

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

FULL COUNCIL

Held remotely on Monday 22nd June 2020 at 7.00pm under regulation 6 of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Present: Mayor Councillor J Burns
Deputy Mayor Councillor L Smith
Councillor A Brown
Councillor J Crooks
Councillor B Davidson
Councillor P Fox
Councillor P Hanlon
Councillor A Luccarini
Councillor J Mason
Councillor E McManus
Councillor M Marks
Councillor L Miller-Jones
Councillor D Roach
Councillor D Smith
Councillor A Stinchcombe

Apologies: Councillor P Firman

In Attendance: Colin Poole (Town Clerk)
Nick Keeble (Arts & Leisure Manager)

All Councillors had joined by video conference. No members of the public joined the directly meeting by Zoom.

Welcome:

Mayor J Burns welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded Councillors how to speak and vote, using the Zoom video conferencing system and that the meeting was being streamed live on the Council's YouTube channel.

MINUTES

C20 /080 **Apologies for Absence**
The above apologies were noted.

C20 /081 **Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation**
Councillor P Fox declared a non-pecuniary interest in C20/089, noting this was a report of decision already taken by a committee, in which she had taken no part, but that the member of staff in question was her daughter.

C20 /082 **The minutes of the Full Council meeting 26th May 2020**
It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor A Brown that the minutes of the meeting held 26th May 2020 be adopted as a true record.
RESOLVED

ACTION

Haverhill Town Council adopted the General Power of Competence on May 14th 2019. All decisions are taken using that power unless otherwise stated.

**C20
/083**

Progress of actions arising from the minutes

C20/070 – Community engagement during lockdown: Members were referred to the report by the Arts and Leisure Manager.

Rainbow Garden – In answer to a question, it was confirmed that the design was low-maintenance, but some ongoing work will be required, but each part is the responsibility of sponsoring groups to look after. The Arts & Leisure Manager was confident it should attract grants. Cllr Brown volunteered to be part of the working group.

Community Kitchen – Members asked that it be emphasised it is for all Haverhill, not just South Ward.

It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor D Smith, that the proposed project plans be endorsed.

RESOLVED

**C20
/084**

Covid-19 Coronavirus

Councillors reviewed the reports from officers previously circulated:

- a) Clerk's Report
- b) Art & Leisure Manager's Report
- c) Youth Skills Manager's Report
- d) Zone Manager's Report
- e) Customer Experience & Marketing Manager
- f) Operations Manager

The reports were noted with thanks.

a) **NOTED**

**C20
/085**

Review of Annual Budget

The RFO referred members to the previously circulated budget report. It was noted that the RFO advised the council appeared to have sufficient funds to cover fixed overheads and be able to retain staff, but at this stage there was insufficient funds to attempt to operate the Arts Centre or Zone under the current social distancing requirements as the additional costs of doing so far exceeded any mitigation through potential income.

In answer to a question regarding long-term plans such as for the splashpark project, the RFO advised that the recommendations were aimed to end the financial year at or around the same net reserves as we expected, so long-term projects would not be affected in this way. He went on to observe that projects such as the splashpark, were jointly funded with the District Council, which may take a significant financial hit, so they may need to rein in some projects.

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor L Miller-Jones, to adopt the recommendations contained within the report.

RESOLVED

**C20
/086**

End of Year Accounts

The RFO referred members to the documentation previously circulated

a) Significant events

It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that no significant event had happened in the previous financial year requiring reflection in the annual accounts.

RESOLVED

It was noted that the impact of Covid-19 occurred at the end of the financial year after budgets were set, and the council had taken this impact into account at C20/085 above.

b) Review of Internal Controls

- i. It was proposed by Councillor D Roach, seconded by Councillor A Brown, that the Internal Auditor's report for the year ending March 31st 2020 be accepted.
RESOLVED
- ii. It was proposed by Councillor D Roach, seconded by Councillor D Smith, that the Review of Internal Controls for the Council be adopted.
RESOLVED
- iii. It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor E McManus, that the Review of the Internal Audit be adopted.
RESOLVED
- iv. It was proposed by Councillor A Stinchcombe, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the Terms of Reference, Specification and effectiveness of the Internal Audit be adopted.
RESOLVED

