

Pre-meeting Reports
8th January 2008

124. Police Report. The Chairman welcomed Sgt Gubbins and PCSO Abbott from the Safer Neighbourhood Team to the meeting and DC Darren Winchester from Suffolk Constabulary. PCSO Abbot gave a summary of the crimes that had been committed through December and talked about other initiatives that had been ongoing over the Christmas period. A report is attached.

One of the main items of interest was the spate of domestic burglaries that had plagued the town on the lead up to Christmas. DC Winchester reported that a suspect had been taken into custody and, as the gentleman concerned was out on licence, he was now back behind bars. Although he couldn't positively state that all the burglaries were down to the one individual he confidently expected the incidences of domestic burglary to now drop to its normal level. He hoped however that residents would remain vigilant and that everybody would continue to take basic security measures around their homes so as to not make entry into their homes at all easy for any prospective burglar.

Cllr Ginger raised the issue of the "boy racers" around the Town which had annoyed and worried so many residents over many years. Many members of the public present also voiced their concern and anger at how the young drivers were allowed to continue being such a nuisance and to spoil the quality of life for so many residents who lived near the Town Centre. Sgt Gubbins explained the Police's position and the actions they had taken to try and reduce the problem. Residents offered some suggestions on how other initiatives might be tried which Sgt Gubbins agreed to consider and try. Residents who lived close to the Sizewell Road Car Park, which appeared to be the epicentre of this nuisance, were invited to have a representative on the Safer Neighbourhood Partnership in Leiston so as to be more involved in the attempts to eradicate the anti social behaviour they were concerned about.

125. County Report. Cllr Ron Ward sent his apologies.

126. District Report. Cllr Geater updated the meeting on Ipswich's failed bid for unitary status and how that had affected the Pathfinder partnership SCDC were currently investigating with the other District Councils and Suffolk County Council. The main concern for everyone involved was the enormous sums of taxpayers money that the whole process had wasted and the continuing uncertainty while the Boundary Committee looked at ways of changing the County's structure in the future. This prompted questions from the room and some discussion.

Other items reported included the District Councils opposition to the Environment Agencies stated intention not to fund the upkeep of flood defences in the Blyth, Alde, Ore and Deben estuaries. Cllr Geater asked the Council to consider giving their support to try and get them to reverse this decision. Finally, he reported that the District Council had been given some money from the Big Lottery which was awarded to Councils to improve play areas. He hoped some might be used to help in Leiston.

Cllr Nunn was able to report the current recycling figures which, for SCDC in the first nine months of the financial year, stood at 44.6%. This was a very encouraging and above average figure. In the twin bin areas the rates were between 53 and 54%. He was also able to announce that the roll out of the twin bin scheme for Leiston residents was ahead of schedule and that two more rounds would now be converted this year – one in April and one in July.

During the above discussions, the time reaching 7.30pm, it was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Cooper 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,
8th JANUARY 2008, at 8.23 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 C.S. Ginger
Councillor T. E. Hodgson
Councillor W. H. Howard
Councillor F. R. Huxley
Councillor J. Morrissey
Councillor A. J. Nunn

A minutes silence was observed in memory of Mrs Joan Telford who passed away last week. Joan Telford joined the Urban District Council in 1972 and was Chairman of the Town Council in 1980.

127. Minutes. It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Ginger and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of the 4th December 2007 be signed as a true record.

128. Apologies. Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Cllr Hawkins, Cllr Blowers and Cllr Mrs Geater.

129. Chairman's Communications. The Chairman informed members that there was nothing to report. There had been no civic activity over the Christmas period.

130. SSG Meeting of 7th December. Cllr Ginger queried two items from the minutes of the meeting of the SSG held on 7th December. One was a reference to possible redundancies at Sizewell A (due to a delay in de-fuelling) and one was to express concern that the NII (as reported) did not intend to prosecute Sizewell A over a recent water recirculation pipe event as "it would take up too many resources". He considered this to be a poor decision for a regulatory authority and was worried they did not have enough resources to do their job. Cllr Bailey, in reply to the first point, explained that there were only going to be voluntary severances and that no compulsory redundancies would be made. In reply to the second point members heard that the NII, if they were happy at the speed and commitment of a company in taking all their recommendations on board after an event (like the one above) then they would often leave prosecution aside to be used as a second option should those recommended actions not be taken in an appropriate time scale.

During the above discussion Cllr Bailey declared an interest as an employee of Sizewell A.

