

# Haverhill Town Council

## Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

### FULL COUNCIL

Held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 7.00pm at Haverhill Arts Centre,  
High Street, Haverhill



**HAVERHILL**  
TOWN COUNCIL

**Present:** Mayor Councillor B Davidson  
Deputy Mayor Councillor M Marks  
Councillor A Brown  
Councillor J Burns  
Councillor Firman  
Councillor P Hanlon  
Councillor A Luccarini  
Councillor J Mason  
Councillor D Smith  
Councillor L Smith

**Apologies:** Councillor L Miller-Jones  
Councillor D Roach  
Councillor A Stinchcombe

**In Attendance:** Colin Poole (Town Clerk)

No members of the public were present.

### **Welcome:**

Mayor B Davidson welcomed everyone and advised the meeting was being recorded.

### **MINUTES**

**C22** **Apologies for Absence**  
**/106** The above apologies were noted.

**C22** **Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation**  
**/107** See C22/112c.

**C22** **Minutes of the Town Council meeting held 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022**  
**/108** It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that the minutes of the meeting held 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 as amended be adopted as a true record.

**RESOLVED**

**ACTION**

**C22 /109 The passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and activities of the council during the period of national mourning**

- a) It was noted that the council had efficiently and effectively implemented Operation London Bridge, in particular a successful proclamation event was held on Market Square. The Mayor thanked the Clerk, staff, volunteers and Councillors and all the extended team involved in ensuring Haverhill was not left wanting at this time.
- b) The meeting noted the meetings that were cancelled as a result of the period of national mourning.
- c) The meeting noted the Leisure & Community Committee would be rescheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022.

**C22 /110 Casual Vacancies**

The meeting noted that there were now three casual vacancies on the council, one each for North, South and West wards. It was proposed by Councillor D Smith, seconded by Councillor M Marks, that it was not practicable at this time to fill these vacancies by co-option.

**RESOLVED**

**C22 /111 To note progress of actions arising from the minutes not covered by this Agenda**

C22/097: The Clerk and Councillor D Smith reported back on the Clements Estate meeting that took place on September 5<sup>th</sup>, including Councillor R Everitt, Chair, Suffolk County Council and portfolio holder for families and communities at West Suffolk District Council, Mr John Feveryear from Havebury Housing, officers from West Suffolk Council and 30 members of the public.

Councillor D Smith asked about the action plan arising from the meeting. The Clerk advised he is awaiting notes of the meeting taken by West Suffolk, but are grateful to the time given by residents to highlight opportunities for improvement to the maintenance of the area.

Councillor M Marks asked that the Estate Walks be reinstated, as this was a useful exercise. The Clerk confirmed this was being discussed.

C22/097: The Clerk had circulated a report to Councillors and set up a survey for councillors to identify priorities for the council over the next six months. The Clerk thanked Councillor J Burns for compiling the list.

Members considered the outcome, in which recruitment of senior staff to boost capacity was the top priority of 7 out of 13 councillors. Councillors considered which priorities were quick wins and what others should be priorities in the short term. Some priorities were beyond the ability of the council to deliver.

The Clerk thanked Members for the guidance. In terms of 'senior management' the council needs capacity that the Clerk can delegate to, to

deliver projects. The Personnel Committee is working on this. We are also short of a committee administrator.

The meeting considered basing the priority on the modal scores rather than median scoring, to prioritise the things most councillors put higher in their priority list. The clerk agreed to put this in the minutes.

<b>Councillor Priorities by modal average</b>				
<b>Priority</b>	<b>top 3</b>	<b>top 5</b>	<b>top 7</b>	<b>bottom 3</b>
Improve Local Centres	8	3	1	1
Recruit senior staff to boost capacity	8	1	0	4
Better servicing of notice boards	3	6	2	1
Railway Walk Benches	3	5	3	2
Equipment storage	5	2	3	3
Hopper Bus	3	1	3	5
Gate to churchyard	1	3	1	8
New Arts Venue	3	0	5	4
Retender cleaning contract	1	2	0	7
Haverhill Area Forum	1	2	8	2

C22  
/112

**Urgent matters from the Leisure & Community Committee meeting due to have been held 13<sup>th</sup> September but cancelled for want of notice, due to the period of national mourning**

- a) The meeting considered the report by the Creative Director in respect of refurbishment of the dressing rooms and artiste's toilets at the Arts Centre, at a cost of £23,688. In addition, a budget of £6,855.55 for the replacement of the cinema server which was obsolete and if it failed we would lose our cinema programme. In addition, Councillors were asked to approve a budget of £6,105 to buy 120 banqueting chairs and 15 round tables to improve the customer experience for cabaret-style shows and events.