c) Annual Accounts & Return

- i. Adoption of Annual Accounts.
 - 1. It was proposed by Councillor E McManus, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the Income and Expenditure sheet be approved as a true record.
RESOLVED
 - 2. It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor A Stinchcombe, that the Balance Sheet be approved as a true record.
RESOLVED
- ii. To approve sections 1 & 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2020
 - 1. It was proposed by Councillor D Roach, seconded by Councillor E McManus, that the Annual Governance Statement be signed as approved.
RESOLVED
 - 2. It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor A Stinchcombe, that the Accounting Statements be signed as approved.
RESOLVED
 - 3. It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor E McManus, that the Earmarked Reserves valued at as at 31st March 2020 be approved.
RESOLVED
 - 4. It was proposed by Councillor D Smith, seconded by Councillor M Marks, that the Assets Register be adopted.
RESOLVED
 - 5. It was proposed by Councillor E McManus, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon, that the Risk Register be adopted.
RESOLVED

d) To confirm all relevant insurances are in place

To note that insurances were reviewed in October 2019 (C19/145b) and remain in place.

NOTED

**C20
/087**

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

- a) Police – see appendix 1
- b) County Councillors – see appendix 2
- c) District Councillors – see appendix 3
- d) Members of the public are welcome to make statements or put questions at this time. - None

C20 **Mayor's Report**
/088 See Appendix 4.

C20 **ONE Haverhill Partnership**

/089

- a) The Board meeting was held on 18th June 2020. The Mayor advised that neither he nor the Clerk were able to attend. Minutes of the meeting will be delayed as the recording did not work, so the chair has asked that those members who read from notes or took notes let him have them. It was unfortunate that no notetaker was available. Cllr M Marks advised that Mr Andy Cutting is leaving the Clements & Christmas Maltings practice, which is a great loss and a cause of concern, if the post is not to be retained. It was proposed by Councillor M marks, seconded by Councillor J Mason that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Cutting.

RESOLVED

Cllr A Luccarini advised that the BID group had written to West Suffolk to advise they intend to hold a ballot in November.

- b) The funding bid for a Good Neighbour Scheme Co-ordinator as a legacy project following the Covid-19 work of the Council submitted to the Suffolk Community Foundation was successful. An existing member of staff, Emily Fox had been appointed to a temporary position until March 31st 2021. This would be under the Volunteer Centre. The Clerk was pleased to advise that the co-ordinators of the Matilda Rose Action Squad Covid-19 response in Haverhill were joining the Haverhill GNS. We will inherit their recipients and volunteers.

C20 **Local Footpaths**

/090

The meeting considered the report from Councillors Davidson and Stinchcombe in respect of signposting local paths.

It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor A Brown, that the proposals be adopted and a budget of up to £1000 be approved.

RESOLVED

C20 **Financial Matters**

/091

- a) **Authorisation of payments:** It was proposed by Councillor D Roach, seconded by Councillor E McManus, that the listed payments totalling £20,671.25 be authorised.

- b) **Grant to Haverhill Silver Band Youth Band:** It was proposed by Councillor D Roach, seconded by Councillor M Marks, to grant £500 towards the purchase of a baritone horn.

RESOLVED

- c) **Grant to Haverhill Gymnastics:** Following discussion on the principle of funding a professional bill for reviewing the rent increase for the Haverhill Gymnastics centre in Holland Road. It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor E McManus, to grant £2,794 towards professional fees in challenging the rent increase proposed by their landlord. Councillor P Fox offered for her and Councillor Quillon Fox to fund the grant instead. It was then proposed that the Clerk be given the delegated authority to explore the merits of the case and report back to Councillor Fox. Councillor D Roach proposed deferral to gather more information. Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor E McManus then revised her proposal to delegate the authority to the Clerk to seek more information and advise Councillor Fox accordingly.

RESOLVED

CLERK

CLERK

- d) **Portable CCTV:** A request from the Police for financial assistance in 'renting' a portable CCTV had been received. The Clerk understands the District Council wanted the police to pay £2,800 'rent' In order to use the portable CCTV WSC already has. The Police didn't understand why they were being charged rent. The Clerk had advised the Police he felt it unlikely the council would pay so much money for 'rent'. He suggested the Police came back with specification for a portable CCTV to purchase. The Mayor observed that this charge was greater than the entire cost of the CCTV installation at the Leiston Centre. Members expressed some astonishment that West Suffolk was 'renting' out publicly-funded security cameras. It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor J Burns, that the Clerk write to the Chief Executive of West Suffolk asking why there is a charge, and does this mean publicly-funded CCTV sits unused rather than tackling crime.

