

Pre-meeting Reports
7th January 2014

- 154. Police Report.** The Chairman welcomed PC Carl Lawrence, Suffolk Constabulary, who gave members an update on the crime figures for Leiston for December. There were 19 crimes this December compared to 34 in December 2012. Carl talked through some of the initiatives that were ongoing with the youth priority that the SNT were currently running with and heard complaints, yet again, about the white van that parked close to the shop in Kings Road, often just on the double yellow lines.
- 155. County Report.** Councillor Smith reported on the progress with regard to the Alde Valley School's Academy application and told members that some of the issues raised by members with regard to Waterloo Avenue site had been noted and supported by SCC. Negotiations were ongoing. A resident asked about broadband rollout to which Cllr Smith undertook to invite the lead officer from SCC on the project to come and address a future meeting as he did not have the full technical facts at hand to answer the question. He then reported that he would be raising the prospect of the D2 route being put back on the agenda with regard to the Sizewell C application. He explained that the four villages by-pass was still the prime aim for SCC but he felt and had argued that the D2 route was also needed due to the issues surrounding the Yoxford junction with the B1122 and the capacity problems of the B1122 itself. Cllr Howard expressed his disappointment that the promised bus shelter for the Waterloo Avenue 6th Form Centre had not been put in before the bad weather. A bus using resident objected however as he and his fellow travellers were upset that no shelter was being planned by SCC for any other stop, especially at Saxmundham where, due to a chaotic timetabling problem, many residents often had to spend an hour between buses in the cold and rain. He petitioned Cllr Smith to get onto the officers responsible for the recent poor management of the timetabling information which had necessitated him, off his own back, putting stickers on the public timetable boards to inform travellers of the mistakes. Cllr Smith explained that he did not represent Saxmundham so asked that the resident contact Cllr Gower with regard to the shelter required there but did promise to follow up the timetabling complaint. Mr Briggs informed the meeting that he had received a communication from Network Rail stating that it was impossible to raise the rail height at the Station Road Level Crossing and put the onus back on highways to plane the road. The meeting was disappointed at this and unsure just how "impossible" it was. Finally, Cllr Howard asked about the results of the recent Social Services review/consultation carried out by SCC. Cllr Smith thought that, as it had only finished very recently, the report would not yet be complete but that he would get a date for when it would be.
- 156. District Report.** Cllr Cooper and Cllr Hawkins had nothing to report but Cllr Cooper undertook to get an answer to a question from Cllr Howard with regard to what was happening with the High St Car Park and the Westbrook land.
- 157. Public.** Mr Jackman-Graham explained to the Council why he thought a Joint Development Committee was needed in the town to manage the expectations of the Sizewell C project. In particular the problems and decisions being made by businesses whilst not knowing when the project might start. He felt a Committee could look at things that could be done to be proactive and could have an effect in managing the frustration everyone felt with the long drawn out planning procedure.

158. Leiston Works Railway. Mr Colin Fisher, Chairman of the Leiston Works Railway, gave the meeting a report on the current situation with regard to their ambitions to reopen a railway between The Long Shop and the old station. His organisation had purchased and cleared the track between Buller Road and the garden of the Engineers Arms and had also raised enough money to lay sleepers and track on that section. The 150yds alongside the Engineers Arms was crucial to completing the project however and he wanted to brief members on where the LWR were with regard to obtaining or getting permission to use that land. He explained how the Council had registered the Engineers Arms as an asset and how, subsequently they had exercised their right for the community to bid for the premises. This meant that, until 7th March 2014, by statute, Adnams could only accept a bid for the premises from a Community Group or Organisation. In the background commercial bids had been received for the premises which Adnams would look at if there was no firm community interest by 7th March. Mr Fisher explained that one of those bids was from an entrepreneur who was very sympathetic and supportive of the LWR and the Long Shop. He had had contact with the bidder and had received an undertaking that the land for the completion of the line would be leased to LWR and that he would be keen to work with a Community Interest Company or other Community Group to run the Engineers as a Community Pub. Mr Fisher had heard from Adnams that they were supportive of this bid as they would like to support any community effort to run the premises and he asked the Council for their support in any future negotiations as this issue proceeds.

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,
7th JANUARY 2014 at 8.07 p.m.**

PRESENT

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

159. Minutes. It was proposed by Cllr Howard, seconded by Cllr Cooper and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of 3rd December 2013 be signed as a true record.

