

At the ANNUAL MEETING of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
Held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,
6th MAY 2008, at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor D E Bailey
Councillor B.A. Barnes
Councillor D.R. Boast
Councillor A.M. Cooper
Councillor J. L. Geater
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 Mrs A.V. Nunn

1. **Election of Chairman.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley and seconded by Cllr Cooper that Cllr Mrs Nunn serve another term as Chairman. With no other nominations Cllr Mrs Nunn was duly elected. She thanked members for their confidence and support. She promised to continue to do her best to reflect member's views during her term of Office. Cllr Howard thanked her for the excellent way she had made meetings inclusive and how she had welcomed and involved the public.
2. **Minutes.** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st April 2008 were signed as a true record.
3. **Apology.** Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Cllr Mr Nunn and Cllr Blowers.
4. **Chairman's Report for 2007/2008 (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. These include the Annual Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service at Leiston Airfield, Leiston Primary School's annual fete, the Anglia in Bloom award presentations held at Trinity Park, where we were awarded a Silver Gilt,

Suffolk – Creating the Greenest County Conference at Trinity Park, Ipswich and the celebration of the homecoming of the Royal Anglian Regiment from Afghanistan which was held in Bury St Edmunds.

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.

A major achievement for Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council in 2007 was the gaining of Quality Status under the Quality Council scheme.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank John Rayner, our Town Clerk, for the considerable amount of additional work which he put in to make this possible.

Gaining the award shows the principal authorities that the Town Council is ready, willing and able to take on greater responsibilities in representing its residents and that it is an able partner in contributing to the long term future of Leiston and Sizewell – something it has been doing strongly and quietly for many years.

Quality Status may be particularly beneficial to us in any future reorganisation of local government in Suffolk.

One of the obligations of a Quality Council is to produce a newsletter four times a year. I am pleased to say that we are on track with this, producing Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter editions. From the many comments that I have received I feel sure that it is appreciated by our residents.

Working in partnership with Suffolk Coastal District Council we have provided new play equipment at the Victory Road Recreation Ground. We have also secured the use of Suffolk County Council land at St Margaret's Crescent for a recreation ground. This, along with the recreation ground in King Georges Avenue, has been equipped with goal posts.

The fencing around the Victory Road Park has within the last week been replaced with bow topped railing to give the area back its original appearance.

It looks very smart and in keeping with the Leiston street scene.

The Community Centre has been re-roofed and equipped with a very smart adapted toilet facility. The Community Centre is now truly accessible to everyone.

The onshore work associated with the Greater Gabbard offshore wind-farm is progressing and we are pleased that the various partners have taken into account the views of local people.

A number of allotments have been freed up so the waiting list is considerably shorter.

Thanks to the generosity of British Energy, Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council now has a new Chairman's Badge and Chain of Office.

The Chairman's Reception, held in April, was attended by around 100 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 last week's planning meeting we considered two controversial planning applications. This attracted around 50 members of the public who had the opportunity to put forward their views.

We, as a council, are delighted with our residents input and support.

Looking forward to the next Council year, we have a number of projects in the pipeline:

The fascia of the Leiston Film Theatre is about to be replaced and it is proposed to install lighting to illuminate the front of the 'Oldest Cinema in Suffolk'.

Money has been put aside for a town appraisal which will be particularly important with the possibilities of local government reorganisation in Suffolk and new nuclear build at Sizewell on the horizon.

A fund has been started to finance the provision of a footpath to Highbury Cottages.

The thought behind this decision being that it may encourage further funding to be made available to us.

This footpath has been on the Council's wish list for a number of years.

The new Local Development Framework is still being assembled by Suffolk Coastal District Council who will be getting back to us for further consultations later in the year. This is the document that will detail the shape and size of Leiston and the number of new homes we can expect over the next 20 years.

The output from our recent traffic review meeting has been passed on to the County Council for their consideration during the forthcoming Traffic Order Review. This will also come back to us later in the year for a public consultation so residents can give their opinions on what is being proposed.

The Council recently discussed whether Leiston should work towards becoming a Fairtrade Town and this is being further investigated.

Inevitably, other issues will arise during the year which the Council will need to address.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Town Clerk and all my fellow Councillors for all their work during the year and also for their help and support to me during my term of office."

5. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman.** It was proposed by Cllr Geater and seconded by Cllr Barnes that Cllr Trevor Hawkins be appointed Vice Chairman for 2008/2009. Cllr Howard however, seconded by Cllr Cooper nominated Cllr Bailey. A secret ballot was requested which came out in favour of Cllr Bailey who was duly appointed Vice Chairman.

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 only a few changes to the list used for 2007/2008. Cllr Boast joined the Highways Working Party, Cllr Morrissey joined the Allotments Committee and the Victory Park Management Committee and Cllr Mr Nunn joined the Newsletter Working Party. With those amendments it was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Huxley and agreed that the composition attached to these minutes be endorsed for 2008/2009.

