



Soham Town Forum, P.O. Box 21, The Pavilion,
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Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23rd February 2006

Present

Robert Peacock (Soham Town Forum Chairman)

Rosemary Aitchison (Soham Town Council Chairman)

John Powley (Cambridgeshire County Councillor)

Donna Martin (Soham Museum Project)

Peggy Gibbon (Soham Town Council)

Robert Barnes (SACT)

Colin Palmer (Resident)

Sheila Rayner (Resident)

John Kirkham (Soham Town Council)

Alison Callaby (East Cambs District Council)

Peter Beer (Soham Town Council)

Dan Schumann (Viva Youth Theatre)

Chris Scurrah (Soham On-Line)

Lawrie Budd (Soham Life)

Sylvia Riley (Resident)

Lesley Bassenger (Resident)

Apologies

Colin M Fordham (East Cambs District Councillor)

Anne Tuite (Soham Town Council / Ely Soham Dial A Ride)

Linda Homan (Soham Village College Youth Development)

Louise Sarll (Soham Village College Youth Development)

John Palmer (East Cambs District Councillor)

Geoff Griggs (Soham Staploe Rotary Club)

Pat Dutton (Health for Life)

Notes of Forum Meeting on 12 January 2006/Matters Arising

Notes agreed as correct and it was identified that the Kents Lane sign requires attention – AC to advise depot, after the meeting CP also advised AC that signs at Brook Dam Lane and Paddock Street also required attention and the Depot have also been advised of these.

Following up re the Budgens link footpath – RP advised by the manager that the access is to be relocated with proper facilities. Forum queried whether there would be disabled provision? AC has consulted the approved plan 05/00408/FUL and notes that there is a footpath link shown – there is also a condition on the consent which requires the footpath to be available at all times. The footpath at its narrowest part appears from the plan to be 2.2metres, although there will be bollards provided at both the entrance and entry (the details of these is yet to be agreed and is again a planning condition), AC will flag up the Forums concerns to the Case Officer who dealt with the original application. Members felt that the Road markings at Red Lion Square needed attention.

Soham Cycling Scheme – Additional Agenda Item

Colin Young, of Hannah Reed Associates attended to update the Forum in respect of one of the Soham Revival Projects, which sought to direct future investments for cycling infrastructure to the areas of most need – AC felt that this work would be a valuable legacy from the Soham Revival Scheme and would enable a phased approach to future initiatives. Colin introduced scheme proposals which involved suggestions which could be brought forward in the short, medium and long term. Two cycle routes running parallel to the main through road between Downfield and Townsend were identified and comments in respect of these were highlighted during discussions .

In addition some short term actions involving the introduction of cycle stands within the town centre were put forward

The post office area was identified as a much used area for informal parking and there

were some issues re ownership - alternative suggestions of outside Viva, the Vicarage or Co-op were put forward. There was some discussion as to the style of stands with some preferring the railing approach – although it was highlighted that the Sheffield stand type was considered more cycle friendly.

In respect of any potential link across the recreation ground, it was flagged up that the Town Council would ultimately have control over this. AC advised that she and Colin would be visiting the Town Council to present the illustrative schemes to the Councillors and discuss the content of the report.

General Issues raised:

Concerns about segregation of cyclists / pedestrians
Appropriate Lighting, which did not compromise residential amenity
Problems with motorcyclists
Consult school re any intended crossings point at Clay Street
Suggest land off Speed lane could also provide facilities for leisure for young people.
There is a current dismount policy at Speed Lane – Weatheralls Policy re cycling (exclusion zone)
Small-scale archaeology pits between Brewhouse Lane and Speed Lane
It was felt that S106 monies should be targeted at wider benefit schemes
Any new surface treatments should be sensitive to, and in keeping with, the location.
Enhancements to Pedestrian crossings were welcomed.

Please note: AC has copies of the report which can be made available should members wish to look at.

Action Plan Progress

AC gave some more information about the 'pinkie ring' pride initiative which would focus on:-

'4 Soham' – i.e. four ways to wear the ring, four local heroes, four fascinating facts, four things you can do for your town. Forum members felt that this was a good awareness raising exercise, which could be built on every year. There was also potential to link it with Citizenship activity in the school and to develop a scheme targeted at younger age ranges. AC highlighted that she has been working with Dan and Viva on the project and Dan introduced the exciting news that Viva had secured funding for a Youth work officer who would be looking at, amongst many other things, a Youth Council for Soham.

Market

Unfortunately Androulla was on holiday so AC updated the Forum on development work to date. Alternative sites were considered however no immediate contender was highlighted, all agreed it needed to be central within the town, on an existing trading day – to enable existing businesses to capture footfall. Closing the road was likely to impact on existing trade and be difficult logistically for anything more than a one-off event. It was suggested that Market Street may continue to be the most appropriate location and that if we looked at alternative stall types, for example the Marquee arrangements which work well for Continental Markets we could site more than one trader per stall. AC agreed to investigate what products were on the market, and number of traders who could be accommodated. It was suggested that the entire length of Market Street could be used and that the Comrades Club could be approached to provide car parking for traders. It was also noted that the Comrades Club was the focus of other events – shoe sale etc.

