

# Haverhill Town Council

## Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

### FULL COUNCIL

Held on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7:00pm at Haverhill Arts Centre,  
High Street, Haverhill



**HAVERHILL**  
TOWN COUNCIL

**Present:** Mayor Councillor D Smith  
Councillor A Brown  
Councillor J Burns  
Councillor B Davidson  
Councillor P Firman  
Councillor P Hanlon  
Councillor M Martin  
Councillor L Miller-Jones  
Councillor D Page  
Councillor L Smith  
Councillor A Stinchcombe

County Councillors: County Councillor D Roach (until 7.43pm)

**Apologies:** Councillor R André  
Councillor Q Cox  
Councillor J Crooks  
Councillor A Luccarini  
Councillor J Mason  
County Councillor H Sowa

**In Attendance:** Colin Poole, Town Clerk  
Jane Lomas, Council Administrator

2 members of the public were present.

### Welcome:

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

### MINUTES

**C25 /016** Apologies for Absence  
The above apologies were noted.

**C25 /017** Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation  
Councillor A Stinchcombe declared a non-registrable interest on P25/024b, being a lapsed member of Haverhill Singers and there is a possibility of

**ACTION**

rejoining in the future. He requested a partial dispensation to stay but not to vote. It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that this partial dispensation request be approved.

**RESOLVED**

**C25 /018** **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

It was proposed by Councillor L Miller-Jones, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon, that the minutes of the meeting held 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025 be agreed as a true record.

**RESOLVED**

**C25 /019** **Actions arising from the minutes not covered on the agenda**

**C24/170** s106 obligations in Haverhill – the Town Clerk wrote to David Burkin, s106 Officer at West Suffolk Council who has referred the matter to the planning service manager. We await a response.

**C25/006c** CPE performance in Haverhill – the Town Clerk wrote to Councillor Paul West at Suffolk County Council who advised it was the responsibility of West Suffolk Council. We await a response from Councillor David Taylor, portfolio holder at West Suffolk Council.

**C25/008** Consultation on strengthening Standards and Conduct Framework – Haverhill Town Council's response has been submitted by the Town Clerk.

**C25 /020** **Reports from District/County Councillors on issues pertinent to HAVERHILL and the PUBLIC FORUM**

a) **Police Report** – Councillor D Smith recently attended a meeting which discussed the four-year plan for the PCC. Nothing further to report.

b) **Ambulance Report** – There is a meeting planned for next week so nothing to report at this time.

c) **County Councillors** – see Appendix 1

**Councillor J Mason:** see report attached (Appendix 1)

**Councillor D Roach:**

Councillor Roach reported that Suffolk Libraries is being taken back under Suffolk County Council control on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025. All libraries will be kept open. The question was raised whether a new toilet facility will be provided for staff and customers as funds were raised towards it. Councillor Roach will raise the issue.

**County Councillor D Roach**

Skips at Falconer Road: foul odours prompted an enforcement notice. The company appealed, but this has now been withdrawn, and they have submitted a retrospective planning application instead, which will be for inert waste only.

There have been some Cabinet changes: Councillor Richard Rout has been appointed as the Full Cabinet member for devolution. Councillor Roach's role in Fostering and Adoption has ended.

Councillor L Smith asked if broadband companies are required to give notice to residents of impending street works. It was explained that although the companies do not need permission to carry out works, it remains a condition that they must inform Highways and residents giving contact information, before work commences.

Councillor Burns has reviewed the Haverhill Area Transport Plan. This was produced in consultation with residents and the council, although it is noted that there was a low response from residents. Councillors were

disappointed with errors in the document and Councillor Roach hopes there will be an update before the next Full Council meeting.

**d) District Councillors**

**Councillor D Smith:** The Local Plan is nearing the end and it is possible, due to the scale of building new houses, a new Local Plan will need to be created.

**e) Town Councillors' matters to report – see Appendix 2**

**Councillor J Burns:** see report attached (Appendix 2).

**Councillor P Hanlon** has written to the portfolio holder regarding The Fox and The Vixen public houses and is awaiting a reply.

**f) Members of the public**

A resident raised the matter of Widdington Recycling Ltd's operating hours. Often work commences as early as six o'clock in the morning, Monday to Saturday. Work ends at 6pm during weekdays and at 2pm on Saturdays. The noise does not only begin very early in the day, but it is also excessive due to huge metal containers filled with demolition debris being dragged across the concrete onto skip lorries, and the truck reversing horns sounding, plus grinding and welding at all hours. The site has a large shed for these works to be carried out inside, but it has no walls, it is just a covered area.

