

HAVERHILL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 24th July 2012 at 7.00pm in The Studio, Town Hall, High Street, Haverhill



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Present: **Chair: Town Councillor: P Hanlon**
 Town Councillors: L Ager, R André,
 M Byrne, T Cook,
 P French, E Goody,
 B Hawes, G Stroud,
 J Stroud and C Turner

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

MINUTES

1. **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs. D André, Carr, McLatchy, Russo and Samuels.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
Cllrs G Stroud and J Stroud declared an interest in item 6 on the agenda, as residents of a neighbouring property.
3. **To Confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 26th June 2012**
Subject to inclusion of the location of the crossing patrol (Place Farm School, Crowlands Road) at item 19, the minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2012 were agreed.
4. **To deal with any urgent matters arising from the minutes not covered by this agenda**
The Town Clerk confirmed that no request had been made for funding to assist with repairs to the scout hut following the recent incident of vandalism.
5. **To Present the Proceeds of the 2011/12 Mayoral Charity to St Nicholas Hospice Care and the Breast Unit, West Suffolk Hospital**
Cllr Byrne expressed her great pleasure in presenting a cheque for £1,030 to Ian Norris of St Nicholas Hospice Care. Ian announced the forthcoming launch of a very exciting initiative in Haverhill, and explained that the town had been chosen because it offers the best financial and moral support to the charity.

Cllr Byrne then presented a cheque to Mr Kumar for the Breast Unit at West Suffolk Hospital. Cllr Byrne again expressed her great pleasure, and reflected on her personal experience of the wonderful treatment she had received from Mr Kumar and his team. Mr Kumar said he was honoured to receive the donation.

ACTION

6. **To receive a presentation from the Haverhill Army Cadet Force (ACF) and a request for funding**

Sgt James Gambrell and cadet Ben Beadle introduced the ACF, its activities and links with the community of Haverhill. Sgt Gambrell made a request for £1783 for equipment in support of expanding the membership and range of activities undertaken.

Cllrs French, Byrne, Ager, Hawes, Turner and R André paid tribute to the work of the ACF, and asked for clarification of elements of the funding request – whether alternative sources of funding were being pursued, other sources of income, and affiliations to other organisations.

Councillors agreed a grant of £500, and invited Sgt Gambrell to return to a future meeting if other funding requests did not meet the remaining amount required.

7. **Inspector Peter Ferrie**

Inspector Ferrie thanked the Town Council for its involvement in resolving a recent issue of criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Insp Ferrie reported the following crime statistics:

- Total crime – 587 this year, compared with an average of 660
- Violence against the person – 91 this year, compared with an average of 103
- Domestic burglary – 13 this year, compared with an average of 22
- Anti-Social Behaviour – 399 this year, compared with an average of 608
- Vehicle crime – 80 this year, compared with an average of 67

The increase in vehicle crime was the only disappointing note in an otherwise excellent performance, but Insp Ferrie reported a forensic breakthrough on that day that may address this particular problem.

Insp Ferrie acknowledged that whilst the performance figures were very encouraging, some problems remain. He referred to two recent spates of vandalism against cars as an example. In this case, four people had been caught.

Insp Ferrie thanked the public for their increased participation in identifying and reporting criminal and anti-social behaviour. This was critical to the Police's success.

Insp Ferrie provided a review of actions taken in respect of the latest SNT priorities – anti-social behaviour in Queen Street, anti-social behaviour by people leaving the town centre via the Chalkstone estate, and High Street parking enforcement. In relation to the latter, Insp Ferrie reported that 41 parking tickets had been issued since 18 June, but that it had made no difference to parking problems. Although it would continue because it is a public priority, he considered that the enforcement activity was not a good use of Police resources, and that closure of the High Street to traffic was an obvious solution to the problem.

Councillors welcomed the reductions in crime in Haverhill, and questioned Insp Ferrie on parking, the effect of the Olympics on resources available locally and the approach to groups of youths gathering in the town. Insp Ferrie reiterated his concerns about use of Police resources for parking enforcement, and reported that he did not expect a huge impact from the Olympics. Work on groups of youths had developed such that instead of just moving them on, the Police now work with partner agencies to address underlying issues.

Councillor Hanlon thanked Insp Ferrie for his report.

Councillor Byrne expressed her gratitude for his attendance, and asked Insp Ferrie to invite PC Will Wright if he would be available to accompany him at future meetings.

The Mayor, with the agreement of the Council, adjourned the meeting at 7.55pm for the public forum.

