



Soham Town Forum, P.O. Box 21, The Pavilion,  
Fountain Lane, Soham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5PL

Tel/Fax: 01353 723472  
Website: [www.forum.soham.org.uk](http://www.forum.soham.org.uk)  
E-Mail: [info@forum.soham.org.uk](mailto:info@forum.soham.org.uk)

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th June 2008 at The Pavilion, Soham**

**Present:** R Aitchison, L Bassenger, L. Bates, S Bussingham, K Bussingham, Cllr Duckworth, K Felstead, C Fordham, P Gibbon, Cllr J Gipp, G Griggs, J Bibbert, E Johnston, A Pallet, J Palmer, Cllr J Palmer, R Peacock, P Paines, Cllr J Powley, S Rayner, C Scurrah, C Warner, J Webb, T Webb,

**Apologies:** P Nash, M Hardingham, T Parramint, G Ginn, T Cornell, P Beer

### **Community Notice Boards**

D Martin and A Pallet gave a presentation showing the new noticeboards and the Forum was asked to decide on the locations. There are to be five single sided boards 2.85 x 1.18m and a double sized board each 1.4 x 0.76m.

Possible locations have been identified by Ann and Peggy with help from Highways.

#### Locations

1. New Shade Estate (North of town)  
Preferred close to bus stop opposite Holmes Lane. It was suggested a further notice should be sited at the Mereside end of the estate once the road is opened.
2. Near Weatheralls School
  - a) Near school
  - b) Near health centre
  - c) Near VicaragePreferred near Vicarage – possibly double sided board
3. Town centre
  - a) On wall in Co-op car park or outside front of shop
  - b) Church Hall site (now unavailable)
  - c) Outside One Stop shopPreferred front of Co-op but might be private land so next choice outside One Stop shop – possibly double board
4. S of town centre
  - a) On wall at Budgens (cannot be mounted on wall)
  - b) St Andrews school entrancePreferred St Andrews School location.
5. Fordham Road  
Only one location opposite Webbs Stores near bus stop
6. Downfields  
Only one location close to bus stop.

These notice boards are low maintenance, painted black with clear PVC to protect notices. Town Council will be asked about day to day maintenance and whether their insurance could cover against vandalism etc.

Management of the boards was discussed. Jackie Hibbert has agreed to manage the notices. And it was decided to approach Soham Town Council to ask if they would be willing to act as the central notice depository so JH can collect them from there. A notice will be displayed on each board stating terms and procedure.

In viewing the slides, the derelict appearance of the frontage of the Medical Centre was pointed out with a view to resolving. There was some discussion as to whether the notice boards would be too close together, and the need for a notice board at Budgens was pursued, and it was decided that if any of the proposed location were not suitable a board could be sited at Budgens, failing this, it was decided to approach Budgens to encourage them to have their own outside display.

The selected locations will be passed on to Soham Town Council for their input before being forwarded on to East Cambridgeshire District Council so that installation can begin.

**Minutes of the last meeting** were approved and signed

### **Matters arising**

D Martin mentioned that subsequent to the last meeting she had spoken to East Cambridgeshire District Council planning regarding some concerns as to the planning process when dealing with planning applications. She addressed Councillors present stating that she had discussed the matter with the Town Council Clerk and left it in his hands to correctly inform the Town Council of their powers.

**Treasurer's Report** In the absence of the Treasurer D. Martin reported that there was £382.42 in the bank and a cheque has now been made out to the Secretary for stationery.

**Chairman's Report** Donna was very pleased at the turnout for the Annual Town Meeting and good reports were given by councillors at the meeting. She expressed pleasure that the Carnival had done so well after the difficult time last year. Can the Forum help to raise awareness of the parade and encourage more floats – prizes £100 for 1<sup>st</sup>, £75 2<sup>nd</sup> and £50 3<sup>rd</sup> and some to many other entrants.

Donna has attended a Funding Fair in Ely and enquired as to funding for Forum projects. There are a number of suitable funding agencies. Awards for All may be able to provide funding for 2 years for Soham Magazine. Donna will pursue the application. There is also abundant funding for youth projects.

**Soham in Bloom** S Rayner raised this suggestion again and pointed out that the two roundabouts at either end of town were 'signposts' for the town. Perhaps Red2Green could help to raise plants for us. Can we identify areas in Soham where we could plant flowers or put containers. Suggestions for next meeting.

**Constitution** A group has met and drafted a new constitution for the Forum. Copies provided for people to take away and study. The outcome will be discussed at the next meeting, with a view to formally adopting the constitution – this will enable the forum to apply for funding packages. J Powley raised the question that the constitution should be checked for legality.

