

Pre-meeting Reports

3rd April 2007

190. Police Report. The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Andrew Buck, Suffolk Constabulary who gave a brief overview of crime statistics in Leiston for March. He introduced PCSO Jacqueline Abbott who was on his Leiston Safer Neighbourhood Team and outlined the top three priorities his team would be concentrating on for the next few months. Number one was vehicle related nuisance (boy racers, parking, motorbike nuisance etc.), second was youth nuisance and anti social behaviour and thirdly came criminal damage. A website was available for residents to contact the team and to get the latest news on activity in their area. The address was given as leistonaldeburgh@suffolk.pnn.police.uk and the website for the team can be obtained by clicking *Suffolk Constabulary* on www.leiston.com. There was also going to be an awareness raising event in Solar on 24th April in the afternoon/early evening. Opening the floor to questions Cllr Howard requested that Sgt Buck and his team use the Solar event to show support for domestic violence victims and raise awareness of the help that was available to them. Cllr Ginger asked that the SNT liaise with the Sizewell Sports and Social Club with regard to the use of the gate from their premises into Heath View.

191. County Report. The Chairman welcomed Cllr Ron Ward who gave a brief report on various County business with which he had been involved. He briefed members on how they could attend committee or Council meetings at County Hall and promised to alert the Clerk if he noticed anything affecting Leiston on future agendas. There were two requests – one that Cllr Ward lends support to and investigate the situation with regard to the 20's plenty scheme outside the Middle School in view of the recent decision to close it (but not for many years to come) and also that he uses his influence as best he can to try and get the hump in Park Road lowered a little more for CATS buses to be able to use the route again to access the hospital.

192. District Report. Cllr Nunn gave details of the continuing roll out of the twin bin recycling scheme – this time, in October, to the properties on and adjacent to Haylings Road and Platers Walk. There would be letters to residents and a road show before the introduction. Cllr Cooper asked that a greater supply of smaller bins be considered for this tranche which Cllr Nunn agreed would be looked at. Cllr Nunn went on to brief members on the new energy policy adopted by SCDC and that they would soon be employing a Green Issues Officer to carry it through. The final subject, raised by Mr Briggs was the poor quality of street cleanliness in Leiston - especially compared to other Towns. Members agreed to raise this later under District matters.

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

**At a meeting of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,
3rd APRIL 2007, at 7.43 p.m.**

PRESENT

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

193. Minutes. The Clerk apologised for incorrectly minuting that the meeting had been closed to hear from Mr Burns at the last meeting (minute 180) as he was an employee. It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2007 be signed as a true record.

194. Apologies. Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr Girling, Cllr Hawkins and Cllr Blowers.

195. Chairman's Communications. The Chairman informed the meeting that March had been pleasantly busy with some committee meetings and a SALC meeting plus some very interesting civic engagements. The Leiston Royal British Legion Band reunion and "Big Blow" had been a huge success and Cllr Mrs Nunn thanked Councillors for helping make the guests so welcome at the Chairman's Reception. Other engagements involved attending the official opening of the Children's Centre and being invited to declare the Long Shop Museum open for the 2007 season. Cllr Huxley asked that the Council write to Mrs Rushbrook at the Children's Centre to thank her for the fantastic job her team had done over the years – her dedication and hard work had achieved a very valuable facility that was a credit to the Town.

196. Allotment Walkround. Cllr Ginger briefed members on the outcome of the recent walk around of the allotments accompanied by representatives of the Allotment Association. Various items had been discussed and the main issues of clearance were soon to get underway, especially on the Haylings Road plot. Some other items, like erecting chestnut palling fences either side of the footpaths that cross the Valley Road Allotments, were still to be costed. Members were content with the progress and agreed to meet with the Association for another walk around in June and September. Overall Cllr Ginger felt that the allotments looked good and were a credit to the allotment holders.

During the above item Cllr Barnes declared a personal interest, remained in the room but took no part in the discussion or vote.

197. Highways Working Party. A report from the recent meeting of the Highways Working Party with representatives from the County Council's Environment and Transport team was on the table and Cllr Ginger was asked to elaborate on some of the key points. All present felt that it had been quite a negative meeting and were upset at the way Leiston had seemingly been ejected from the five year plan they thought they were part of to find they were very tenuously included in the new five year plan but with very little left that had been fought for previously. It was agreed, that even to an independent observer, it increasingly looked as though Leiston was being treated as a back water and was not being allocated funding proportionately. Members agreed to write and request that the Chairman of the County Council Highway Committee be invited to come and address a future meeting to discuss these concerns.

198. Dog fouling – Victory Road Recreation Ground. In response to a letter of complaint from a concerned resident members discussed the various options available to address the dog fouling problem on Victory Road Rec. Members drew back from investigating an outright ban but asked the Clerk to find out what would be involved in instigating a strict Dogs on Lead policy. He was also asked to draw together options for enforcing the dog fouling act (adequately signed on the park). It was felt that shaming and education might help a little too. The next newsletter could highlight the issue. All agreed that, as usual, it was the inconsiderate, selfish and anti social few who spoiled it for the many as the vast majority of dog owners were responsible and cleared up after their pet. Members were asked to consider King George Avenue Park as well which suffered as much and, in one instance, an owner had been seen shutting his dog inside the children's play area there so he did not have to supervise it! Entirely unacceptable.