160. **Apologies.** There were apologies from Cllr A. Nunn.
161. **Chairman's Communications.** The Chairman reported that she had attended the recent presentation evening at the Alde Valley High School which had been a lovely evening watching the pupils being rewarded and presented with their qualifications after their hard work throughout 2013. Members also noted that the Chairman's Reception for 2014 would be on 14th March.
162. **Declarations of Interest.** Cllr Cooper declared an interest in Agenda item 16c, Cllr R Bailey in item 11, Cllr Ginger and Cllr Mrs Geater in item 9 and Cllr Howard in any item related to RBL or EDF.
163. **Highbury Field Footway.** The Clerk reported that the agreement had now been signed and the next step was to meet with Amy Readhead to discuss arrangements for topsoil and path ends before going out for estimates. The Clerk also assured Cllr Last that the earmarked reserve contained enough money to complete all works that might be required to complete the project. He also assured Cllr Hawkins that the Council's insurers were aware of the initiative and would provide cover.
164. **Film Theatre Extension.** Members noted the Clerks report of the briefing given to members before Christmas regarding the Festival of Remembrance and the seating project proposed for the rear of the auditorium. The Theatre Manager requested members support in arranging an early meeting with the organisers of this year's Festival of Remembrance to ensure it was run smoothly. Last year had brought a couple of issues to the fore that needed resolving before this November. It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Ginger and agreed that members help the manager to take this forward. The second item was the proposal to take out the rear four rows of seats and to replace them with superior seats with table attached and a row of much requested cuddle seats. The Clerk explained how this was a very good time to do the project as many of the 12 year old seats in the venue were needing repair and we had now run out of spares. Apart from the benefit to the customers of being able to use the new enhanced seating we would gain 40 spares which should last the next 5 years or so. The project would need to be underwritten however to the tune of £10,000 although the manager anticipated various initiatives' being able to repay that investment with one to two years. There was some discussion with regard to this being deemed a first and second class seating scheme to some although to others it was a chance to enjoy an adult only area of some comfort should that be their wish. It also reflected how the industry was progressing and what the customer wanted. With these reservations for some it was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Sparrow and agreed that the project be funded and should go ahead.
165. **Joint Development Committee.** Cllr Cooper opened the debate by acknowledging the frustration of waiting for Sizewell C but expounding the work done already on this issue by the Town Appraisal Team and, now, the Neighbourhood Planning Team. He felt that the work being done on the Neighbourhood Plan should be given a chance as it was aiming to take Leiston forward and was going ahead without needing to take Sizewell C's timing into account. Other members echoed this and felt that another "committee" might undermine or conflict with the business and employment group (as a for instance). It was therefore proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr D Bailey and agreed that the possible formation of a Joint Development Committee be put on hold. It was felt prudent to put it on the Agenda again in March however and have a closer look at the Neighbourhood Plan in February.

- 166. Engineers Arms.** Members were unanimous in their support for the work being done by the LWR and were very keen to help to ensure that the 150 yds of trackbed within the curtilage of the Engineers Arms was obtained for their use as soon as possible as this was absolutely essential. They understood that there was unlikely to be a “community” bid before the 7th March deadline for the Engineers Arms although they were aware of the formation of a Community Interest Company in the Town which would be keen to be involved with the possible running of the whole site after that. The fate of the land would therefore be in the hands of Adnams or the potential purchasers come March. Members had noted Mr Fisher’s summary of the situation and also noted that there was one bid which had given a firm undertaking, albeit by word of mouth, that they would lease the land to LWR and be prepared to work with a CIC if they were successful. With there being no such discussion or undertaking from other bidders and no certainty that Adnams would consider splitting the site and selling the land to LWR it was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Cooper and agreed that, in principle, the Town Council supports the community bid as the best way to secure the land for LWR and to see the Engineers being used in its historic setting.
- 167. Meeting with SCS Ltd – 15th January.** Members noted the meeting and the Clerk reported that Mr Tim Collard would no longer be coming as he had retired from the company following his spell of ill health. Cllr Ginger asked the Chairman to write and thank Tim for his help over the years and to wish him well in his retirement.

The meeting took a break for refreshment from 8.45pm – 9.00pm

- 168. Haylings Pond.** There was no news on how SCDC were getting on with the improvements but there were several observations made on how the pond and meadow appeared much more tranquil and litter free with the enforced absence of fishing on the site at present.
- 169. War Memorial.** The Clerk informed members that he had commissioned a stonemason to do some tests as to what was required to clean up the memorial and for a report and estimate to be given to achieve that. Members pointed out that the memorial was the responsibility of SCDC and would therefore discuss passing on the information once it was at hand. Cllr Mrs Geater asked what measures might be available to avoid the same problem happening again in the future should it be able to be cleaned up completely.
- 170. Fairtrade.** Cllr Mrs Nunn thanked Cllr Howard for his help at the recent Christmas Fayre and announced that there would be a coffee morning during Fairtrade Fortnight in February and, possibly, a band recital. She also mentioned that the new Fairtrade Town signs at the town entrances had provoked interest with both and her and the Clerk receiving enquiries as to what Fairtrade was all about.
- 171. Finance.**
- a) **Accounts for payment.** It was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Hodgson and agreed that accounts presented in the sum £12,398.14p along with £8,590.92p paid since the last meeting be approved for payment. Cllr Howard declared an interest in cheque No 311852.
 - b) **Banking Arrangements.** The Clerk informed members that the Community Account at Barclays was now open and functional and that £130,000 had been moved across on deposit.

