

At the ANNUAL MEETING of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
Held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,
5th MAY 2009, at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor D E Bailey
Councillor B.A. Barnes
Councillor D.R. Boast
Councillor A.M. Cooper
Councillor Mrs S.M. Geater
Councillor C.S. Ginger
Councillor Mr. T.J. Hawkins
Councillor T.E. Hodgson
Councillor W.H. Howard
Councillor F.R. Huxley
Councillor J Morrisey
Councillor N Parker
Councillor Mrs A.V. Nunn

1. **Election of Chairman.** It was proposed by Cllr Howard and seconded by Cllr Hodgson that Cllr Tony Cooper be appointed Chairman for 2009/2010. Cllr Howard told members how he believed that Cllr Cooper would be a good advocate for the town and that he would always act in the Town's best interests. Everyone agreed and with no other nominations Cllr Mrs Nunn congratulated Cllr Cooper on his election and presented him with the Badge of Office to wear whilst undertaking his official duties. Cllr Copper then read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman and thanked members for their support and confidence.
2. **Minutes.** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th April 2009 were signed as a true record.
3. **Apology.** Apologies for absence were previously received on behalf of Cllr Mr Nunn and Cllr Geater.
4. **Chairman's Report for 2008/2009 (Councillor Mrs Ann Nunn).** Cllr Mrs Nunn addressed the meeting as follows:

"I would like to welcome you all to tonight's Annual General Meeting of Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council. The Council encourages public participation and this is usually at the beginning of our meetings, but this being the AGM, the public will have the opportunity to speak towards the end of the meeting. I encourage you to raise any concerns that you may have or even take the opportunity to compliment the Council on its performance!

I feel very honoured and privileged to have been your Chairman for the last year.

During this time I have received support and friendship at every meeting and event that I have been able to attend. I have represented the Town at a number of events both locally and further afield.

Of particular note was the official opening of the North Suffolk Skills Centre at Halesworth. This centre provides training for school pupils aged from 14 upwards on a day release scheme from their school, either one day a week or one day every two weeks, depending on their age. The skills they can choose from include plumbing, electrical work, vehicle maintenance, painting and decorating and hairdressing.

I met some pupils from Leiston High School who were taking part in this programme and I was very impressed both with the centre itself and the enthusiasm shown by the pupils and the trainers.

I would now like to take you through just some of the achievements and issues that we, as a Council, have been involved in over the past year.

We joined the Minsmere Levels Stakeholder group as we are concerned about several issues including, defence of the coast against storm surges and rise in sea level caused by global

warming and improvement of the internal drainage of the marshes to allow flood water to drain into the New Cut and hence to the sea.

The Council has responded to the proposals put forward by the Boundary Committee for local government reorganisation in Suffolk and several Councillors have attended the various meetings on this topic.

The Council were saddened by the death of Councillor Clive Blowers following a long illness, in July. Clive became a Councillor in 1999 and served continuously until his death.

In September, the Council resolved to work towards Leiston-cum-Sizewell obtaining Fairtrade Town Status. In October a Fairtrade drop-in session was held for businesses and this was followed up in February with a Fairtrade Day for the general public. We are currently in the process of setting up a Fairtrade Town Steering Group which will include members of the public and producing a Fairtrade Directory.

Councillor Nigel Parker was co-opted to the Town Council in September to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Councillor Clive Blowers.

The Zebra crossing in Waterloo Avenue was completed late last year and will be an excellent improvement once the Traffic Order Review puts the appropriate yellow lines down to make it completely safe.

Safer Neighbourhood teams became firmly established during the year. They are making a difference and the Council agreed to fund an additional PCSO for Leiston which could help bring about further improvements in community safety and general wellbeing.

With part sponsorship from Energy Solutions we were able to put on a good display of Christmas lights. We are now looking for sponsorship for this year.

The Council agreed to maintain the Dinsdale Road toilets for a further year and then to review the situation.

The possible construction of Sizewell C will present the Town Council and the community with a number of challenges.

Following a concern raised by a member of the public concerning possible links between the use of water by the Sizewell Power Stations and the quality and reliability of the water supply in Leiston, seven Councillors and one member of the public visited the Essex and Suffolk Water facility at Lound. We received an interesting and highly informative presentation by Essex and Suffolk Water and came away relatively reassured and confident we will be able to talk freely with the company as the plans for a possible Sizewell C take shape.