RESOLVED

C20 **Actions taken under delegated powers**

/092

The Clerk reported that he instructed all staff to take at least two weeks' leave between July 6th and September 27th 2020. This is to avoid potential disruption to service delivery through staff shortages due to accrued annual leave being taken in a short space of time. He had taken written advice from Blue Star HR, the Council's HR advisors, consulted the Personnel Committee and received positive feedback from Unison before acting.

NOTED

C20 **Urgent Correspondence**

/093

None.

C20 **Date of Next Meeting**

/094

- a) The next meeting would be held Tuesday 28th July 2020, by remote meeting.
b) It was proposed by Councillor P Fox, seconded by Councillor D Smith, to approve the dates of full council and planning meetings as per the paper previously circulated.

RESOLVED

C20 **Closure**

/095

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 20:59pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date.....

Appendix 1

Emergency Services Report

The Mayor had previously circulated the SNT report. Councillor P Hanlon advised that he had received reports of motorbikes ride around the Wilsey area at 1am. This had not be reported to the police. Councillor M Marks highlighted the issue of antisocial drivers in souped-up vehicles are racing around town, with customised exhausts making a great deal of noise. The mayor has been deploying the VAS, but in Bergamot Road overall average speed is not sufficiently high enough to trigger Police action.

Councillor Brown asked about the proposals for Speedwatch. The Mayor advised that at the time it was investigated the police officers involved in assessing schemes were redeployed and unable to complete the process. The Clerk confirmed it remained his belief that we would have access to an equipment-sharing scheme. Councillor D Roach asked that we push for more road-policing in Haverhill and proposed that the Town Council writes to the Chief Constable with evidence from the VAS, asking for visible presence from the traffic division. This was seconded by Councillor A Brown.

RESOLVED

Appendix 2

County Councillors' reports

Councillor D Roach reported: He has been attending meeting on the Minerals and Waste Plan, made more difficult without being able to do site visits.

Councillor P Fox reported:

Suffolk Public Health Matters: <https://sway.office.com/m5RhYSBclOQe7DUF?ref=Link>

A link from Public Health with an overview of changes from the key commissioned services in response to coronavirus (Covid-19).

Home Education

As most of you know this is a subject that I am quite passionate about so when I was asked to Chair a Task and Finish Group on behalf of Scrutiny I was really pleased. We were tasked with the topic of off-rolling in schools, a habit which forces the parent to sign a letter and educate the child/ren at home even if no one is ready for it. This did not happen and I resigned as the chair otherwise I would find it difficult to have my say. The off-rolling continues, and people seem to skirt over or around the issue. We did not receive any facts and figures.

During the time we were looking into HE I was asked to speak to 3 families, which I did and it was very interesting. They all had different stories, but the same story, one of the families reminded me of my own story in terms of how things progressed or not. I asked 2 of the three families what they hoped might come out of the general look at HE and the biggest one was acceptance. People voice their disapproval without understanding what you are hoping to achieve for, with, and because of your child.

My eldest son is now 30, and as I spoke to these families, one thing stuck out and that is in all these years nothing has changed: the stories were the same. We need to help the parents with support but only if they ask for it.

We also need to be sure that when children are off-rolled, and parents sign that letter that they have been informed. They generally do not get told about the costs of keeping a child home, the fact that you have many services cut off from you and the family and it can be difficult on the whole family, being together 24/7 with no help, especially if you have no family or friends around.

The result of the Task and Finish Group is going to be we produce a new leaflet!

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Children's Centres

The administration are hoping to bring the paper on Children's Centres to Cabinet in July. During lock down County Council has continued to provide a service, albeit a virtual service, to families which has been accessible in the evenings as well.

I have been assured that apart from Haverhill's Children Centre being turned into a Family Hub and it now covering more members of the family and offering some different services that the Centre is safe. Do not hold me to that, but I do feel re-assured by Councillor Mary Evans that the future looks OK for Haverhill. As I know that local people are worried about our centre I will wait and see what the cabinet paper brings next month and then decide how to vote.

Schools

This is an ongoing and changing situation and hopefully there will be more information available in the summer. Some parents have enjoyed the home education side of things while in lockdown and others not so much, however, now people are going back to work children are gradually going back to school.

My own concern is that Year 11 and Year 13's have just been left to work things out for themselves. Many are struggling to work through the maze that the government has created over the years in "the what happens next" phase. Students are agonising over results day. The results are based not on hard work in getting to exams ie revision and study; they are on assessments and work over several years. It will be interesting to see what impact this has a few years down the line.

