

**SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP held at 3.00 pm
at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 3 JUNE 2004**

Present: - Councillor S C Jones – Chairman.
Councillors P Boland and A J Ketteridge.
Tricia Halford – UDC, Rubina Kirmani – UDC, John Ready - SW
Initiative, Jeremy Pine – UDC, Peter Riding - LA 21, Les Scott – UDC,
Alex Stewart – UDC, Chris Stoneham – EEC Highways and
Malcolm White - SWTC.

SW5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M A Hibbs.

SW6 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2004 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SW7 CONSULTATION OF TRADERS ABOUT PEDESTRIANISATION

It was noted that the Town Council was not required to consult the local traders at this stage.

SW8 BID TO UTTLESFORD FUTURES FOR FUNDING FOR FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Group was informed that a bid for £3000 for a feasibility study was submitted to the Uttlesford Futures meeting which was held on 18 May 2004. Uttlesford Futures considered the proposal for work to be undertaken in the Saffron Walden Town Centre. Following a full discussion it was agreed that Ian Orton would submit a full report to the next meeting illustrating how the project could bring benefits to other parts of the District. Ian Orton would consult Peter Riding from LA21 and submit the report.

The Group agreed that the Chairman, John Ready from SW Initiative and Peter Riding from LA 21 would attend the next meeting of Uttlesford Futures on 21 July 2004 and present a case for funding this feasibility study.

SW9 PEDESTRIANISATION/SEMI PEDESTRIANISATION

John Ready from SW Initiative gave a presentation on various options for pedestrianisation and semi pedestrianisation of the market square. A comparison was made with similar town centres in Germany, which were pedestrianised. He

emphasised that pedestrianisation could provide social opportunities for the area, including local displays, sitting-out areas for local cafés and other similar uses.

He suggested three options

1. Minimum Change Option- to create a pedestrianised area in King Street and not to restrict traffic movements.
2. Whole width of Market Square to be pedestrianised.
3. Pedestrianise Market Square and Common Hill, this to be linked to the Car Park.

The Group discussed the options for pedestrianisation/semi pedestrianisation of King Street and Market Place. Pedestrianisation could enhance the value of the town as a tourist attraction and as a place to live and work. The existing parking layout in the Square would require revision and there would be a need to add bicycle parking spaces also if pedestrianisation/semi pedestrianisation of the town centre was approved.

The Group requested information on how pedestrianisation schemes had affected other similar historic towns in the area.

The Group agreed that if complete pedestrianisation was considered, access ought to be available for Blue Badge holders and for loading/unloading for traders.

SW10

BLUE BADGE PARKING/ACCESS ISSUES

Detailed maps were circulated at the meeting of various options to provide parking for "Blue Badge" holders (people with disabilities) within the Controlled Zone. The Group considered the options and agreed that the best option would be to provide two additional parking bays for Blue Badge holders at the marked taxi rank in Market Street. Replacement taxi waiting facilities could either be provided immediately to the south of the existing bays, or else in the High Street. It was felt that one replacement taxi bay would be sufficient given the level of demand. It was agreed that the feasibility of this option to be discussed with the Chairman of the Taxi Association. A report would be made to the next meeting of the Council's Transport and Highways Committee seeking Members' authorisation to proceed with the necessary consultation on this option.

SW11

REFURBISHMENT

The Group was informed that tenders had been invited for refurbishment of the toilets and these were due back in two weeks time. The work would involve only internal refurbishment.

A suggestion was made to knock down the wall between the public toilets to connect Market Square, Jubilee Gardens and the Car Park. This would solve the security problems and improve the view.

It was noted that a listed building consent application would be required to make any alterations to the building as it was a listed building. Additional funding would also be required to carry out this work.

SW12

BOLLARDS ON MARKET ROAD

A photograph of the bollards on Market Road was circulated at the meeting and the Group requested that these be removed or replaced.

The Group was informed that this was difficult to resolve as no funding was allocated for repair work. The bollards had to be placed to stop lorries from entering the street as heavy traffic could cause damage to historic buildings.

Councillor Boland said that people were fed up and wanted these bollards removed. He suggested that openings could be provided so that pedestrians could cross the street.

The Group also expressed concern at an empty shop which was boarded up and looked derelict.

The Group was informed that a planning application had been submitted for this shop six weeks ago, and if that was approved it was likely that improvement works would be carried out.

SW13

SWAN MEADOWS CAR PARK

The Group expressed concern at lorries which were parked at Swan Meadows with their refrigeration units switched on all night. It was agreed that the option of putting up a notice informing the lorry drivers to switch off their engines could be looked at.

The Group also expressed concern that the Car Park was under-utilized and this could be due to parking charges. The Group was informed that the charges were reasonable and the fee was only 80p per day for season ticket holders and a number of discounts were also available for local businesses.

The Group noted that after decriminalisation in October, parking enforcement by the District Council would encourage more people to park in the car parks. It was agreed that an advertisement be placed in the local paper informing residents of the low parking fee.

The meeting ended at 4.45 pm.