Works to construct the underground cable connection from the Greater Gabbard substation in Sizewell to the National Grid are continuing. The undersea cables should be coming ashore in July and the beach car park should be tidied up and be ready for use in August.

Three new seats are to be installed in the Old Post Office square. There has been some controversy over the design but I am sure that these will be a fitting and welcome addition to this attractive area.

The Council has made comment and liaised with various bodies on a number of consultations including the new Local Development Framework, a possible Sizewell C and the Traffic Order Review. The Traffic Order Review is late but is very important to the town.

The Council continues to improve its assets such as the Community Centre, Film Theatre, Victory Park and the various allotments.

The Film Theatre Foyer has been enlarged thanks to fund raising by the Leiston Film Theatre Support Club and by the vision and sheer hard work put in by the Film Theatre Manager Wayne Burns. A big thank you to Wayne, who with his team of helpers have worked tirelessly to get this completed in a surprisingly short space of time. Many people assisted with this project, but a special thank you must go to Hannah Everett, the Assistant Manager, and Stephen Ginger, who is no doubt Wayne's right-hand man.

The project was completed with no cost to the Council for any of the construction work.

The allotments are currently fully occupied, all being worked and there are now ten new people on the waiting list.

The reorganisation of Schools in Suffolk will change the face of the town and we await news of the intentions for the middle school site.

An NHS dentist is expected to open a practice in one of the shop units at Alexander Mews later in the year.

The artwork by pupils from Leiston Middle School displayed on hoardings around the Colonial House building site has been of a high standard and helps to brighten up the Town.

The lack of a footpath from Highbury Cottages into the town continues to cause concern. The Council is putting money aside each year towards this and is doing all it can to get this project underway.

Being a Quality Council, we publish four newsletters each year which are well received. I would like to thank Councillors and members of the public who have contributed to these newsletters.

The Chairman's Reception, held on 30th April was attended by around 90 guests. This annual event is an opportunity for the Council to say thank you to everyone who is involved in the numerous local organisations which help to make Leiston and Sizewell such lovely places in which to live.

At this reception I introduced an award, the Chairman's Cup. This will be awarded every year to a person of the Chairman's choice, whom they consider has strived to make a difference in our community.

It gave me great pleasure to present this award to Nita Ling. Nita has worked quietly and tirelessly throughout the year leading her small team of helpers to make Leiston and Sizewell very colourful, attractive and tidy.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Town Clerk and all my fellow Councillors for all their work during the year. I would also like to thank them all for their help, support and friendship they have given to me during my term of office. Thank you all very much."

Cllr Cooper, on behalf of the Council, thanked Cllr Mrs Nunn very much indeed for the excellent way she had represented the Council during her term of office over the last three years. He hoped he would be able to follow her example.

5. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman.** It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson and seconded by Cllr Ginger that Cllr Bing Boast be appointed Vice Chairman for 2009/2010. With no other nominations Cllr Boast accepted the position and thanked Councillors for their confidence in him.

6. **Composition of Working Parties and Representation on Other Bodies.**

Members gave their preferences as to which Committees, Working Parties or Organisations requiring a representative from the Council they wished to be involved with for the coming year. There were a few changes to the list used for 2008/2009 as, with a change of both Chairman and Vice Chairman, there was some movement to accommodate Cllr Mrs Nunn and Cllr Bailey in their own right once more. Cllr Parker joined the Film Theatre and Allotment committees and Cllr Morrissey the Highways Working Party. With the amendments decided it was proposed by Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Huxley and agreed that the composition attached to these minutes be endorsed for 2009/2010.

7. **Signatories for Cheques.** It was proposed by Cllr Boast, seconded by Cllr Mrs Nunn, and agreed that, in addition to the Town Clerk, signatories for Town Council cheques should include any two of the following Councillors: - Cllr C.S. Ginger, Cllr F.R. Huxley, Cllr A.M. Cooper, Cllr W. H. Howard.

8. **Loan of Artefacts.** The Clerk reported that various artefacts, including a working model steam tractor in a glass case, a wooden model steam lorry, a Garrett bust on a plinth, a collection of Garrett hats and a trunk, were on loan at the Long Shop Steam Museum. He further reported that the School Bell from the former Church of England Elementary School in Waterloo Avenue was similarly on loan at the Primary School. It was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Hodgson and agreed that these loans should continue. Cllr Hawkins declared a personal interest in the Long Shop items.

