

Pre-meeting Reports
12th January 2010

- 132. Police Report.** Members welcomed PCSO Philip Marshall, Suffolk Constabulary, who gave the meeting a breakdown of the crime figures for Leiston for December (attached). He also reported on the public meeting held on 7th January where the new priorities for the Safer Neighbourhood Team were set with the public's involvement. He was asked to ensure that, in future, his report and any other notices the SNT issued, gave a clear telephone contact number as well as the website and e-mail addresses for those residents without a computer.
- 133. County Report.** Councillor Ward sent his apologies.
- 134. District Report.** Cllr Nunn gave more details of the fire that had affected the Parham composting facility recently. Alternative arrangements had been made for the time being to ensure green waste did not have to go into landfill. He informed the meeting that all households in Leiston would be on the three bin scheme by mid march this year. There were various discussions on the forthcoming changes to the policing in the town and on the ongoing Local Government Review.

At a meeting of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,
12th JANUARY 2010, at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor A. M. Cooper (in the chair)
Councillor D. E. Bailey
Councillor D Boast
Councillor J. L. Geater
Councillor C.S. Ginger
Councillor T. J. Hawkins
Councillor T. E. Hodgson
Councillor W. H. Howard
Councillor F. R Huxley
Councillor Mrs A Nunn
Councillor A. J. Nunn
Councillor N. Parker

- 135. Minutes.** It was proposed by Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Mrs Nunn, and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of 1st December 2009 be signed as a true record.
- 136. Apologies.** Apologies were accepted on behalf of Cllr Morrissey, Cllr Mrs Geater and Cllr Barnes..
- 137. Chairman's Communications.** The Chairman reported that he had attended several functions since the last meeting including the High School Presentation Evening, the Suffolk and Royal Anglian Regiment (Leiston Branch) Christmas get together and the County Council civic carol service. He had also attended the civic carol service in Bury St Edmund's cathedral. Another item he brought to the meetings attention was the excellent show put on by Bright Sparks at the Film Theatre before Christmas – he had been extremely impressed by the show and was glad that such a venue and such talent was available for residents to enjoy in the town. On a sad note he reported that he had attended the funeral of Mr Fred Carter along with so many other townsfolk on 4th January. He paid tribute to all the work that Fred had done for the community and passed on the Councils condolences to Fred's wife Pat and his children Neil and Helen.
- 138. Long Shop Museum.** The Clerk reported that he had recently attended a meeting with the Trustees of the museum at which they had discussed the offer that the Museum had received for them to purchase the railway line behind Station and Dinsdale Roads. It was agreed that the Trustees would consider the offer on the basis that, although there may not be much use that could be made of the land in the immediate future, the long term aim would be to run Sirapite along her old route sometime in the years

to come. To do this would obviously be very expensive but it was felt that if the land were not secured now then the chance of achieving this may well be gone forever. Once the decision was made to seriously consider the offer various actions were decided upon. The land in The Engineers pub garden would be key to the project so that had to be investigated and more details of ownership of the walls either side of the line were required too. The Clerk informed members that he had passed on their commitment to fully support the initiative in a way that would best add gravitas to any funding bids etc. He also passed on that he had been asked to consider applying for listing status on the gates, and possibly the sign, at the top of the line on Buller Road. Advice sought on this since the meeting however gave very little hope that they were suitably unique for this to be a successful venture. Members felt that it would be supportive to raise a substantive motion of support for the project so, on a proposition from Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Ginger, it was unanimously agreed to support the Long Shop in their endeavours to obtain the old railway line.

Councillors Hawkins, Nunn, Huxley, Ginger and Cooper declared a personal interest in the above topic.

139. Finance.

- a) **Accounts for Payment.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Boast and agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £22,565.04p along with £9,024.37p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment.
- b) **Annual Risk Assessment Review.** Members discussed the report presented by the Clerk and asked relevant questions to assure themselves that they were satisfied with its content. It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Ginger and agreed that members accepted that a proper and thorough risk assessment had been carried out covering all physical, financial and governance risks which the Council could reasonably be expected to encounter and that appropriate measures were in place to cover or reduce those risks where possible..
- c) **Internal Audit and Internal Control Review.** Members noted the report on Internal Controls, the report from the Internal Auditors on their visit in December and the Clerks recommendation for appointment of next years Internal Auditors. It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Ginger and agreed that Heelis and Lodge be appointed as Internal Auditors to the Council for 2010/11. It was further proposed that the Internal Auditors report from December be accepted as integral to the financial risk reduction process and that it be noted that the Clerk came out of that report very well.
- d) **Review of actual Income and Expenditure against budget.** Members noted the half yearly actuals and compared them to the year's estimates to ensure things were on track where this was possible. The Clerk explained the difficulties of producing a more frequent comparison due to the operations in the Theatre not being linear. Members did comment that the monthly Financial Report did in fact give them a good indication of where the Council stood even though it did not contain the detailed comparison. It was proposed by Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Huxley and agreed that the members were content with the information presented and that it gave a fair reflection of how the budget stood against the estimates.

