

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 28th March 2006 at 7.30 pm
In Haverhill Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill



HAVERHILL TOWN COUNCIL

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Present: **Chair:** **Tim Marks**
Town Councillors: **L Ager, S Brown, S Fanning, E Goody (items 1-5 only),**
M Graham, Mrs Mary Martin (items 1-9 only), S Martin,
E Morton, K Richardson, A Thomas, and E Trebble

Also present: **Seven members of the public**

MINUTES

1. **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs McManus and Samples.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
Cllrs Goody, Mrs Mary Martin and Thomas declared an interest as members of St Edmundsbury Borough Council. Cllr Marks declared an interest as a member of Suffolk County Council. Cllr Fanning declared an interest as a resident living near the Tesco's site.
3. **To confirm Minutes of Meeting held 7th March 2006**
Cllr Fanning asked for an amendment to item 4 which was rejected by the Council. Cllrs Fanning and Graham asked that in item 6 line 2 the words "Fanning" be replaced by "both" and "she" by "they". With this amendment the minutes of the meeting held 7th March were signed as a true record.
4. **To deal with any urgent matters arising from the Minutes not covered by this agenda**
There were no urgent matters not covered by the agenda.
5. **Inspector Bruce Gent, Suffolk Police**
Inspector Gent advised that there had been a spate of house burglaries, 10 in December 2005, 11 in January 2006, and 12 in February. Sadly some of these had taken the form of distraction burglaries on elderly persons. There had been a seasonal dip in the incidence of anti-social behaviour, and there had been a Criminal ASBO issued, plus an ASBO pending, against two teenagers. Trading Standards had undertaken an exercise to identify traders selling alcohol to under-age persons and one shopkeeper had been caught doing so, and would receive a caution. The Haverhill Sector was nearly back to full strength with the appointment of Richard Baker (Town Centre Beat Officer), Craig Brett (Parkway/Hanchett End Beat Officer) and John Woodgate (Parkway/Hanchett End Community Support Officer). There were now three Community Support Officers who would between them undertake duties in the Town Centre which would include upholding parking and traffic regulations.

Cllr Morton asked the Inspector regarding violent offences against the person, which were showing an increase. Cllr Trebble asked regarding the proposed merger of Police forces, and the Inspector advised that Suffolk Police were opposed to the current proposals. Cllr Goody stated that irrespective of mergers it was the presence of Police Officers in the neighbourhood which was important. Cllr Thomas asked for greater enforcement of parking and traffic regulations in the High Street and at School Lane. Cllr Mrs Mary Martin stated the Police needed to become more aware of the strength of feeling regarding traffic infringements in High Street and illegal parking in High Street and School Lane. Cllr Sheena Martin also voiced concern regarding the seeming lack of action regarding enforcement of the High Street traffic and parking regulations. Inspector Gent advised that he was aware of the issues but that other issues, including detection and apprehension of house burglars, drug dealers and those stealing from motorvehicles, were taking priority.

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Forum

A member of the public asked whether the Town Council could take more leadership in the issues arising from the Haverhill Area Working Party. The Town Mayor advised that the Area Working Party was a Borough Council Working Party and it was the Borough Council who determined its membership, and voting rights. The Town Council had initially not be included as a member and it was only by persistent lobbying had the Mayor been admitted as an observer to the proceedings. It was agreed that in view of the strength of feeling the Town Council would write to St Edmundsbury Borough Council seeking greater representation on the Area Working Party.

The meeting was resumed after the Public Forum

Cllr Goody left the meeting.

6. Adoption of Committee Reports

Planning Committee

The Council agreed the adoption of the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 7th February and 7th March 2006.

Finance Committee

The Council agreed the adoption of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held 21st February 2006. Cllr Graham asked that it be noted that he had not given apologies for this meeting as he was not a member of the Committee.

Personnel Committee

The Council agreed the adoption of the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held 24th January 2006.

