

NOTICE OF ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

WIVENHOE TOWN COUNCIL

All residents are invited to the Town Meeting that will be held in the William Loveless Hall on Wednesday, 9th May, 2007 at 7.00pm.

The following is the Agenda for the evening:

- 1 Distribution of Mayor’s Charity Fund
- 2 Minutes of the last annual meeting
- 3 To receive the annual report of the Town Council and financial statement
- 4 To discuss any specific points which residents wish to raise
- 5 To consider any resolutions which may be proposed

If you wish to raise any specific points or submit any resolution to the Town Meeting, please return this form BEFORE Tuesday, 8th May 2007 to the **Town Clerk, Council Offices, High Street, Wivenhoe CO7 9AB.**

Successful resolutions will be considered by the Town Council, but are not bound by them.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

I wish to raise the following point:

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I wish to submit the following resolution:

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2007

Your Representatives Were:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Cllr. P. Kraft (Town Mayor) | Cllr. Ms. S. Glozier-Green | Cllr. K. Rogers |
| Cllr. D. Purdey (Dep. Mayor) | Cllr. S. Gillman | Cllr. Mrs. F. Richards |
| Cllr. T. Roberts | Cllr. C. P. Liddy | Cllr. N. Lodge |
| | Cllr. B. Sinclair | Cllr. P. Hill |

During 2006/2007 the representatives of Wivenhoe on the Colchester Borough Council have been:

For Wivenhoe Quay ward: Cllr. A. Quarrie and Cllr. S. Ford
For Wivenhoe Cross ward: Cllr. D. Adams and Cllr. E. Kraft
Cllr. Julie Young represents Wivenhoe on Essex County Council.

Wivenhoe Council Staff:

The Council staff during 2006-2007 were: Antoinette Stinson, Town Clerk; Christine Pettitt and Xiaomei Li job-sharing the Reception/Admin position; Groundsmen James Young and Andrew Hearn; Hall caretaker, Mick Wells; Hall cleaner Carol Johnston, Office cleaner Val Tipper and Litter-pickers Ray Smith and Richard Drury. Richard Drury left in June 2006.

2006 - 2007

A YEAR-END REVIEW:

Once again the Town Council has had a very busy year with good progress on many initiatives. In addition to Town Council responsibilities, nearly all councillors have other interests in the community as members or officers of a wide variety of local organisations that has added to the ability of this council to take a leading role in representing the Wivenhoe community.

Your Council has been pro-active in its outlook and not just reacting to events as they unfold. We all care passionately about Wivenhoe and do our best to make it the best place in which to live.

Planning:

Wivenhoe, like many other communities up and down the country, is undergoing a period of dramatic upheaval and renewal. Some changes are welcome; others are less so.

The Town Council has an advisory role on all Wivenhoe planning applications. The Council's Planning Committee met 18 times during the year and expressed views to the Borough Council on 84 planning applications.

The Planning Committee aims to secure the best interests of the whole community of Wivenhoe. Those interests are served by its views being considered valuable by the local

planning authority, Colchester Borough Council, when considering planning applications. So as to achieve that objective, the planning committee seeks, where possible,

- to encourage the views of local residents,
- to actively engage developers in a dialogue with interested parties
- and to focus its observations on considerations relevant to the planning process.

Material planning considerations include matters of visual impact, design, privacy, overbearing, daylight, noise, smell, traffic access, health and safety, ecology, fear of crime, economic impact and planning history but not matters of private rights, property values or loss of a view.

The planning committee is also vigilant whenever funds under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - “planning gain” - may be available for community benefit. It is money paid by a developer to a Local Planning Authority to offset the cost of the development to the community. For example, if a developer built 100 new homes, it would affect local schools, drains, roads etc. The cost of constructing the supporting infrastructure would have to be met by the Local Authority. If so, a Section 106 agreement will be included as part of the planning permission. Part of that money may be available to improve the local environment.

The Town Council’s relationship with Colchester Borough Council’s Planning Dept. is not an easy one. Whilst the Town Council is lauded on some occasions as being “the eyes and ears of the Borough Council”, it has also been left in no doubt by the same planners that its advice on the material planning considerations is unwelcome and irrelevant. This lack of communication by the Borough Council is sometimes seen locally as insensitive to local needs. The Town Council is left with clear impression that the lessons arising from the mistakes of the sixties and seventies have simply not been learnt. However, the Town Council appreciates that its task would be more difficult without technical support by the Borough Council and is grateful for it.

Best Value Committee:

The remit of this committee is to consider the functioning of the Council and how to improve its role as an effective Council, to improve efficiency and continually try to enhance services to local residents. It now meets monthly and is proving a useful forum for all Councillors to discuss ideas and ensure that ‘Best Value’ is achieved.

Landscaping Committee:

This year has seen a change in the Chairmanship of the Committee with Cllr. Sally Glozier-Green stepping down and Cllr. Stuart Gillman taking over. The offer of ‘free trees’ by CBC was taken up and 40 trees have been obtained which will replace the dead scrub on the King George V Playing Field. It is hoped to refurbish a few more tubs and sponsorship letters have been sent out. Thanks are extended to businesses, organisations and individuals, who have sponsored the scheme. Anyone wishing to become a sponsor should contact the Town Council offices where they will be sincerely welcomed.