The meeting took a break from 8.10 – 8.35pm

140. Precept.

- a. **Core costs** –Members considered the core costs to be able to efficiently run the Cinema, the Community Centre and all the items associated with the general administration for a further year. This came to £124,225. Members then discussed the possible capital projects they wished to contribute to in the coming year. There was some discussion on the best way to do this which was resolved on a proposition from Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Nunn, that members go through the projects item by item, voting on each at the time as to whether they be 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. Cllr Geater wished it to be noted that he voted against the method proposed.
- b. **Part funded PCSO.** Members noted that they had committed the Council to part funding a PCSO for Leiston for two years in the last budget round and therefore agreed to include £14,000 for 2010/2011.
- c. **Property purchase contingency.** Members considered the prospects that could be forthcoming during the next 18 months with regard to the local government review (LGR) and, of course, a general election. The District Council are seriously reviewing their property portfolio with a view to realising its value or decreasing the running costs. Members noted that the Council Offices were very likely to be considered within this strategy but felt that there was no need to put money aside just yet as no firm offer or intention had been conveyed to them by SCDC therefore, the £10,000 allocated as a contingency for this was removed.
- d. **Community Centre** – There was just one item, £1500 to renew the timber where necessary around the fire doors. Having had to dip into contingencies during this current period to renew the heating system there was now very little else that needed doing for the foreseeable future.

- e. **Cinema** – After the success of introducing a Dolby Digital sound system two years ago, adapted toilets last year and the new foyer and fascia this year members were asked to consider setting aside £10,000 next year to go toward a new digital projector. Members were informed that digital projection is fast taking over from 35mm which, unfortunately, needs investment in new equipment for it to be shown. A digital projector would also be required to show the new 3D films storming the cinemas. In fact, some of the top family films later this year may only be available on digital and, more immediate, residents are asking for 3D as it is a the new and exciting way to watch movies. After a serious discussion it was agreed that investment was the only route to take and that to keep going forward was the only real option to ensure that residents had access to the current and up to date entertainment that the Film Theatre provides. Councillors Geater and Ginger wished their objection to this investment to be noted.
- f. **Allotments.** Members agreed to include £2,000 in the estimates to carry on tidying up both allotment sites and to be used to progress the fencing and tap provision.
- g. **Highbury Cottage Footway** – Members discussed the current position with regard to trying to get a safe footway from Waterloo Avenue to Highbury Cottages and to save residents and their children walking along a dangerous road. It was agreed last year and this to put £10,000 into an earmarked reserve which could be added to and be ready to contribute to the construction of a pedestrian footway along the B1119 in the future. A further £10,000 was included in the estimates for next year.
- h. **Christmas Lights.** Members noted the costs that could be incurred should the Council not be able to find a suitable sponsor for the Towns Christmas Light Display next year and decided to put £2,000 in the budget to ensure the continuation of the lights next Christmas. Should the newly formed Leiston Business Association take on the Christmas Lights as hoped then this could be used elsewhere or be kept available as possible grant aid for next year if required.
- i. **Play Equipment.** Members noted that the reserve currently stood at £20,000. The Victory Park project was completed the year before last at a cost of £45,000 which gave an idea of the cost of installing, replacing or repairing play equipment and safety surfaces. Members felt that there should be a healthy reserve for this item as Leiston did have a lot of children and young people and careful saving now would enable the funds to be available for new projects/repairs which were due in the next couple of years. £5000 was added to the reserve.
- j. **Dinsdale Road WC's.** Members put £11,800 into the estimates to continue running the Toilets in Dinsdale Road for a further year. Although costly due to the age and design of the toilets members felt that many residents appreciated the convenience.
- k. **Bins, furniture and computer equipment.** £500 was put aside to replace waste and dog bins as necessary, £1000 was put aside to renew ageing benches around the town and £1,000 was put aside to replace ageing computer equipment during the year.
- l. **Health and Safety.** Members appreciated that they were ultimately responsible for the Councils Health and Safety record and, although they trusted the Clerk to have done his best on their behalf, they agreed with the Clerk that an outside independent audit of the Councils standards and practices would give everyone confidence that the right procedures were in place. SJB Solutions had provided a very reasonable quote for £650 which members agreed to leave in the estimates.
- m. **Grants.** Members agreed to put £5,000 aside again for donations and support of the local organisations and charities that do work in the Town.
- n. **Contingencies.** £3,500 was set aside for contingencies.
- o. **General Reserves.** The Clerk informed members that he was not confident enough to recommend that anything be taken from reserves to offset the final precept figure as any excess that may have remained at year end had been eaten into with two major repair bills for heating coming close together at the Community Centre and the Cinema. He anticipated that the General Reserves at year end would be approximately £70,000 - £75,000 which would be sufficient to cover the advised figure of half the Council's annual expenditure.
- p. **Precept.** The Clerk informed members that the Precept needed to carry out ongoing business, provide the agreed level of service and to carry out the above capital projects for 2010/2011 would be £192,175. This figure was 4% higher than last years precept and added £3.85p a year (7.5p a week) to a Band D properties overall Council Tax bill (37% of properties in Leiston are Band A who will see there contribution to the Town Council increase from £68.59 per year to £71.16p). On a proposition from Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Hodgson, it was agreed to precept the District Council for £192,175 for 2010/2011.