A concern was raised regarding the proposed closure of the local office of the Haverhill Echo. Councillors echoed this concern, in particular the impact it might have on local reporting, and in the longer term the retention of a Haverhill-specific newspaper.

There being no further matters raised by the public, the Mayor resumed the meeting with the agreement of the Council at 8.07pm.

8. Adoption of Committee Reports

Leisure & Community Committee

The Council moved the adoption of the minutes of the Leisure & Community Committee meeting held on 10th July 2012.

Personnel Committee

The Council moved the adoption of the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 17th July 2012.

Planning Committee

The Council moved the adoption of the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 10th July 2012.

9. Crown Health Centre

Cllr Byrne commented on recent reports regarding additional spending on the Camps Road Clinic. She said that this was not new money, was only for refurbishment of the building, and would not help with either GP appointments or urgent access to GPs. She read from a letter from Matthew Hancock MP, which she considered did not reflect these facts, and said she would pursue x-ray facilities for the town. She also reported on a meeting she had attended with Ed Garrett from the shadow Clinical Commissioning Group for West Suffolk, which she said was positive, but would not provide anything new until 2013.

Cllr Goody said that the £500,000 announced for the Clinic was originally £600,000, so in reality was a reduction.

Cllr Hanlon reported on the worsening problems with waiting times for GP appointments.

Cllr Turner said that services and funding had been lost from the town. He added that this was not a party political issue, not about government cuts but PCT cuts, and that the campaign was about obtaining proper healthcare in Haverhill. He considered that the Town Council should continue to invite the support of Matthew Hancock.

Cllr Byrne said she felt let down by Matthew Hancock, but would continue to fight to get the £1.2m lost from the closure of the Cron Health Centre reinvested in Haverhill. She hoped all councillors would attend the day of action on 28th July in support of healthcare and the staff of the Crown.

Cllr G Stroud expressed his deep concern for the people of Haverhill, and echoed the call for support at the day of action.

Councillors agreed the purchase of banners and t-shirts in support of the campaign.

TOWN CLERK

10. High Street Pedestrianisation

Councillors considered the recent HAWP decision on the High Street Improvement Scheme. Cllr Hanlon said that the £750,000 set aside for the scheme was now to be used to extend an expensive car park, and called for full pedestrianisation, which he said had already worked in Queen Street.

Cllr Byrne expressed her dismay at the dramatic change in HAWP members' views on pedestrianisation. She said that the improvement scheme was now to be an expensive cosmetic exercise. She added that accountability and democracy were being undermined by HAWP's refusal to allow the Town Council's pedestrianisation survey results to be presented at the meeting, and by its refusal to allow the public to speak at the meeting.

Cllr Goody echoed Cllr Byrne's comments, and considered that the Town Council should be given the improvement scheme funding, as the only body that understands the town and its future.

Cllr Turner said that the funding could be put to much better use than that being proposed, perhaps even in support of healthcare in Haverhill.

Cllr G Stroud said that the Town Council should continue to push for pedestrianisation, as it is a public priority, highlighted both by the Town Council survey and by views expressed at public meetings.

Councillors re-affirmed their continuing support for pedestrianisation, and instructed the Town Clerk to maintain activities in pursuance of this.

TOWN CLERK

11. Neighbourhood Community Budgeting

Councillors approved the following contracts in support of the Neighbourhood Community Budget pilot:

- Project management support – support provided by Suffolk County Council after no other providers had come forward when

invited

- Community engagement support – awarded to Micah Gold Associates following a competitive tendering exercise which attracted seven bids
- Change management support – awarded to Taylor Haig as part of the competitive process used in determining the community engagement provider
- Communications – PR support contract awarded to Simply PR following a competitive tender exercise. Website contract awarded to The Design Office following a competitive tender exercise.

Cllr R André commented that the Haverhill pilot scheme was highly regarded and had received praise from Government. It was a notable success for Haverhill's ability to work as one community.

12. To authorise payments

The Town Council approved the following cheque lists:-

| Date | Cheque Numbers | Value |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 19.06.12 | 007939 | £1,700.00 |
| 26.06.12 | 007940 – 007952 | £6,931.54 |
| 03.07.12 | 007953 – 007974 | £3,500.00 |
| 10.17.12 | 007975 – 007997 | £53,904.51 |

13. To receive urgent correspondence

Cllr Hanlon reported that he had received a lot of praise for the Town Council's work on the Torch Relay, including one compliment by a Manchester resident during a visit to Birmingham.

14. Closure

The meeting was closed at 8.55pm.