131. Finance.

- a. **Accounts for Payment.** It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Huxley and agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £23,896.16p along with £16,827.34p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment.

132. Precept.

- a. **Core costs** – Members agreed to the figures presented by the Clerk to cover the core costs anticipated to run the Community Centre, the Cinema and the general expenditure incurred by the Clerks office. A sum of £500 was added to make provision for the recently announced power cost rises. This came to £112,625. Members then discussed the possible capital projects they wished to contribute to in the coming year item by item, voting on each at the time as to whether they were added or deleted from the final estimates. Proposals and voting are not detailed for each item below, just the decision and, where requested, a recorded vote.
- b. **Historic Map (Council Chamber)** – Members noted the estimate from Judith Weisner which detailed the work that was required to repair and restore the large wall map in the Council Chambers. They agreed that the work should be carried out and put £2000 into the estimates to join the £500 set aside last year to meet the estimate.

- c. **Community Centre** – There was a long discussion covering the various aspects included in the estimates for four items in the Community Centre. Two essential items were all agreed on – new windows for the kitchen (£1,000) and two new radiators (£1,000). The provision of a decorative and secure bow topped railing fence around the perimeter of the site was also finally agreed as members felt this was fully in accord with their efforts to enhance the Town's appearance as well as making the building more secure (£4,500). A sum was put into an earmarked reserve to cover replacement furniture – mainly the chairs – as the backs of quite a few were splitting and were more costly to have re-upholstered than to be replaced (£2,500).
- d. **Cinema** – After the success of introducing a Dolby Digital sound system this year members looked at the next recommendation that Mr Tony Williams had made which was to upgrade the Film Theatre's Fascia. This had become even more desirable with the current fascia boardings showing advanced signs of deterioration with some actually falling off. Members noted the rough estimate obtained by the Clerk of what a complete overhaul would cost (£5,500) and also noted that, should they not agree to this, then monies would have to be allocated for emergency repairs. It was eventually agreed that the full amount would be put in the estimates as, again, a new fascia would be a good advertisement, enhance the town and be a one off cost with no ongoing repairs being required to the current fascia.
- e. **Allotments.** Members agreed to include £2,000 in the estimates to carry on tidying up both allotment sites with £1,500 of that sum earmarked to join Cllr Ward's locality money (£500) to start on the chestnut fencing project.
- f. **Highbury Cottage Footway** – Members discussed the current position with regard to trying to get a safe footway from Waterloo Avenue to Highbury Cottages and Footpath 3 to save residents and their children walking along a dangerous road. It was agreed that, after the last meeting with the County Council, there was no chance of getting them to do it or a footway being constructed unless the Town Council did the majority of the work themselves. Members agreed, that even if it took a few years, unless they started putting money aside now nothing would ever happen. It was decided to put £10,000 into an earmarked reserve to be added to and to be ready to contribute to the construction of a pedestrian footway along the B1119.
- g. **Victory Road Recreation Ground.** Members firstly agreed to put £1,200 in the estimates to purchase a new lamppost by the school gates to replace the broken one there at the moment. They then heard the Clerk outline plans to complete the re-fencing along Victory Road and to repair some of the broken concrete footways which are becoming potential trip hazards. Members agreed to put £12,000 into the landscaping budget to get this completed.
- h. **Christmas Lights.** Members noted the costs that could be incurred should the Council get involved with the Christmas lighting in 2008 and put £1,000 into reserves to cover them.
- i. **Play Equipment.** Members noted that the Victory Park project was now complete but that the reserve needed topping up to allow the Council to upgrade King George Recreation Ground in due course and to provide equipment to the playing field behind St Margaret's Crescent. £5,000 was added to reserves.
- j. **Dinsdale Road WC's.** Members put £8,000 into the estimates to continue running the Toilets in Dinsdale Road for a further year.
- k. **Town Appraisal/Consultation.** Members discussed the possibility of following up on the Town Appraisal, conducted in 2002, with another consultation to keep the discussion with the residents fresh and current. £5,000 was put in the estimates to fund the process once the vehicle for the process was decided upon.
- l. **Grants.** Members agreed to put £5,000 aside again for donations and support of the Town's local organisations and charities that do work in the Town.
- m. **Contingencies.** £3,500 was set aside for contingencies.
- n. **General Reserves.** The Clerk informed members that he was comfortable in taking £10,000 from the anticipated general reserves at year end to offset the precept. This would leave approximately £60,000 in the General Reserve all being well which would be sufficient to cover the advised figure of half the Council's annual expenditure. On a proposition from Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Ginger it was agreed to take £10,000 from general reserves to offset the precept for 2008/2009.
- o. **Precept.** The Clerk informed members that the Precept needed to carry out ongoing business, provide the agreed level of service and carry out the above capital projects for 2008/2009 would be £172,325. This figure took into account the agreed contribution from reserves and, on a proposition from Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Howard, it was agreed to precept the District Council for £172,325 for 2008/2009. Cllr Geater wished to have his vote against the proposition recorded.

