



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

LEISURE AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 3rd March 2026 at 7.04pm at Haverhill Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill

Present: Councillor J Burns (Chair)
Councillor A Brown
Councillor P Hanlon
Councillor A Luccarini
Councillor D Page
Councillor D Smith (Vice Chair)
Councillor J Teixeira

Apologies: Mayor Quinn Cox
Councillor M Martin

In Attendance: Colin Poole, Town Clerk
Vicky Phillips, Deputy Clerk
Daniel Schumann, Creative Director

There was one member of the public was present.

Welcome:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the meeting was being recorded.

MINUTES

ACTION

LC26 /013 Apologies for Absence
The above apologies were noted.

LC26 /014 Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation
None.

LC26 /015 Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 19th January 2026
It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor J Teixeira that the minutes of the meeting held 19th January 2026 be agreed as a true record.
RESOLVED

LC26 /016 To note progress of actions arising from the minutes not covered by this Agenda
LC26/009 – The Clerk advised that this had been done.

LC26 /017 Public Forum
Member of public stated that the minutes made interesting reading.

MANAGERS' REPORTS

Reports attached, see Appendix (i)

a) Creative Director and Arts Centre

Dan Schumman had submitted his report and explained that the accompanying table and chart were provided as an annual overview of performance rather than something that would be produced regularly. The data highlighted patterns in audience behaviour and the performance of selected successful shows. He explained that one key indicator was the percentage of new customers attending events. The figures showed that many successful shows attracted a high proportion of first-time visitors, demonstrating that the Arts Centre is continuing to reach and engage new audiences rather than relying solely on existing attendees. Dan stated that while the venue continues to programme a mixture of familiar returning acts, variety is important to maintain audience growth. Familiar shows provide reliable bookings, but introducing new acts helps bring different audiences to the venue.

Dan also explained the main ways audiences discover events. The printed brochure remains the most significant marketing tool, followed by the website and email marketing, with word-of-mouth also playing an important role. Social media contributes but is less influential than these other channels for the venue's audience. Marketing typically works best when people encounter information about a show several times across different channels. The report also highlighted that shows promoted by acts or promoters with their own marketing channels and promotional materials generally perform better. Having strong promotional assets, such as images and videos, also significantly improves marketing effectiveness.

In response to questions about future development, Dan explained that the size of the building is the main limitation to attracting larger productions. While redevelopment ideas are being explored through the working group, progress is dependent on funding and will take time.

Councillor A Luccarini mentioned that he was not receiving any marketing emails from the Arts Centre despite having selected email contact preferences on the website. Dan thought that this may be due to an additional section of the website where users must select specific categories of interest, such as music or dance. If these options are not selected, users may not receive marketing emails even if they have indicated that they wish to receive communications and it was perhaps that this part of the website may be unclear. Customers may also believe they are subscribed to marketing emails when in fact they are not receiving them due to these additional preference settings. Dan explained that he was not directly responsible for managing the marketing team or the website systems, but would mention this to Sara Marsh and perhaps a meeting could be arranged with Councillor J Burns, Councillor A Luccarini and Joe Dexter to review the structure of the contact preferences to determine whether improvements could be made to ensure customers who wish to receive marketing emails are not unintentionally excluded.

b) Youth Skills Manager

Councillors reviewed the report submitted, it was noted that even though the Zone had been closed there was still lots of things taking place and that Karen and her team were a great asset to the Town.

c) Zone Manager

The contract has been placed for the new boiler unit, just waiting on lead time for delivery.

Youth work can continue, even though The Zone is closed, but because of the lack of heating the evening youth club had to stop.

d) Community Wardens

The Community Wardens had been doing a lot of work at the Stourview Wellbeing Centre, amongst many other things, they had assisted with the installation of the CCTV, signs would shortly be going up as they have now been ordered, and pressure washing had been carried out.

LC26 Grant Funds not yet allocated

/019

Noted.

The Clerk to check the totals in the table.

