



Soham Town Forum, P.O. Box 21, The Pavilion,
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Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 13th October 2005

Present

Robert Peacock (Soham Town Forum Chairman)	Peter Beer (Soham Town Council)
Shirley Blake (East Cambridgeshire District Council)	Peggy Gibbon (Soham Town Council)
Rosemary Aitchinson (Soham Town Council Chairman)	George Ginn (Soham Town Council)
Pat Dutton (Health for Life Project)	Helen Randall (Care Network)
Chris Scurrah (Soham On-Line)	Donna Martin (Soham Museum Project)
Dan Schumann (Viva Youth Theatre)	Lawrie Budd (Soham Life)
Steve Driver (Resident)	Sylvia Riley (Resident)
Robert Barnes (Resident)	Maureen Hardingham (Resident)
Lesley Bassenger (Resident)	Colin Palmer (Resident)

Apologies:

John Powley (County Councillor)
Geoff Griggs (Soham Staploe Rotary Club)
Louise Sarll (Youth Development)
John Kirkham (Soham Town Council)
Alison Callaby (East Cambridgeshire District Council)
Anne Tuite (Soham Town Council)
Sheila Raynor (Resident)
Ruth Ginn (Soham Guides)

1.0 Notes of Forum Meeting on 14th July 2005 – Matters Arising

1.1 The notes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

2.0 Care Network

2.1 Helen Randall of Care Network gave a presentation on the work of the Care Network and the opportunities offered by a "Good Neighbour" scheme. She sought the Forum's views on whether there is potential for these schemes in Soham and whether there was likely to be volunteers for this.

2.2 Examples of these schemes include Welcome Home from Hospital, Lunch Clubs Good Neighbour Schemes, Mobile Warden Schemes. It was noted that many Soham residents use Bury Hospital, and lunch clubs are already operating in Soham. It was also noted that volunteers would need to be subject to police checks and the schemes would need to have insurance, Health and Safety training etc.

2.3 It was suggested that Care and Repair might be asked if they would be willing to act as a host organisation for any of these schemes. It was also commented that any scheme considered should consider people with disabilities as well as the older age groups.

2.4 Helen is planning to meet local people over the next couple of months in order to identify needs, and is seeking the Forum's assistance and support in identifying potential contacts. The Forum made a number of suggestions on contacts and groups to meet.

2.5 Helen can be contacted on (01353) 772169, e-mail helen.randall@care-network.org.uk if Members have any additional contributions.

3.0 **Viva Consultants Report Feedback**

3.1 Dan Schumann advised that a report and business plan for the Viva Centre have been completed now by the consultants. The report will be circulated to all key contacts. A fundraiser has been employed to assist in seeking funding for purchasing the centre. The Trust are also seeking a Centre Co-ordinator. Funding applications for the co-ordinator have been submitted together with some project specific applications e.g. for cinema, an older person's drop-in in conjunction with ESDAR. The Centre has also seen an increase in use.

3.2 It was noted that the Centre is a big commitment for the Trust, and the fundraising is a major task. If insufficient funds are raised the Trust will need to review their involvement in the project Rosemary Aitchinson advised that the Parish Council had been approached for views on use of forthcoming S106 funding and can put forward the Viva project.

4.0 **Railway Correspondence**

4.1 Chris Scurrah circulated information on the Soham Train Station campaign. The conclusion reached in this paper is that the only way forward would be through private sector financing, S106 agreements or major investment by National Government and the Railway Authority. Councillor Powley's letter on the subject was noted. George Ginn's written views were also conveyed to the meeting.

4.2 Donna Martin expressed her concern about the planning application on the potential site which also had wildlife value.

4.3 Chris and his team will continue in their lobbying efforts.

5.0 **Action Plan 2005/06**

5.1 A copy of the draft action plan for the Soham Forum was circulated. The format of the document was complimented as a much more useable document.

5.2 Suggestions were made on minor amendments to the text and layout. Comment was also made about the need for Soham to have a stronger voice and the need for a strategic approach. The Town council are working on a town plan which they hope will contribute to the Local Development Framework. It was noted that the District Council's draft economic development strategy prioritised Soham.

5.3 In terms of distribution of the Action Plan the Forum recommended local centres such as the Library, Sports Centre, Health Centre etc., features in local press and a door to door distribution via free newspapers if finances permit.

6.0 **Project Updates**

6.1 Soham in Bloom – Robert Peacock advised that 1½ hundredweight of daffodil bulbs have been donated to the town by Shropshires and he sought views on

where these should be planted and assistance with planting. He was hoping to involve local schoolchildren. Suggestions for locations included roundabouts (subject to Highways consent), school grounds, churchyard, grass verges, recreation ground (subject to grass cutting arrangements), Budgens' car park. Post meeting note – ECDC works department and Ely Volunteer Bureau have volunteered to assist with planting.

- 6.2 Soham Life Newsletter – Difficulties with the Ely Standard were reported and Geoff Griggs is exploring potential to work with the Weekly News. Soham Life has been well received and meets a need in the community. Dan Schumann volunteered to seek some funding to help the project.
- 6.3 Town Guides – Progress on these were reported. Donna Martin expressed her concern about the errors in the publication and was thanked for the work which she had done to seek to correct these.
- 6.4 Soham Festival – Peter Beer noted the 9 events which had taken place this year. Lessons learnt included timing of the events to avoid clashes with other town events. Overall the festival had been well appreciated and the Forum funding support was very welcome. AGM planned for 2nd November.
- 6.5 Community Transport – Dan Schumann reported that ESDAR is going from strength to strength and the third bus purchased is already being used to capacity. However the scheme will face a major funding gap in 2006 when existing funding programmes end and the Board are exploring solutions to this.
- 6.6 Soham On-Line – Advertising is increasing on the site. History and business sections are being updated.
- 6.7 Community History Museum – Donna Martin reported that a documentary to be shown on BBC4 featuring Olandah Equiano, a campaigner against the slave trade who had close links with Soham. The Museum open day was very successful and the Museum will be collaborating with Viva on a Christmas window. The Museum have also won a £15,000 award for a Soham on the Home Front project and the Forum congratulated them on this achievement.
- 6.8 SACT – The Christmas lights new fittings will be in place shortly.
- 7.0 **Any Other Business**
- 7.1 Thanks were given for the support with the community bus for the ploughing event.
- 7.2 Copies of the East Cambridgeshire Strategic Partnership newsletter and PRIDE (retail training) prospectus were circulated.
- 7.3 The availability of Soham promotional chocolate bars for local events was noted – contact Sally Bonnett at ECDC.
- 7.4 The consultation period for the Local Development Framework consultation strategy has been extended to early November – comment forms are available on-line or from ECDC planning department.
- 7.5 Alison Callaby is consulting on later opening of Clay Street car park – to be introduced on an experimental basis.

8.0 **Date of Next Meeting**

Commencing at 7.30pm on Thursday 24th November 2005 at The Walter Gidney Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Fountain Lane, Soham.

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