Project Updates

LB reported that Geoff had not been receiving any information through from which to develop a new issue of Soham Life. CS noted that the Enewsletter had been launched on web to be updated every 2-4 weeks and act as a town newsletter. AC to speak to Geoff. It was also noted that Ely Standard deliveries were going array causing littering within the town.

Joint Festival / Twinning – French Week

Various festival events planned in the lead up to the signing ceremony on carnival day – Sunday 21st - Monday 29th May. Draft programme as follows:

Sat/Sun – Sport event (organised by the Football club) with French involvement
4 Major events planned, and it was planned to decorate the Market Street area / Pavilion to add to the colour and atmosphere of the occasion.
French Film night
Indoor French Continental Fayre Market
Evening of explanation – with a speaker from France
British Festival - Saturday evening

Community Transport

Working hard to fill funding gap, have raised £50k and are currently awaiting result of bid to the District Council – further four year funding applied for from Big Lottery Fund – expression of interest submitted. In addition they have bid for several commercial contacts to support service as new arrangements give greater flexibility. Membership is still growing, and the results of a recently conducted member survey have been very positive. Plans to buy further vehicle to be discussed in detail. New leaflet also planned.

Soham On-Line

Bulletin board now on line, participants need to register and confirmation email sent to ensure no bogus details registered. CS is currently updating the business section database, and has helped SACT with their membership drive. In addition he is trying to get sponsorship for site to include full details of businesses and mailshot planned.

In addition the history section has been updated, although DM and CS would like to do some further work. The Twinning section has also been added although work is required to simplify text.

Video clips are being trialled on line, and this would enable Business ads to be featured. Web hosting fee to be charged from April, RA identified that CS should forward on to Town Council who had agreed to meet such expenses.

Community History Museum

DM reported that the Museum were producing information for Twinning activity and that they had held a fantastic Quiz Night, which had raised just under £50

The Members free annual outing had also been held with 22 participants taking part in a Ghost Tour in Ely followed by coffee at the Lamb.

It was requested that some time be set aside at the next Forum Meeting to discuss the Interpretive art work for 'Soham on Home Front' - Agenda item for next meeting. It was acknowledged that the British Legion were on board with the scheme and that the Town Council would also be consulted.

The group continues to look for premises for storage and exhibition space.

DM also reported back in respect of the outcome of the investigation into the break in at

the Viva centre, and noted her disappointment the CCTV system had not captured sufficient information to enable the Police to proceed with the investigation. She suggested that it may be appropriate to invite representatives from both CCTV control and the Police to explain to the Forum about procedures and policing in the area. Forum members agreed that we should schedule a CCTV Review Item and invite relevant speakers to our May meeting.

CS highlighted that researchers in connection with the Paul O'Grady Show – who are developing a programme featuring Jewish Refugees, had approached him via the website for local information.

SACT

AGM 21st March 2006 at Soham Lodge Hotel

360 letters sent out to business and 18 responses received to date.

AGM to be advertised in the local press

Twinning

Good levels of activity occurring under two areas, official twinning and twinning association, which are currently running in parallel and enabling technical organisation, with advertising starting to take place. Business card awareness raising idea flagged up at the last meeting being developed

Keep reminding re event, with signing planned for 315pm outside Pavilion on Carnival Day.

Twinning Association currently requires funds and it is likely that they will make a formal request to the Forum for support. Official Twinning in France to be held 15th April , they will be hosting an English week.

Any Other Business

Soham Village College - Annual Production 2006 - 'Hello Dolly!' –1st, 2nd, 3rd, & 4th March 2006

Speed limit at entry to town Shade end, potential future agenda item - proposal to extend to Island.

RA highlighted that the Forum may wish to hold an event to highlight trading standards department services and initiatives – relevant papers passed to AC.

RA also highlighted the Countryside Watch Scheme – developed to reduce rural crime.

Date of Next Meeting

Commencing at 7.30pm on Thursday 6th April 2006 at The Walter Gidney Pavilion, Fountain Lane, Soham

Notice of Meeting

Date: Thursday 6th April 2006, Time 7.30pm

Venue: The Pavilion, Soham

Agenda

Item Lead

1. Present |& Apologies
2. Notes of Forum meeting on 23rd February 2006 together with any matters arising
3. Soham Interpretive Art Donna Martin
4. Market
5. Project/Group Updates
 - Newsletter 'Soham Life' Geoff Griggs
 - Festival Peter Beer
 - Community Transport Anne Tuite
 - Soham On Line Chris Scurrah
 - Community History Museum Donna Martin
 - SACT Robert Peacock
 - Town Twinning John Kirkham

Date of next meeting: Thursday 18th May 2006

Meeting Dates for 2006

Thursday 29th June 2006

Thursday 10th August 2006

Thursday 21st September 2006

Thursday 2nd November 2006

Thursday 14th December 2006

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