The resident asked for help from the Council to order Widdington Recycling to commence working at a reasonable time, as he has spoken to Widdington but there has been no cooperation. Councillors advised that the company has submitted a planning application for which our Planning Committee will agree a consultation response in due course. In the meantime, County Councillor D Roach and Councillor A Brown will refer this issue to Environmental Health.

The Clerk will write to Suffolk County Council asking for planning enforcement to look at these nuisances.

**County  
Councillor D  
Roach; West  
Suffolk  
Councillor A  
Brown**

**Town Clerk**

**C25  
/021** **Mayor's Report**

The Mayor attended the unveiling of the restored shield that was presented to the town 135 years ago by Haverhill, Massachusetts, USA. The shield is mounted on a wall in Haverhill Arts Centre.

The Mayor also attended a photo-shoot outside the old Corn Exchange to promote an initiative by a local church which is hoping to raise enough funds to purchase the building.

**C25  
/022** **ONE Haverhill Partnership**

a) **Business Plan**

The Town Clerk reported that work on the business plan is moving forwards and the OHP Board may be asked to review it before the next Board meeting.

b) **Wellbeing Hub update**

The scheduled meeting to discuss next steps was postponed so there is nothing to report at this time.

**C25  
/023** **Establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Norfolk and Suffolk**

There was a wide-ranging discussion about possible effects and consequences for the residents of Haverhill if a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Norfolk and Suffolk is implemented under devolution plans.

While it was accepted there could potentially be some advantages assuming it is properly funded, it was agreed that there are also deep concerns, particularly about democratic accountability. The Town Clerk will draft a response taking onboard discussion points which he will bring to the next Full Council meeting in March for consideration.

Town Clerk

**C25** **Financial Matters**

**/024**

a) Authorisation of payments: It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the listed payments totalling £89,010.71 be authorised.

**RESOLVED**

b) Grant application

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon, that Haverhill Singers be awarded £895 towards a choral and orchestra performance at St Mary's Church on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2025.

**RESOLVED**

Deputy Clerk

c) Council Debit Card

It was proposed by Councillor L Miller-Jones, seconded by Councillor J Burns that:

- i. the spending limit on the Council debit card be increased to £2,500; and
- ii. that Youth Services be provided with a Council debit card.

**RESOLVED**

Town Clerk

**C25** **Adoption of Committee Reports**

**/025**

a) Planning Committee:

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor A Brown, that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

Adoption of the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> February was deferred to the next meeting.

b) Energy and Sustainability Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor D Page that the minutes of the Energy and Sustainability Working Party meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

Town Clerk

c) Personnel Committee:

Deferred until the next meeting.

Town Clerk

**C25** **Policy Adoption**

**/026**

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor M Martin that a standalone Sexual Harassment policy, in accordance with the duty to act to prevent such behaviour, set out in the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

**C25** **Actions taken under delegated powers**

**/027**

None.

**C25** **Date of next meeting**

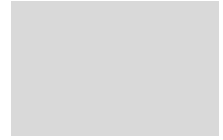
**/028**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**C25**  
**/029**

**Closure**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.12pm.



Signed ..... Date.....  
**Chairman**

**Appendix 1 – County Councillors’ reports**  
**Appendix 2 – Town Councillors’ reports**

## **APPENDIX 1 – County and District Councillor’s report Councillor Joe Mason**

### **County and District Councillor Report, February 2025 Cllr Joe Mason**

**February has been dominated briefings related to the Budget and Devolution at both Suffolk County Council & West Suffolk Council. SCC had budget proposals approved and this week we will be debating the budget at West Suffolk Council.**

#### **In this report.**

1. Suffolk County Council News
2. Highways Update
3. Persimmon Estate, Relief Road & S106 & Related
4. Anaerobic Biodigester
5. West Suffolk Council
6. WSC News

#### **1. Suffolk County Council News**

- **Arts organisations and museums across Suffolk get £500,000 funding boost**

Thirty-three arts organisations and museums from across Suffolk have been awarded funding from Suffolk County Council’s £500,000 Culture Project Fund.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/arts-organisations-and-museums-across-suffolkget-500000-funding-boost>

- **Suffolk County Council confirms 2025/26 budget**

Suffolk County Council has confirmed how it will spend its money in the forthcoming financial year - an £803.7 million plan focused on protecting essential services and supporting the county’s most vulnerable residents.

The council’s budget for 2025/26 was approved at a meeting of all councillors on Thursday 13 February, with an emphasis on meeting rising demand for children’s and adult care services.

For every £1 the council spends in the next financial year, 77 pence will go directly toward services that support the health and wellbeing of people in Suffolk.