It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor J Mason, that the budgets be approved, to be taken from the Long-Term Maintenance Reserve, which currently stands at £154,547.

**RESOLVED**

- b) Grant Application: The Link. Alison and Russell Day answered Councillors' questions in relation to The Link, which will be based in the High Street and act as a community drop-in. It will open initially between 10am and 4pm Tuesday-Friday, but these hours will extend as more volunteers facilitate this. The meeting noted that the Volunteer Centre will be moving to this project and taking furniture along. This application is for the flooring. It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor M Marks, that £4,963 be granted to the Salvation Army for the setting up of the Link in the High Street.

**RESOLVED**

Mayor B Davidson declared a Non-Registerable Interest in item C22/112(c) as he volunteers for the Voluntary Network. It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that Mayor Davidson be given a dispensation to take part in the debate and vote.

**RESOLVED**

- c) Grant Application: The Voluntary Network. It was proposed by Councillor J Mason, seconded by Councillor A Brown, that £10,000 be granted to the Voluntary Network to support the provision of community transport in Haverhill, and that they are asked that they display a “supported by” logo on their vehicles serving the Haverhill area.

**RESOLVED**

**C22** **Reports from District/County Councillors on issues pertinent to**  
**/113** **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 – none

**C22** **Suspension of Standing Order 3X**

**/114** It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor J Mason, that Standing Order 3X be suspended, in order to allow the completion of business to be transacted beyond the two-hour maximum time.

**RESOLVED**

**C22** **Mayor’s Report:**

- /115** a) Mayor’s report – see appendix 4

**C22** **ONE Haverhill Partnership**

**/116** The Clerk advised the Board meeting planned for Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September had been cancelled. A discussion with West Suffolk is taking place on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss how ONE Haverhill can find meaningful direction, particularly how it can be supported to maintain its role in ensuring different strands of work pull in the same direction, for the benefit of Haverhill. It has no resource to create a new business plan, around which partners can rally.

**C22** **Adoption of Committee Reports**

- /117** a) Planning Working Party

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor D Smith that the minutes of the meeting held 25<sup>th</sup> July and 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

**C22 Financial Matters**

- /118 a) Authorisation of payments: It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the listed payments totalling £169,362.06 for August and £178,178.39 for September be authorised.

**RESOLVED**

**C22 To receive urgent correspondence**

- /119 None.

**C22 Dates of next Meeting:**

- /120 The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022, venue to be advised.

**C22 Exclusion of the press and public**

- /121 It was proposed by Councillor J Brown, seconded by Councillor D Smith that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted – HR Matters and finance, as publicity would undermine the Council's ability to have unfettered debate and result in less robust, well-considered or effective policies.

**RESOLVED**

**C22 Actions taken under delegated powers**

- /122 a) The Clerk advised that staff from the Splashpad Café would be redeployed to the Arts Centre to establish a coffee bar in the café area. This would not have the extensive menu that the previous Arts Centre café had and would be staffed by only one person most of the time.

**NOTED**

- b) The meeting noted that the Finance Administrator advert has been approved.

**NOTED**

**C22 Budget 2023/24**

- /123 The Clerk advised the meeting of the various financial challenges facing the council in the next financial year. Of particular concern is the impact of the cost-of-living crisis in terms of energy costs, impact on audience numbers for the Arts Centre, the upward pressure on wages and the need to attract and retain good staff. This could result in a significant increase in the gap between overall expenditure and earned income, which by law must be met.

Following a discussion, the council provided the following direction:

- Maximise value for money and seek cost containment wherever possible.
- Maintain services and events but look to make them more cost effective.
- Provide plenty of information to residents so they understand what services we provide locally.

- Seek alternative sources of funding to complement the precept (Clerk to provide list of funding successes).
- A precept rise is inevitable, so a robust presentation of how it is used to benefit people must be made.



**C22**    **Closure**

/14    The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21:50.

Signed .....  
**Chairman**

Date.....

- Appendix 1 – Police**
- Appendix 2 – County Councillors’ reports**
- Appendix 3 – District Councillors’ reports**
- Appendix 4 – Mayor’s Report**

**APPENDIX 1 – Police**

Inspector Ben Hollands becomes the local area inspector from the beginning of October.

**APPENDIX 2 – County Councillors’ reports**

**Councillor J Mason**

- a) Councillor Mason referred Members to the parish newsletter he previously circulated.
- b) A page has been created on the SCC website regarding the cost of living crisis, which may be useful to people facing hard times.
- c) Councillor Mason has had a number of dropped kerbs approved around Haverhill, to make it easier to access the town centre. The Clerk asked Councillor Mason to be aware of some of the installations of dropped kerbs had been implemented without any thought, meaning the dropped kerbs were unusable.

