

## **TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

### **FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2002 at 7.30pm**  
**At Haverhill Town Hall Arts Centre**

**PRESENT:**                    **Town Mayor:**                    **Cllr Eric Bowman**  
   **Town Councillors:**            **M Dane, P Hanlon, G Kiernan, L Kiernan,**  
   **Mrs M Martin, A Trewartha and M Woodley**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**    **Clerk to the Council – Gordon Mussett**  
   **Five members of the public**

### **MINUTES**

**1.     Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Dunning, French, Goody, Hancock, Maggie Lee and Smith.

**2.     A Presentation by Maria Mason, Project Manager, HAMS**

Maria Mason, Project Manager of HAMS (Haverhill Advocacy and Mentoring Service) gave a presentation on the work of the service, which had been established with a government grant to provide a one-to-one mentoring service for schoolchildren with special educational needs. To date seventeen primary school children had been referred to the scheme, and twenty volunteer mentors trained. The initial funding was due to expire in February 2002, but a one-off grant had been received from the Esmee Fairbairn Trust, together with the guarantee of financial support for the next three years from On-Track. Maria Mason asked that the Town Council consider its support for the scheme. Cllr Trewartha asked about the demarcation between On-Track and HAMS intervention, and was advised that the type of intervention each service offered was different yet complementary. Cllr Mrs Martin enquired whether the service extended to Middle Schools but was advised that at present it was only available to pupils of Primary Schools who had been referred via the school. Cllr Gerry Kiernan proposed that the subject of a grant be referred back to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. Cllr Hanlon seconded the proposal, all being in favour.

**3. To confirm Minutes of Meeting held 27th November 2001**

Cllr Gerry Kiernan proposed and Cllr Mrs Mary Martin seconded that the minutes of the meeting held 27th November 2001 be accepted as a true record, all being in favour.

**4. To deal with any urgent matters arising from the Minutes**

Cllr Dane enquired whether there was still to be a segregated cycleway between Manor Road and Chalkstone Way, and Cllr Mrs Mary Martin confirmed that there was to be a separate cycleway.

**(Full Council adjourned for Public Forum)**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

A member of the public referred to the Social Impact Study, and to the comment within it that the Town Council was held in high regard within the town. The member of the public added that if all the individual comments containing praise for the Town Council were analysed they all referred to leisure, arts and entertainment activities, and to other deeds or successes of the Town Council. The member of the public added that the Town Council should publicise its successes more, and that the publicity should include reference to the whole Council, not individual Councillors. The member of the public also commented on the agenda item to be taken in closed session, asking how many of those who had attended the public meeting on the Arts Centre were aware that the decisions were being taken in secret.

Cllr Gerry Kiernan advised that wherever possible the public and press were able to listen to debate at Town Council meetings, both of Full Council, and of its Committees where much of the business was transacted, but that sometimes, where issues affecting staff arose, these must be taken in private. Cllr Larry Kiernan agreed with the comments made by the member of the public regarding publicity for Town Council actions other than leisure events. Cllr Hanlon agreed the Town Council needed to be more pro-active with its publicity for its non-leisure activities. Cllr Dane suggested that the Town Council could publicise its meetings more widely.

The member of the public suggested that the award of Grants be made at each meeting, rather than have one particular meeting when a lot of people attended, followed by five meetings with a minimal attendance. The Clerk added, and Cllr Gerry Kiernan agreed, that attendance at Town Council meetings country-wide was poor unless there was a contentious issue.

**(Full Council resumed after Public Forum)**

**5. Adoption of Committee Reports**

**Leisure & Environment Committee**

Cllr Hanlon proposed and Cllr Larry Kiernan seconded that the minutes of the Leisure & Environment Committee held 11th December 2001 be adopted, all being in favour.

Cllr Hanlon reported that the light at 28 Elmdon Close was still not working, and a further outage was reported of a light in Landseer Court.

Cllr Hanlon asked regarding the flooding of the pedestrian subway under Millfields Way and the Clerk advised that he had written to the Borough Council on the matter.

Cllr Dane asked whether the Town Council had obtained a quotation for a teenage shelter and the Clerk advised that whilst he had "ballpark" prices he did not have a fully-costed quotation.

Cllr Gerry Kiernan enquired regarding the smell at Sturmer Arches that had been reported in early December. The Clerk advised that the Borough Council had advised that they had checked the area on three separate occasions but had been unable to detect a smell. Cllr Gerry Kiernan asked the Clerk to check with AWA whether the fan in the kiosk had stopped working in that period.

Planning Committee

Cllr Mrs Martin proposed and Cllr Larry Kiernan seconded that the minutes of the Planning Committee held 11<sup>th</sup> December 2001 and 15<sup>th</sup> January 2002 be adopted, all being in favour.

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr Gerry Kiernan proposed and Cllr Hanlon seconded that the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2002 be adopted, all being in favour.

**6. St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Membership of and Nominations for Standards Committee**

Cllr Gerry Kiernan proposed, and Cllr Mrs Mary Martin seconded that Cllr Goody be nominated to serve as the representative of larger local councils on the Borough Council's Standards Committee, all being in favour. There being no further nominations, Cllr Goody's nomination was agreed.

**7. Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000)**

The Clerk reported that the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 placed a duty on the Town Council to promote race equality. This duty means that, in everything they do, the authorities (including Town and Parish Councils) should have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity; and promote good race relations between people of different racial groups. This duty extended to reviewing all the Council's functions and duties and reviewing whether they were being conducted and organised in such a way as to ensure that there was no exclusion of any racial group, either by act or omission.