Town Clerk

LC26 Grant Requests

/020

a) Memories are golden

It was proposed by Councillor T Brown and seconded by Councillor D Page that £750.00 be awarded towards extending their space at the Leisure Centre as recommended in the report.

RESOLVED

b) Rotary Children's Fun Day

It was proposed by Councillor T Brown and seconded by Councillor D Page that £500.00 be awarded towards extending their space at the Leisure Centre as recommended in the report.

RESOLVED

LC26 Grants not accepted

/021

None.

LC26 Grant Recipient Reports

/022

See appendix (ii)

a) Explore Outdoor Summer and October Free School Meals

Noted

LC26 Working Parties

/023

a) Community Events Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor A Luccarini that the minutes of the meeting held 13th January 2026 be adopted.

RESOLVED

LC26 Date of Next Meeting

/024

Tuesday 26th May 2026.

LC26 Closure

/025

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.44pm

Signed

Date.....

Chairman

Appendix (i)

Item 7: Manager's Reports

a) Arts Centre Report

Box Office Update

- Notable shows have included:
- Beauty and the Beast - best performing panto by 900 tickets
- Swinging Cat Jazz Club - sold out
- CP Wrestling - sold out
- Sound & Vision (David Bowie) - sold out

Future Sales

The following have all made a particularly healthy start:

- Wrong Jovi
- Totally Blondie
- Psychic Sally
- K Pop Party - added matinee due to demand
- Elvis Tribute
- Forbidden Nights
- Meatloaf Tribute

Cinema

Notable successes within our cinema programme have included:

- RBO: Carvaggio
- Song Sung Blue
- H is for Hawk

Our Dementia Screenings in partnership with The Terrific Tuesday Club continue to go well. These are being helped with funding from the warm spaces fund.

Pantomime

The pantomime this year will be SNOW WHITE and will go on sale shortly. I am pleased to report that showbusiness legend ANITA HARRIS has agreed to play The Wicked Queen. Anita Harris has been amongst the nation's favourite performers since her glittering career took off in the 1960s. From Carry On films to top ten records, from the Albert Hall to Las Vegas, from Eastenders to the Royal Variety Show, this lady really has done it all.

• Visual Arts Exhibitions

We were pleased to host a new exhibition by local artist Sara Marsh. We are in the process of booking another exhibition from The Hayward Gallery and some artist workshops to accompany this as part of our Suffolk Culture Fund project.

- Suffolk County Council Culture Fund

Youth Theatre and Holiday Workshop

The weekly youth theatre is still going well and numbers are slowly growing. We recently held our first half term performing arts workshop, inspired by *Matilda the Musical*, was a tremendous success. Fifteen young people of all abilities took part, many of whom had no previous experience of theatre, yet over the course of the week they grew in confidence, skill and enthusiasm. Through singing, movement and drama activities, participants developed their performance techniques while also learning the value of teamwork and creative expression. It was especially rewarding to see new friendships form and quieter members of the group begin to shine. The workshop culminated in a lively showcase performance for family and friends, where every participant took to the stage with pride. The sense of achievement was palpable, and the positive feedback from parents highlighted just how transformative the experience had been for their children.

The Warm Space Project

The eight-week Warm Space Project held every Friday from 10am–1pm between Friday 9th January and Friday 27th February 2026, created a welcoming and creative warm space for the community.



Activities included a community collage, sewing and knitting, games, a sound bath with watercolours, Valentine's and Easter cards, planting and growing decorated terracotta pots, chair-based movement Pilates, and a Mamma Mia 2 film screening with hot chocolate. Attendance grew steadily each week, reaching up to 15 people of all ages — from elderly residents to parents, toddlers, and childminders. The most popular sessions were the sound bath and watercolours, Valentine's crafts, planting and growing, and Pilates. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants praising the warmth, friendliness, and sense of connection the sessions brought. Many expressed a wish for the project to continue weekly, highlighting its positive impact on wellbeing and community spirit.

The main area for improvement identified was marketing, as several participants only learned about the project later. Overall, the Warm Space Project successfully fostered laughter, creativity, and belonging — proving to be a much-needed space for joy and togetherness.

