



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

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Chairman: Cllr Pat Holden
Vice Chairman: Cllr Carole Mulroney
Town Clerk: Paul Beckerson



Minutes of 15th Annual Town Meeting – 18th March 2011, 7.30 pm at Belfairs High School, Highlands Boulevard

Present: Councillors: Pat Holden (Chairman), Carole Mulroney (Vice Chairman), Bill Abbott, Margaret Cotgrove, Elaine Crystall, Hilary Davison, Mike Dolby, Peter Dolby, Donald Fraser, Jerry Holden, Paul Lawrence, Caroline Parker, Jean Rowswell, Patsy Ryan and John Wren.

David Amess M.P.

Borough Councillors: Alan Crystall, Fay Evans and Barry Godwin.

Southend Borough Council Chief Executive Rob Tinlin

Plus 64 members of the public

The meeting opened at 7.30pm

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the Annual Town Meeting: residents and visitors. She was very pleased to see Southend ward councillors, Faye Evans, Barry Godwin and Alan Crystall, Southend Borough Council's Chief Executive, Rob Tinlin and the MP for Southend West, David Amess. She then introduced all the Councillors present on the stage. She thanked Cllr Hilary Davison for most of the organisation for the meeting, Jan Andrews and Peter McFarlane of Belfairs School for their support on the technical side and Brian Houssart for running the residents to and from the school.

2. Good for Leigh Awards

Presentations were made to Mr Tompkins (St Michael's School), Leigh Neighbourhood Police Teams, Amy-Louise Smith, Postman Joe Bene, Paul and Fiona Siggins, Terry Hatton (Jeweller), Southend Zimbabwean Network and Mara Chrystie (Community Mosaics East). (Details Appendix 1)

3. Apologies

Councillor: Mrs Reta Cocks, Borough Councillor Nigel Holdcroft

4. Minutes of the 14th Annual Town Meeting were agreed by the meeting and signed.

5. Annual Report of the Town Council.

The Chairman of the Council and the Committee Chairmen reported on the Council's work during the preceding year. (Attached as Appendix 2) (Attendance Sheet Appendix 3)

6. Annual Accounts of the Council year ending March 2010

The meeting noted the accounts. (Appendix 4)

7. Details of the balances and expenditure up to date year 2010/11

The balances were noted and there were no questions. (Appendix 5)

8. Observations on the Town Council Budget 2011/12

There were no observations. (Appendix 6)

9. **Census 2011**

Cllr Carole Mulronee encouraged everyone to fill in their census form and gave information on the surgeries that the Town Council would be holding to assist residents in completing the forms.

10. **Observations from Guests**

David Amess MP. Mr Amess referred to the professionalism and dedication to the community shown by the Town Council members and officers. He said how much he had enjoyed attending the Council's events. He commented on the forthcoming Diamond Jubilee in 2012 and the Olympics taking place the same year. He said Leigh was fortunate to have such a dedicated team of volunteers making a significant contribution to the community.

Alan Crystall, Borough Councillor said that the Town Council had been good for Leigh. He stated that he would be a friendly critic and that what was needed was more co-operation between Town and Borough Councillors especially bearing in mind the current localism agenda. He suggested setting up a small standing committee consisting of both Borough and Town Councillors.

He also commented that he felt the Town Council became too involved in the detail of planning applications and should leave this to the Borough Council as the determining authority.

Cllr Carole Mulronee responded. The Town Council had been trying for some time to set up liaison meetings with its Borough Ward members but to date this had not been achieved. The Town Council treated planning issues very seriously as planning was a very important issue for Leigh. The Town Council would not reduce its input or consideration of such matters regardless of the Borough Council's powers of determination.

Fay Evans, Borough Councillor assured the meeting that the Borough Council did take notice of the Town Council's views on planning, which were always very helpful. She would particularly miss Jean Rowsell who is not standing in the forthcoming elections.

Rob Tinlin, Chief Executive Southend Borough Council said we live in interesting times and it was a challenge to deliver services against a background of £15m worth of cuts. There were a number of issues where the Borough and Town Councils needed to work more closely together especially helping the community to do things for themselves and not being reliant on local government to deliver it for them. He estimated that over the last eight years SBC has lost out on £75m of revenue support grant due to inaccurate census returns in 2001 and he stressed the need that everyone must fill in the returns to ensure the Borough receives the correct amount of funding. An extra £1m had had to be added to the highways budget to cover the bad weather conditions and there would be extra costs in the summer of 2012.

Mr Barry Godwin, Borough Councillor He was pleased with the efforts of the Town Council and looked forward to working more closely together in the future.

11. **Resolutions of which written notice has been received**

There were none.

12. **Questions and comments from residents and electors of Leigh-on-Sea**

12.1 **Mr J. Smart**

Subsequent to last years meeting and my raising the question, a large section of London Rd from Chalkwell Park Dr to Leighton Av was paved. However the section from Leighton Av to Oakleigh Park Dr was only patched at either end leaving a whole run of tarmac rough, cracked and potholed. I have raised this with the officer concerned at the Civic Centre and though he agrees it is bad he does not propose to remedy this. Why?

From **CE. R Tinlin**

He agreed to get the engineers to look into it.

12.2 **Mr J. Smart**

Church Steps. The hedging to the east of the steps has grown so that it is no longer possible to reach the handrail. Though it has been trimmed just above the rail the rest of the hedge grows out so anyone of normal height cannot grasp the rail without colliding with the hedge. Cannot something be done? The hedge needs to be cut back level with the wall.

From **CE. R Tinlin**

Agreed to look into the issue and see what could be done.

13. **Conclusion**

The Chairman thanked those attending and ***closed the meeting at 9.15pm***