During the above discussions Cllr Ginger declared a personal interest in all matters affecting the Cinema. He remained in the room and partook in all other items other than those. Cllr Huxley, Cllr Morrissey and Cllr Barnes declared an interest when the allotments were discussed.

The meeting was suspended for 15 minutes for a natural break from 9.15 pm to 9.30 pm

133.Planning.

- a. **C07/2217 – Conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to form five dwellings at Crown Farm, Sizewell gap Road, Leiston.** Members were very worried about the access to the site and asked that a clear statement from Highways on the recommended splays etc. be obtained by the planners. Members also requested that a clear statement from the H&SE NII on the suitability of building 5 new residences inside the DPZ was obtained before issuing approval. If those issues were able to be resolved members agreed that the architectural features of this building had merit and should be preserved as allowed by AP75.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- b. **C07/2205 – Erection of part two storey part single storey side/rear extension on Smyth House, High Street, Leiston.** The proximity and height of the proposed extension to the bungalow on the northern boundary was considered far too much and would be unacceptably overbearing. The neighbouring properties were not shown on the plans but had to be considered in deliberations. The loss of light to that bungalow from the south would be excessive and a considerable loss of amenity

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- c. **C07/2243 – Erection of replacement dwelling at Woodbine Cottage, Sizewell Gap, Leiston.** Members were not comfortable with the design and considered that it did not fully reflect the style of the existing property or, more importantly, its neighbours. The main concern however was that, using AP34 as guidance, this could not be considered a modest change and the replacement dwelling was much bigger than the original building. This could almost be treated as new dwelling and, as such, would not be permitted. If it is treated as an extension then the frontage alone was too large but taken with the rear elements members felt that a refusal could be the only option.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- d. **C07/2285 – Internal alterations at first floor level in Leiston Abbey House, Leiston Abbey, Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- e. **C07/2328 – Erection of lean-to shed at 1 Church View, Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- f. **C07/2357 – Erection of ground floor and first floor extensions on Ocean Cottage, Sizewell Gap, Leiston.** The proposed changes were far too large to be classified modest and almost double the size of the property.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

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

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

134.County Matters.

- a. **Speed Limits.** After earlier comments during the pre-meeting reports the Clerk was asked to get clarification of the legal status of 20mph limits.
- b. **A12 Industries.** Cllr Boast informed members that Cllr Ward had written to him with a reply to the question he had asked last month.

135.District Matters.

- a. Members noted the meeting due to be held with SCS Ltd.'s Mr Tim Collard the very next day and contributed various items for the agenda.

136.Correspondence.

- a. Members noted the letter from SALC to the Environment Agency objecting very strongly to their stated Estuarine Strategy for Suffolk. There was some discussion on the pros and cons of "managed retreat" but, on a vote, members agreed that to do nothing was not what Leiston or its neighbours wanted and directed the Clerk to write to the Environment Agency to express our concerns.
- b. Members noted the request for a donation from the Suffolk Accident Rescue Service and, on a proposition from Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Howard, it was agreed to donate £50 to SARS as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.

- c. Members noted the request for a donation from CYDS and, on a proposition from Cllr Geater, seconded by Cllr Hodgson, it was agreed to donate £750 to CYDS as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.

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

- d. Members noted the request for a donation from the Disability Advice Service and, on a proposition from Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Howard, it was agreed to donate £50 to the Disability Advice Service as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.
- e. Members noted the request for a donation from the Long Shop Museum and, on a proposition from Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Hodgson, it was agreed to donate £1,250 to the Long Shop Museum as allowed under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.

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

137. Questions to the chairman. Members passed on many complaints from residents about the poor service the town was currently getting from Lloyds Chemist. They also asked whether the Clerk could obtain the most recent Ambulance response times for IP16.

There being no more business the meeting finished at 10.25 pm.

----- Chair

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