Daniel Schumann

b) Youth Skills & Community Provision January – February 2026

Participation & Engagement

Despite temporary closure of the Zone building during this period, delivery has remained consistent and impactful.

Boost Programme Participation Highlights

Twilight Youth Zone

- Continued as a vital and trusted access point until late January for young people seeking support with wellbeing, confidence and community connection.
- Smaller group sizes enabled more targeted, relationship-led interventions.
- On average 12 per week attending

Choices Programme

- 35 young people currently receiving intensive mentoring support.
- 75 young people supported to date.
- Referrals continue to increase, activity secured into April 2026.
- Growth reflects strengthened relationships with schools and community partners.

Job Club

- Delivered flexibly from the Job Centre and Art Centre Café.
- Accessible 1-to-1 employment support maintained
- Approximately 8 clients per week

Haverhill Family Practice Outreach

- 33 young people (aged 12–24) currently signed up for support

Sewing

- 8 regular attendees aged 14-25

Participation during this period represents more than attendance, it reflects re-engagement, rebuilt trust and renewed structure in young people's lives.

Inclusion, Mental Health & Early Intervention

Inclusion and early intervention remain central to delivery, particularly for those isolated, anxious or disengaged from mainstream environments.

Junior Signpost Programme

Supports young people experiencing anxiety and barriers to participation, focusing on:

- Building resilience
- Reducing avoidance behaviours
- Gradual reintegration into education and social environments

Adult Signpost Programme

Gaming-based sessions provide an informal entry point for those who may avoid structured services. Outcomes include:

- Improved social interaction
- Increased teamwork skills
- Growing confidence

Participants are transitioning into volunteering and employability opportunities as confidence increases.

Parent & Toddler Group

- Reduces parental isolation
- Strengthens peer networks
- Provides early parenting guidance
- Builds family resilience

Sewing Group

A welcoming creative space focused on:

- Practical skill development
- Recycling and sustainability
- Combating isolation
- Confidence-building through shared achievement

Across all strands, delivery remains flexible, non-judgemental and relationship-led.

Emotional Wellbeing, Safeguarding & Community Safety

Emotional wellbeing is embedded across all activity, contributing directly to reduced anti-social behaviour (ASB) and improved community safety.

Choices Programme – Mentoring & Therapeutic Intervention

- Weekly mentoring delivered in schools, homes, libraries and walk-and-talk models.
- Careful caseworker matching strengthening trust and measurable outcomes.
- Trauma-informed therapy and counselling supporting emotional regulation.
- Funded counselling secured for nine local young people.

Impact Observed

- Reduced school disruption and improved behaviour.
- Lower risk of disengagement and anti-social behaviour.
- Improved emotional regulation and coping strategies.
- Increased resilience and sense of belonging.

Partner Feedback

“It has provided them with a safe and trusted adult to help unpick challenges.” — Jack Watkinson, Designated Safeguarding/CIC & Mental Health Lead

“Choices is a vital support for our most vulnerable students and improves their chances in life.”
— Samuel Ward Student Services

Skills Development & Employment Progression

Supporting progression into Education, Employment and Training (EET) remains a strategic priority.

Schools Engagement

- Participation in interactive sessions such as “Who’s Job Is It?” at Castle Manor.
- Increased awareness of career pathways and workplace expectations.

Job Centre Plus Partnership

- Bespoke 1-to-1 employment support.
- Support into volunteering, work and accredited training.
- Coordinated outcome tracking.

Suffolk Futures Funding

- Secured three-year funding (£29,000 total) to support NEET young people into sustainable training and employment pathways.
- Strengthens long-term stability of the employability offer.

Adult Signpost Progression Pathway

Participants transition from confidence-building into structured employability sessions, strengthening:

- Job readiness
- Self-belief
- Decision-making capacity

Impact is increasingly visible in clearer progression planning and improved attitudes toward work and training.

Safeguarding & Strategic Development

Safeguarding remains embedded across all delivery.

