

Pre-meeting Reports
5th June 2007

11. **District Council.** Cllr Hawkins reported that little activity had taken place since the May elections whilst members briefed themselves in and the new committee and cabinet structure was put in place. Cllr Howard reported an encouraging improvement in litter bin performance but this was countered by other members who were still witnessing patchy adherence to schedule in their areas. Cllr Howard also raised the issue of fortnightly refuse collections (an unpopular move in many other areas). Cllr Geater responded and pointed out that the smelly kitchen waste could be disposed of weekly by prudent use of the brown bin one week and the grey the next. Cllr Hodgson felt that many residents would have no problem with the new system but did feel for the young families with nappies to dispose of. Cllr Hodgson also asked whether there had been any feedback about the conduct of the count at the recent elections. He was concerned about the way the District poll and the Town poll had been done at the same time for Leiston. Cllr Hawkins had not heard about any problems but advised Cllr Hodgson to take his concerns to the newly appointed officer who would be conducting future elections.
12. **County Report.** The Chairman received apologies on behalf of Cllr Ron Ward.
13. **Police Report.** Police Community Support Officer Jacqui Abbott gave members a brief run down of crime statistics for May. Down to 37 crimes overall (from 59 the previous May) the majority were again Criminal damage. She reported that the police Direct Service was up and running again online and that statistics in future would be produced by the East Area HQ and might not be in the same format as members had previously enjoyed. It would take a couple of months to see what could be obtained under the new system. Members hoped that it would still be possible to isolate the figures purely for the Parish (not the Leiston and Aldeburgh Safer Neighbourhood Area as a whole). Cllr Mrs Geater expressed her concern about the boy racers and asked what was being done. Cllr Ginger reminded the meeting that Inspector Lucas had promised that this would be a priority. PCSO Abbott reported that they were still looking at getting enough assets in place to hit the problem but were getting close to a purge. Members hoped confiscation would be enacted as this worked well during Operation Eubank. PCSO Abbott also agreed to put boy racers on the Agenda of the inaugural meeting of the Safer Neighbourhood Partnership on 21st June.

During the above reports, 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 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,
5th June 2007, at 7.48 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs A. V. Nunn (in the chair)
Councillor D. Bailey
Councillor B. A. Barnes
Councillor D. R. Boast
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

14. **Minutes.** It was proposed by Cllr Geater, seconded by Cllr Huxley and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of 15th May be signed as a true record.
15. **Apologies.** Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Cllr Nunn, Cllr Cooper and Cllr Blowers.

16. **Chairman's Communications.** The Chairman reported that she had necessarily had quite a quiet time during the election period but since, had had the honour of laying a wreath on the Towns behalf at the Annual Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service at Leiston Airfield. She had also represented the Town at the annual Mayor Making in Aldeburgh where she had received some very encouraging comments about Leiston.
17. **Chairman's and Members' Allowance.** Members heard the history and breakdown of the current allowances. Cllr Mrs Nunn confirmed for Cllr Howard that the current allowance of £600 was adequate and covered all the travel and other expenditure associated with carrying out her duties.
18. **Chairman's Badge of Office.** Cllr Mrs Nunn expressed her concern about the small Chairman's badge that the Council currently owns for the Chairman to wear at civic occasions. At various events where the Chairman mixes with other civic leaders the discreet brooch is not very visible and others often do not recognise that our Chair is actually a dignitary rather than a member of the public so to speak. Although it could be said that it is not the clothes that maketh the man etc. it would perhaps add more gravitas to the holder of the Chairman's position when representing the Town both at home and further afield if there was a more distinct badge of office. When invited to make presentations for instance, or judging competitions – a chain or ribbon with a crest of the Town very visible would arguably make the occasion more special for the recipients perhaps. It was noted that this was raised 10 years ago where a design and costings were narrowly dismissed by one vote. Members discussed it and agreed that the time had come to revisit the issue and asked the Clerk to get some definite costings and to put the item on a future agenda for further discussion.

In view of the interest from the public it was proposed by Cllr Geater, seconded by Cllr Huxley and agreed that Planning be brought forward up the Agenda to be discussed forthwith.

