

Pre-meeting Reports
5th December 2006

126. Police Report. The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Richard Gubbins, Suffolk Constabulary, who gave a brief report on crime figures for Leiston over the last month. He gave an update on the Nightsafe initiative and how there were increased patrols in the High Street on Friday and Saturday nights and also informed the meeting that two “boy racers”, who had been causing a particular nuisance in the town just recently, had now signed acceptable behaviour contracts and were acting more responsibly. Cllr Howard requested that Sgt Gubbins get a breakdown of how many of the assaults that he had just reported were domestic incidents and also asked Sgt Gubbins whether, in his opinion, the Crown Prosecution Service caused delays in cases going to court or not. Sgt Gubbins explained that the CPS put in safeguards at an early stage of the procedure to prevent, as much as possible, cases failing once they reached the courts – this didn’t necessarily retard them but did ensure there were sound reasons for prosecution in the first instance.

127. County Report. The Chairman welcomed Cllr Ron Ward who gave the meeting a brief summary of the recent White Paper on local government and how it affected the County. He then gave an overview of the budget setting process the County was currently undergoing and answered questions from Cllrs and the public on various aspects of it. Cllr Mrs Nunn drew Cllr Ward’s attention to the speed bumps in Park Road Aldeburgh as the new CATS bus now scraped its chassis when it went to the hospital. Cllr Ward knew the bump involved and undertook to try and resolve the problem.

128. District Report. Cllr Geater also gave a brief overview of the ongoing process to set the District’s budget for next year and answered questions from the meeting on various aspects of that process too. Cllr Girling asked that Cllr Geater find out some detail on how the new Sports Network was shaping up as she felt that there may not have been enough publicity to ensure all the sports clubs etc. in the area knew of its existence and its aims. She also requested that Cllr Geater remind Cllr Hawkins of his undertaking to find out what portion, or how much, of the car park fees were being put into recycling.

During the above reports, the time reaching 7.30pm, it was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Ginger 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 DECEMBER 2006, at 7.53p.m.

PRESENT

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

129. Minutes. It was proposed by Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr May and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2006 be signed as a true record with the following amendments; In minute 125a) the last sentence should read “Cllr Howard wished it minuted that he had objected because the Emergency Planning Officer was not able to meet the requirement to evacuate the town – Cllr Ginger and Cllr Mrs May also objected on these grounds.”

130 Apologies. Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr Bailey, Cllr Hawkins, Cllr Mrs Geater, Cllr Nunn and Cllr Cooper.

131. Chairman's Communications. The Chairman informed the meeting that on Friday 1st December she had visited Halesworth to witness the cutting of the first turf for the construction of a new £2M vocational training centre for North Suffolk. The centre is expected to open in September 2007 and will help young people between 14 and 18 develop a range of vocational skills such as brickwork, carpentry, painting and decorating, auto-engineering, Information and Communications Technology, creative media studies, hairdressing and catering. It will be located on part of Halesworth Middle School's grounds and will principally be used by Bungay High School, Lowestoft College, Leiston High School and Sir John Leman's High School in Beccles. On Monday 4th December Cllr Mrs Nunn reported that she had had much pleasure in attending the launch party for CATS newly acquired state of the art 16 seat accessible minibus.

132. Light Pollution. Members had a general discussion about the increasing nuisance that light pollution poses to modern living in the town these days. As you drive around the countryside adjacent to Leiston the orange glow over the town seems to be increasing. Businesses seem to prefer bright security lights rather than infra red security cameras and many of these are not discreet lights either but shine upwards as well as outward of the area they are installed to illuminate. Not just businesses of course but private "security lighting" can also be quite invasive. Members wondered whether there was any legislation on the statute that could be used to trim the amount of light being produced at the moment – especially with energy saving being paramount in the public consciousness. The Clerk was asked to write to SCDC and enquire.

133. Newsletter. Members agreed that the next edition of the Newsletter would go out on 23rd February 2007. It would go to press on 15th February and members should therefore ensure their contributions were received by 12th Feb 2007 – or preferably by the February meeting. Various members undertook to ask the Long Shop, the Youth Club and other local organisations whether they would write a few words for the next edition.