199. Film Theatre and Community Centre adapted facilities. Members were disappointed that the Clerk had been unsuccessful in attracting more than two estimates to carry out the desired work at each of the Councils venues. They considered those estimates that had been presented, discussed the pros and cons of each and noted how each accorded with the allocated reserves. It was noted that the contingency fund for 07/08 was very likely to be needed to replace the roof on the Community Centre so could not really be called into play for either project if required. The Clerk was also unable to report just where the Council stood with regard to any excess that might be recovered from 06/07 – the accounts had only just been closed and a couple of weeks was required to get the final figures together. It was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr May and agreed (Chairman's casting vote) that Duncan and Son be appointed to adapt the Film Theatre for a maximum of £14,738 and the Community Centre for a maximum of £9,950.

During the above item Cllr Ginger declared a personal interest and took a full part in the debate and vote.

200. Litter Bins and Street Cleanliness. Members reported that the bin-emptying schedule was clearly not being adhered to and all agreed street cleanliness was of an inferior quality to what was expected. Discussions with Mr Collard, Operations Manager for Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd., had failed to address the problems so members all agreed that the Clerk write and invite Mr Dennis Ball along to address a future meeting to discuss resources.

201. Clerk's report. Members agreed to only hold a full meeting on 1st May if the Chairman and Clerk felt it necessary. The Statutory Annual Meeting would be on 15th May and the Town Meeting on the same evening at 8.00 pm.

202. Finance.

- a) **Accounts for Payment.** On a proposition from Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Huxley, it was agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £23,447.55p along with £9,591.54p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment.

203. Planning Matters

- a) **C07/0455/FUL – Erection of one semi detached dwelling and one detached dwelling on part side garden, 23 Cross Street, Leiston.** Members felt that this proposal was a complete overdevelopment of a small corner plot which would adversely affect the amenity enjoyed by 23 Cross Street and erect a dwelling (Plot 1) with no off street parking and little garden or privacy. Plot 2, although incorporating a garage, has no off street parking and, again, adversely affects the outlook, privacy and amenity of 23 Cross Street. The plot might just take one dwelling but, beside the overdevelopment and cramped layout, the increase in cars the residents of two properties would generate requiring on street parking in an area devoid of any spare capacity would be unacceptable.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- b) **C07/0394/FUL Construction of vehicular access 4 Abbey Road, Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- c) **C07/0410/FUL Erection of three storey four dwelling apartment block (resubmission revised scheme) on land adjoining Crown Street Car Park, Sizewell Road, Leiston.** Members asked that an archaeological watching brief be put on the site due to the previous existence of a monastic mill there. The slight adjustments to positioning and fenestration of the revised scheme presented were now considered acceptable and it was agreed to recommend approval. Members wished to point out however that future residents in the apartments may well suffer a lack of amenity from the evening activities on the adjacent car park. Finally, the Clerk was asked to ensure the HSE's view had been sought on this project.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- d) **Greater Gabbard – underground cabling.** Members discussed the previous evenings presentation given by National Grid on their proposals to take a 132Kv cable from the new Greater Gabbard substation on the Sizewell Belts around to Sizewell A to connect to the grid. This would be in lieu of a 400Kv link via a new pylon by the substation. Members were concerned by one aspect of the underground plan and that was the digging of a trench across the SW grass sward of the Sizewell Car Park. Residents were also very concerned about the environmental impact and disruption which this operation would cause. It was agreed to continue to encourage National Grid to try and find a route that did not erupt into the car park at all, to try and reduce any disruption this operation might have but, most importantly, to insist on very thorough and ongoing restoration work if they do have to dig up any of the areas proposed.

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

204. County Matters.

- a) **Bus shelters.** Cllr Ginger asked the Clerk to ensure that the Council's request for a bus shelter opposite High Street Car Park and on the North side of Main Street continue to be pressed.
- b) **Pavements.** Continuing on the theme whereby it was felt that Leiston was getting the thin end of the wedge when funding was allocated members raised the issue of pavement renewal. It was all too obvious that Leiston had been given short shrift here as the only work done had been to dig up and re-concrete 5 slabs in the High Street. It was pointed out that Aldeburgh had had the whole of the High Street renewed (much of which was perfectly sound). The same seemed to be happening in Framlingham Castle Street. The Clerk was asked to write to Lucy Robinson to enquire about the criteria for pavement renewal.

205. District Matters.

- a) **Play equipment.** Cllr May asked about the progress in getting some swings on Victory Park. The Clerk regretted that legal requirements had slowed down the process at District level but the contract should be let very soon.

206. Correspondence.

- a) **Angel Players.** Members were pleased to note that the Angel Players had adopted the Film Theatre as their new home with the unfortunate demise of the Angel Theatre in Rendlesham. Cllr Huxley ruminated that this would help achieve the aims for the venue set many years ago of having a live production each month.

207. Questions to the Chairman.

- a) Cllr Howard asked for leave to thank the Chair for the inclusive and friendly way she had led the Council over the last year. In turn Cllr Mrs Nunn again thanked everyone for their support and help during her tenure.
- b) Members asked that it be noted that many had received very complimentary comments about the displays at the entrances to the Town.

On behalf of members, the Chairman congratulated the Clerk on obtaining his Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) and presented him with a small token of their appreciation.

There being no more business the Meeting closed at 10.35 pm.

----- Chair

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