

Haverhill Town Council



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

FULL COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday 20th October 2015 at 7.30pm at Haverhill Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill

Present: Mayor Councillor B McLatchy

Councillor A Bramwell
Councillor A Brown
Councillor J Burns
Councillor M Byrne
Councillor T Chivers
Councillor J Crooks
Councillor P Fox

Councillor Q Fox
Councillor P Hanlon
Councillor I McLatchy
Councillor B Robbins
Councillor C Turner
Councillor A Williams
Councillor W Yang

Apologies: Deputy Mayor Councillor D Roach

Absent: None

In Attendance: Colin Poole (Town Clerk)

9 members of the public were present.

Welcome:

Mayor B McLatchy welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised members of the public attending that the meeting was being recorded.

MINUTES

ACTION

C15 **Apologies for Absence**

/136 The above apology was noted.

C15 **Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation**

/137 No declarations of requests had been received. Councillor A Brown declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in item C15/141c Community Governance Review. His County Council Division includes Kedington.

C15 **The minutes of the Full Council meeting held 29th September 2015**

/138 The meeting agreed these were a true record.

C15 **Matters arising not on the agenda**

/139 No matters were arising.

C15 **Annual Budget Proposals**

/140 The Clerk advised the meeting that he would shortly be preparing the first draft of the 2016/17 budget for consideration by the Council.

- a) Precept v service continuity: At the beginning of the 2015/16 financial year a 4% rise in the precept was estimated to be required

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if all things remained equal. The current estimate was 2%. It was agreed that the Clerk should model 0%, 2% and 4% precept increases.

- b) Additional Priorities: The Clerk asked for any proposals for additionality in 2016/17. It was agreed that the cost of additional notice boards should be allowed for in the calculations.

CLERK

C15
/141

Responses to Consultations being undertaken by the Borough Council.

- a) Gypsy and Traveller Short Stay sites: It was proposed by Councillor C Turner, seconded by Councillor J Burns, that the following response be submitted:

“Haverhill Town Council recognises Haverhill is outside the geographical parameters of the consultation but agrees that the A12, A14 and A140 corridors are the correct locations given the information regarding historical routes used through the county.

CLERK

“The Council does not however understand the inclusion of Sudbury as a site. This does not match the “corridor” policy and therefore falls outside of the rationale that the aforementioned main roads are the ones used by travellers. As this consultation is about short stay sites, what route is in mind when identifying Sudbury? The A1307/A1017 passes through Haverhill, Clare, Cavendish and Long Melford to Sudbury. The location of attractive places to stay must influence the route choices of travellers every bit as much as it would for the settled community travelling from A to B. Anything that encourages travellers off of the main routes therefore seems to be contrary to the aims of the policy and risks travellers seeing and occupying the very ad-hoc sites for a short stay, that the policy is designed to protect. The A12, A14 and A140 are the main routes through Suffolk and sites close to these roads will help make them the preferred routes for travellers to take.”

RESOLVED

- b) Planning Enforcement Priorities: It was proposed by Councillor B McLatchy, seconded by Councillor J Burns, that all the responses to which enforcement scenarios should be classed as “Very Important”, as for neighbouring properties any of them could be equally harmful, depending on the scale of the enforcement issue, rather than type.

RESOLVED

- c) Community Governance Review: The Council considered the Clerk’s proposals for realigning the boundaries with adjacent Suffolk parishes. These were to include all current proposed developments identified in the consultation and land earmarked for future Haverhill expansion. The rationale for the proposal is based on

- i. Sense of Place – Where is the point on resident’s journey home that they feel they have reached Haverhill? This is the natural boundary. The Spirit of Enterprise, Fox Public House and Sturmer Roundabout are examples of this, but none are in Haverhill.
- ii. Sense of Community – New Developments ‘face’ Haverhill and some of the parishes in which their sites sit have expressed a desire for clear separation from them.
- iii. Commonality – Haverhill is a town made of ‘incomers’. Village parishes have a focussed cultural and historical sense of community that would be challenged by proportionally

- massive additional housebuilding.
- iv. Preservation of village identity – A realisation that if the boundaries are not moved, the parishes will have a new centre of gravity, new (potentially conflicting) priorities and with current electorates outnumbered 10:1 new Councillors to govern change. Village facilities such as village halls would be both too small and no longer in the geographical centre of the community. Current village priorities such as traffic calming may be the opposite of what the new electorate want.
 - v. Capacity – Haverhill Town Council already serves a population of 25,000 and works at that scale when organising events.

In answer to questions regarding some houses currently outside the town boundary but immediately adjacent to it, the Clerk advised that it would be down to the Borough to weigh up the current resident's sense of place with the practicalities of having coherent boundaries. It did not seem sensible to create "enclaves", nor was it clear how they could be genuinely serviced by the current parish if they were surrounded by new Haverhill developments. Therefore the proposed boundary included them in our community. There was also some allowance made for areas where new development was likely. The proposed boundary followed existing field boundaries and natural features but final detail changes are likely when development designs are made clearer. It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor P Fox, that the proposed response be adopted.