19. **Planning.**

- a) Minutes of the Planning Meeting held 22nd May 2007. Noted
- b) **C07/0941/LBC – Internal alterations to ground floor bar in White Horse Hotel, Station Road, Leiston.** It was noted that work had already started on the alterations, quite illegally, and that notice had been served to cease work immediately. This also served as a formal warning setting out the serious nature of the applicant's position (potential prosecution). This is the second time that unauthorised work had been done on the listed premises and members were very concerned. The nature of the current application was considered generally acceptable however and provided a reasonable layout which would allow the Main Street entrance to be re-instated. Members did not like the idea of partial removal of the original rear wall of the Hotel and, although recommending approval wished to caveat that with authority being given to the Listed Buildings Officer at SCDC to ensure that the re-instatement or alterations necessary to preserve the character would be incorporated in any permissions. Cllr Hawkins pointed out that the Licensing authority and Fire officer would all be involved in this too.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

During the above item the meeting was suspended (8.05 – 8.11pm) to effect the ejection of an inebriated, disruptive and noisy member of the public. Police were called.

- c) **C07/0947/FUL – Erection of 2 semi detached houses and 1 detached bungalow and formation of car parking (Demolition of garages), Garage site rear of 8-18 St Margaret's Crescent, Leiston.** Members considered this to be a cramped attempt at backland development that it would be detrimental to the area in which it is proposed. The entrance is inadequate, the erection of 3 dwellings at the bottom of residents gardens degrades the amenity they enjoy from those gardens and, with so much effort being put in to solve the parking problem in St Margaret's Crescent, the removal of the garages is unacceptable.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- d) **C07/0971/CRG3 – Proposed GRP kiosk to house electrical equipment to control treatment plant, Sewage Treatment Works, Valley Road, Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- e) **C07/0966/FUL – Erection of light industrial unit and offices on land beside Beacon Lights, Eastlands Industrial Estate, Leiston.** With appropriate restriction on hours of operation, careful clauses on smells, noise and extraction members were happy to recommend approval.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- f) **C07/0965/FUL – Erection of one two storey dwelling and vehicular access on land to rear of 43 Sizewell Road (fronting Urban Road), Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- g) **C07/0920/FUL – Erection of new two bay cartlodge at Abbey Cottage, Eastbridge Road, Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

20. **Sizewell Stakeholder Group.** Members agreed that Cllr Mrs Nunn should represent them at the forthcoming AGM of the Sizewell Stakeholder Group in lieu of Cllr Mr Nunn who is unable to attend. Cllr Howard asked members to let him know if anyone had any items they wished him to raise at the meeting and Cllr Huxley reminded everyone that it was a public meeting should anyone else be interested and be keen to attend.
21. **Allotment Walkround.** Members noted that the planned walkround for week commencing 11th June had been postponed until Thursday 12th July at 2.15pm.
22. **Leiston in Bloom.** Members were pleased to note the progress ready for this years competition and also noted that the judging day had been announced as 11th July. Members went on to consider the plans to install a pergola around the seat opposite the Fire Station. It was generally felt that, aesthetically, it would compliment the street scene (with planting) and, if SCDC agreed that planning permission was not required, Mrs Ling could go ahead. Members also noted the request that they try and put Tuesday 10th July in their diary to lend a hand with the In Bloom Litter Pick.
23. **Crime and Disorder.** Members noted the minutes of the meeting held on 16th May. The main item was the paragraph outlining the attempts to negotiate a permanent use of the Middle School Playing field behind St Margaret's Crescent for the youngsters of that area to use for ball games. The Clerk explained that the Headteacher of the Middle School was investigating with the County Council how this might be possible and, if members supported the idea, a meeting could then be arranged to progress it. It was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Huxley and agreed that the report be accepted and the actions be supported.
24. **Victory Road Play Area.** Members met the consultant on site on 4th June to clarify the layout of the proposed equipment and heard that the project should be completed by the school holidays.
25. **Newsletter.** Members discussed the forthcoming newsletter and assimilated some ideas for further exploration. The newsletter would go out with the Annual Report on 22nd June.
26. **Christmas Lights.** Members agreed that a public meeting should be called in the Community Centre for July 11th to try and form an action team to hopefully organise some lights this Christmas.
27. **Parish Tree Scheme.** Members couldn't think of any suitable projects at the moment although Cllr Huxley did remind members that money had been earmarked in reserves to replace the two dead/MIA trees on the recreation ground.
28. **Code of Conduct 2007.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley that Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council adopt the Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils, including paragraph 12(2), as laid out in Statutory Instrument 1159 of 2007. This was seconded by Cllr Geater and unanimously agreed.
29. **Finance.**
 - a) **Accounts for Payment.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £46,527.53p along with £7,740.55p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment.

