

Pre-meeting Reports
7th July 2009

- 32. County Report.** The Chairman welcomed Councillor Ron Ward who gave members an update on proceedings at the County Council as members there got stuck in to the new term after the recent elections. Cllr Ginger asked whether Cllr Ward was aware of the poor state of the roads and pavements in Sylvester Road and Paxton Chadwick Close and wondered whether he would like to have a look, along with Mr Cook, a resident, to see for himself. This was arranged. Cllr Ginger also reported that Leiston Surgery now had a new ramp to allow easier access for wheelchairs. Cllr Hodgson drew attention to the ongoing problem of the flood at the bottom of Sylvester Road whenever it rained.
- 33. Police Report.** The Chairman welcomed Police Community Support Officer Jackie Abbot, Suffolk Constabulary, who gave members a thorough report on criminal activity in the town during June (a comprehensive report is attached). The main point of note was the unfortunate increase in bicycle theft although, overall, crimes were down again on last year. Jackie introduced PCSO Philip Marshall who had now completed his four week familiarity tour and would now be going "solo". Philip gave members a short resume of his background and members wished him well and hoped he would enjoy his time in Leiston. Jackie explained that she would be leaving in September but that her replacement, Jeanette Pither, would complete her training in time to join around the end of August. The Chairman stood to congratulate Jackie on being accepted into the Police Force and wished her well in her training to become a regular constable. He thanked her for all the hard work she had put in to making the job of PCSO in Leiston a very relevant and highly respected post. She had made a big difference in the town since taking on the role and had gained the respect of everyone with the way she had conducted her duties as the dedicated Leiston officer in the Safer Neighbourhood Team. A question was asked about the individuals often seen sleeping rough on the corner of Crown Street and Sizewell Road. Jackie confirmed that they were homeless and that, as the law stood, they were within their rights to sleep rough and, as long as no other laws were being broken, they would be left alone.
- 34. District Report.** Cllr Hawkins gave an overview of the new choice based housing allocation system that was now being run by SCDC and explained how it was designed to make the system fairer and to give applicants a better choice when applying for social housing. He also pointed out that, although there might be a perception that the SCDC planning department often did not appear to take account of town council recommendations, this was not the case and, in two recent applications, the town council's recommendation had swung the committee to agree with the town's point of view.
- 35. Public Forum.** Mr Les Lovell stood to support the Chairman's praise for PCSO Abbott and added his own thanks for the way she had gone about her duties and had helped the Allotment Holders.

At a meeting of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,
7th JULY 2009, at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor A. M. Cooper (in the chair)
Councillor D. E. Bailey
Councillor B. A. Barnes
Councillor J. L. Geater
Councillor Mrs S. M. Geater (from 7.43pm)
Councillor C.S. Ginger
Councillor T. J. Hawkins
Councillor T. E. Hodgson
Councillor F. R. Huxley
Councillor Mrs A. V. Nunn
Councillor N. Parker

- 36. Minutes.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of 2nd June 2009 be signed as a true record.
- 37. Apologies.** Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr Nunn, Cllr Morrissey, Cllr Boast and Cllr Howard.
- 38. Chairman's Communications.** The Chairman reported he had attended the Consecration by the Archbishop of Canterbury of the Chapel of Transfiguration, Cloisters and Crypt of St Edmundsbury Cathedral. He had also been very pleased to help the Middle School Year 7 pupils unveil and open the new seat in Old Post Office Square which they had helped design. The children had put in a lot of work and he thoroughly recommended a visit to the Long Shop to view the impressive artwork on display there associated with the seat design. On 22nd June he had been pleased to attend the raising of the Commemorative Flag to mark Armed Forces Day at Sizewell and witness the unveiling of a memorial statue beside it in recognition of the Englelandvaarders Comrades who escaped from

occupied Holland and fought with the Allies in the 2nd World War. The statue was presented by the widow of one such gentleman who had paddled for 56 hours in a two man kayak across the North Sea to land at Sizewell. There were many visitors from Holland at the ceremony which was graced by another very impressive performance from the Royal British Legion Band.