134. Clerks Report. The Clerk updated members on progress in erecting the Christmas tree on High Green and where he had got to with his training. He also gave a brief summary of the affordable housing seminar he had attended the day before and undertook to find out where the District stood with regard to allowing developers to "buy" their way out of providing affordable housing where it was now required.

135. Finance

- a. **Accounts for Payment.** On a proposition from Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr May, it was agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £10,176.97p along with £13296.29p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment.
- b. **Budget presentation.** Members received the estimates for 2007/2008 with a covering letter explaining what was included and why. There were several capital projects included which would all be discussed in January when the precept was due to be set. All Councillors were invited and encouraged to visit the Council offices to talk through any or every aspect of the estimates that were not clear.

136. Planning Matters

- a) **C0/2191/FUL – Construction of onshore works relating to the proposed Greater Gabbard Wind Farm inter-tidal and onshore cable installation and associated equipment. Construction of one access point off highway and associated tracks. Establishment of temporary lay-down areas and construction compounds. Construction of sub-station with a maximum height of 12.6m above level with associated earthworks, comprehensive landscaping to include tree planting, hedgerow re-installment and creation of lowland habitat. Land adjacent to Broom Covert and Sizewell Gap Road, Leiston.** Members were satisfied that everything that could be done had now been done to try and get the sub station moved as close as possible to the industrial site that is Sizewell Nuclear Power Stations. The new proposal was much more sympathetic to the overall landscape and, although, still in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, was much less visually intrusive than it would have been on the original site. The only items members wished addressed were for the bridleway adjacent to the site to be protected and for SCDC to commit to enforcing any landscape conditions attached to any permissions. It was essential, after all this work, that the finished site be fully landscaped and shielded.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- b) **C06/2021/FUL – Erection of part two-storey part single storey extension and creation of new vehicle access at 70 Abbey Road, Leiston.** Members felt that the building works proposed were unobtrusive but were disappointed to note the level of hedgerow that would be lost to achieve an authorised splay for the new entrance onto Abbey Road.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- c) **C06//2174/FUL – Convert garage to ancillary accommodation at Fishers Farm, Abbey Lane, Leiston.** Members felt that this proposal would detract from the listed building (due to its angle and proximity) and would put pressure on the occupier to build another garage or outbuilding in the future which would further clutter the overall setting. Members did not consider that this application had enough merit to comply with AP75 and would certainly insist that very tight controls be put on any future development rights should it be so adjudged. The application site is in the countryside, is fully visible from the footpath that winds through the curtilage of the property and, in members opinion, could be considered to be a new dwelling. It certainly increases the population of the parish and should therefore be referred to the NII for consultation vis-à-vis evacuation plan. Cllr Howard wished it to be minuted that he had objected because the Emergency Planning Officer was not able to meet the requirement to evacuate the town – Cllr Ginger and Cllr Mrs May also objected on these grounds. Cllr Girling abstained.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- d) **C06/2150/FUL – Conversion of 4 bed house to two 2 bed houses at 13 Station Road, Leiston.** Members repeated their comments made with regard to this property when it formed a part of a previous application; they had noted that virtually every new development seeks to maximise land use etc. and almost exclusively consisted of small flats and two bed units. This could be to comply with PPG3 but it also made it more **essential** for towns like Leiston to keep their four bed units to ensure there is a mix of accommodation and that there is scope for families to move up as their space needs increase. Members hoped that SCDC will resist this application as, although it may just comply with the AP42 and the supplementary guidance, in the overall context, it did not comply with AP36 which should be considered, in this case, to be the most important criterion.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- e) **C06/2196/ELE – Proposed overhead line works at Leiston near Sizewell to connect Greater Gabbard's Offshore wind farm to transmission network.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- f) **NII discussion and instructions to the Clerk with regard to writing minutes.** Cllr Howard requested that a departure from Standing Orders be accommodated by members to allow him to not only have his vote recorded (as entitled) but also to have the reason recorded when discussing planning applications. Members felt that this issue had been sufficiently covered and that all members were comfortable with the standing procedure in place with regard to applications and requesting NII approval for any that would increase the population of the town. They did however recognise that Cllr Howard had not been present for all those discussions and, although against convention and statute, agreed to allow the Clerk to record Cllr Howard's vote separately for the immediate future. Cllr Ginger and Cllr Mrs May asked that their vote, and the reason for it also be recorded. This too was tacitly agreed.

