

Pre-meeting Reports
6th November 2012

- 121. Mr Tom McGarry.** Mr Tom McGarry, EDF, described to the meeting the current situation with regard to the draft Statement of Community Consultation as it is prepared for the start of the Stage 1 consultation, due to start in November (for the proposal to build a new nuclear power station at Sizewell). He explained that the main focus of the consultation would be on the residents who lived within a 10 mile radius of Sizewell with the first (and extended) public exhibition being in Leiston. There would also be an office on the High Street anyone could go to get more information or to discuss any issues that they might have. Residents could also go there to leave feedback on the proposals or they could do this online or by using the feedback forms available at the exhibitions. The first stage of consultation will take feedback on EDF's early proposals, including all the ancillary site options, and then take these all into account before putting together more detailed plans which would then go to the second stage of consultation. He informed the meeting that EDF would be funding, through the Planning Performance Agreement with the Principal Councils, an independent planning consultant whose specific brief would be to work with individual town and parish councils to help them formulate a comprehensive response to the first stage consultation. He/she would meet the councils, discuss the plans with them, hear their concerns, work with them to ensure they had considered every aspect of the plans that could affect them and then write a response for the Council to approve to go to EDF. There was a lot of discussion; mainly on the process for the appointment of this independent consultant/advisor, but other queries were also answered regards the consultation process.
- 122. Police report.** The Chairman introduced PCSO Philip Marshall, Suffolk Constabulary, who gave members an overview of the crime statistics for October (attached). He reported that 11 (of the 35 crimes) had been detected and more were still being investigated. PCSO Marshall then answered questions as best he could but, as Mr Briggs pointed out, some were more suited for a senior officer to respond to. The data that Philip presented though was concise and comprehensive and he was able to assure Miss Oliver that the SNT were currently doing educational visits to the schools to promote road safety, in particular the dangers of poorly lit (or unlit) bicycles and the need to wear bright clothing in the dark. There was general agreement that the poor response times for Leiston needed attention and that this should be pursued through Inspector Aitken.
- 123. County Report.** The Chairman welcomed Cllr Richard Smith who reported that the County Council would not be increasing Council Tax for a third year. He also reported that he had toured the cinema with the manager to discuss the plans for an extension and pledged £4,000 from his locality budget toward the project should it go ahead.
- 124. District report.** Cllr Howard wondered whether the District Council had assessed the possible problems that could occur due to the change in benefits schemes proposed for next April, especially with regard to housing. If benefits were too low for a certain area then there could well be a number of residents asking to be rehoused. Mrs Girling thanked the Town Council for their support in trying to preserve listed buildings in the area but was sorry the District Council had not agreed with their recent comments regards Wood Farm. She also raised concerns over the current emergency plan with regard to Sizewell Power Stations. Mr Holmes raised the issue of tree roots on his allotment and requested Town Council help in lobbying the District Council to rectify the problem by removing the trees from their boundary of the Caravan Site.

During the above discussions, the time reaching 7.30pm, it was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Hawkins, and agreed, that standing orders be suspended to allow the public part of the meeting to be completed.

**At a meeting of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL
held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,
6th NOVEMBER 2012, at 8.12 p.m.**