Briefings

Lots of briefings now, much more than before; I attend a lot more than before, because I do not have that 2 and ½ hour round trip to Ipswich. Especially when you get to Ipswich and the briefings last just 45 minutes. It is difficult to give the outcome of many of the briefings because of the continuing change of the Coronavirus and how we should treat it and should behave when moving around with other members of our community

22nd June 2020

Quillon has a few briefings this week on Children's Centres and also one on Climate Emergency and Test and Trace. I only have one, a CYP one this week. Makes up for last week

We have several lined up for the following week including Scrutiny, which is now over two days because of the pre-meet.

Other News

We, the LDGI Group at County, recently had our AGM and we now have a new leader, Elfrede Bramshaw-Crawshaw. Our previous leader is now the Deputy Leader and I am now Chair of the Group.

I have completed training as a Governor with the Churchill School this week and have some more this week. You may have noticed our Head at the Churchill is leaving and moving onto a position that offers a new challenge, but she will still be staying within Trust.

So that is my virtual life. In my real 3D life, I have been down to the market in Haverhill a couple of times and have been pleased with the efforts put into the market. A lot of shops still haven't opened, just as they have not in Saffron Walden. Surprisingly they are large High Street brands that are still closed. There has been a lot of work going on the last couple of weeks in regard to Haverhill High Street. I know it has not been easy and it has been quite a job to coordinate at times. I would like people to reflect about the amount of work that has been put in to make Haverhill viable. A couple of Councillors and our Town Clerk should be really proud of their achievements.

As you will hear the Volunteer Centre now has 2 members of staff, but we are still lacking a venue. It will come, soon. Haverhill people are good at working together and I think once the Volunteer Centre is up and running it will be a fantastic resource for all those who want to offer their time to others and for those looking for volunteers.

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Local Mental Health provision still continues to be an issue; some of us being sent to Ipswich or Bury, and the waiting lists are quite considerable. I can only see it getting worse after lockdown and isolation periods end for everyone. Already there has been reports of children showing signs of depression, adults the same and there are many people that live alone and have discovered depression for the first time in their lives. I am thinking of setting up a women's group, on an ad hoc type basis for women with depression, whether the depression has been for a long time or only just come about through isolation. Need to wait for venues to open up and things to be a little more normal.

Councillor Fox advised that Councillor Quillon Fox would be providing a separate report in the future.

Appendix 3

District Councillors' reports

Councillor D Roach: Local Plan: Vision 2040 – good feedback from Councillors on the first draft. All the summer planters and hanging baskets are out. He hopes they will not be moved by people wanting to let vehicles park on the pavement.

Councillor P Hanlon reported:

Passengers waiting for the bus in Shetland Road were not aware that a road closure meant the bus was not able to go that route – Stagecoach had advised they were going to post notices advising passengers. Wratting Road – this has just been road-marked and is now to be resurfaced.

Queen Street and High Street after 4pm. Drivers ignoring the signage advising blue badge holders only, with 'boy racers' speeding down the High Street. Enforcement is needed. It was noted that parking enforcement only applies to parked vehicles, not moving-vehicle offences.

He has had complaints regarding noise from the fitness rooms on Strasbourg Square. This had been raised at the time planning permission was sought. He has reported it to planning enforcement.

Councillor J Mason reported: attended a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, establishing a new work programme. Considerable disquiet about the state of finances, such as no revenue from car parks for the last three months. Also, whether any projects are going to be impacted by the financial consequences of Covid-19.

Councillor D Smith reported: He advised Development Control is meeting fortnightly rather than monthly, due to the workload. West Suffolk are restarting the Licensing Panel. There are issues with flytipping – a concern that this is from people off the estate.

Councillor A Brown: Has asked if wildflowers can be sown on one of the roundabouts to brighten things up. Cllr D Roach advised that the County Council is looking at rewilding.

Councillor J Burns reported:

- **NW Haverhill:** Understand planning officer has gone back to developer following HTC planning comments as well as some questions they have. Not heard any more.
- **Great Wilsey Park:** Infrastructure application was recently approved. Awaiting formal housing applications to be submitted.
- **Manor Road School Site:** Work has now restarted with drainage going in and water connections having been done this last week.
- **Chapelwent Road Site:** Work progressing well. Had complaint from neighbours about boundary fence ownership which hopefully resolved now as developer was going to write to them all. Seems the original developers of Hales Barn Estate denied ownership whereas current developers proved who owned it.

