

Haverhill Annual Town Meeting

Minutes of a Town Meeting

Held on Tuesday 18th May 2015 at 7.00pm at Haverhill Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Chair: R André, Town Mayor

Present: 72 members of the public, invited guests and press

MINUTES

T15/ Apologies for Absence

001 20 Apologies for absence were received.

T15/ Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th May 2014

002 The minutes were approved by a show of hands. The Mayor advised that all matters arising had been addressed during the course of the last year.

T15/ Town Mayor's report

003 The Mayor gave the following report:

The decision of the Town Council to invite me to serve a second year reflected their concern that whilst we had lost the services of Will Austin, were managing with Bob Whittome as a part time Clerk and were seeking to appoint Colin Poole to the permanent post, we needed to ensure some continuity in running the Council. It has been an unusual, but rewarding, additional year. This Mayoral year has been even busier than the previous, with over 200 events attended by the deputy Mayor and I. Between us we have travelled over 3,000 miles to venues in Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Essex. Whilst Civic occasions form the majority of those events it has been of special significance to meet employers, traders and business leaders building the wealth of our community. Education and services for young people are dear to our hearts in serving the community and there have been numerous opportunities to engage with school Leaders, Teachers and support staff as well as our enthusiastic learners.

In addition to those events we have attended a wealth of community festivals, school and nursery occasions, presentations by regional bodies to volunteers from our community and the wealth of our own local events and shows.

I continue to be heartened by the evidence I have seen of so many volunteering to assist our community, giving freely of their time, skills and energy to improve life in our area. The huge diversity of their talents and skills is a significant component in the rich fabric of life in our community.

The enormous pleasure I have experienced in the many aspects of this second Mayoral year has only been possible with the unstinting support of those around me. Our Deputy Mayor has eagerly taken the engagements I have been unable to attend. Cllr Byrne has journeyed far and wide, often committing to long days and nights, in

ensuring Haverhill is fully represented. Together we have ensured that Haverhill is known and appreciated throughout our region.

The Town Clerk’s Assistant and Mayor’s Secretary, Vicky Phillips, has kept my diary on track and fiercely defended me from late arrivals, ensuring I am fully briefed for every occasion. Vicky has been stalwart in ensuring that invites are passed to me, replies are sent and I have full instructions for every function. Her support in arranging our own functions makes even the most demanding events appear simple. That Vicky and others have continued to provide sterling service even when additional demands have been placed on her and there is evidence of their professional commitment to our Town.

The Town Council team, led by the Town Clerk and Nick Keeble, are stalwarts in delivering a service of which we are all proud. The year began with Bob Whittome as our Town Clerk whilst we prepared for Colin Poole. Bob was able to ensure that a smooth handover was effected and was able to guide Colin towards administrative tasks which needed follow up. Colin’s support and advice has helped us to review and improve our procedures and he completes a triumvirate of hugely supportive and skilled Clerks – we are fortunate to find outstanding Clerks with immense impact. Our entire team provide a gold standard service for which we should all be grateful.

Behind all the glamour of serving as Mayor is the Mayoress who lights up the flagging conversations, tolerates the frustrations, and has loyally supported me in the role. My family has continued to encourage me and urged me on, despite my frequent late arrivals or absences from family occasions; their support is highly appreciated.

It is easier for the Mayor to feel appreciated – the Robes and Chain inspire many to show their appreciation. Meanwhile my fellow councillors, from all sides of the political spectrum, carry on with the constant round of meetings that are the lifeblood of the Town Council. Outside the demanding round of Council meetings our Councillors attend groups and committees in support of the many working to improve our community and constantly pursue issues raised by our residents. Their commitment to, and care for, our residents is profound and should be recognised by all.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent Haverhill in the wider community and for the support of all our community.”

T15/004 For Haverhill Residents to Discuss Any Matter Relating to the Town of Haverhill

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Mr Ian Johnson | Expressed concern that the Chamber of Commerce had recently resurrected support for a road connecting the Great Wilsey Park development to the North East of Haverhill with Coupals Road, which his group and the Town Council had successfully persuaded the developer not to build. Does the Town Council have the same view as before that the road should not be built? |
| Mayor | <i>The Developers have no plans to put that road in and are unaware as to why the Chamber have raised it. The last Town Council I attended expressed no desire to see a road across that green corridor. The New Town Council will need</i> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <i>to form its own opinion but I am assured by planners that there is no intention to put that road back into the scheme at the present time.</i> |
| Mr Bill Austin Mayor | When will allowing public access to the ONE Haverhill meetings be reconsidered? <i>The decision still stands, apart from the annual public forum and consultations which are fully open to the public. The Town Council will continue to press for the meetings to be held in public, but currently there are representatives on ONE Haverhill who are not used to meeting in public.</i> |
| Mr J McDonagh Mayor | When will the Town Council get better shops for Haverhill? <i>The Town Council, Chamber of Commerce and ONE Haverhill are pressing for the Co-op site to be brought back into retail use. There are only a few empty shops at the moment. The Town Centre Masterplan will lead on the improvement in the retail offer for Haverhill and I will ask the Town Council to keep a watchful eye on developments for the High Street</i> |
| Mrs Wendy Yagir Mayor | Hold ups on the Withersfield Road cause long delays. We were promised a relief road, when is it going to be built? <i>This is a Highways Issue. I will ask the Clerk to put your views forward.</i> |
| Mr Ali Yagir Mayor | The town is dying, with too many charity shops. What can be done about them? <i>The Viability of the High Street is a matter the Town Centre Masterplan will address. Consultations take place from June onwards and traders and residents need to take part to make sure it reads as you want.</i> |
| Mr David Whetton Mayor Cllr M Byrne | The industrial area to the south of the town is becoming a lorry park, with drivers living in them with no facilities. What can be done about this? <i>The Town Council is talking to Culina along with ward councillors in an attempt to resolve this. Ward Councillors are actively engaged on this topic.</i> <i>Following a meeting with residents the layby on the bypass where lorries were stopping was closed but unfortunately it has been re-opened. Culina has been told this needs to be resolved and have promised they will find a resolution.</i> |
| Councillor Robert Everitt, Mayor of St Edmundsbury | It has been my pleasure to visit town and parish councils in St Edmundsbury and thank them for the work that they do. St Edmundsbury want to continue to work closely with Haverhill Town Council. I congratulate the new Councillors on their election and thank the outgoing councillors for their |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>Town Mayor</i> | <p>work. We hope our close working relationship will continue and to that end would like to present a hand-painted scroll celebrating the Magna Carta, made by Councillor Oliver, to Haverhill Town Council to thank them for all that they do.</p> <p>I particularly thank Mayor André for being an absolute stalwart in attending events in Bury St Edmunds on behalf of Haverhill.</p> <p><i>Many thanks for your kind words and this lovely gift.</i></p> |
| <i>Ms Eileen Peck</i> | <p>In relation to the Great Wilsey development, will the promised infrastructure be delivered? Haverhill is fast becoming a dormitory town. Facilities are what keeps people in the town spending money.</p> <p>Also, Bury Road needs upgrading to cope with the additional housing.</p> <p><i>The Town Council will press for the promised infrastructure to be delivered.</i></p> |
| <i>Ms J Hargreaves</i> | <p>What is happening with the Corn Exchange?</p> <p><i>The property is on the market for sale by the private owner. Various people have ideas for how the building can be used. I will ask the incoming Council to keep a watching brief on the matter.</i></p> |

T15/ Closure

005 The meeting was closed at 7.25pm.