



Minutes of
The first **Annual General Meeting** of the
Southminster In Future Times Parish Plan Group held on
Wednesday 28th November 2007 at 8 pm in **Southminster Memorial Hall**.

1. **Present:** John Cassels, Terry Cassels, Kath Dunstan, Ray Hornett, Theresa Lawrence, Jeanne McLeay, Paula Neall, Bob Perry, Viv Perry, Mr & Mrs Sandford, Chris Shaw, Jacqui Sinden, Grace Stevens, V M J Wells.

Also present: Parish Councillors Brian Beale, Ken Dunstan, Kay Maudesley, Keith Williams, editor of the Burnham and Dengie Hundred Review.

Apologies for absence had been received from Rev. Gordon Anderson, Jerry Haley, Rupert Killick, Graham & Pat Martin, Sheila Nicholson, Chris Parish, Allan & Christine Pye, Phil Richards, Malcolm Shaw, Roger Sinden, Karen Skiggs and Karen Whiting

2. **Welcome:** In the absence of Chairman Jerry Haley, Jacqueline Sinden welcomed everyone to the meeting. She indicated that the minutes of the Inaugural General Meeting (9 pages) were available to be read if required. It was decided to leave them for people to view after the meeting.
3. **The story so far:** Kath Dunstan (Secretary 2006-7) referred to the decision a year ago to hold a competition to design a logo for the Group. A folder of all the children's entries – with details of prizewinners – was on display. The winning adult entry was that of Terry Pankhurst. Kath described the logo: The blue ellipses represent the two rivers, Crouch and Blackwater, between which Southminster lies. The green and yellow area represents our rural situation. The grey blocks are building bricks – all set to build a future Southminster – which just need assembling. The weather vane shows that we are moving and that the movement is forward.

Kath introduced the members of the SIFT team and then summarised what the group had achieved during the year. (Appendix 1)

As a report on how the team has worked, is working and should be continuing to work, she gave the SOUTHMINSTER presentation – assisted throughout by Grace who operated the 'PowerPoint' slides. (Appendix 2)

- a) **Links with Parish Council** were re-iterated by Council Chairman Brian Beale and he assured the meeting that the Council was not dictating to

SIFT in any way. The Council was grateful to the SIFT committee for all their hard work in trying to ascertain what the feelings of Southminster people are. The Council tries to deal with present needs; SIFT will flag up future needs. As far as possible the Council would try to respond to requests and suggestions – but he pointed out that some things being asked for were not within the council's remit and some were just impossible.

- b) **Links with RCCE:** In the absence of Field Officer Stella Meesters it was suggested that people should study the RCCE documents after the meeting. Grace stressed that the RCCE had been extremely helpful through their conferences and their general availability as well as providing written guidance material.
- c) **Links with other local organisations:** It was clear that all the organisations linked by the presence of their members in the SIFT Group were working together for the benefit of Southminster.
 - I. We heard from Jacqui that the Dengie Project Trust caters for the needs of the older folk. It was also agreed that the DPT initiative in founding **One Place** as a community information point was greatly valued. Brian asked for feedback about the publication "Parish News" and the only immediate comment was that it is thin on editorial material, reports etc. Further information would be gathered from questionnaires and fed back.
 - II. Theresa explained that as well as being warden of some sheltered housing she is a Youth Worker, so she is trying to encourage some young people to take more responsibility and interest in Southminster's future.
 - III. Terry spoke of her work for the proposed Cycle Path. The Cycle Path Group is working towards not only safe cycling from Southminster to Burnham but also to reduce obesity, develop child independence and encourage healthy family exercise. She publicised the New Year's Day 2008 "Icycle Ride".
 - IV. Paula outlined what FOSCOS is. She described the Orchard off Southfield Way as being sensitively developed for wildlife, a peaceful place to walk through, and a place with games equipment for children too. The Apple Day in October had been a success. Following discussion about people not knowing where to find The Orchard there was a suggestion that SIFT might consider promoting the introduction of finger posts and a 'You are here' map in the village centre.
 - V. Grace explained that in her work for the Community Rail Partnership she is based at Southminster Station – also the home of Right Tracks – and has been working to make the station more attractive and welcoming. Painting help came from the Community Payback team. The former Blackwater Task Force had adopted the Station, designing and planting the garden – using the SIFT logo as a basis for their colour scheme. Grace, as a former long-term resident and now working in Southminster, urged us through SIFT to encourage residents to keep the village atmosphere and cherish what we have.
 - VI. Bob explained that his team of Community Payback workers is available to help with projects.