- c) **Internal Auditors report.** Members noted the internal auditor's report from her visit in December and, on a proposition from Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Howard, members were pleased to agree to accept it.

172. Precept 2014/2015. Members had studied the report and recommendations from the Clerk over the Christmas break and were satisfied that the projections and estimates therein covered all aspects of the Council's anticipated business for the coming year. There was one addition brought forward at the table which was proposed by Cllr Ginger and seconded by Cllr Howard. This was to add £1,000 to the sum set aside for wages to allow room for the Council to introduce the living wage as the minimum hourly rate for council employees should this be agreed at the next wage review. With this agreed the new proposed Precept came to £224,000. It was proposed by Cllr Ginger, seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed that the Council set a Precept of £224,000 for 2014/2015 which was a rise of 1.9% on the current year (equating to 4p a week on the Council Tax for a Band D tax payer in Leiston). The report and estimates the Precept is based on, rather than duplicate it in the minutes, is available in the Council Offices for public viewing. The main points covered in the report are how the District Council are not passing on the full grant given to them to pass on to Town and Parish Councils this year (a reduction of £5,700), provision for the running of King George Avenue Recreation Ground and Haylings Pond Meadow which have been passed down from the District Council and provision for new seats in the Cinema.

173. Planning.

- a) **DC13/3552/FUL – Erection of a single story dwelling house including vehicular access, parking and turning area. Land rear of 15 and 17, Urban Road, Leiston.** Members noted that this was clearly a backland development which they felt was unwelcome and detrimental to the amenity of the residents in 15 and 17 Urban Road. The bungalow itself was in an unfortunate position (right next to a car park and that this proposal was an overdevelopment of that site. If it were approved however members request that you impose a condition which restricts the work onsite or use of machinery to not take place outside of 8am – 6pm weekdays, 8am-1pm Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays. (Cllr Cooper and Cllr Hawkins abstained)

RECOMMEND REFUSAL

- b) **C13/13/3647/FUL – Erection of a single-storey front extension. 43 Waterloo Avenue, Leiston.** (Cllr Cooper and Cllr Hawkins abstained)

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- c) **C1313/3729/FUL – Erection of a single-storey side extension at 37 King George Avenue, Leiston, Suffolk.** (Cllr Cooper and Cllr Hawkins abstained)

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

- d) **Neighbourhood Plan update.** Nothing happened over the Christmas period. The next phase is to work with SCDC to look at potential housing sites around the town.

174. County Matters

- a) **Highways.** Councillor Mrs Geater highlighted several really bad road surfaces around the town which made cycling very hazardous. The main ones were at the bottom of the High Street, the junction at Kings Road/Haylings Road and

Dinsdale Road. Cllr Sparrow highlighted the parking problems and atrocious road surface in Haven Road.

175. District Matters.

a) **Nothing raised.**

176. Correspondence.

a) **SARS – Suffolk Accident Rescue Service.** Members noted a letter from SARS explaining what they do and reporting on some operations they have been involved with around the local area. Cllr Last spoke highly of the organisation as he had worked with them in the past at various incidents. It was proposed by Cllr Boast, seconded by Cllr Cooper and agreed that £100 be granted to SARS in recognition of the life-saving work they do.

b) **72 High Street.** For some time members have thought it desirable to enter into a formal lease with their tenant at 72 High Street as, for many years the premises has been let on licence. The Clerk reported that the legal fees for drawing up of a lease would likely be £1,000. Members considered this and on a proposition by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Boast all agreed that, on advice given, this should be done.

c) **Leiston Parochial Charities.** The Clerk reported that there had been no call on the Charity since January 2013 and recommended that members might agree to allocating the years income to the Citizens Advice Bureau, as before, as an emergency hardship fund. £500 was proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Ginger and agreed.

177. Questions to the Chairman.

a) **Leiston Amateur Dramatic Society.** Cllr R Bailey asked to be able to promote to the meeting the formation an Amateur Dramatic Society in the town. The Chairman asked him to perhaps do a small article for the next Council newsletter.

There being no more business the meeting finished at 9.52 pm.

Chair

Dated