Haverhill Family Practice Outreach Model

Weekly GP-based presence has enabled:

- Early identification of unmet need
- Immediate access to trusted support
- Reduced escalation into crisis services

A clear gap has emerged for young people unable to attend school due to anxiety. Planning is underway to explore a **Daytime Engagement Hub**, offering:

- Structured daytime provision
- Emotional regulation support
- Gradual reintegration pathways
- Coordinated work with parents and schools

This represents a key area of development.

Leadership & Youth Voice

Young people remain central to shaping services.

Current activity includes:

- Engagement conversations across Haverhill to widen youth voice beyond existing participants.

- Ongoing adaptation of activities based on direct feedback.
- Progression pathways within Adult Signpost encouraging independence.
- Group activities promoting peer support and shared learning.
- Mentoring sessions empowering reflection and ownership of change.

Confidence, identity and self-belief continue to strengthen as young people recognise their capabilities.

Overall Reflection & Strategic Direction

Despite temporary building limitations, delivery over the past six weeks has remained responsive, adaptive and impactful.

Year Two of the Choices Programme has consolidated success, with:

- Increased referrals
- Demonstrable outcomes in education engagement
- Improved mental health outcomes
- Clearer EET progression

Partnership working has strengthened significantly, particularly with schools, Job Centre Plus and Haverhill Family Practice, creating a more connected system of support across Haverhill. A clear unmet need has emerged around school refusal and anxiety-related absence, shaping the strategic exploration of a Daytime Engagement Hub to provide structured early intervention and prevent escalation.

Case Management System (CMS)

A Case Management System has been identified to strengthen evaluation and impact measurement across all provision.

The CMS will support:

- Consistent data capture across programmes
- Clear measurement of distance travelled
- Stronger safeguarding and case coordination
- Improved evaluation and organisational learning
- Enhanced evidence for grant and funding applications

Strategic Alignment

Each strand of provision directly aligns with our core objectives:

- Early intervention
- Keeping young people safe
- Strengthening youth voice
- Tackling NEET and improving life chances

The service continues to demonstrate flexibility, innovation and measurable impact, with strengthened systems now being developed to ensure sustainability, accountability and growth into the next phase of delivery.

Karen Chapple

c) Zone Manager and Lead Youth Worker

Staffing – The Zone. No change

Training – All Zone staff have been accessing training with iHasco our new training provider. Congratulations to them all on completing various courses.

Zone Opening Hours – Closed from 5th February due to a problem with the heating system.

Parties:

Parties for January 2025 and January 2026 are similar. February figures reflect being closed most of February 2026.

Numbers of **parties** held in 2025 and 2026

	2025	2026
January	13	14
February	11	3

Soft Play: Attendees

	2025	2026
January	1676	1570 + 404 Party attendees (This includes the children/parents)
February	2000	146 + 73 Party attendees (This includes the children/parents)

Zone Annual Comparison between 2025 - 2026

Please refer to John Burns figures detailing the comparisons.

Toddler Time - (parents attending and are responsible for their children) this session takes place during term time only stops during the school holidays. We have lost a lot of our regulars due to their children starting school, but this is normal. Numbers are still lower than last year. Toddler Time still suits customers who prefer just having preschool children here and it's usually a calmer session. Good time for parents and children to make new friendships.

Zone Breakfast – This has gone down well and we will continue to offer both meat and meat free breakfasts.

SEND Sessions – Funded by Activities Unlimited take place every other Monday during term time. This ensures we only have a maximum of 25 children plus parents/carers have the opportunity to chat with others who are experiencing similar concerns but also sharing what works for them. Unlimited squash and some healthy snacks are offered to the children. This group has usually had a good uptake. Any children/parents who find our main sessions that are open to the public challenging are given information regarding our Monday SEND session.

Funding – We continue to look for funding to enable us to offer different projects/ activities at The Zone.

Youth Work

Staffing – Youth Workers availability is dependent on their other job requirements and family commitments. All staff are casual hours.