7. **Signatories for Cheques.** It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Morrissey, 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 Geater, seconded by Cllr Mrs Geater and agreed that these loans should continue.

9. **Any Other Business.**

The meeting received reports from the following organisations.

Inspector Christopher Lucas representing the Suffolk Constabulary.

Inspector Lucas gave a brief overview of the crime figures for Leiston for April (attached) and then gave the meeting a report on the statistics for the last year. This included a run through on how the Leiston Sector had performed against the various indices with regard to number and type of crimes against other sectors in the area. All indices were down apart from burglary, thefts and fraud.

After the figures Chris gave a more general brief in which he told the meeting how policing had changed since the introduction of Safer Neighbourhood Teams in the area. He was now the Leiston Neighbourhood Inspector rather than the Sector Commander and the Police Community Support Officers had now become a very vital part of the community safety team. He outlined how his officers were working hard on reducing youth nuisance and anti social behaviour, Boy Racers, criminal damage and underage drinking.

Cllr Boast asked about Neighbourhood Watch committees and whether they were still being supported.

Inspector Lucas confirmed that the Chief Constable was a big supporter of the neighbourhood watch scheme so thought that they would soon be re-invigorated and back on the map.

Cllr Ginger reinforced many points Inspector Lucas had made about the Safer Neighbourhood Team and Cllr Geater thanked the Inspector for the good job that they do in Leiston. There isn't, statistically, much crime in the Town so there are, proportionately, less Police Officers than areas with a higher crime rate. This of course means that, when an incident does occur, our Officers are sometimes outnumbered and the job can be very hazardous. Cllr Howard asked that residents be encouraged and advised to report all incidents to ensure that the crime rate is a true record of what happens in the Town so, that if it warrants it, more officers are assigned to the sector.

Ann Napthine on behalf of the Long Shop Museum.

"Visitor numbers for the year totalled 10,851, slightly down on 2007; one reason for this was the reduction in pre-season numbers, largely because there was no Leiston Christmas shopping night in 2007. 574 visitors attended Open Day, and the count at Final Fling, on a fine autumn day, was over 600. The highlight on this occasion was the arrival of a replacement firebox for the shunting engine *Sirapite*, on an original Garrett trailer pulled by Trustee Bill Kemball's 1910 Burrell steam engine. The summer season saw many group visits, including East Anglian Practical Classic Cars, three Probus clubs, an Engineering Group, Lincolnshire Archaeology Group, a disabled group and Lowestoft Christian Men's Network. The Friends of the Long Shop held a successful fundraising barbecue in June, despite poor weather, as well as a Lecture Supper in October and a repeat of the highly popular 'Sausage Sizzle' in November. Other events included a display of Morris dancing, a brass band concert and a 'Behind the Scenes' Tour for Museums and Galleries Month, as part of a campaign to highlight volunteering in museums.

Work continued on the Museum's major current project, the restoration of *Sirapite*. With the erection of the engine shed, sponsored by EDF, it was possible to continue work during the period of winter closure.

Completion of the project is now scheduled for 31 October 2009.

The Manager, Stephen Mael, continued to deal with the considerable burden of work associated with the application for Accreditation of the Museum, the award of which was announced in December. He nevertheless managed to put up the usual interesting displays in the Museum, including one on Thomas Martin, who received a certificate for fifty years' service after spending the whole of his working life at Garrett's. The Education Officer, Julia Mael, organised the traditional Victorian Apprentice days over an extended period in 2007, and various school visits, one of which was linked to the *Sirapite* project as part of a special Science Day. The Garrett Room was used to host a Suffolk Craft Society Children's Textiles Exhibition called Rags to Riches.

As always, the Friends of the Long Shop made a valuable contribution, both by raising funds and by providing volunteers. The Trustees are also grateful for the support the Museum continues to receive from Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council and Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council."

Mrs Jacqui Plant on behalf of the Leiston Royal British Legion Band

"Good evening every one. As you may or may not be aware I am the secretary of Leiston RBL Band, and am here this evening to give a report on what the band has done in 2007. Yet another busy year has come & gone. We have performed at 25 different engagements this year, from marches to concerts, fetes & playing on bandstands etc. Sue, our musical director has once again been a stickler for perfection in our playing & I feel it has been beneficial to all the band members, who have improved in their musical ability overall. It's not easy standing out the front when there is mixed ability within the band but she has shown with her patience and encouragement especially with the younger players that we can produce a full band sound. Our fundraising for our imminent Ypres trip at the end of May 2008

has just about been reached. We have had a lot of support and donations from all over, to many to mention but a list can be viewed on our website. www.leistonband.co.uk

Now for a public announcement:

We are holding a quiz on the 16th May 2008 7.30pm at the riverside centre, Stratford St Andrew. The proceeds of this will go in the Ypres fund. Cost is £4 per person including food

We have begun our quest to buy new instruments and have to date purchased 2 new cornets, a trombone & a BbBASS. The cost of our latest purchase the bb bass was in fact £5,000. So as you will appreciate it doesn't take long to spend any money which we have earned from our various performances. On behalf of the band members I would like to thank Leiston town council in their ongoing support of the band and that it is very much appreciated by us all.

