

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

COMMUNITY EVENTS WORKING PARTY

Held on Monday 13th October 2025 at 7.30pm



Haverhill
Town Council

- Present:** Mayor Q Cox
Councillor J Burns (Chair)
Councillor A Brown
Councillor P Hanlon
Councillor A Luccarini
Councillor D Page
- Apologies:** Councillor B Davidson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor L Miller-Jones
Joseph Dexter – Marketing Officer
- In Attendance:** Colin Poole, Town Clerk
Sara Marsh – Events Manager
Gary Wilson – Operations Manager
Vicky Phillips – Deputy Clerk, notetaker
Steve Marsh – Deputy Technical Manager (from 7.54pm)
Councillor J Mason

MINUTES

- | | ACTION |
|--|---------------|
| CE25 <u>Welcome</u>
/033 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. | |
| CE25 <u>Apologies for Absence</u>
/034 The above apologies were noted. | |
| CE25 <u>Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensation</u>
/035 None. | |
| CE25 <u>Minutes of the previous meeting</u>
/036 It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor Q Cox, that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 th July 2025 be agreed as a true record.
RESOLVED | |
| CE25 <u>Matters Arising not on the agenda</u>
/037 None. | |
| CE25 <u>Public Speaking</u>
/038 There were no members of the public present. | |

CE25 Community Events 2025

/039

Sara M, GW provided an overview of the summer fun days, which were all very successful. The weather was particularly good this year, contributing positively to attendance and atmosphere.

i) Chalkstone

This event was busy as usual, with strong community engagement and great support from the community centre management.

ii) Parkway

Parkway was a successful new location, hosted in the Church car park with the support of Father John. Using the Church facilities meant that there is no need to hire toilets for the event and the smaller, more contained site worked well logistically, creating a pleasant atmosphere. Attendance was estimated at 200–250 people, which was considered a good turnout for a first-time event at this venue.

iii) Clements (Puddlebrook)

Hosting the event at Puddlebrook, instead of the Leiston Road shops car park, as in previous years, improved the experience for attendees and organisers. The event drew approximately 400–500 people, including many new families.

iv) Picnic in the Park

The event was in a slightly different location within East Town Park, not in the play area as usual because of the dog show, but went well.

Sara M advised that the events budget for 2026/27 would need to be lifted in order to cover increased costs. For example she explained that hiring inflatables consumes most of the available budget. In answer to a question, CP confirmed that purchasing inflatables and operating them ourselves is not viable due to insurance limitations.

v) Haverhill in the Park

This event experienced a setback as the fairground rides did not arrive as advertised. However, there was no negative feedback received, and the “old school” toys were well received by attendees.

Steve M presented a budget review, showing the event kept close to the budget target. He noted improvements in setup and breakdown logistics, with the team learning from past years. A drone video of the site was shared, highlighting that relocating the toilets improved the overall space and flow of the event.

- Attendance numbers within the event space were reported as slightly lower than last year by security, although how accurate the counting was is debateable.
- There were a very large number of people outside the event area enjoying the music but consuming their own alcohol, which is not permitted inside the secure event area. This resulted in a lot more litter which we did our best to collect at the end of the night.
- GW has been in contact with West Suffolk Council regarding additional litter bins for future events.
- The event went smoothly in terms of security, with only one incident occurring outside the secure area on the final evening. This was handled effectively by our security team and will not impact next year’s event.
- A minor sound issue occurred during Stereo Jack’s set, but overall audio quality was good.

b) Feedback

- **Sound:** Could be louder near the catering area.
- **Kiosk Takings:** Lower than expected — may require some ideas
- **Staff & Volunteers:** All staff, technical crew, security, and volunteers performed very well. A big thank you to everyone involved in organising and running the events.
- **Worked well as a two day event**

**SM / GW /
SM**

Note:

Actual costs for all events will be circulated once available. Sara M also reported that recent discussions with Robert Henry Summers regarding fairground rides may affect future events, such as the Halloween Trail and Christmas Events. It is possible to hire in attractions from commercial operators, but this would significantly impact on cost.

All members that attended agreed that all the days were a success.

CE25 CAMRA Beer Festival 2026

/040 Sara M reported that the Haverhill Arts Centre is heavily booked throughout October, leaving very limited availability, if any, for hosting the Beer Festival. AB observed that the original concept for the event was to create an Oktoberfest-style celebration, and it was agreed that efforts should continue toward achieving that vision. CP noted that hiring a marquee in a public space would incur significant costs, and there are security issues as we could not leave the beer unattended while it settles. CP suggested exploring a partnership with local businesses to host the event in the Market Square, perhaps a collaboration with the new Loungers restaurant, where the beers could be kept secure.

CE25 Upcoming Community Events

/041

Event	Date	Provisional Budget
Halloween Trail	Friday 31st October	£17,000
Christmas Event	Saturday 29th November	£12,500
Christmas Fireworks	Saturday 29th November	£9,000

Halloween Trail: Friday 31st October 2025

Due to previous issues with Robert Henry Summers failing to attend as agreed, Sara M advised against including a fairground or continuing with the colour-coded system this year. Instead, the event will return to its earlier format.

A tendering process was conducted for tech, which resulted in high quotes from alternative providers, but our current supplier, EAL, continues to offer a competitive service.

A site map was displayed during the meeting, and Sara M explained the planned route, which she has walked through in advance with EAL and the technical team. Bucket collections will be carried out at designated entry and exit points.

Barriers, security personnel, and staff will be stationed along the route, which will be lit using pea lights to guide visitors. A concern was raised regarding the low parapet at the bridge; however, Steve M confirmed that sufficient lighting and barriers will be in place to ensure safety in that area.

Christmas Event and Fireworks: Saturday, 29th November 2025

Sara M reported that the street market will start at 9.00am, and she has secured around 34 stalls to date, she is expecting more to apply. Due to the issue with Robert Henry Summers there will be no rides as in previous years, which has opened up a space on the market square. She has looked into hiring Wrestlers free bouts and the potential to bring back the ice rink, which we could potentially charge for.

The Carnival / Parade will start at 4.30pm and Sara M has had lots of interest, with 3, potentially 4 schools, Lisa Mason, Centre Stage Men's Shed, Samba Band and the Kerala Association. The Carnival will leave the Arts Centre at 4.30pm – High Street – Queen Street - Loop around Queens Square and back to Market Square. There will be additional stewards to last year at certain points. St Mary's Church will be used as a collection/disrobing area.

Sara M was open to any ideas to replacing the rides on the market square, Cllr Brown suggested Reindeer. Sara will look into this.

SM

Fireworks

The fireworks will start at 5.45pm, GW has secured road closures until 6.30pm. Staffing has been secured, for both carnival and fireworks events. Music will be played as members of public arrive at the Recreation Ground, and will be turned off for the fireworks display.

Sara M has spoken to West Suffolk Council regarding free parking for the events.

CE25 Any Other Business

/042 None.

CE25 Date of Next Meeting

/043 Tuesday, 13th January 2026 (tbc).

CE25 Closure

/044 The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:32pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date