39. Community Centre. Members noted the report from the meeting of the Community Centre Management Committee. With regard to choosing the style and method of replacing the current inventory of worn and scruffy chairs members noted an example, provided by Anglia Upholstery, of a re-covered chair against a new, identical chair, in the style that the Centre's patrons preferred. The difference in cost between the two options was £6 with an overall saving of £300 should all the current chairs be re-covered. An examination showed that the old chairs still had sturdy metal frames of comparable quality to the new chair and members felt that re-covering, using a local firm, would be in the spirit of recycling and would avoid the throwing away of 50 perfectly serviceable chair frames. On a proposition from Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Geater it was agreed to get all the current chairs re-foamed and re-covered at a cost of £2,400. This would be fully covered by the £2,500 earmarked in reserves specifically for this purpose. Members then went on to discuss the damaged heating system and the alternatives for replacement. The Clerk outlined the recommendation from the committee which was to fully replace the system and to find the money for this from the repair budget and grants topped up, if necessary, from contingencies. Money set aside for replacement windows should not be touched and should be used for that purpose. On a proposition from Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Ginger this was agreed and the Clerk directed to get the works completed as soon as possible. Finally, members noted the excellent report Mrs Davis had got from the food standards inspector. This was a surprise visit and the first for many years. Members asked the Clerk to write and thank Mrs Davis for the excellent way she runs the Centre kitchen – it is much appreciated.

40. Film Theatre. Members noted the report from the recent Film Theatre Committee meeting. The recommendation to replace the current wooden name board/fascia with aluminium one was discussed. Members felt that they could not leave the current tatty frontage without some form of repair/refurbishment for much longer. Since the foyer had been completed members felt that a new fresh look to the fascia, to compliment it, would be better than just replacing the planking like for like which was the current plan. Cllr Cooper explained that, when he asserted that the original fascia should be retained last year he meant the black wood detail, above the nameboard, as the black and white frontage was an important feature. It appears that this was misinterpreted to mean the wooden name carrying fascia immediately above the shop fronts which he was not so perturbed about. In fact the committee had unanimously decided to recommend a new look and, on a proposition from Cllr Mrs Nunn, seconded by Cllr Bailey, it was agreed to progress the option put forward by Sign-a-Rama to replace the name board with a powder coated aluminium board across the whole frontage with bespoke gold lettering. The Clerk was to find out if planning permission was required for the change and for any lighting. Cllr Geater wished his vote against to be minuted and asked that his request to have another survey of the premises be put on the next agenda.

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

41. Newsletter. It was agreed that, despite the odd glitch, the council would continue with the current method of delivery via the Community News as the alternative (Royal Mail) was too expensive.

42. Sizewell Stakeholder Group. Members noted Cllr Howard's report of the SSG meeting of 11th June and the minutes of the SSG sub group meeting held in May. Cllr Ginger raised the issue of liaison during any new build as he felt that the SSG were the wrong body to get involved with that. He favoured something similar to the Construction Consultative Committee that was in operation during the construction of Sizewell B with Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council being one of the leaders of that group. Cllr Hodgson agreed and felt that the construction issues should not be under the SSG remit. They should remain independent and should concentrate on their core activity of looking after A and B station. They could of course have a representative on the Consultative Committee to iron out issues where the new build affected the smooth running of the other two sites but it was not felt that the SSG make up or constitution was at all suitable for the day to day liaison that would be needed once construction starts. The Sizewell Parishes Liaison Group would also be involved and, again, their involvement would be to deal with construction issues rather than the regulatory and scrutiny function the SSG undertook with the licensed sites. Cllr Hawkins reported that the public meeting to discuss the Sizewell A "leak" incident was set for Wednesday 22nd July at 6.30pm Jubilee Hall.

43. Highways Working Party meeting. A meeting was scheduled for 16th July to discuss possible one way systems to recommend to Council in September.