During the above discussions Cllr Ginger , Cllr Nunn, Cllr Mrs Nunn and Cllr Bailey all declared a personal interest in matters affecting the Cinema.

141. Planning Matters.

- a. **C09/1857 Erection of one internally illuminated double sided pole mounted display at 47 Waterloo Avenue (Shotter's Garage), Leiston.** Members were concerned that an illuminated sign so close to a busy road would be a distraction to motorists, especially if it rotated or flashed in any

way. The Clerk was asked to pass these concerns on to the planners in case they had not already sought advice on this issue.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- b. C09/1991 – Variation of Conditions 4 and 14 of planning permission C08/2204 to allow for the erection of verandas and decking to the permitted 9 static caravans at Cliff House Caravan Site, Sizewell.** There was some discussion on the merits or otherwise of the proposed additions, especially with regard to the site being quite prominent within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There were no significant planning concerns however and, with the site being in an adjacent Parish, it was agreed to offer no objection.

NO OBJECTION

142. County Matters.

- a. **Highways.** Cllr Howard pointed out that the small railing fence by the zebra crossing in Waterloo Avenue still needed to be moved and Cllr Huxley, with members support, suggested that the Clerk write and thank the County Council employees who have been out in atrocious conditions for long hours trying their best to keep roads and pavements as safe as the weather allowed over the last few weeks.

143. District Matters.

- a. Nothing raised.

144. Correspondence.

- a. **SJB Safety Solutions.** Members noted the services that SJB Safety Solutions could offer with regard to auditing and advising on the Council's current H&S regime and have made provision in the estimates to use the service.
- b. **Suffolk Accident Rescue Service.** Members noted the request for a grant from SARS and were very pleased to respond. It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that, as allowed by LGA 1972 s137, £75 be donated to the Rescue Service to help with their work.
- c. **PISCES Swimming Club.** Members noted the request for a grant from the Pisces Swimming Club for the disabled and were very pleased to respond. It was proposed by Cllr Boast, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that, as allowed by LGA 1972 s137, £50 be donated to PISCES to help with their work.
- d. **Home Start.** Members noted the request for a grant from Home Start Suffolk Coastal and were very pleased to respond. It was proposed by Cllr Boast, seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed that, as allowed by LGA 1972 s137, £50 be donated to Home Start to help with their work.
- e. **Victim Support.** Members noted the request for a grant from Victim Support and were very pleased to respond. It was proposed by Cllr Nunn, seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed that, as allowed by LGA 1972 s137, £50 be donated to Victim Support to help with their work.
- f. **Sizewell Parishes Liaison Group.** Members noted the request for the agreed membership fee to remain a member of the SPLG and, recognising at an earlier meeting the need for the group to have an operating fund, on a proposition from Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Parker it was agreed to send £150 as requested.

- 145. Questions to the chairman.** Cllr Cooper answered a question taken at the last meeting with regard to the proposed new policing policy. He confirmed that all victims of crime will be contacted and personally visited unless they stated that they did not want to be. He was also asked about the future of Daneway. Members were disappointed that they were not consulted further on the disposal of this property and now just waited to see who had bought it.

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

There being no more business the meeting finished at 10.02 pm.

Chair

Dated