Cllr Gerry Kiernan proposed and Cllr Hanlon seconded that the Clerk implement the procedures outlined to evaluate all the Council's functions and duties and to monitor to ensure there was equality of opportunity for all, regardless of race, religion, sex, or ability.

**8. Model Code of Conduct**

The Clerk reported that a Model Code of Conduct for Parish Councils had been published, and that all Local Councils had until 5<sup>th</sup> May 2002 to adopt it, either in its original format or with amendments. Unfortunately some of the supporting documentation was still in draft and all Local Councils in Suffolk had been advised not to adopt the Code at present. A series of training courses, firstly for Clerks, and then for all Borough and Town Councillors, would be held during February and March, and the Code of Conduct would be brought before Council in March for adoption. The Council noted the information.

**9. To authorise urgent payments.**

Cllr Bowman proposed and Cllr Hanlon seconded that the payments shown on the list below be approved for payment, all being in favour.

| <u>List Date</u> | <u>Item Numbers</u> | <u>Cheque Numbers</u> | <u>Total Value for List</u> |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 29.01.02         | 1-8                 | 3800-3807             | £5,756.38                   |

**10. To receive urgent correspondence****a) G L Hearn – Section 73 Application (SE/01/3554/P), Land off Park Road**

The Clerk advised the Council that G L Hearn were acting as agents for the landowner, and not for any business/company that may wish to operate from the land. The Clerk advised that this application was to remove the condition restricting the range of goods that could be sold from this site. This condition had been imposed when the retail park had first been approved. The Planning Committee had objected to this application on the grounds that it would draw trade from the town centre. Cllr Dane stated he had not been present when the Planning Committee had taken their decision, and the Chair of Planning confirmed that Cllr Dane had been late in attending the Committee meeting. Cllr Dane stated he did not support his fellow Councillors' decision. Cllr Mrs Mary Martin reported that the Planning Committee felt the same about this application as they had about the application by McDonalds, that whilst the investment by a major company was to be welcomed, it should be within the town centre rather than out-of-town. Cllr Gerry Kiernan agreed that the town centre needed more development around it, and that permitting a general retail unit out-of-town would create a precedent for further such units. Cllr Dane felt that there was only limited room for growth in the town centre. Cllr Hanlon stated that the site already had permission for retail use, but not for this range of "high street" goods. Cllr Gerry Kiernan restated it was important to develop in and around the town centre. Cllr Larry Kiernan agreed with the Planning Committee's decision. The Full Council agreed to note the content of the letter, but to uphold the decision of the Planning Committee.

**11. Matters of report**

Cllr Gerry Kiernan reported that the Social Impact Study Report would be presented to the Haverhill Partnership on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February at 10.00 a.m.

Cllr Dane reported he had had complaints about the lack of gritting on the Shetland Road estate. The Clerk advised that Shetland Road itself was on the gritting route.

Cllr Bowman reported that he had had reports of problems with the sewers on the Clements Estate and asked that the Borough Council investigate before the handover to Havebury Housing.

Cllr Bowman reported that it seemed that many of the Public Houses in the town did not recycle their glass bottles, and proposed that the Town Council promote the concept of glass recycling to the licensees. Cllr Kiernan seconded the proposal, all being in favour.

The Clerk reported that there was to be a day for the Town Council to formulate its future policy in respect of the town, and agree on key action points. The Council agreed that for those present the 23<sup>rd</sup> February was the better day for such an event.

***Cllr Hanlon proposed and Cllr Mrs Mary Martin seconded that in accord with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matters to be discussed will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the Act.***

**12. To Consider The Town Council's Position Regarding the Future Management of the Town Hall Arts Centre**

The Clerk advised that the advice from the Suffolk Association of Local Councils on this subject is that Town Councillors who are also members of St Edmundsbury

Borough Council may be deemed as having a pecuniary interest in the finances and property of the Arts Centre, and therefore whilst able to speak at meetings of Haverhill Town Council are not permitted to vote at those meetings.

Cllrs Gerry Kiernan, Larry Kiernan, Hanlon and Mrs Mary Martin declared an interest as members of St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

The Clerk reminded the Council that they had given in principle agreement to accepting the management of the Arts Centre in accordance with Option D of the report submitted to their meeting in March 2001. The charitable status of the building, the effect of which had only just been realised by both the Borough and Town Council meant that this option was no longer possible, and that if the Town Council were to assume managerial control over the Arts Centre it would be necessary to investigate further models. The Clerk advised that he was seeking the Town Council's approval to investigate alternative models for future management of the Arts Centre, which would be the subject of a further report to Full Council. Cllr Dane felt that it was important for the Town Council to relocate its administration into the Arts Centre. Cllr Bowman proposed and Cllr Trewartha seconded that the Clerk explore fully all possible alternative management arrangements, seek the necessary legal advice to support the implementation of any such alternative management arrangements, seek the approval of the Charity Commissioners to the proposed alternative arrangements, and present a new paper to Full Council at the earliest opportunity. Cllrs Gerry Kiernan, Larry Kiernan, Hanlon and Mrs Mary Martin abstained from voting, and the proposal was agreed by the remaining members.

**13. Closure**

The meeting was closed at 8.47 p.m.