9. **Any Other Business.**

The meeting received reports from the following organisations.

Police Community Support Officer Jackie Abbott representing the Suffolk Constabulary.

PCSO Abbott apologised on behalf of Inspector Neil Reid, the Sector Commander, who was unable to attend the meeting to give an annual report. PCSO Abbott, who has given regular reports throughout the year, gave, instead, her normal monthly update which is attached to these minutes.

Jo Mancey on behalf of the Long Shop Museum.

"The Manager, Stephen Mael has continued to work extremely hard on all aspects of running the Museum, arranging displays and organising various events. Volunteers continued to enter items in the Accessions Register thereby reducing the backlog and Simon Middleditch continued his valuable contribution to the general maintenance, painting and various other tasks. The Hon. Education Officer, Julia Mael, organised key events including the Museum's Victorian Apprentice

Days for Leiston Middle School, Cliff Lane and Castle Hill Primary Schools, and also, with funding from Suffolk County Council and Renaissance Group of England, new under 5s activities and craft afternoons for older people, which were very well attended.

Admission charges remain unchanged at £4.50 for adults, £4.00 concessionary and £2.00 for children with a special family rate (2 adults and 2 children) of £11.00. Total number of visitors for the year was 11,072, 221 up on last year. Open Day was attended by 441 visitors – opened by the Chairman of the Suffolk Coastal District Council Cllr. Cliff Coker – who enjoyed listening to the Royal British Legion Band, witnessing the engines in steam and the official handing over of the Garrett steam road roller Consuelo Allen by Trustees of the Transport Trust for a bargain price of £1. As part of Museums' Month the Long Shop hosted a Free Leiston Day. 500 people came to look around the museum and see displays by local organisations, including the Scouts, Army Cadets, Old Comrades, Allotment Holders and Leiston Art Group. Free refreshments were provided by the Friends who also staffed a successful draw and produce stall. October saw the Final Fling, with engines in steam and other visiting attractions, a very successful day attended by 524 people. There were also exhibitions and visits by Suffolk Craft Society, Radio Suffolk, the Alabama Living History Society, the Francis Barnett Club and the East of England Embroiderers' Guild. Group visits included Suffolk Preservation Society Coastal District, Hollesley Glebe House Group, Castle Motor Cycle Group Haverhill, Hadleigh Cardiac Group and the Stour Valley University of the Third Age. The Friends of the Long Shop held a successful fundraising 'Sausage Sizzle' in October and Lecture Supper in November.

Sirapite continues to be the foremost project with huge progress being made. All the major parts have now been restored or manufactured from scratch and it is notable that the work has been done at the Museum site or outsourced to local businesses either in Leiston itself or in Norfolk or Suffolk. At the end of March Sirapite passed her hydraulic test and Trevor Wrench, the engineer in charge of the restoration, was highly complimented on the quality of the work. It is hoped to have her reassembled and running under her own steam by the end of the summer. The display boards and listening posts are being prepared and there is a comprehensive photographic record of the project. Fundraising is ongoing as inevitably there is a shortfall in the budget, and the Sirapite team are extremely grateful to all those who continue to hold events and give donations. The Trustees are grateful for the support of Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council, and also for the generosity of donors to the Museum, including Energy Solutions at Sizewell A Power Station who again paid for the publication of the Museum's leaflet. The Museum's volunteers continue to make a valuable contribution to the success of the Museum, for which they were thanked at the traditional pre-Christmas reception kindly hosted by the Trustees at Leiston Community Centre."

Cllr Bill Howard on behalf of the Leiston Royal British Legion Band

"We had a very sad start to the bands year when we learned of the death of Daphne Oliver. Daphne was one of the first women to join what was at the time a very male dominated pastime. Daphne took a full part in the band as a player, past chairman and drum major. We got the sad news just as the band was setting out for Ypres in Belgium. Supported by fund raising and donations from Leiston and around Suffolk the band were to play in the evening ceremony at the Menin Gate. On day 1 we played a concert in the town square at Ypres, in the afternoon at the Tyne Cott cemetery the band played at a moving ceremony at the memorial stone set in the middle of 12,000 graves. 8 of our cornet players played the last post and reveille and 2 of our younger players Harriet Kersey and Jack Parker along with councillor Bailey laid wreaths. The band lead a parade which included a Sikh contingent from Luton representing Sikhs of the Salient to the sombre evening ceremony at the Menin Gate. Dereck Doy our drum major laid a wreath on behalf of the band. On the final day the band played a concert in the main square in Bruges. Everybody who took part agreed this small tour was a most awesome and moving period for our band.