44. Minsmere Levels Stakeholder Group. Members noted the correspondence with the MSLG and were happy that the Clerk had undertaken to get involved and to attend any meeting the MSLG might wish to organise with the Environment Agency or other relevant bodies to discuss the sluice. It was also noted that the next public consultation on the Shoreline Management Plan (3) was on 17th July 2-7pm at the Aldeburgh Church hall.

- 45. Town Appraisal.** Members discussed the best way to take this forward. It was agreed to try and set up an independent body to do the appraisal which would be in accord with the Council's wish to consult with the community as much as possible. Suffolk ACRE would be able to help, train and advise any group that did form and the Council could stay involved to ensure that specific items they needed to consult with residents on were included in the questionnaire. Cllr Bailey asked that members who were interested meet in the Council Chambers on 11th August at 7.30pm to discuss the results from the last appraisal and to see how much use had been made of the answers in progressing the main issues in the Town Centre Action Plan it produced.
- 46. Fairtrade.** Cllr Mrs Nunn updated members on progress toward Leiston becoming a "Fairtrade Town". The group had now made their submission and had received acknowledgement from the Fairtrade Foundation. It may take up to six weeks to hear whether the bid is successful.

The meeting took a break from 8.35 pm – 8.50 pm.

- 47. Requirements should Sizewell New Build go ahead.** Members were keen to ensure that things were in place in good time should a new nuclear power station get the go ahead to be built at Sizewell. This included ensuring that all the other agencies that would be affected (NHS, education, highways etc.) are making plans and are aware of how the construction phase might affect them. For their own part members had a detailed discussion, drawing on experience from the building of Sizewell B, to make a list of what needed to be addressed before the construction force hit the ground. The main items fell under four headings - highways safety, recreation, health and education. There has to be a footway to Highbury cottages in place by start of play – that is essential. HGV's must be contracted to take the Yoxford route (or lose their contract). The Cyclepath from Knodishall needs to be extended from its terminus at the south end of Haylings Road through to King Edward Road/ St Margaret's Church along Footpath 8 to allow cyclists to avoid the narrows from Kings Road to White Horse Corner. Other works may need to be done to increase the off street parking capacity in the town close to the main through routes to allow these to be free flowing. Recreation brought forward the need for a new library and community centre better able to cope with the increased demand, possible upgrading of the swimming pool if it is required and an annual subsidy to the Film Theatre throughout the construction phase to allow it to continue providing the timely product it does at present and for it to be able to extend its programme. Education presents a problem as the current plans to go to a two tier system are happening around the scenario of a possible increase of numbers in the Leiston pyramid. A new surgery is required in the Town Centre and a CCTV system is required around the town centre too. It is hoped that the police are pursuing their own requirements but, as a minimum, it would be expected that they ask for extra manpower and cells closer than Lowestoft as essentials. It was hoped that the public conveniences in Dinsdale Road, so close to the transport hub of the town, be rebuilt to allow for 24 hour opening. Finally, the question of Minsmere Sluice may well come into the equation too. The aforementioned items will be taken forward for analysis and to be worked up in due course.

48. Finance.

- a) **Accounts for Payment.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £11,643.07p along with £9,610.63p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment.

49. Planning Matters.

- a. **C09/0825 – Erection of single-storey extension and double garage at 81 Abbey Road, Leiston.**
RECOMMEND APPROVAL
- b. **C09/0859 – Retention of dwelling without compliance with Condition 5 of planning permission C08/1475 (archaeology condition) at 97 Abbey Road, Leiston.** Members agreed to leave the decision to the discretion of the planning officers who would be more aware of what action might be appropriate.
- c. **C09/0948 – Erection of two-storey side extension at 52 Valley Road, Leiston.**
RECOMMEND APPROVAL

For the above item Cllr Cooper declared an interest and Cllr Mrs Nunn took the Chair.

