

FULL/M/27.01.04

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 27th January 2004 at 7.30 p.m.
At The Town Hall Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill



Haverhill
TOWN COUNCIL

Bevan House, Camps Road
Haverhill
Suffolk CB9 8HF

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PRESENT:

Town Mayor:	Cllr Jacqueline Rudd
Town Councillors:	R Avallone, C Cullum, M Dane, S Fanning, E Goody, M Graham, G Kiernan, Maggie Lee, T Marks, Mrs Mary Martin, L Robinson (items 1-8 only), A Thomas, and R Warwick (except items 1-6)

Also present: Twenty-five members of the public

In attendance : Mrs M Mitson Woods, Chief Executive SALC
Minutes: Mrs L Lodge (SALC), Mr N Keeble.

1. Action in Absence of Clerk

It was **resolved** that in the absence of the Town Clerk, the Chair of the Council or appointed Acting Clerk can sign Agendas for any meeting of Haverhill Town Council and that this resolution be retrospectively applied to the Agenda for the Full Town Council Meeting of 27th January 2004. **Agreed.**

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor N Whelan, Councillor R Warwick (arriving later), Inspector M Jepson (Suffolk Constabulary).

The Mayor advised that items 7 and 11 would be deferred to the next meeting as Inspector Jepson was not available (item 7) and in the absence of the Clerk, there was no information available for item 11.

3. Declarations of Interest.

Councillors Martin and Goody – St. Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC), Councillor Lee – Suffolk County Council (SCC), Suffolk Police Authority, SEBC, Councillor Kiernan – SEBC and SCC, Councillor Dane – personnel issues, Councillor Thomas – SEBC and HAVO (Haverhill Association of Voluntary Organisations).

4. Minutes of the last meeting held on 22nd December 2003.

The following changes were made: add the following words at the end of the first resolution in item 5 'to be referred back to Finance Committee' the figure of £1000 in each of b and c in item 6 be changed to read 'a total of £1000 for both b and c together'.

Councillor Dane left the meeting.

Mrs Lodge clarified a point raised by Councillor Graham in the minutes. Dates of previous Personnel Committee meetings were confirmed and it was noted that the minutes of all the Personnel Committee meetings up to the previous Council meeting in December were accounted for in those minutes.

Councillor Dane returned to the meeting.

The minutes were then confirmed with the above amendments. **Agreed.**

5. Urgent matters arising from the Minutes not covered by the agenda.

Councillor Fanning noted that the budget had been adopted as per the Council's Standing Orders, following a recommendation from the Finance Committee, as presented by the Clerk.

6. Presentation by David Hart, Chair of Arts Centre Programming & Advisory Committee.

NOTE: The following does not form part of the minutes but is included for information.

Mr Hart advised that the Committee had been in existence since 1993 and was made up of various representatives of local authorities, businesses and special interest groups, with a membership of 12. The forthcoming change of management was noted, moving from St. Edmundsbury Borough Council to Haverhill Town Council and that the Arts Centre had been gifted to the people of Haverhill by deed. The Committee welcomed the transfer, but would like to see the creation of an independent support group with members from many different bodies. It was noted that the first job of such a body would be to identify its mission, to be constructive and supportive of the management of the centre. It was noted that the Arts Centre was now valued, visited by thousands of people and encouraged business and tourism into the town. It was noted that the Clerk and Arts Centre manager had a proven track record in supporting the centre and the new management was welcomed.

In response to the presentation, Councillor Lee advised that the Leisure & Arts Committee would consider the points raised and would wish any independent body acting as an advisory group to retain its independence. It was also noted that there had been discussions about the possible creation of a 'Friends of' type group.

(Full Council adjourned for Public Forum)

A member of the public noted that he had requested some information from the Mayor. The Mayor advised that she had previously replied to the individual that the information was contained in a Council Green Paper and therefore, she was unable to supply the information due to its confidential nature.

A member of the public advised of her support for the introduction of blue bins by SEBC and asked if Councillors were using them. A show of hands indicated most were.

A member of the public noted the ongoing problems of speeding traffic in the Castle Reach development, since April 2002. He noted the support of a town councillor for traffic calming

and correspondence he had with first SEBC and then SCC. It was suggested that there had been 8 road traffic accidents in the previous 21 months, but only 1 of these had been recorded as an accident by the police because no injuries were recorded. The lack of resolution of problems was noted and that road signs provided by SEBC were only an interim measure. He hoped that a traffic-calming scheme would be included in the Haverhill Local Transport Action Plan (LTAP).

Councillor Lee advised that the LTAP was expected in January/February and noted the prioritisation method used by SCC for schemes. She noted it was important that the public were involved in the consultation process.

A member of the public advised of a letter in which it was suggested that the persistent, prolonged speeding could be due in part to the good design of the roads in question. He urged the Council to raise the priority of a traffic-calming scheme.

Councillor Kiernan noted the interim steps taken to alleviate some of the problems. Councillor Avallone advised he would like to see the speed limits reduced throughout Haverhill.

A member of the public referred to a previous Council meeting and resulting publicity.

Councillor Dane and Mr Keeble left the meeting.