Cllr Howard declared an interest in Cheque No 308570, Cllr Ginger in No 308534.

- b) **Accounts for 2006/2007.** The Clerk presented members with the completed accounts for 2006/2007 and asked them to go through them to make sure they were happy with them before the July meeting where they would be asked to approve them.
 - c) **Internal Auditors and Internal Control.** Members noted the requirement from April this year to more fully review the Internal Audit Plan to ensure it took full account of corporate risk. Members noted the Clerks report on this and also noted the independence, competence and the excellent knowledge of Local Government procedure that Heelis and Lodge brought to the table. The relationship with that firm has been very good and they continue to offer useful advice and guidance whilst, during their visits, ensuring our compliance and risk is well managed and that internal controls are relevant and robust. Members felt that the Council was well served by Heelis and Lodge and, on a proposition from Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Geater, agreed to retain them as the Council's Internal Auditors for a further year. Members continued to be satisfied with the careful controls worked up over many years to ensure that the Cinema and other businesses were financially secure, transparent and well managed.
30. **County Matters.**
 - a) **Buses and Bus Shelters.** The Chairman brought members attention to the recent cuts in the bus services to the town which had left many residents very upset – this wasn't helped by the fact that no timetables were available before the cuts came into effect. Cllr Hodgson explained how the County had responsibility for the services and therefore the cuts although the District had the responsibility for administering bus passes. Cllr

Hawkins elaborated and explained that the District Council had to subsidise the new over 60 passes from the Council Tax as the Government grant to implement the scheme only covered half the cost. Members agreed to approach the County Councillor for more information. Members also agreed to possibly look closer at the new timetabling once it was settled to see if there was any way of trying to effectively co-ordinate the buses and trains at Saxmundham.

31. District Matters.

- a) **Meeting with Mr Collard (SCS Ltd.)** Members noted the forthcoming meeting arranged with Mr Collard and agreed to go ahead with it. There was some debate as to whether it would be preferable to continue the dialogue with Mr Ball first but members felt that, after Mr West's visit to the town and the new regime that has been put into place for bin emptying, members would give this a chance to prove itself and, a meeting with Mr Collard covered all the other areas of Suffolk Coastal Services' work in the town as well.

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.

32. Correspondence.

- a) **Leiston Old Folks Outing.** In response to a letter from the Leiston Old Folks Outing Committee, on a proposition from Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Geater, it was agreed to donate £150 to the organisation as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.

During the above item Cllr Bailey declared an interest, remained in the room but took no part in the discussion or vote.

- b) **Home Start.** Members noted that Home Start wasn't one the Councils nominated charities and therefore followed normal practise and deferred the request for support to be considered in December beside all similar requests.
- c) **St Margaret's FC.** Members noted the dire situation faced by St Margaret's Football Club due to the rapid deterioration of their roof. Members felt that the community hall and overall facilities offered to members and non members alike by St Margaret's (especially since the loss of the Church Hall) was an important part of the town's fabric so, on a proposition from Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Geater, it was agreed to donate £100 to the organisation, as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137, to show support of their bid for grant aid to other organisations.

During the above item Cllr Howard declared an interest, remained in the room but took no part in the discussion or vote.

- d) **Leiston Youth Centre.** The request for help in purchasing new computer equipment was deferred until December.

During the above item Cllr Huxley declared an interest and left the room.

- e) **St Margaret's Crescent.** Members noted the letter which finally clarified ownership of the grass verges around the Crescent and agreed that another meeting could now be organised between Flagship Housing and the County Council to try and find a solution to the parking problem.
- f) **Victory Park Horse Chestnut.** Members noted the letter from the residents in Waterloo Avenue backing onto the Recreation ground again requesting that the Horse Chestnut be lopped. Members, again, were sympathetic to the correspondent but were disinclined to radically alter the shape of the tree as it was such a magnificent and mature specimen. They did however agree for the Clerk to visit the premises and report back on the extent of the distress the tree might be causing.
- g) **Festival of Remembrance.** Members were very happy to donate the use of the Film Theatre for the evening of the 7th November for use of the Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance.

33. Questions to the Chairman.

- a) Cllr Huxley asked whether members were aware that the Table Top sales were not as well supported this year and therefore proving to be unviable – it was very likely they would no longer take place. The Clerk had not heard for sure but was expecting a decision from the organisers to pull the plug before the July event.

There being no more business the meeting finished at 10.30pm.

----- Chair

----- Dated