2008 Saw another busy year for the band with a varied number of engagements. Our usual British Legion Parades along with a dedication of the new inshore Lifeboat in Aldeburgh which if you had attended that one you would have got an idea of the conditions which the Lifeboat Crew have to go out in. The rain poured down and the wind was gale force, we ended up playing in the hanger because our music and stands couldn't stay upright outside!!! Another engagement saw us also play for a posh birthday party in Woodbridge. In total we had 27 different engagements.

We were very lucky last year to be involved with a music workshop run by Wrentham band, which involved them, us and Stowmarket concert band having music tuition by Elgar Howarth. A famous brass band musical director. Who, in the morning, gave valuable time to the younger players on perfecting their technique etc and then in the afternoon all 3 bands played as one with music he had chosen for us to rehearse before the day. It proved to be a wonderful opportunity for everyone involved young and old who all came away having learnt something new.

Our fundraising is always on going and we appreciate the Town Council in all the support they give to the band throughout the year. We were very fortunate to have been left a legacy from the estate of Tony Flick for £2,000. He was a great supporter of the band and we had played for him at his home on a couple of occasions. It doesn't take long to spend. Our latest instrument purchased has been a Bb flat bass at a cost of £5,000.

We have already had a number of enquiries for this year and we will be playing at the Newmarket Poppy Race day in August, which is a very high profile job for the band.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the band to thank the town council and the people of Leiston for their continued support. Our website is at www.leistonband.co.uk “

Cllr Huxley on behalf of Leiston and Saxmundham Citizens Advice Bureau.

“The number of contacts handled by the Bureau is up on that for last year - 10,437 compared with 10,134. As I reported last year, the cases dealt with are becoming increasingly more complex and frequently very time-consuming. To some extent the more straightforward issues on which advice has been given in the past are now being tackled by the clients themselves, using the vast information resources which are available on the internet. The Citizens Advice Service's Advice guide (www.adviceguide.org.uk) which is part of the CAB network and gives basic information on housing, debt, the legal system, benefits and consumer rights had over seven million visits last year. In many instances this is often sufficient to put people on the right track. If a problem is complex, Adviceguide steers the questioner to a CAB Bureau for more detailed advice.

3,800 of the 7,747 issues dealt with during the year were to do with benefits or debts. Many of the benefit cases involved tax credits, in particular alleged over-payments, and some revealed very dubious administrative practices. The benefits system is becoming increasingly complex and some clients find it almost impossible to jump through the various hoops to claim their entitlements. For example, the introduction of Employment & Support Allowance has caused a lot of confusion and has added yet more hurdles for clients who struggle to understand what they should be claiming and when.

The average debt per client was £26,700 (£25,500). It is easy to be critical of clients who fall into debt but it is clear that the reasons for debts seldom relate to deliberate profligacy. They often do not understand the terms of loans or credit agreements and may not realise that monthly repayments can add up to infinitely more than they borrowed originally. Debt can happen to anyone - the important thing is to try to catch it early, before the situation gets beyond saving. Over recent months many clients have been struggling to pay their bills because of decreased hours of employment or even the loss of a job. Relationship breakdown can cause havoc in a family budget, as can the arrival of a new baby. Those needing benefit or tax credit help may have to wait weeks for their entitlements to be paid and in the meantime there can be really frightening issues to confront such as the threat of homelessness or of bailiff action over payment of arrears. Equally relevant is the fact that some clients find it really difficult to budget effectively and are tempted into credit deals which simply drop them deeper into debt.

Employment is a growing area. Many businesses have had to cut back on their staff costs. The Bureau has given advice on redundancies as well as decreases in paid hours and changes in contracts and has come across some employers who have been taking advantage of the situation.

More details of issues dealt with will be found in the Bureau's Annual Report.

