

Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting

**Tuesday 22nd January 2002 at 7.15 p.m.
at Bevan House, Camps Road, Haverhill**

PRESENT: **Chair:** **Cllr. Maggie Lee**
 Town Councillors: **E Goody, Mrs Martin, A Millar and A Smith**

MINUTES

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Bowman, Hancock and Gerry Kiernan.

2. Minutes

Cllr Goody proposed and Cllr Smith seconded that the Minutes of Meeting held 20th November 2001 (previously adopted at Full Council on 27th November 2001), be approved as a true record, all being in favour.

3. Matters arising

a) Clements Surgery

The Clerk reported that the future of the surgery now rested with the Borough Council, who had to approve the land swap arrangements. No formal planning application had yet been received for a new surgery.

b) Social Impact Study

The Clerk reminded the Committee that the launch of the results of the Social Impact Study would be at 2.00 p.m. on Monday 28th January at the Arts Centre. Cllr Goody reported that he had requested that copies of the report be made available before the meeting but this request had been refused. Cllr Maggie Lee asked that her apologies, together with those of Cllrs Mrs Martin and Smith be given to the organisers of the launch.

c) Pedestrian Safety Reeds Lane

The Clerk reported that the Borough Council had agreed to paint a white line the length of Reeds Lane to provide a designated area on which pedestrians should walk, as there was no footway on this road. Cllr Maggie Lee asked that the Town Council's efforts in having this safety improvement be publicised.

d) Cleales Site

The Committee noted that demolition of the remaining buildings on the site had commenced, although no further planning applications had been received. Cllr Smith stated he was concerned that the site was to be used for further car parking rather than retail use. Cllr Maggie Lee agreed, and a discussion ensued regarding the future of the Town. The Committee agreed that a whole-day event be held, involving all Town Councillors, one Saturday, to review all the issues and recommend future policy. The Clerk was asked to arrange the meeting.

4. Correspondence

a) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Proposed New Bus Shelter, Spindle Road

The Clerk reported that St Edmundsbury Borough Council had made funds available for an additional bus shelter, and that he had travelled the Town bus services to agree a suitable location. The best location would seem to be at the junction of Spindle Road and Poplar Close, and he had consulted the residents regarding the siting. Four residents had responded, and it would appear that by moving the bus stop slightly any objections could be overcome. The Committee noted the Clerk's action, and asked that the Borough Council provide a litter bin at the same location.. The Clerk added that, subject to planning approval it was hoped to relocate a redundant bus shelter from Western Avenue to become a teenage shelter on the Chalkstone estate.

b) Suffolk County Council – Pension Fund Contribution Rates

The Clerk reported that since setting the budget for 2002/2003 the Suffolk County Council Superannuation Scheme Actuaries had re-assessed the employers' contribution to the scheme and recommended that these be 290% of the employees' contributions. The current rate was 250%. The information was noted.

c) DTLR – Local Government White Paper: Parish Proposals

The Clerk reported that the recent White Paper on Strengthening Local Government had contained some changes affecting Local Councils. These included direct grant aid of £30,000 for Best Value Councils, increasing the Section 137 limit to £5.00, and thereafter inflation linked rises, removing the borrowing constraints, and enabling electronic banking. The Committee welcomed these enhancements.

d) St Edmundsbury Borough Council/Suffolk County Council – Strengthening of Swan Lane Bridge and resultant traffic management measures

The Clerk reported that the closure of Swan Lane bridge for fifteen weeks would commence on 4th February. Although the initial traffic diversion would be for traffic to use Hamlet Road, Duddery Hill and Clements Lane, the Clerk reported that he had pressed for options to include a temporary weight restriction on Crowland Road, "No Access for HGV's" on roads off Duddery Hill, and a possible one-way order, west to east, for Queen Street. The Borough Council would implement these as necessary according to the success (or failure) of the initial scheme.

e) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Membership of and Nominations for Standards Committee

The Clerk reported that nominations were being sought for a member to represent Town Councils on the Borough Council Standards Committee. The Committee agreed to invite nominations for this position at the Full Council meeting.

f) 1st Kedington Ranger Guides – Report of Use of Town Council’s Grant

The Committee noted the receipt of the Ranger Guides’ report on the use of the Grant, and asked the Clerk to write and thank the Ranger Guides for an informative report.

g) DTLR – Consultation on proposed changes for second homes and long-term empty homes

The Committee considered the consultation paper on the introduction of Council Tax charges for second homes and agreed a response for the Clerk to submit to the DTLR.

h) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Joint Working Arrangements

The Clerk reported that St Edmundsbury Borough Council had advised that the legislation that enabled the establishment of the executive arrangements also meant that existing Agency arrangements had to be terminated. The Clerk indicated that this would affect the existing arrangement established in 1995 under which the Town Council determined contentious licence applications, and should have been allocated financial responsibility for bus shelters and seats in Haverhill, together with street naming. There was an opportunity to establish a new agreement and the Clerk was asked to establish what suitable services might be included in any new agreement.

i) Suffolk Constabulary – Distraction Burglary Seminar, 21st February

The Clerk reported that numbers of possible attendees at the Distraction Burglary Seminar, to be held at the Drama Studio, Samuel Ward Upper School, on 21st February at 7.30 p.m. It was agreed to ask for four places.

5. Authorisation of payments

Cllr Goody proposed and Cllr Smith seconded that the payments shown on the lists detailed below were approved for payment, all being in favour.

List Date	Item Numbers	Cheque Numbers	Total Value for List
27.11.01	1-4	3717-3720	£589.57
11.12.01	1-29	3721-3749	£15,110.11
11.12.01	1-9	3750-3758	£8,320.03
19.12.01	1-12	3759-3770	£2,724.48
09.01.02	1-10	3771-3780	£2,530.42
15.01.02	1-7	3781-3787	£2,565.08
15.01.02	1-7	3788-3794	£6,923.66
22.01.02	1-5	3795-3799	£2,574.92

Cllr Mrs Martin reported that she was due to inspect and check recent invoices for accuracy.

6. Matters of report

Cllr Goody asked if the Borough Council’s Environmental Health Officers could be asked to monitor the closing times of those public houses without an extension granted by the Justices’.

Cllr Smith asked if the Borough Council could be asked to investigate the charges made for taxis outside “normal” hours of operation.

7. Closure

The meeting was closed at 8.35 p.m.