PRESENT

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

- 125. Minutes.** It was proposed by Cllr Sparrow, seconded by Cllr Hawkins and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of 2nd October 2012 be signed as a true record.
- 126. Apologies.** Apologies were accepted from Cllr Nunn.
- 127. Declaration of interests.** Cllr Bailey declared a non pecuniary interest in Agenda item 17b and also intended to leave the room for that item. Cllr Howard declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda items 6, 9 and 17c. Cllr Cooper declared a non pecuniary interest in 17c too.
- 128. Chairman's Communications.** The Chairman encouraged everyone to support the Fairtrade Coffee morning being held in the Peter Free Foyer on the 8th November. He also informed the meeting that the Fairtrade Team were again manning a stand at this year's Christmas Fayre.
- 129. Mr McGarry's presentation.** Members were pleased to note that it was mainly the case that Leiston had made for professional assistance during the Sizewell C planning process that had secured the Independent Advisor Mr McGarry announced during his earlier presentation. Cllr R Bailey wished to thank EDF for taking our concerns on board but, along with other members, hoped that the selection process for the advisor could be transparent. It was therefore proposed and agreed that the Clerk should write and request that a member of Leiston Town Council be part of the selection or interview process to ensure, on behalf of the Parishes, that the successful candidate was truly independent.
- 130. Meeting with ONR.** Members noted the report from the meeting with ONR and the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Unit of 29th October. Cllr Ginger expressed his disappointment that the ONR did not appear to take any real responsibility for the way the criteria was being, and had been applied to land use planning and developments in and around Leiston over the last 40 or so years. There was still a little confusion too over the classification of Sizewell B as needing "remote" criteria for its lifecycle. Members were unsure whether SCDC were still using this or, as was intimated by ONR, that a relaxation had been made as experience of PWR operation and the shut down of Sizewell A now allowed semi-urban criteria to be used. The government however have not officially reclassified Sizewell B. The report noted however that, after the recent Boundary Hall enquiry, and the decision from the

Secretary of State, (where community benefits were assessed against safety) it had been adjudged that planning decisions should not be based solely on demographic assessment but should take into account whether there is any evidence of impact to the off site emergency plan. It was made clear that ONR could only advise on land use planning applications and had no regulatory powers to prevent a development from going ahead. However, basing advice on whether the emergency plan could adequately accommodate the proposed development, supported by the views of the emergency planners would present a compelling case for or against at the local level. Finally, Cllr Howard wished it to be noted that he felt the public should have been invited to attend the meeting of the 29th.

- 131. Library.** Members noted the report from Mrs Wyllie on the IPS meeting of 22nd October which she had attended on behalf of the Leiston Library Steering Group along with Cllr Howard and the Clerk. The meeting was to encourage and explain the procedure and benefits to the various support groups of becoming a member of the IPS. Suffolk County Council had basically signed a contract with the IPS for them to run Suffolk's Libraries but had underfunded them by around £100,000, deliberately, to try and engineer community commitment and involvement in their local libraries (this spirit was very evident during the initial threatened closures). It was envisaged that each library would have its own support group or friends group who raised money or contributed in kind in other ways to enhance the basic service provided by the local branches. The IPS had split the deficit amongst the 44 libraries based on size and Leiston was requested to contribute around £1,700 a year. This was much less than initially touted a year ago when members were concerned about the libraries future but was still a big ask for a small voluntary support group to raise. There were also concerns about this money just being absorbed into the IPS main account so groups were looking at ways of using their contributions to enhance their own library – like taking over the purchase of periodicals and newspapers for instance. Cllr Howard also did a report which recommended that members consider funding the Support Group and, in the spirit of the thing, leave the funding shy of £275 for the group to try and raise from donations from surrounding parishes who benefit from our library too. On a proposal from Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Ginger, it was agreed to fund the first 20 months membership fee requested by the IPS of £2000 and to make £100 available to the support group to cover admin costs for them to promote and expand their group for the future.
- 132. Sizewell – use of Fishermen's Huts.** SCDC were considering a request for a hut on Sizewell beach to be used for activities other than storage of fishing and boat maintenance equipment. Members felt that this was definitely against the spirit of the area and felt that any change of use might possibly even need planning permission. It was proposed that SCDC be advised of members' reluctance to allow any change of use on this site.
- 133. Upper Abbey Farm.** Members had all received a letter outlining the timeline and intentions of EDF to complete planning approval and complete restoration by next September. Cllr Ginger asked that this item remain on the Agenda however so no one took their eye off the ball.
- 134. Highbury Cottage footpath.** The Clerk reported that discussions were still ongoing with Mrs Readhead-Higgins regards the legal aspects of possibly using part of her field for a footpath.
- 135. Town Appraisal.** The Town Appraisal committee had met and had dissected the Appraisal results into areas that the Town Council could address, items that needed to be addressed by other authorities and items that could be clearly addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan. Members noted and approved the Terms of Reference for the Appraisal Committee who would continue to meet as a separate process from the Neighbourhood Plan Group to take forward all the areas identified for further Council/Authority action.
- 136. Neighbourhood Plan.** Members heard that there had been some interest from the public meeting but more help was going to be needed. The next phase was to get all the residents willing to help together with those Councillors who were willing to be involved and to have a briefing on the way ahead.