RESOLVED

Councillors were asked to submit comments to the Clerk by Tuesday 27th October so that the response could be returned.

C15 /142 Reports from the Police, borough and County Councillors and the PUBLIC FORUM

The meeting received reports from the Police and Borough/County Councillors on issues pertinent to Haverhill and the Public Forum. See Appendix 1 for Details.

Councillors C Turner and W Yang left the meeting

C15 /143 Arts Centre Improvements

The meeting considered the report provided by the Arts and Leisure Manager. It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor Q Fox that a budget £70,000 be approved for technical equipment (lighting and sound systems) and that £33,000 be granted to the Haverhill Community Trust for improvements.

RESOLVED

All funds to come from earmarked reserves held for this purpose.

C15 /144 One Haverhill

The Clerk advised that following on from the resolution taken at the last meeting of the Council, he had worked with the Chair and Vice-Chair of ONE Haverhill, and others, to produce a new draft Terms of Reference. These need to be considered on an individual basis by representatives on ONE Haverhill who may need to refer to their own Boards before attending a meeting to vote on the matter. This was planned for December.

C15 Haverhill Corn Exchange

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- /145 The meeting discussed the state of the building and the benefits of obtaining a full structural survey in order to better understand what works need to be carried out to protect the building from further deterioration. This information would be shared with the Borough Conservation Officer in order that the current owners be required to carry out such works as may be identified. It was proposed by Councillor A Williams, seconded by Councillor T Chivers, that a budget of £5,000 be approved for a structural survey.

RESOLVED

C15 **Mayor's Report**

- /146 Mayor McLatchy read her report to the Council, on her work as Mayor during the last month. (see appendix 2)

C15 **Finance Regulations**

- /147 The meeting considered the draft Finance Regulations based on the NALC Model Regulations 2015.

- a) The Clerk asked for specific consideration of key financial limits on authority to spend money and also instructions for the making of payments.
- b) Councillors agreed to payment for utility supplies and Non-Domestic Rates by variable Direct Debit.
- c) Councillors agreed to the payment for certain items to be made electronically by BACS
- d) Councillors approved in principle to internet banking transfers subject to specific authority by signatories on each occasion.
- e) Councillors approved the appointment of the Clerk as Service Administrator for electronic banking subject to specific proposals for limits of authority to be agreed.
- f) Councillors agreed that section 6.18 (corporate credit cards) be included, subject to specific arrangements being agreed before such a card is activated. It was agreed not to use the optional clause banning the use of personal cards for business use. It was agreed that a clause should be inserted banning personal use of any corporate credit card.

It was proposed by Councillor P Fox, seconded by Councillor J Burns, that, subject to the amendments above, the Financial Regulations be adopted.

RESOLVED

C15 **Adoption of Committee Reports**

/148

a) Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee had not met since the last meeting.

b) Finance Committee

The Finance Committee had not met since the last meeting.

c) Leisure and Community Committee

The Leisure and Community Committee had not met since the last meeting.

d) Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee had not met since the last meeting.

e) Planning Committee

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Q Fox, that the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2015 be adopted.

AGREED

- C15** **Authorisation of payments**
/149 It was proposed by Councillor M Byrne, seconded by Councillor A Brown, that payments for cheques 10871 - 10926 totalling £43,982.57 be authorised.
RESOLVED
- C15** **Meetings in 2016**
/150 The meeting considered the proposed dates set out in the previously circulated report by the Assistant Clerk. It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor P Fox, that the dates be approved.
RESOLVED
- C15** **Urgent Correspondence**
/151 None.
- C15** **To Exclude the Press and Public**
/152 It was proposed by Councillor B McLatchy, seconded by Councillor J Burns, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items, as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential HR nature of the business to be transacted.
RESOLVED
- Councillor Q Fox left the meeting***
- C15** **Staffing Matters**
/153 The Clerk advised that Auto enrolment for our Council takes place in January. Three options have already been adopted. LGPS and the LGPS 50/50 scheme, plus the low-cost NEST scheme. LGPS had set contribution rates for employees of 5.5-9.5% and for us as an employer 23.2%. NEST required a minimum starting contribution of 1% from employees and employers. Whilst this would be increased over time, it still appeared to be a rather low contribution by an employer which might not result in a meaningful pension. There were upper limits in cash terms to what could be invested in NEST, but employers were free to choose their contribution rate subject to any cap.
- It was proposed by Councillor M Byrne, seconded by Councillor P Fox, that the Employer's contribution rate to the NEST pension scheme be set at a maximum 15% for any staff who exercised their right to join.
RESOLVED
- C15** **Date of next Meeting:**
/154 The next meeting will be held on 24th November 2015.
- C15** **Closure**
/155 The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:28pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date.....