### **Correspondence**

Letter from East Cambridgeshire District Council about Local Development Plan. Comments to them by 11th July 2008. C Scurrah, D.Martin, C Warner and R Aitchison to meet and put forward comments. The documents does not address some of the issues for Soham which are seen as very important e.g. Sewage treatment works etc. M Duckworth stated that he felt the LDF was unfit for purpose. J Powley stated that it was too restrictive for Soham. Not a design for the long term and no room for intelligent growth. J Palmer stated that there was a lot of 'land locked' land in Soham that needed to be released. We are urged to read and discuss this document – available on line as it is important to Soham's future.

Letter from Soham Colts Football. Village College are taking football off the curriculum and they are looking for a new football pitch. There is new one being built on the new estate under Section 106 contributions but this has not been handed over to the Town Council yet. There should also be money from Section 106 for maintenance. J Gipp to enquire when it might become available for use. J Webb to look at the site, as Colts claim that it is not suitable for ball games.

**Masterplan** Due to problems with the Ely Masterplan, forum comments have been deferred until a later date TBA. Ely's Masterplan was felt to be too Ely centred. M Duckworth and J Palmer pointed out that these comments had been made forcefully at East Cambridgeshire District Council. How will the problems with the Ely Masterplan affect Soham Vision? Soham Vision is still going ahead and will continue to focus on what Soham needs and drive forward as much as possible. Suggestion that perhaps we could find funding to survey residents and find out what they would like to see in Soham for inclusion in Soham Vision. This was welcomed.

**Railway Station** C Warner has discussed the proposal for a station at Soham with Chris Curtis. If development of a halt is approved by rail authorities £1,000,000 could be made available to put this in place. C Warner will continue to take this matter forward.

**Spencer Drove Development** T Cornell has been asked to approach East Cambridgeshire District Council in order to highlight overstretched services and raise community concerns re. this development. Provision of services especially sewerage are a major concern. D Martin raised the issue that there are severe drainage issues regarding this site and produced copies of the East Cambridgeshire District Council flood zone map which shows land following the river though town has 'Zones of rapid inundation'. An area was highlighted to indicate the inclusion of the proposed development site within this zone as the East Cambridgeshire District Council map does not account for a culvert under the railway line which issues into the site. D Martin stated that the developers rule of 100 year average for river levels had eliminated flood events, and observed that in a week of 'average rainfall' the river had risen 4ft overnight and 8ft over all. C Warner stated that the Environment Agency were not happy with this development. D Martin asked those present to consider the effect that development of this site would have on existing residents in posing a risk to their properties. J Palmer said that the site had been outlined for business development in the past. D Martin stated that this was on a part of the site not affected by the drainage issues.

**Community Hall** Letter from the Church Hall Trust regarding a vote taken at East Cambridgeshire District Council asking them to reaffirm support for retention of Church Hall and adjoining land for community use. This had been supported by the previous District Council but has now been rejected by a vote of East Cambridgeshire District Councillors. Heated discussion ensued about the lack of support by local district councillors, despite those concerned being present at a number of meetings where the issue had been raised and votes showed support to retain the site for community use. M Duckworth was asked to clarify a number of points, and J Palmer contributed. There was no consensus other than that many people around the table felt that community interests had not been represented. M Duckworth stated that he had sought out the identity of the land owner, and argued that the land owner had a right to do what he wished with the land. R Peacock requested that the debate be taken no further. D Martin requested that the Church Hall Trust report any future developments to the meeting under 'Community Project Updates'.

**Car Parking** Soham Town Council have confirmed that Recreation Ground car park will now be open until 10.30pm

**Christmas Street Fair & Lighting.** The Christmas Street Fair will take the place of 'Late Night Shopping' on 12th December 2008. L Johnson confirmed that 25<sup>th</sup> Soham Charity Ball will provide all money raised to the Christmas lights fund. She also gave a list of suggested events ranging from teddy bears picnics to tea dances, farmers markets to art exhibitions, Boogie Nights to Halloween parties and lots more. She has asked for volunteers to help and will need to find suitable venues for all these events. She hopes to encourage Soham based businesses to raise the profile of these events. Need to include Burwell, Fordham, Isleham, Wicken etc. She will ask the Town Council for a donation to fund silver trophies for best shop window and best stall and also for free rides for children for the Xmas Fair. Trying to raise money in the meantime by making good headlines. Pledges of money can now be made to the bank account. D Martin offered to go through the events calendar with her and nominate possible venues and project leaders.

**Soham Magazine** A French has managed to get very good quotes for this £795 for 4000 copies – 4 editions in a year. This should be affordable and we could get funding for 2 years through Awards for All, but still awaiting samples.

**Next Meeting:** 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008, 7.30pm – 9.30pm, Hall 1, The Walter Gidney Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Fountain Lane, Soham