- 137. World of Housing – report.** Members noted the comprehensive report from Cllr Ginger (attached) on the state of the social housing landscape at present as Government changes to the way Housing Associations are funded and regulated come into force. He reported real concerns that these were leading to difficulties and speculated that they could lead to a housing crisis in the near future.
- 138. Allotments.** Beginning of review of terms and conditions. Members were asked for comments on the sufficiency of the current rules and conditions for allotment hire, especially with regard to possibly restricting the use of bonfires on the plots. Members decided to wait until the meeting with the Allotment Association in November to get their views.
- 139. Standing Orders and Financial regulations.** Members noted the proposals submitted by the Clerk for amendments to both Standing Orders and Financial Standing Orders to update them after the recent changes in Code of Conduct and Audit regulations. It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed that the amendments, as proposed, be accepted, and both Standing and Financial Standing Orders be updated accordingly.
- 140. Finance.**
- a) **Accounts for payment.** It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed that accounts presented in the sum of £25,240.32p along with £8,383.46p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment.
- b) **External Auditors report for 2011/2012.** Members noted the report from the Clerk on how the minor issues raised on the auditor's certificate were being addressed. It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr D Bailey and agreed to approve the Annual Return for 2011/2012 and the proposed actions to address the issues arising from it.

Cllr Ginger declared an interest in cheque number 311379 under item a).

The meeting took a break for refreshment from 9.10pm – 9.25pm

- 141. Planning.**
- a) Cllr Howard and Cllr Ginger pointed out that they would continue to vote against any proposals for new dwellings being built in the Town due to their belief that the emergency planning arrangements for evacuation of the town in the event of a severe nuclear accident were not proven.
- b) **C12/2031 – Erection of single-storey rear extension at 15 Waterloo Avenue, Leiston.**
RECOMMEND APPROVAL
- c) **C12/2165 – Use of land for the erection of one single-storey dwelling (revised scheme) in part rear garden, 1 Garrett Crescent, Leiston.** (Cllr Cooper abstained)
RECOMMEND APPROVAL

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

- d) **C12/2139 – Residential development to the site to provide 119 dwellings with associated car parking, open space, landscaping and new access arrangements on land opposite 18-30a Aldeburgh Road, Leiston.** Members had studied all the plans and associated documents and offered the following observations. Although not a planning matter there was a lot of concern about the ability of the current sewage system not being able to cope with such a big increase in properties at this site. Clarification was sought from Anglian Water on which station this would go to; Aldringham or Leiston, as Aldringham was currently being tankered across to Leiston causing disruption in Valley Road. Members were also concerned about the increase in traffic at this point and, having observed that Highways rarely comment on planning

applications, hoped some studies would be done to check that this increase was acceptable. Some members also thought that one entrance road for an estate this big was a planning mistake. On other issues the Clerk informed members that the opinion from the Suffolk Joint Emergency Plans Unit was that this development could be accommodated within their off site emergency plan. Members wondered what the mechanism was for ensuring education, health and other infrastructure was able to absorb this project and hoped this would be addressed. Overall though, in planning terms the real objection was that this was being proposed for a Greenfield site and on one outside the town boundary. Members had looked at this site in the past and had included it in future provision but only after the fields behind St Margaret's Crescent had been developed. Members disagree with the assertion made for that site that the entrance is not suitable as a program of works was agreed when that site was previously awarded 120 homes. It would appear that that site suffered from the reclassification from brownfield to a Greenfield site at quite the wrong time for the re-submission of the plans. The other element here is that Leiston has just started on its Neighbourhood Plan and members felt that this application was premature to that process. It would be good to do the work and then we would be in a much better position to advise on community benefits that needed to be provided to make this application acceptable and sustainable. The footway from Red House to the corner of Red House Lane needs to be completely redone too. (Cllr Hawkins and Cllr Cooper abstained)