Appendix 1

Reports from the Police, District/County Councillors on issues pertinent to Haverhill and the Public Forum.

County Councillor Julian Flood:

Councillor Flood reported the following matters:

1. He attended a meeting of the Parkway Residents Association and found it very useful. He urged other Councillors to support their local Resident's Association.
2. He is funding new fishing stands at the "newt pond".
3. Wind turbine at Nosterfield End he understands has been rejected at appeal.

County Councillor Tony Brown:

Councillor Brown reported on the following matters:

1. Very disappointed to report the Sainsbury's pedestrian crossing now won't be installed until after Christmas

Mr W Austin: Expressed his opinion that ONE Haverhill's Masterplan report did not include the views of ordinary people given at the information days held on Market Hill. The fact the group refuses to meet in public takes away the democratic rights of townspeople.

Appendix 2

Mayor's Report for July – September 2015

Because of limited time this evening, I will highlight just a few of the many duties I have performed on behalf of Haverhill in the last few weeks.

On the 12th July I attended the local Vehicle Rally here in Haverhill and was very impressed with the way it was organised. The owners of the vehicles entered were very enthusiastic about his event continuing and even growing larger, they think it is one of the best venues in the calendar and our team here in the Arts Centre can be thanked for the smooth running of this event, if it were to be bigger it would need to be somewhere other than the car park and I certainly think this would be worth it.

On the 17th July we attended ONE Haverhill Apprenticeship Awards, this was very inspiring as the amount of work put into the by Karen who is based here at the Arts Centre, has led to local companies investing in a good number of apprentices in Haverhill. On the same day we attended the Leavenheath Civic Reception. In the same week we attended the ever popular and successful Haverhill summer bash again successful thanks to our Arts Centre Team, that evening we also attended the Mayor of St Edmundsbury's Civic service. That week we also attended an event put on by the amazing group, Inspire Suffolk Prince's Trust Team, I felt humbled by the success of the team in inspiring a number of our local young people to overcome difficulties and gain skills while in this scheme and I felt so proud of them as they stood up and described the experience of completing the course.

On the 28th of July we put on a Mayor at Home Event and I had the bright idea of doing something a little different to the usual glass in hand do, this was to put on a show of some of the terrific things we have in Haverhill and we only had about three days to do it, this meant a lot of hard work for Colin, Vicky, Nick and all the team here. You should have seen the canapés handed out they were made by our team here and were fit for a palace function. The theme was the Past, Present and the Future of Haverhill, in a very short time we managed to put on twelve displays related to this and it was very successful and still talked about on the Mayoral circuit, I am very proud of that event, it lead to Haverhill being described as the lost jewel in the crown of Suffolk, well, it is no longer lost as people are becoming more and more aware of Haverhill and we all need to make sure we promote it to the best of our ability.

On the 10th of August we attended a Mayors Charity Event in Sudbury not long before the horrendous fire there, I contacted the Town Clerk at the time and offered condolences and support on behalf of the people of Haverhill, last Sunday I was able to ask him how things are at the moment, he told me that some of the people made homeless were now in accommodation and that the people and business of Sudbury had been very generous and donated huge amounts of essential needs, clothes and money to help the situation.

That same week we attended our local Floral Arts Club Event, also we attended the VJ War Memorial Parade in Bury St Edmunds. I had the privilege of laying a wreath at the Memorial on behalf of the people of Haverhill. Next day we attended our local VJ walk around the cemetery to pay homage to the men of Haverhill who so bravely gave their lives so that we may live in peace today, the event was very well organised by our local History Society and was quite an emotional occasion.

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Back from holiday we were straight into duties. On the Sunday we attended the My Blue Heart exhibition then the Parade and Sunset Ceremony to celebrate the Queens Longest Reign at Bury. The same evening after, the suggestion by Cllr John Burns and Cllr Tony Brown, Colin and the team here at the Arts Centre organised the setting off of the fireworks at the New Croft as Haverhill's way of commemorating our Queens Longest Reign. In the same week we attended the 95th Anniversary Celebration of Suffolk West WI Federation. Also I presented a very large number of certificates to our local children at the library for reading achievements; this was heart-warming as there were so many really young children there.

On the 16th of September our very own REACH celebrated the 10th anniversary of REACH Community Projects and all the wonderful work they do and I must say that REACH is one of the subjects of the Mayor's At Home event that is mentioned time and time again. They were the inspiration for several visiting Mayors and Chairmen to set up similar groups in their areas.

We attended events in Woodbridge, Hadleigh and also a Battle of Britain service in Bury.

Last week we were in Bury for the Graduation Ceremony of West Suffolk University on Saturday morning and a charity event in Saffron Walden in the evening. On Sunday we were at a charity event in Stowmarket in the morning and a Civic Service in Ipswich in the afternoon.

This morning I attended the enrolment session of our local U3A and if you do not belong to this I would urge to do so as they cover a huge variety of interests that appeal to all tastes.

End of Mayor's report.