

Haverhill Town Council



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

COMMUNITY EVENTS WORKING PARTY

Held on Tuesday, 13 January 2026 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillor J Burns (Chair)
Councillor B Davidson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor A Luccarini
Councillor L Miller-Jones (until 7.45pm)
Councillor D Page

Apologies: Mayor Q Cox
Councillor A Brown
Councillor P Hanlon
Joseph Dexter – Marketing Officer

In Attendance: Colin Poole, Town Clerk
Sara Marsh – Events Manager
Gary Wilson – Operations Manager
Vicky Phillips – Deputy Clerk, notetaker

MINUTES

- | | ACTION |
|---|---------------|
| CE26
/001 <u>Welcome</u>
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that as a Working Party it has no delegated authority, and all recommendations must be ratified by the Leisure and Community Committee or implemented by the Clerk under delegated powers. | |
| CE26
/002 <u>Apologies for Absence</u>
The above apologies were noted. | |
| CE26
/003 <u>Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensation</u>
None. | |
| CE26
/004 <u>Minutes of the previous meeting</u>
It was proposed by Councillor D Page, seconded by Councillor A Luccarini, that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 th October 2025 be agreed as a true record.
RESOLVED | |
| CE26
/005 <u>Matters Arising not on the agenda</u>
None. | |
| CE26
/006 <u>Public Speaking</u>
There were no members of the public present. | |

CE26 **Community Events 2025**

/007

Sara M and GW provided an overview of:

a) Halloween Trail 2025

SM/GW reported that the event was still busy as usual but as it was on Halloween itself, there were slightly fewer people and the weather was also atrocious. In the last hour the number of people dropped, probably due to the weather. Queuing down the railway line worked well, and although we had planned for it, there was no backing up onto the road.

It was suggested that the concessions stalls could be re-positioned, as it seemed that when the public left after walking around, they did not stop at the stalls. Overall the event went well and was well received by the public.

b) Christmas Event

SM suggested that for this year's Christmas event, the Town Council hand over the charity stalls to Colin and Sharon at West Suffolk Council entirely and ask them to tie in a Makers Market so they handle both. There were some issues with traders, who were asked to arrive at a certain time and arrived earlier, things then got a bit fraught. Colin and Sharon will be able to handle all the market stalls together.

The Reindeer worked well, with only one complaint. SM will look at where to place props next year, as they were a bit hidden in Queen Street. Queen Street business did not engage, so was a bit dark.

At the last minute, the fairground agreed to attend, which filled the market square. There was good community engagement, with community groups and schools participating in the event. There was a lot of good feedback from the public.

Going forward, the parade route will need to be reviewed, including the start and finish points and the overall timing. Consideration will also be given to adding more speakers towards the end of the parade. It was noted that the parade overran, causing a knock-on effect that delayed the fireworks and coincided with a shift change at the Ambulance Station. This resulted in vehicles accessing Camps Road while large numbers of people were still present and before the event had concluded. It was agreed that road closure times, staffing, and safety arrangements should be reviewed for next year, with consideration given to extending the road closure and using physical barriers or agency staff to prevent vehicle access to Camps Road, rather than relying solely on Town Council stewards.

Budget

For the year as a whole, the events budget was slightly underspent. However, the arrival of the fair at the Christmas event ensured the Market Square was fully occupied, as we could not afford to provide additional attractions, the space may otherwise have been empty due to budget constraints.

GW

CE26 **Proposed Community Events for 2026**

/008

Dates for summer events have been spread out so are not all weighted at the beginning of the summer. Effectively there will be an event each week. There was some discussion around the future possibility of including the new estates in Haverhill.

a) Science Festival – 20th-25th April

CP reported that he has secured for the Planetarium again this year, but will be in St Mary's Church. There will also be stalls and the hopefully the curiosity cube.

b) Food Festival – 16th May

CP reported that there is a ONE Haverhill initiative to work with local businesses to hold a food festival, which will celebrate the different cultures in Haverhill, who will come and share their food. The date is to be confirmed by OHP Board and added to minutes.

CP

- c) Chalkstone Fun Day – 29th July
To be held slightly later due to annual leave, will be held on the field as last year.
- d) Parkway Fun Day – 5th August
Father John very keen to host again.
- e) Clements Fun Day – 12th August
Worked well at Puddlebrook field, so will use that site again this year.
- f) Haverhill in the Park – 21st – 22nd August
Some discussion took place over the numbers of people attending, content of the show for 2026 and how to make the best use of the budget. Officers to have arrange a meeting.
- g) Picnic in the Park – 27th August
Same as previous years, which has worked well.
- h) Halloween – 30th October
Report circulated to members of the committee, for discussion at next meeting.
- i) Christmas Events – 28th November
Discussion took place around the budget increase for the events, it was agreed that officers will investigate sponsorship for events.

**GW/SM
Steve M**

All

CE26 /009 **CAMRA Beer Festival 2026**
SM reported that as mentioned previously, the HAC is pretty much booked up for 2026, so it is not looking likely that the beer festival will be held at the Arts Centre. There is a capital purchase item in the report circulated about Halloween for members to consider. SM will be engaging with business / pubs to encourage them to hold a Beer Festival.

CE26 /010 **Any Other Business**
None.

CE26 /011 **Date of Next Meeting**
20th April 2026.

CE26 /012 **Closure**
The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:18pm.

Signed

Chairman

Date