Highway Matters:

In July 2006 Essex County Council published proposals to close Queens Road to through traffic at its junction with Valley Road. The Town Council felt this was wrong and argued its case in a paper published on the Wivenhoe web site. There was considerable local debate on

this subject resulting in ECC Highways continuing with its original scheme. Queens Road became a cul-de-sac in March 2007. The Town Council welcomed the other highway changes which it had worked on with Highways as part of the Section 106 negotiations held in 2002.

Street Cleaning:

As a supplement to the Borough Council's operations, the Town Council employs a litter-picker primarily to remove litter from the open spaces, however, he works diligently in the surrounding areas as well. Once again the amount of fly-tipping is increasing and the Town Council continue to relay complaints about this to Colchester Borough Council's Clean-up Squad.

The Teenage community:

The Town Council was pleased to at last achieve a modest skateboarding facility for youngsters which was funded through various grants and donations. The Council is also very grateful to Taylor Woodrow who laid the base at no charge to the Council.

Play Areas:

The Town Council continues to make modest improvements to the play areas. It is presently working with residents in the Broadfields area of Wivenhoe on a scheme to improve the play area at Richard Avenue.

The William Loveless Hall:

The Town Council's new 10 page Hiring Agreement, caused by the new Licensing Regulations which came into force in November 2005, is now well established with hirers of the William Loveless Hall and operating efficiently. The same process has had to be carried out for the hire of the King George V Playing Field in order for community events such as the May Fair and the Teddy Bears' Picnic to take place on the field. The May Fair Committee felt that they needed more time to comply with the terms of the Hiring Agreement which, unfortunately, has meant that this year's Fair has been cancelled. The Town Council is discussing with the Committee how the Fair can be staged in 2008.

This year has seen one of the biggest projects undertaken for a long time – the installation of a toilet for the disabled in the William Loveless Hall. The project started later than expected but having re-tendered the Town Council employed local builder Will Sparrow to do the job and he has made a very good job of it. The Town Council were lucky to get the majority of this grant-aided. Wivenhoe is not a large Council and a project such as this costing nearly £40,000 would have been beyond the Town Council's means if it had not been for the Essex County Council's Community Initiatives Fund. The Town Council were also lucky enough to obtain another grant from the East Essex Area Forum of £4,000 which will enable the Hall's kitchen to be renovated and this will be done as soon as possible by our own workforce. The Town Council apologizes to hirers for the inconvenience and interruption of classes during building works but the end result will be well worth it.

The Hall continues to be well used by all manner of clubs and organizations. It is looked after by a Working Party, chaired by Cllr. Penny Kraft, two other Cllrs, four lay members and the cleaner and caretaker. Bi-monthly meetings are held where all aspects of running the hall are discussed. Most of the maintenance is done by the Town Council's groundstaff and some outside contractors. The Farmers' Market, held on the third Saturday morning of each month is also continuing to be very successful. Wivenhoe is very fortunate to have such a facility.

Bus Shelters:

Thanks to Essex County Council's Quality Bus Route most of Wivenhoe's bus shelters have now been replaced and the Town Council hope to obtain a grant to replace the bus shelter in Belle Vue Road.

Christmas Lights:

The Town Council again contributed money and time to supporting the Christmas lights display engineered by a large team of volunteers. Anyone wishing to become involved in this scheme would be most welcome.

Churchyard Piers and Gates

The Town Council was successful in obtaining a grant for the refurbishment of the churchyard piers and gates and now that Diocesan approval has been given it is hoped that work will commence very soon.

The Wivenhoe Woods Working Party

This new group has gone from strength to strength this year with a good crowd of willing volunteers doing sterling work under the guidance of our ranger Richard Moulson. Sycamores have been cleared, muddy areas boarded and paths cleared. This will continue next year with a job hopefully being done every couple of months. A very big thank you to all those involved.

Allotments:

The allotments are managed by Wivenhoe Allotments and Gardens Association with whom the Council liaises closely. The allotments are thriving. Not only is there a long waiting list, but for those lucky enough to have one, the enthusiasm amongst the holders never ceases to amaze. We are looking forward to another bumper year. The Town Council has helped with new fencing and they have also offered the Cricket Club help with their fence and this is still an ongoing project. With officers of WAGA, Councillors inspect the allotments twice each year. The Council notes it currently has the highest number of people on its waiting list for a very long time.

New Health Centre

The Town Council has again been taking an active role in pursuing a proper Health Centre for Wivenhoe with full medical facilities to ensure our doctors can deliver the highest possible care for residents.

Community Policing:

Current situation: one full time police officer PC Neil Gibson; one full time Community Support Officer PCSO Louise Neville; one part time police officer PC Wendy Byrne. All officers use mobile telephone 07966 197245 or can be contacted at 822082. These officers are also responsible for the University campus and are supported by Colchester officers when the need arises.

Community Safety Group.