137. County Matters.

- a) **SALC.** Cllr Huxley gave a brief report of proceedings at the recent SALC area meeting.
- b) **Church Bridge, Saxmundham.** Members noted the letter giving notice of the forthcoming closure of Church Bridge in Saxmundham for up to 4 months for repairs. They were very surprised that this important through route to the Town was just going to be closed and noted that the option to keep one lane open was discounted to save money. They were appalled at the lack of consideration and thought that had obviously gone into that decision as the cost to all the school buses and the inconvenience to all the commuters could not have been taken into account. The Clerk was asked to write and to ask how this could possibly be justified. More publicity was also required for what was going to be a major disruption. It was hoped that Leiston and Saxmundham could have been looked at as important Market towns in the area and therefore deserving of more effort to ensure that the quality of life was disrupted as little as possible.

138. District Matters.

- a) **Healthy Living Centre.** The Clerk reported that an internal meeting was being held in SCDC on 11th December which might give a clearer picture of how to take this project forward in the New year. Nothing else to report.
- b) **Greenprint Forum.** Cllr Huxley gave a brief report of proceedings at the recent meeting of the Greenprint Forum.
- c) **Sizewell Beach.** Cllr Blowers reported an abundance of horse riders just recently galloping along the dunes in front of the Power Stations. The Clerk undertook to pass this on to the Countryside Ranger.

139. Correspondence.

- a) Members noted the request for grant aid from **Victim Support** and, on a proposition from Cllr Girling, seconded by Cllr Huxley, it was agreed to donate £100 to the organisation as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137. Members asked the clerk to request a brief summary of the sort of help they have given to Leiston residents over the past year.
- b) Members noted the request for grant aid from the **Leiston and District Swimming Club** and, on a proposition from Cllr Girling seconded by Cllr Barnes, it was agreed to donate £100 to the organisation as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.

During the above item Cllrs Howard and May declared an interest and left the room.

- c) Members noted the request for grant aid from the **Willows (East Suffolk MIND)** and, on a proposition from Cllr Girling, seconded by Cllr Howard, it was agreed to donate £100 to the organisation as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.
- d) Members were pleased to receive an update from the **Citizens Advice Bureau** and, on a proposition from Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Girling, it was agreed to release the £1600 earmarked in the estimates and put aside to help support the excellent work the CAB does in the town.

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

- e) Members noted the request for sponsorship from the **Leiston Football Club** and, on a proposition from Cllr Girling, seconded by Cllr Howard, it was agreed to donate £100 to the club as a one off donation as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.
- f) Members noted the request for grant aid from **Vitalise** and, on a proposition from Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Huxley, it was agreed to donate £50 to the organisation as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.
- g) Members noted the request for grant aid from the **Home Guard Club** to help with the building of some disabled facilities. Members recalled that they had helped other like clubs with similar projects in the past and, on a proposition from Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Girling, it was agreed to donate £100 to the organisation as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.

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

- h) Members noted that the leisure centre was no longer selling SCDC Black and Green refuse sacks.
- i) **Lorry Park.** The first response to last months request to multi-agencies for a Lorry Park-up facility to be investigated for this area was from the County Council and not very encouraging. The letter did enclose some Heavy Goods Vehicle Incident Record forms however which could be used to report incidences of lorries overnighting in inappropriate places.
- j) **Household Waste Site.** Members were disappointed to read that the small parking area they had enquired about at the last meeting was not considered to be in the tenancy agreement enjoyed by the Household Waste Site. In fact they were incredulous that this was the case. Members asked the Clerk to try and arrange an on site meeting with an appropriate representative from SCC to try and clear this up and/or to explore other solutions.
- k) **North Area Parish Councils Meeting.** The Chairman and the Clerk undertook to go to the Parish meeting on 13th December at Stratford St Andrew to represent the Council.

140. Merry Christmas. Cllr Huxley wished the Chairman and everyone present a very merry Christmas and the Chairman reciprocated.

There being no more business the Meeting closed at 9.55 pm.

----- Chair

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