The Mayor advised that the matter was of a confidential nature and that the member of the public should take up the matter with the Chairman of the relevant Committee.

Councillor Dane and Mr Keeble returned to the meeting.

The lack of attendance by a police officer was regretted as it was felt by a number of people that the lack of prosecutions for speeding could not be answered directly.

Councillor Warwick joined the meeting.

Councillor Lee noted the use of mobile and hand held cameras in Haverhill to check traffic speeds. Councillors Graham, Marks and Lee commented variously on the need for more prosecutions for speeding, illegal parking and adherence by all drivers to the reactor signs in place.

(Full Council resumed after Public Forum)

7. Inspector M Jepson, Suffolk Constabulary.

Deferred to next meeting as previously agreed.

8. To receive Committee reports.

Planning Committee. Councillor Martin moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th January 2004. **Agreed.**

Community First.

Councillor Thomas declared an interest. Councillor Fanning moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2004 be received. **Agreed.**

Councillor Kiernan asked if Criminal Records Bureau checks were relevant for councillors. Following discussion it was agreed that consideration of councillors undergoing CRB checks on a voluntary basis is included on the next Committee agenda.

Councillor Dane and Mr Keeble left the meeting.

Personnel Committee.

Councillor Thomas moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2004 be received. **Agreed.**

Councillor Dane and Mr Keeble returned to the meeting.

Councillor Robinson left the meeting at 9.15pm due to work commitments, during the following item.

9. To Agree Revised Committee Memberships

Committee seat allocations as agreed by party leaders were circulated to all councillors. An amendment to the proposal was moved to allow Councillor Marks a seat on the Leisure & Arts Committee, endeavouring to retain political balance. **Agreed.**

Noted that the Committee terms of reference determined the number of councillors to sit on each of these. To comply with these, it would be necessary for either another councillor to be removed from the Leisure & Arts Committee or for the terms of reference to be amended. Noted that the various political parties would need time to consider the political balance before the matter could be resolved, thus the resolution as amended, would have to be deferred to the end of the meeting to allow for such consideration.

10. Review of Council's risks

A paper had been previously circulated to members. It was noted that many items were already being actioned. Councillor Dane raised a concern that the last paragraph, within 'Other Issues', contained a sentence that '... councillors ... must attend training courses ...' It was moved that the Town Council adopt the Risk Assessment report, with the exception of the last section titled 'Other Issues'. **Agreed.**

The 'Other Issues' sections would be referred to each relevant Committee for consideration.

11. Market Town Healthcheck

Deferred to next meeting as previously agreed.

12. Policing Reassurance Audits

It was moved that the recommendation from Community First Committee be adopted.

Agreed.

The action already taken was noted. The Community First Committee was requested to take action at the appropriate time.

Councillor Lee left the meeting.

13. SuffolkWest PCT Patient & Public Involvement Strategy

The Strategy Document was noted.

14. Draft Electoral Arrangements for Suffolk County Council

Councillor Dane welcomed the draft recommendations.

Councillor Graham left the meeting during item 14.

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Councillor Goody noted concerns that there would be unfair representation joining the town with small parishes. Councillor Kiernan re-iterated the points made by Councillor Goody.

Councillors Graham and Lee returned to the meeting.

Councillor Lee noted that the town councils comments were not included in the document. Councillor Lee moved that the council should reply in line with its original proposals and ask why these had not been included in the draft recommendations. **Motion failed.**

15. To delete Standing Order 49

It was moved that Standing Order 49 be deleted. **Agreed.** Noted that Standing Order 49 would be written as 'Deleted' to avoid number changes after this point and save printing costs.

16. Resolutions received from Councillors

Councillor Fanning moved that Standing Orders be amended so that all additional meetings offer three clear working days notice, not to include the day notification is posted to members of the Council, the day of the meeting, bank holiday and weekends.

It was noted that although this was legal, it would not be good practice as it could restrict the Town Council in acting when urgent issues arose. The Mayor moved that this matter be deferred for further discussion. **Agreed.**

17. To authorise payments

It was moved that cheques numbered 000586 –000609 be paid. **Agreed.**

It was moved that the meeting consider items 20 and 21 only at this point, due to the time having reached 10pm. **Agreed.**

*It was **resolved** that in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press are excluded from items 20 and 21 of the agenda 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. **Agreed.***

All members of the public left the meeting.

Councillors Dane and Cullum left the meeting.

18. Staff Grievances

Councillor Dane returned to the meeting.

19. Staffing Issues

A verbal report from the Personnel Committee meeting held earlier the same evening was given.

The following recommendations were moved :

Recommendation : That a temporary Clerk be contracted via SALC as soon as possible, until the Clerk returns to work, for up to 17.5 hours per week at a cost of up to £250 per week and the matter be reviewed at the next full Council meeting. **Agreed.**

Recommendation : In the absence of the Clerk, any complaints (about staff?) from councillors must be posted, via Royal Mail, to the Mayor, who will forward on to SALC for

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consideration. That there will be no deadlines on responses during this time and a minimum of 15 working days would be needed. **Agreed.**

20. Closure :

The meeting closed at 10.30pm.