- d. **C09/0962 – Conversion of former shower block to three holiday flats at Cliff House Caravan Site, Sizewell Hall Road, Aldringham cum Thorpe, Leiston** - Members stood by their decision made last time this particular building was brought forward for conversion in that it is contrary to policy in that it seeks to convert a building of no architectural merit to residential use where it would not otherwise be allowed. It is in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and makes no contribution to the character of the countryside through its presence. Indeed, if it is redundant it should be removed. The fact that the residents would now be holiday makers didn't, in their opinion, alter this fact. If SCDC was minded to approve this then members hoped that the character of the building is studied to ensure it is appropriate to setting and that a very stringent tourism caveat be applied to the permissions to ensure it does not become a second home complex by any other name. Cllr Hawkins abstained.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- e. **C09/ CC– Extension to the rear of the building to form a new accessible toilet with incorporated changing facilities and a new boiler room at Leiston Youth Club, Seaward Avenue, Leiston**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

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

50. County Matters.

- a. **Abbey Lane.** The Clerk had met with the County Safety Officer, Mr Luke Barber, and had looked at the problems raised at the last meeting with regard to fast moving HGV's and other traffic along Abbey Lane. Mr Barber was at a loss to suggest what traffic calming measures would be appropriate along the lane that would not be abused by regular users who were extremely familiar with the route. Tourists are generally much more circumspect on the minor roads so don't need them. There had been no accident or injury reports along the Lane over the last three years which means County would be very unlikely to consider spending any money on the stretch anyway. Mr Barber did suggest that the Lorry Management Group look at the HGV situation although he did wonder what other routes they would be diverted down if they were stopped from using the Lane. As far as other heavy works in Harrow Lane were concerned they would probably be allowed as an exception "for access only" in any case. The Clerk would inform Mr Barker of the meeting.
- b. **Footway to Abbey Retirement Home.** Cllr Ginger pointed out that some of the repairs had been done but there was still one section that needed urgent attention – the Clerk informed him that he had enquired as to what was happening with that regard.

51. District Matters.

- a. Nil raised

52. Correspondence.

- a. **NHS and Ipswich Hospital.** Members noted the reply from Mrs Taylor Brown offering to come and discuss the future of Ipswich Hospital with Councillors but declined her offer as it was felt there would not be much to gain. The gradual decrease in level of specialist services at the Hospital was being fought through the media at present and members were all too aware that they would be given the same talk should Mrs Taylor Brown visit. The Clerk would write and explain members concerns again however and put some emphasis on the strain on East Suffolk families with these specialist services going further and further afield.
- b. **Great Blakenham** – proposed visit to recycling centre. The Clerk was asked to get some dates from Mr Collard for a visit in the Autumn.
- c. **Waterloo Avenue.** Members noted that an "H" was due to be painted on the ground beside the Zebra crossing to help with visibility. The Clerk was to enquire when this would be happening.
- d. **CYDS.** Members noted the request from CYDS for financial support for this year and also noted that there was provision in the estimates to make a contribution to the organisation if members so wished. After discussing the organisations accounts it was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that, as allowed by LGA 1972 s137, £1000 be donated to CYDS.

During the above item Cllr Cooper declared an interest and left the room, Cllr Mrs Nunn took the Chair.

- e. **Leiston Old Folks Outing (LOFO).** Members noted the request for a grant toward this years outing and were very pleased to respond. It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that, as allowed by LGA 1972 s137, £150 be donated to LOFO.

During the above item Cllr Bailey declared an interest and remained in the room.

- 53. Questions to the chairman.** Cllr Huxley asked about the future plans for the Co-op dry goods store. He also asked whether the Chairman could obtain the journey time statistics from the ambulance service for Leiston. Cllr Huxley then asked whether anyone was aware that the new timetable for National Express Rail might well no longer have a through train from Lowestoft to Liverpool Street. Could a representation be made?

Cllr Ginger declared an interest in the Co-op when it was raised and left the room.

There being no more business the meeting finished at 9.40 pm.

----- Chair

----- Dated