Members work in partnership with the police, Wivenhoe Town Council and other agencies, liaise with offices in the new building developments and the community. Wivenhoe continues to be a safe town to reside in with low crime rates. A number of meetings have been held with guest speakers, members of the public also attended. This is a most active group with a growing membership many of whom are from the new housing developments around the

Quay. The group continues to monitor street lighting and many other issues, including advising youth on their behaviour and the dangers of taking illegal drugs and of under age drinking. The majority of the town's youth are law abiding and this is very much appreciated. Evidence has been given before the Colchester Borough Council and to the Essex County Council as reasons for the reopening of the Wivenhoe Youth Club that was regularly visited and advice offered to its members.

University - there has been a strengthening in the partnership with various departments at the University and attending various functions and advising students on community safety issues.

Community Safety audits continue to be conducted on a regular basis in compliance with the Crime and Disorder Act. Although there is a low crime rate, a crime pattern analysis is applied identifying crime trends and prioritising areas that require a police and community response. Wivenhoe police and other officers have been thanked for their excellent cooperation, in particular in dealing with excessive use of alcohol by under-aged youths, many of whom are from other areas.

Communication with Wivenhoe residents:

Apart from Town Council notice-boards, the Council's principal means of communicating with residents is via its community website, the Wivenhoe Encyclopedia on www.wivenhoe.gov.uk. Launched five years ago, the site comprises over 900 pages of information and attracts around 700 visits per week. News, details of events, local organisations, businesses, people, Wivenhoe history and much more can all be found on it, including Town Council minutes. In addition, several Town Councillors and indeed some Borough Councillors and our County Councillor make regular contributions to *Wivenhoe News*

The 'Community' Bus:

Wivenhoe's third minibus has been very well used and provides a valuable service to the community. The Town Council helps with the maintenance costs of the bus and office staff keep the bookings diary. The Mini-bus Committee meets twice a year to discuss any problems that arise and discuss maintenance issues and running costs. The Town Council has had the current bus for eighteen months now. It was bought in November 2005 when it was a year old. It is still running well and has caused no major problems. Drivers and passengers alike are pleased with its performance and the hydraulic lift at the rear has been a great asset and is well used.

Volunteer drivers, who take the elderly to the Monday Club, the Over-60s Club, or on shopping trips provide a life-line to many who would otherwise find it difficult to get about. The bus is available for community hire when it is not being used by these groups. The suggested rates of donations are reasonable and a short familiarisation process enables the holder of a clean licence to drive it.

Volunteer drivers are always needed - if you feel you would like to help by becoming a volunteer driver once in a while, please contact the staff at the Town Council.

Mayor's Charity Fund

The Mayors Charity Fund (MCF) has raised nearly £6,500 during the past year, most of the money will be put back into Wivenhoe to support local endeavours. The Mayor has supported three outside charities, namely the one mile Sports Relief Walk; a donation to Whizz Kids via Dave Harrison, who helps many organisations in the town with bar duties, (he intends to climb Mount Kilimanjaro for this charity) and a small donation to the Hospital League of Friends where the Mayor was a volunteer for three years.

This money was raised by many people at an assortment of functions which included the Teddy Bears' Picnic, the annual cricket match, a '1940s' day, Wivenhoe Memories, the Mayor's Ball, an Art Exhibition, a Sponsored Dog Walk and day trips to France and Belgium, courtesy of Cedrics' coaches – all repeat successes of traditions begun in previous years. Added to this was the first Summer Ball, which proved a success, and is to be repeated this year.

The Mayor has also continued to support the student bursary, which is awarded to a resident of Wivenhoe studying at the University. The Mayor would like to thank everybody who has helped to raise this money in so many different ways.

The Town Mayor will distribute the grants at the Town Annual Meeting.

Finance:

The Town Council's precept for 2007/2008 has been set at £131,382, an increase of 5% on 2006/2007. This represents a rate of £47.48 per year per council-tax-payer living in a Band D property, against £45.21 last year, being an increase of £2.27 per household. Income from fees and charges is estimated at £23,795 with £32,454 coming from the Parish Grant.

Town Council Public Access:

All Town Council meetings are advertised on the notice-board outside the Council Offices. Members of the public are welcome to attend. Should members of the public wish to speak, a request must be made through the Town Clerk, Mrs. Antoinette Stinson, at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

The Planning Committee meets every three weeks. It considers local planning applications as well as other development issues. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

The Council Offices are located at 77 High Street, on the first floor, and are open from 9.00am to 4.00pm from Monday to Friday. Anyone who experiences difficulty in accessing these upstairs offices can draw the attention of staff by pressing a buzzer to the left of the front door.

The telephone number of the offices is 01206 822864 and the fax number is 01206 827298. The website is www.wivenhoe.gov.uk and the e-mail address wivenhoe_council@btconnect.com.

NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF AUDIT

(Local Government Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and the Audit Commission Act 1998.) Notice is hereby given that the Audit procedures for year ending 31 March 2006 took place in July 2006 in accordance with the Audit Commission's new regulations. The Annual Return and Audit Certificate have been signed by Lubbock Fine, Chartered Accountants.

Antoinette Stinson, Town Clerk