- VII. John explained that Saint FM – the local radio station on 94.7FM for Burnham, Maldon and the Dengie Hundred – was due to be launched (for mainly testing purposes) on 1st December and would be broadcasting between 7am and 10pm daily. The major launch is due in January. He hoped that SIFT would use it to aid communication.
- VIII. Kath explained that the Church is supporting SIFT because of their basic Christian beliefs about the value of community. St Leonard's Church has been able to help – not only by having members involved but also by offering the use of its grounds and building.

d) **The SIFT Web Site:** Grace gave a presentation about the website and explained how in today's society this is a major method of communicating since so many people stay at home in front of TV or computer. The site is welcoming and the latest news – of meetings, events, fundraising etc. – is prominent. The 'Latest News' section will soon have the AGM details and the results of the questionnaires will be published as soon as they are available. There should be a chairman's report monthly and an attempt to answer people's questions, some of which are listed under the 'Frequently Asked Questions' title already. The 'Contact Us' link has already been tested successfully. Details of competitions and prizes will be published. There are many links to other useful sites – so most of what people might need to know about Southminster and what is on here is available. A selection of photographs of Southminster makes the site more attractive. Links to other Parish Plan groups could be useful in sharing ideas and difficulties. There is an agreed commitment to update the site within 48 hours of information being submitted. As soon as the final Parish Plan document is produced it will be included on the web site. The site points out that the Parish Council is not expected to solve all the problems but information given to the Council will enable them to influence others who can make a difference.

e) **Questionnaires and their analysis:** Because the analysis was incomplete only a brief summary was given. (Appendix 3) Complete results will be published as soon as they are available.

4. **Financial Report** Paula Neall (Treasurer 2006-7)
The final account had been circulated (Appendix 4) Paula explained that the reason we had more money remaining in the account than we had expected was because

- I. we spent less on the printing than had been budgeted and
- II. we had decided not to buy analysis software after all, carrying out the analysis ourselves

but that some money may still be required to hold further consultations since the rate of return of questionnaires was low.

John proposed and Ken seconded that the accounts be formally accepted. This was carried nem con.

Paula proposed and Jacqui seconded that Rupert Killick be asked to be independent examiner of accounts next year. This was carried nem con.

5. **Questions and Answers:** There were none at this point.

6. **Correspondence:** Graham and Pat Martin had written to thank us for the prize (a bottle of whisky given by Brian and Jeannie Cottam) they had won in the draw, having returned their questionnaire in time.

7. **The Election of the Committee for 2007-8:** Brian agreed to take the Chair for this item. The following people were elected unopposed:

Chairperson: Roger Sinden (who had indicated his willingness in advance, since he was unable to be present) was nominated by Kath and seconded by Terry.

Secretary: Kath Dunstan was nominated by Grace and seconded by Theresa

Treasurer: Paula Neall was nominated by Jacqui and seconded by Grace

Committee Members: The following people volunteered and were accepted by the meeting: Jacqui Sinden, Theresa Lawrence, Terry Cassels, Bob Perry, Jeanne McLeay, Annette Sandford and Jerry Haley (in his absence).

Other people expressed willingness to help whenever they could – but at this stage not to be considered as full committee members. These included John Cassels and Chris Shaw. It was agreed that our constitution allowed for people to be co-opted as required during the year. The important thing was to have as much help as possible from as many people as possible. Brian suggested that some specific involvement from young people might be welcome in the future. Theresa agreed and said that several had already expressed a willingness to participate in a Youth Forum. She also pointed out that they may be willing to work on particular projects but rather reluctant to attend committee meetings.

Kath expressed a vote of thanks to Grace for all her work during the year, for her continuing commitment to working on the web site and her technological expertise for this meeting. Terry thanked Kath for her hard work during the year and for this meeting.

8. **Date of next annual meeting:** This was suggested as Wednesday, 26 November 2008.

9. The meeting was declared closed at 9.32 pm but tea and coffee was served while people remained to view literature and engage in conversation.