerk informed members of a scheme the County Council were piloting whereby Council staff and Councillors (including Town Councillors) could use just one telephone number to report anything at all that they spot or are concerned about when, otherwise, they might not have known who to report it to. Items could include potholes, overgrown hedges, anti-social behaviour, street lights or footpaths etc.
- c. **Youth Club.** Cllr Huxley again asked the meeting to canvas residents as the Youth Club Support Group Committee was now down to only two members and needed help. Volunteers urgently needed.
- d. **Heath View.** Cllr Ginger raised the issue of flooding at the south west corner of Heath View.
- e. **King George Avenue.** Members noted the new kerbing at the top of KGA and heard that the whole road was due to be re-surfaced during the summer.

46. District Matters.

- a. **Anti-social behaviour.** Members were concerned at the anti-social behaviour displayed by a few residents who sat and drank during the day on benches in the centre of town. It was agreed that this should be clamped down upon and a request would be made to the Safer Neighbourhood Team to do so at their next meeting.
- b. **Haylings Pond Car Park.** Members asked the Clerk to write and request that SCDC repair the surface of the car park at Haylings Pond. It is in a very sorry state of repair at the moment and needs attention.

47. Correspondence.

- a. **SLOW sign – Abbey Road.** Members noted the e-mail from Mr Luke Barber of the Road Safety Team which apologised for the delay in getting the SLOW sign painted in Abbey Road. He also reminded members of their undertaking to pay for the work which was below the cost expected at £49.79p.
- b. **Parish Liaison meeting** – It was agreed that Cllr Howard, Cllr Hodgson and Cllr Mrs Nunn would attend the Parish Liaison meeting with SCDC on 17th July. This would be to discuss the Boundary Committees recommendation due out on 7th July.
- c. **PCSO Pilot Scheme.** The Clerk reported that he had been to a presentation on the proposed pilot scheme which, basically, was for parishes to buy half a PCSO with the other half being paid for by the Police. The PCSO in question however would work solely for the purchasing Parish a guaranteed 80% of the time – there would be no abstractions and the PCSO would turn to the Council to establish his/her priorities. The idea was that smaller parishes might want to club together to share the cost (£14,000 per annum) or that even larger towns like Leiston and Aldeburgh might wish to share an extra PCSO on top of the one they have each at the moment. Members were slightly cynical in that they felt that Leiston residents had already paid for supposedly adequate policing in their Council Tax and that this was a form of double taxation. On the other hand they did appreciate that the Chief Constable was a keen supporter of the work PCSO's do and his support for this scheme to try and introduce 10 more into Suffolk over and above those included in his current budgeting. Members decided to look at the issue again in October as £14,000 was a significant expenditure and would have to be agreed for next years estimates.

During the above item, the time reaching 10.00 pm it was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow business to be concluded.

- d. **Safer Neighbourhood Team items.** Cllr Cooper explained how he had witnessed two vehicles, coming from the Sizewell direction in KGA, mistake the new hole in the wall for pedestrians in Sizewell Road Car Park for the actual entrance. He felt that this should be highlighted in case anything could be done to make the situation clearer. To be taken to next SNT meeting.

48. **Questions to the chairman.** Cllr Boast asked whether he could attend the next SNT meeting which was agreed instantly. The Clerk was reminded that Council policy was not to refer to the Community Centre as the Day Centre which he had done in the accounts and members once again asked the Clerk to pass on a huge thanks to the In Bloom team – the pergola looked very classy.

There being no more business the meeting finished at 10.15 pm.

----- Chair

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