The remaining 23 pence will fund other critical areas such as fire and rescue, highway maintenance, climate initiatives, waste management and bus services, as well as the infrastructure, staff, and technology required to keep services running efficiently.

Cllr Richard Smith MVO, Suffolk County Council’s deputy leader and cabinet member for finance, economic development and skills, said:

“This is another budget set in challenging times. Economic growth remains sluggish, public finances are under pressure from rising demand and global uncertainty continues to create financial instability.

“But it is precisely in times like these that we must stay focused on our responsibility to the people of Suffolk. We are committed to delivering high-quality public services that make a real and lasting difference in people’s lives. We will continue to prioritise those who need our support the most, including vulnerable children and adults who require assistance to live independently.”

The council's budget will increase by 6.7%, from £752.9 million in 2024/25 to £803.7 million in 2025/26.

Despite a slight uplift in Government funding for local authorities, rising costs and growing demand have required the council to set significant savings targets to balance the books.

The council has approved £10.9 million in new savings, which will focus on restructuring and transforming how services are delivered. This follows £17.5 million in savings approved in the previous year, bringing total savings for the 2025/26 financial year to £28.4 million.

Suffolk County Council's share of Council Tax will rise by 4.99% next year, which includes a 2.99% general increase and a further 2% dedicated wholly to helping meet the rising costs of social care.

This means households will see the following changes in their weekly Council Tax payments:

Band B property: £24.67 per week, a £1.17 increase from 2024-25  
(Band B properties are the most common in Suffolk)

Band D property: £31.72 per week, a £1.51 increase from 2024-25. Cllr Smith said:

"We know that many of our residents are feeling the pressures of rising costs. That's why it's our duty to ensure that every pound of public money is spent wisely and delivers the best possible value for our residents."

- **Funding made available for safer, healthier and accessible travel around Suffolk**

Suffolk County Council has been awarded £3.7 million to continue to encourage cycling, walking and active travel across the county, and making journeys more accessible.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/funding-made-available-for-safer-healthier-and-accessible-travel-around-suffolk>

Please addendum at the end of this report for the Haverhill Local Transport Plan (working document) Last week I was in Ipswich discussing omissions from the plan relating to the underfunded cycle route project as part of the Persimmon 106 agreement. It is getting approved by Cabinet this week but will remain a working document by the team.

Please let Cllr Roach, Cllr Sowa or myself know if there are any inaccuracies that you would like amended.

## 2. Highways

- **Parking and traffic in Crowland Road** – Nothing further to report. Though I know Cllr Liz Smith is supporting some residents with concerns relating to parking

- **Winter & Potholes**

Duddery Hill – Following last weeks planning meeting where concerns were raised I alerted Highways to its deterioration and general concern regarding obvious subsidence around it. I have been assured that it is set for repair, though I am disappointed that Highways were not willing to expedite.

As previously reported Winter is obviously here, which has seen some road surfaces deteriorate. I again kindly ask all ward members and members of the public to report road defects using the [Suffolk Highways Reporting Tool](#) for all defects to be assessed. Clearly Highways Maintenance Operational Plan will prioritise due to severity, but any help, particularly with the more serious road defects will help immensely.

- **Haverhill Town Centre Signs & Ehringhausen Way**

I refer members to my December report. We are awaiting the TRO to be updated and all I have is a Spring 2025 timescale which could take up to the end of May.

### **3. Persimmon Estate and Relief Road, S106 & Related**

I am meeting West Suffolk Planners and Suffolk County Council Highways team in the next fortnight and am planning to visit the Relief Road to view progress before our next Town Council meeting. I have been assured again, this last week, that the Relief Road is still on target for a Spring 2025 opening. We will see. This is now no longer under control of Persimmon. Road Constructors KATO are now onsite and will be the ones determining whether that Spring deadline is met.

There are multiple issues relating to the site I continue to work on and on which I am seeking progress.

### **4. Anaerobic Biodigester**

Awaiting a date for when this will be going to the Development and regulation committee at Suffolk County Council.

### **5. West Suffolk Council & News**

I attended Performance and Audit Scrutiny to review the budget proposals and to approve its submission for debate at WSC.

I am engaged with officers on a number of projects of which there are three I feel are ready for me to provide a report on.

- **Anti-Social behaviour nr Chapple Drive**

Cllr Paul Firman and myself have been engaged with residents regarding the behaviour of some teenagers and conflict with residents. I completed 2 planting projects resolving issues in one area (at the Glebe), but problems still persist elsewhere on the estate. West Suffolk Officer, Jon Eaton, and the Town Council On-the-spot Van is engaging with the individuals but it is likely an additional planting project in a second location will be needed to address on-going concerns.