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- e) **C12/2199 – Proposed erection of replacement and improved facility block to serve touring caravan site at Cakes and Ales, Abbey Lane, Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- f) **C12/2238 – Erection of two storey rear extension on 47 Crown St., Leiston.** This was a large extension which elongated the building such that it rather dominated both neighbouring properties to an unacceptable degree. The bulk of the extension would severely intrude on the neighbour to the south (whose windows face that way) and would take the light from the rear of the property to the North.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- g) **C12/2247 – Erection of single storey extension on 4 Woodlands, Haylings Road, Leiston.**

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

142. County Matters

- a) **Cherry Tree - Seaward Avenue.** Cllr Ginger requested that the Cherry Tree outside number 60 Seaward Avenue be pruned as it was getting very big.

143. District Matters.

- a) Nothing raised.

144. Correspondence.

- a) **Bonfires on the allotments.** Members noted the letter and petition from residents in Valley Road with regard to the excessive amount of bonfires they had endured this year on the allotments. They had earlier agreed to take this item forward with the Allotment Association.
- b) **Film Theatre extension.** Members noted the letters they had received from neighbours of the Film Theatre which, mainly, were objecting about the sheer size of the second storey extension and the effect that this would have on properties in Drivers Yard. There were also comments on the cost of the project (were it to go ahead) and a request that a ground floor extension be considered. Cllr Ginger proposed that, in view of the comments made, the plans should be withdrawn but members decided to leave them in and await the planning officer's decision before discussing the situation further.

- c) **Rural Coffee Caravan Information Project.** A letter from the project requesting funding was put off until December.

During the above item, the time reaching 10.00pm, it was proposed by Cllr Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Ginger and agreed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the meeting to conclude.

- d) **Sizewell C.** Members noted the update from the Chairman of the Joint Local Authorities Group and also the letter outlining the arrangements for the formation of a Community Forum.
- e) **Pavement outside 3-11 Aldeburgh Road.** Members noted the letter from Highways acknowledging the concerns of Aldeburgh Road residents and explaining why nothing would, at present be done to rectify the situation. The paths themselves were still well within tolerances for safety.
- f) **SERCO.** The company taking over Suffolk Community Healthcare had written to consult on their plans to restructure and change the way the service is provided to improve efficiency and quality of that service. Despite the reduction of 137 full time equivalent staff the letter stated that the redesigned service would provide the best possible care still for patients. With no real detail on how this would be achieved members were very concerned that the care of our most vulnerable residents and the staff attending them in their homes could be at risk of disruption and possible degradation of service. Cllr Mrs Geater urged patience as the detail would have to be looked at of what was proposed and it could be that the service might even improve at the front line.
- g) **Suffolk ACRE.** Members noted the Extraordinary General Meeting being called by Suffolk ACRE as part of the process of their incorporation into a new Suffolk wide voluntary sector Infrastructure project (with no name yet) – referred to currently as Newco...

145. Questions to the Chairman.

- a) Cllr Cooper drew members attention to relaxation from government on the criteria for civic awards and asked the Chairman whether he could bring this forward for discussion at a future meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Hawkins, seconded by Cllr Cooper and agreed that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the Meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

- 146. Personnel.** A confidential issue regarding personnel was discussed and resolved.
(During the above item Cllr Ginger declared an interest and left the room)

There being no more business the meeting finished at 10.35 pm.

Chair -----

Dated -----