Training – We will be looking at putting our new youth workers through recognised youth worker training when it is available and accessible to them.

Funding – We continue to look for funding to help us deliver our youth projects and work with Youth Skills.

Pride Alliance Group – Continues at Castle Manor (term time) for an hour on a Wednesday to meet with Miss Sparks and young people to discuss matters regarding LGQBT+ and other topics of interest. We usually have between 10 to 14 young people attend. The school is very supportive regarding any concerns or issues the young people come up against.

Detached – We have been going out weekly and visiting areas that have been highlighted as areas of concern from various organisations and the police. We continue to work with the police, communities within Haverhill, Havebury, and other professionals to enable us to provide the best

service possible to the young people. While out on detached we were concerned regarding the vixen pub in Strasburg Square. Boarding down, burned furniture, sharp nails sticking out of pieces of wood and the site and building completely accessible. We emailed the police with our concerns who immediately acted on our report, (thank you PC Jack Oakley) and we are hoping the building will be made secure again very soon.

SEND Youth Night –This session invites young people with their families/carers to access pool, table tennis, giant Jenga, giant connect four, colouring, football, basketball and also the chance for the young people and their families to meet up. We welcome younger siblings if this is the only way SEND young people can visit us, but the youngest is usually about 11. These are great evenings and thank you to Activities Unlimited for the funding

Wellbeing Youth Hub – Young people can play football, basketball, PlayStation 5, giant Jenga and giant connect four. Arts and crafts are available, pool, table tennis and air hockey. Some of the young people like to just sit and chill and catch up with their mates. We invite other professionals in to deliver other activities.

Youth Skills – We continue to work with the Youth Skills to support activities for young people and their families.

On Spot Van – Visits the Market Square and Tesco's car park. We are in the process at looking at redesigning and getting a quote for the wrapping as it has been on 15 years and is looking pretty rough. Jack Oakley from the police and Demi from Havebury came out with us one session. Shamed it poured with rain, but we did get a couple of young people near the end of the session once it stopped. Will arrange another session with Jack and Demi.

Thanks for your continued support.

Sandra Linnane
Senior Youth Worker

d) Community Warden activity report

This month our wardens have been mostly about helping at the Zone and working with Jo/Phoebe at the Hub. They have done a sterling job in both situations.

Note: graffiti around town still an issue, but not as prevalent as previously. We are trying to resolve the problem we have of no longer being able to take collected waste to the SCC HWRC in Homefield Road, and West Suffolk have limited capacity.

AD HOC JOBS:

- The zone – removing balloon using the Arts Centre Genie elevated work platform allowing an electric fan to be activated (circulates hot air down)
- Assistance with taking up carpet at the zone following an incident with the heating system.
- Storage unit building at various sites
- Straightening up and cleaning road signage around town (ongoing)

STOURVIEW WELLBEING CENTRE WORK:

- Painting
- Helping Councillor Burns install CCTV
- Pressure washing walls / Crown Passage
- Assisting with myriad of small jobs towards getting the centre set up

REGULAR JOBS:

- Graffiti removal around town – still an issue although not as bad as two months ago (bandstand had some)
- Trimming of all vegetation at council properties: zone/hac/splashpad/pump track/zone
- Signage at all sites/notice boards
- Plumbing work across all sites
- Clearing gutters at all sites
- Helping partner agencies where required

Gary Wilson

Operations Manager

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS 2025 REPORT



In the run-up to Christmas, our packed three day Christmas Holidays programme supported hundreds of local families, with 596 Festive Food Boxes collected, 43 young people enjoying our Adventure Days, and 30 families taking part in Family Park Cooking sessions.



100% of parents who attended a family park cooking session during the christmas holidays thinks that the session improved their child's confidence

The food box gave me the chance to experiment with different things and gave me the knowledge and ingredients to do so without worrying about failing

Our sessions took place at venues across Babergh, Mid and West Suffolk and were attended by children and families who were eligible for free school meals or met other eligibility criteria.

Thank you for enabling us to enjoy a wonderful Christmas Day