- **Woolpack Planting Project**

I continue to work with the Landlord of the Woolpack Brian Walford and the Parks Team regarding the planting in the raised brick border outside the Wool Pack. The planter has been cleared and I am awaiting an update regarding planting which the Parks Team have agreed to fund in entirety.

- **Burton Centre Court**

Members of the Town Council might have noticed that the Burton Centre court (Owned by SCC) has had the astroturf removed with a view for a community group to take on the lease. There is still some works to be done to secure the boundary and repair the wall which has cracks that need addressing. Contracts are being agreed with a community group, but it is hoped this amenity will be again provide a community purpose as opposed to being left derelict for the last 10 years or more.

- **Market, High Street & West Suffolk Budget**

I remain concerned regarding the weekly Friday and Saturday markets, there is little evidence that the £300,000 investment in markets across the district, announced in July 2024, has or is making any difference. Regarding the High Street generally, I am hearing increased numbers of business owners citing concern regarding the combination of



changes to Employers National Insurance Contributions as well as the impact of the increase in the National Minimum wage.

March 1<sup>st</sup> has been announced for the return of the Makers Market.

The debate on the budget will be held this Tuesday. It is disappointing that there is little to support the High Street and promote footfall across the District market towns.

Increases to Ringo charges will do little to help footfall.

### WSC News

- **Makers markets return to West Suffolk with exciting opportunities for shoppers and traders** Starting in March, the popular makers markets will be returning to Haverhill, Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket.  
<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr20250213ws01.cfm>
- **Budget proposals to meet challenges and invest in future of West Suffolk** Proposals for a £78 million budget to invest in delivering services and initiatives that make a real difference to the lives, health and prosperity of West Suffolk have been backed.  
<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr20250205ws01.cfm>
- **First Thriving Communities Fund grants are agreed** The first grants under West Suffolk Council's new Thriving Communities Fund have been agreed, investing over £260,000 into 44 separate projects to benefit residents.  
<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr20250204ws03.cfm>

.....

Please note this report does not include all the work I am undertaking at the moment or projects I am engaged with and trying to move forward for the betterment of the community. Where I have stated 'no further updates' or 'ongoing', please refer back to my previous month's reports.

Members are always welcome to contact me should they need any information or assistance relating to issues across the Cangle District.

.....

## APPENDIX 2 – Town Councillor’s report

### Councillor John Burns

- **Great Wilsey Park:** An application for an internal link road has been made which, simplistically put, joins up phase 1 & 2 (from Gurteen Way/Wratting Road) to phase 8 (Donovan Way/Chalkstone Way).
- **Police Matters:** Crime stats for December 2024 were distributed on 7<sup>th</sup> February.
- **SCC Highways:** Awaiting proposed road signage schematics for the town centre. For unknown reasons Millfields Way was resurfaced last week despite there being no obvious potholes or damage to the road surface. That is despite the road surface near to Wratting Road having many deep, but reported, potholes. Lovely new surface but failed to repair the speed cushion that their surfacing abutted to. Still waiting for repairs to several unlit bollards I have reported last year (including 2 in the resurfaced area) and many of the lit bollards across town are now being totally obscured as they need cleaning.
- **Greater Cambridge Partnership:** A consultation for the CSET system for the busway to the proposed P&R at Four Wentways is underway.
- **Parking:** No obvious changes to parking enforcement.
- **Markets:** A meeting was recently held to review the recommendations from the 2022 review and agree a list of action points to be looked into. The first of the monthly “Maker’s Markets” (planned to be renamed) takes place this Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March.
- **Sturmer Arches:** Still nothing to report.
- **Fox PH (Wratting Road):** No further news known but have asked WSC members to ask relevant questions.
- **Vixen PH (Millfields Way):** No further news known but have asked WSC members to ask relevant questions. Reports of vermin have been received but not verified.
- **Strasbourg Square:** Work was carried out last week to de-weed the planting areas resulting in 3 x truckloads of weeds being taken away.
- **Other work:**
  - Assisted HTC staff with the ATC parade held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.
  - Attended, with many others, the funeral of the late George Eady in BSE.
  - Still organising splashpad pump repair, cleaning and decommissioning for later in the year.
  - Usual IT related tasks for HTC. Working on Windows 11 upgrade requirements.
  - Provided usual weekly financial stats for Zone, Coffee Bar and HTC Bar to HTC management plus attending various HTC meetings.
  - Working with others on planning for VE80 & VJ80 commemoration events due to take place in May and August respectively. I will be audio recording the Silver Band next month to provide a musical overlay for the events to be held in St Mary’s Church on 8<sup>th</sup> May and 21<sup>st</sup> August.