The Bureau collects information about financial gains achieved for clients and confirmed. For the last year these confirmed gains were:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit	£20,084
Disability Benefits (AA, DLA, IB, SSP, ESA)	£104,435
Other benefits, including tax credits	£7,153
Employment	£9,050
Consumer	£16,547
Legal	£90,823
Other	£9,936

This total of £258,028 shows an increase of over £100,000 on last year's figure and is well over double that of the previous year. The figure for Disability Benefits is four times that for last year and the Legal category has more than doubled. This latter increase may reflect clients' increasing

tendency to resort to court action to claim monies owing to them - often the threat produces the desired result.

The case-recording system has made it possible to start recording outcomes which are not necessarily financial especially where housing is concerned. For two years the Bureau has been involved in a pilot project run by the National Homelessness Advice service (NHAS) which has been looking at the impact of housing advice on CAB clients.

The largest proportion of the advising (47%) was done face-to-face at the Leiston office with another 12% at the various outreach offices. Telephone advice accounted for 36%. Some advice (5%) is given by letter. E-mail advice is only done on occasionally.

The Trustees are grateful for the support which the Bureau receives from Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council.

The Manager, Nick Mayo, and her superb team of professional and volunteer advisers at the Bureau are to be congratulated for the excellent work which they do for the people of this town and the surrounding district, maintaining a consistently high quality of advice and, equally important, doing it all with good humour.

Denny Horsefield on behalf of CYDS

Denny explained that she had recently taken the post of General Manager at CYDS and gave an overview of what CYDS does, the opening hours, the services CYDS provides and what the challenges were in her new role.

June Oliver asked whether assistance was given to young people to get employment. Denny explained how CYDS staff helped their youngsters with interview technique, writing CV's, looking for jobs and writing letters.

Cllr Howard thanked Denny on behalf of the Council for all that they did for the Town's youngsters.

Malcolm Briggs on behalf of the Leiston Youth Club Support Committee

Malcolm explained how the Support Committee were working with Suffolk Coastal District Council to enhance the Haylings Pond area further and to build on the best open space award that the meadow achieved in last year's Anglia in Bloom judging. The partnership is working up a project to introduce disabled access to the pond, to maintain the pond and to improve the site before applying for funding.

Leiston and Aldringham Nursing Association

Cllr Huxley explained how the Nursing Association had been going since the First World War with money raised by local residents to buy the equipment that the Association loaned out. The Association has a quantity of wheelchairs and other equipment that is urgently looking for a new home. Cllr Huxley asked that anyone with some space to store the equipment and a little time to service the items if required between loans that they contact him for more details.

Daphne Roshier on behalf of the Women's Institute

"Good evening I'm Daphne Roshier Treasurer of Leiston WI.

Our aim is to promote education and well being in country women. In order to spread this amongst the population of Leiston an open meeting was held to consider an afternoon session hoping to attract young mums and people who could not attend our evening group. However, there was no response so the idea has been abandoned.

Membership has increased slightly although we have been unable to persuade anyone to join the committee which remains the same as the last few years. Some members have been involved with events at the Long Shop Museum.

Throughout the year we have had talks on a variety of subjects from the Suffolk Coast to Egypt. An especially interesting one to enlighten us about the complexities of DNA. The British Legion Band once again entertained us at our Harvest supper. The Birthday dinner was followed by Bingo.

We were fortunate to receive several grants towards the cost of the necessary updating of the electrical wiring and heaters. Home Start are now using our hall and together with the rental we receive from them and other groups using the hall we are able to raise enough funds to support the

hall. There are disabled facilities and a well-equipped kitchen the charge for hiring is £7.00 per hour”

For further information regarding any aspect of Leiston WI please contact the President Mrs Betsie Black on 01728 688354

- 10. The Meeting was then opened up to members of the Public.** Cllr Huxley congratulated Mr Harry Balls on his one hundredth birthday and suggested that the Council send him a card to pass those congratulations on. Mr Malcolm Briggs asked that the Town Council, in the coming year, work hard to try and secure some much needed social and affordable housing in the Town. He also thanked the Council and the Councillors for the work they do for the town which, although he did not always agree with everything they did, he was appreciative of their desire to make Leiston an even better place to live than it is now.
With no more comment the meeting was closed.

There being no more questions the meeting closed at 8:58 p.m.

Chair

Dated