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- **Police Matters:** The April crime stats was sent out at beginning of June. The June SNT newsletter has just been sent. A Police & Crime Panel (online) meeting is due to be held on 17th July. The police helped last Friday with management of the High Street closure for 45 mins or so until called away. I have started installing domestic abuse advice banners at their request at suitably approved places around town (Tesco railings so far).
- **SCC Highways:** Have been implementing the Safer Places town centre closures since last Thursday from 10am to 4pm (7 days a week) to assist with social distancing during Covid-19. Needless to say, abuse from drivers has been plentiful. On Thursday over 100 vehicles came through the large No Entry signs by Bull PH; many claiming they did not see them or saying they had read in the press it was only until 4pm. The police turned back 8 vehicles when they attended on Friday. One local pizza delivery company driver was very abusive to the Highways contractor demanding to be allowed to drive into the High Street.

Further signs have been added around the town since to emphasise the closures and will continue to be done as needs demand. However, as soon as enforcement is removed, drivers ignore the signs and park in both High Street and Queen Street despite the roads being open for deliveries to the shops and Blue Badge holders only. The Temporary Traffic Regulation Order now in place will be constantly reviewed during its current 3-week validity period and changes made as necessary based on government advice and local needs.

- **Greater Cambridge Partnership:** I attended a long Zoom meeting on 1st June in which plans for the CAM network from Addenbrookes to Four Wentways was discussed in depth plus a park and ride scheme to the west of the A11. I made some comments and asked questions about capacity in respect of Haverhill but did not receive any satisfactory answers. They seem to be blatantly unaware that Vision 2031 introduces another 5000+ adults needing to work somewhere, and their only answer was they were planning to put “one extra bus on during the rush hour”. There was a lot of criticism from many consultees (nearer to the site) and since on social media and elsewhere. It is not known whether the CCPA will object in some way.

Work is due to start installing a Toucan crossing near the Babraham Research Institute roundabout and other work on the A1307 which could mean delays for drivers heading into Cambridge.

- **Parking:** CPE has now been finally implemented and many tickets issued for illegal parking particularly in the town centre however disappointed that WSC Operations failed to ensure they were in town on the 1st day of the Safer Places initiative.

It is shame that the charging on the car parks was reintroduced by WSC without any consultation with its Councillors and announced to them at the same time it was announced to the press and on social media. Councillor Luccarini made valiant efforts for it either to be delayed for a couple of weeks to allow businesses to reopen, or to tone it down by perhaps offering to have 2 hours of free parking, but was totally rejected by officers without any valid reasons; not even a phone call was made. Personally, I have disappointed with their reaction and their disregard for local needs once again, the same as was done for markets, whilst other officers were working extremely hard to implement the government’s Safer Places initiative.

- **Markets:** These have been reopened but some regular traders have either not managed to return or have stated they will not be returning as they moved permanently to markets which did not close. I have been filming the markets for WSC including some statements from traders to ensure their wares are advertised and encourage residents to use.
- **Covid-19:** Has still been very quiet from my perspective. Without repeating what has been said earlier, Councillor Luccarini, HTC employees, and myself have spent many hours (every day) this past week putting out pavement stickers and Correx boards (most of which were ripped down later that night) and subsequently helping to manage the High Street road closures with all the usual abuse and ignorance of road signage; particularly from local residents and businesses.

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- **Other items:** No updates on Lidl footpath enforcement, Combined Authority, Corn Exchange, Atterton & Ellis, Sturmer Arches or Woodlands Hotel. I was unable to attend the One Haverhill meeting as was dealing with the first day of the road closures but hope to view the meeting on the Zoom recording.
- **Other work:** Set up new laptop Haverhill Volunteer Centre use. Continue to support Clerk and others working from home. Currently working on Armed Forces Day work including publicity video editing. Will be working to assist two residents in separate areas of town by install the VAS to gather data about alleged speeding they are concerned about.

Appendix 4 – Mayoral Report

Date	Event	Location	Comments
31 st May 2020	Socially distanced meet and greet.	Recreation Ground, Haverhill	Welcoming back Callum Slater and Matt Davies from their 24 hours walk (from Bedford) in aid of the Joshua Tarrant Trust and the Bedford King Arms Project.
21 st June 2020	Raising of Armed Forces Day Flag (early morning)	Market Square, Haverhill	Start of our annual commemoration and celebration of all things the Armed Forces do to protect and support us. A short film will be made available later in the day via social media including Armed Forces Cadets.