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

"The number of contacts handled by the Bureau is down on that for last year - 10,134 compared with 11,165 but still well up on the previous year when it was 8,233 but the cases dealt with are becoming increasingly more complex and frequently very time-consuming. It is not unusual for a client's case to take a couple of hours and require further similar lengths of time.

As I have just said, this reduction in numbers does not mean that the Bureau is less busy, nor does it mean that clients are preferring to choose other advice agencies. More advice can be found on the internet. A particularly good site is Adviceguide (www.adviceguide.org.uk). This is part of the CAB network and gives basic information on housing, debt, the legal system, benefits and consumer rights. 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.

The Bureau is dealing with considerably fewer cases of form-filling for benefit claimants. Until comparatively recently benefit applicants have been confronted with lengthy, detailed forms each with 20 or 30 pages. Now new applicants are required to make their applications through telephone interviews during which the agency staff question them in great detail and complete their applications on the spot. This frees up our Bureau's advisers time but does not automatically result in correct benefit payments in all cases.

Procedures for dealing with debt clients are becoming much quicker and more streamlined with the result that the number of contacts on their cases will have reduced overall. Clients with serious debt problems are increasingly seeking to follow the bankruptcy route which means that there is no longer a need to write repeatedly to individual creditors to explain the CAB's involvement and to correspond about repayment proposals.

However, 3,228 of the 6,765 issues dealt with during the year were to do with benefits or debts. Many of the benefit cases related to tax credits, in particular over-payments and clients' problems in trying to repay money on limited budgets.

The average debt per client was £25,500 (£16,000) with more than one client with debts in excess of £100,000. 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	£24,701
Disability Benefits	£21,334
Other benefits, including tax credits	£36,372
Employment	£17,712
Consumer	£7,416
Legal, including utilities	£36,201
Income Tax and Council Tax Rebates	£3,021
Other	£3,192

This total of £153,204 shows a marked increase on last year's figure of £119,962.

Most of the advising was done face-to-face at the Leiston office but telephone advice ran it a close second. There was still a substantial number of people seeking advice at the outreach offices at Saxmundham, Framlingham, Wickham Market and Woodbridge. Occasionally advice is given by letter. E-mail advice is still under consideration.

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.

A useful website is www.adviceguide.org.uk

Leiston Youth Club

Cllr Huxley, Chair of the Youth Club Support Group, explained how the group really needed more people to join as, at present, there were just four members, one of whom was the Headteacher from the High School. Leiston Youth Club was highly thought of and worked well. It had a good leader in Gary Butler but had just been dealt a bit of a blow with the closure of the lunch club due to maternity leave. It was hoped that volunteers could be found to help at lunchtimes so that the sixth formers could again come across and help and also it was hoped the word could be spread to try and attract more people to join the support group.

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 currently looking for a new home. The meeting was asked to bear this in mind and to possibly keep an eye open for suitable premises.

Cllr Mrs Nunn on behalf of the Women’s Institute

“The committee of Leiston Women’s Institute (WI) meets on the first Tuesday of the month and therefore send their apologies for absence.

Leiston WI is a member of the Suffolk East Federation of Women’s Institutes, which in turn is a member for the National Federation of Women’s Institutes.

Leiston is part of Group 9 which includes Aldeburgh, Saxmundham, Snape, Kelsale, Friston and Knodishall WIs. This group meets twice a year.

The WI is a registered charity and the aim is to promote education and well being in country women. We are interested in all aspects of life and seek to give women the opportunity of working together through the organisation and putting into practice those ideals for which it stands.

Leiston WI meets on the second Tuesday of each month. We have speakers on a wide range of subjects including taking part in Belly Dancing at our January social.

At our Birthday Party in March we were entertained by the Royal British Legion training band which we enjoyed so much that we have invited them back for our Harvest Supper in September!

Our members are involved in the local community, such as working in the charity shops, Meals on Wheels, the Rose and Sweet William Club. We also take part in the Victorian Days at the Long Shop.

We cater for visitors to the Long Shop Museum as well as other groups who visit our area.

We are very lucky to own our own hall and need to fund raise for ongoing repairs and replacements to meet the Health and Safety requirements.

It is used on a regular basis by seven local groups.

It is fully equipped and is available for hire at £7 per hour.

We have tubs of flowers outside which is our small part for Leiston in Bloom.

Our hall was purchased from the Air Ministry in the fifties when it was removed from a local airfield and erected on our land in John Street.

You could say that we were making good use of resources and recycling before recycling was invented!

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.** No-one wished to comment so the meeting was closed.

There being no more questions the meeting closed at 8:48 p.m.

----- Chair

----- Dated