Arts & Leisure Committee

The Council agreed the adoption of the minutes of the Arts & Leisure Committee meeting held 7th March 2006.

7. Referral of Tesco Planning Application to the Secretary of State for Determination

The Council note that the Secretary of State had declined to "call in" this application.

8. To Review Standing Orders

The Council reviewed Standing Orders and agreed to amend Paragraph 41(e) to read "the membership of the Finance Committee shall be Town Mayor and Chairs of Committees; for all other Committees the membership shall reflect as near as possible the percentage of members affiliated to political parties or groupings".

9. To Review Financial regulations

The Council reviewed Financial Regulations and agreed no amendments were required.

Cllr Mrs Mary Martin left the meeting.

10. To Review The Council's Risks

The Council reviewed the Council's Risks and agreed measures to remove or mitigate these as necessary including arranging for all Councillors elected in May 2007 to be trained by SALC, and to stage an event on 13th May 2006 for the Council to agree its aims and priorities.

11. Meeting Dates

The Council agreed the meeting dates for Council and Committees in 2006/2007.

12. Committee Membership

The Town Mayor advised that Committee membership would remain unchanged following the recent co-option.

13. Suffolk Association of Local Councils – Delivering Change 2006-11

The Council agreed its response to the consultation document.

14. Christmas Lights

The Council agreed to transfer unspent monies in 2005/2006 to earmarked reserves to be spent in 2006/2007.

15. Haverhill Arts Centre

The Council agreed to transfer unspent monies in 2005/2006 to earmarked reserves to offset any future reductions in income.

16. VAT on Credit Card Purchases

The Council authorised the Town Clerk to make specific purchases of van hire by personal credit card. Cllrs Fanning and Graham abstained from voting, indicating that they did not believe it to be correct to expect staff to use their personal credit cards for Council business.

17. Accounts & Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006

The Council noted that the amendments would defer for a few years the need to prepare its accounts to full SORP standard.

18. Correspondence

- a) Department of Health – Inequalities in Health Funding
The Council noted the reply from the Department of Health.
- b) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Parish Conference 20th April – to nominate three Members to attend and items for discussion
Cllrs Brown, S Martin and Thomas were nominated to attend to represent the Council at the conference.
- c) Haverhill and District Pensioners Association – Formation of Local Patient Forum (attached)
The Council agreed in principle to support the formation of a forum to campaign against health inequalities in the town and asked the Clerk to produce a paper outlining the issues on which the forum could concentrate, its possible membership, and its likely resource needs.

19. To authorise payments.

The Council authorised the following cheque lists:-

| Date | Cheque No.s | Value |
|----------|-----------------|------------|
| 24.01.06 | 002022 | £37.00 |
| 31.01.06 | 002023 – 002049 | £49,837.44 |
| 07.02.06 | 002050 – 002057 | £29,261.97 |
| 14.02.06 | 002058 – 002075 | £9,486.46 |
| 21.02.06 | 002076 – 002086 | £4,511.08 |
| 07.03.06 | 002087 – 002108 | £41,659.38 |

20. To receive urgent correspondence

Cllr Richardson reported that ex-Councillor Cullum had contacted her asking to receive Council minutes and agenda by post. The Town Clerk advised that ex-Cllr Cullum, along with all other persons who were on a circulation list for copies of agenda and minutes, had received a letter asking him to indicate, by a set date, how he would like to receive his copies in future; post, email, or website. Ex-Cllr Cullum failed to respond by the due date and since having subsequently asked to be reinstated, has been offered the options now available; email or collect a copy from the Arts Centre Box Office. The Town Clerk advised that the legal requirement on the Council was to publish, in a public noticeboard, a copy of its meeting agendas, which was currently being done. The Council confirmed that ex-Cllr Cullum having failed to respond by the due date, agendas and minutes would no longer be posted to him.

21. Closure

The meeting closed at 9.48 p.m.