**Councillor D Roach**

Most people will be aware of the proposals for an anaerobic digester on the edge of town. I have flagged this to SCC as it will be processed under a waste application via the Development and Regulation committee. The officer dealing with it is Andy Rutter. These plants can be extremely smelly which you may have noticed if passing the one on the way to Baldock. WS planning is also aware of the application. It will most likely also need an environmental impact assessment.

We are now back at WS looking at the local plan. Haverhill is represented on the working group by John, David S, and in addition Pat will be joining as reserve member.

You may have noticed that templates have been replaced on the bypass lay-by which seem to have stopped the overnight lorry parking but we will keep an eye on it.

SCC adoption panel has been busy and i continue to sit on this group.

I attended the Transport East conference last week. This body now has govt. funding for 3 years to look at all aspects of transport for Suffolk Norfolk and Essex. Whilst there was nothing specific for Haverhill we will be able to feed into the group via West Suffolk.

**APPENDIX 3 – District Councillors’ reports**

**Councillor A Brown**

Councillor Brown referred the meeting to recently circulated ambulance response times. He reminded the meeting that the backdrop to these figures was the withdrawal of the rapid response vehicle. Councillor Brown described the figures as ‘shocking’, giving the following examples:

Category	Response time <b>before</b> withdrawal of tethered RRV (Average mins)		Response time <b>after</b> withdrawal of tethered RRV (Average mins)	
	Actual	Target	Actual	Target
C1 (life threatening)	09.23	07.00	14.14	7.00
C1 (average for 90%)	18.48	15.00	27.34	15.00
C2 (average for 90% emergency blue light)			67.00	40.00

Councillor Brown has tried to get response on these figures from Matt Hancock MP and WSDC CEO without success. Councillor Brown proposed, seconded by Councillor D Smith that the council write to the EEAST Chief Operating Officer, Marcus Bailey about these figures.

## **RESOLVED**

Councillor Marks advised that the last public meeting was held in camera, avoiding scrutiny, which she is going to take to the WSDC Scrutiny Committee. People are having to be taken into hospital because they are too sick to be left alone at home and have no support. This ties up ambulances queuing at hospital, who cannot admit new patients because the people brought in without support for them at home cannot be discharged for the same reason. The whole system is broken and needs fixing.

Councillor Marks highlighted a Community Enterprise Project which may free up both ambulances and beds. This would be of interest to Councillors to hear about this.

### **Councillor D Smith**

The Anaerobic digester is a concern and we should support Withersfield Parish Council in their objections. The Mayor advised the developer, Acorn, will be making a presentation to the council as soon as possible.

Dentaid is coming to town on 20<sup>th</sup> October. The Town Council are supporting with the provision of gazebos. Councillor M Marks advised she has met with a dentist today in respect of scrutiny on dental contracts, which is the reason we do not have so many NHS dentists any more. She advised the new contract was not sufficiently an improvement to make any difference.

### **Councillor M Marks**

Ms Nan Endersby is a huge enthusiast for promoting bees, particularly in respect of grass cutting. WSDC is going to try and allocate some spaces not to cut, in order to encourage bees. Councillor J Mason referred to the use of weed control chemicals and the impact on bee populations.

### **Councillor J Burns**

- **Weedkilling** hasn't been done much locally anyway, the new system in WSDC for maintaining public space seems to be failing.
- **Local bus service:** The new 131 service route is not confirmed but may not service the Clements or Kedington. There is a need to find out more. Councillor D Smith described the bus service as being in managed decline. An hourly service to Cambridge could end up with overcrowded buses. The Clerk will provide the contact details of Simon Barnett, Integrated transport and Enhanced Partnership Manager at Passenger Transport at SCC, to Councillor J Mason to take up in his capacity as County Councillor.
- **NW Haverhill:** Work continues with further phase applications going through the planning process and two having been approved since the last report (infrastructure and phase 6).
- **Great Wilsey Park:** Occupations of properties in phase 8 (off Chalkstone Way) are not taking place with continued construction on this phase as well as phases 1 & 2 off the A143. The northern footpath from New Croft to the roundabout is now complete and looking good. Planning work on the s278 parts (e.g., traffic lights at end of Chalkstone Way) is ongoing. This is particularly relevant as the school transport plan for Samuel Ward is suggesting the vast majority of pupils are driven to the school although the data is very patchy and perhaps unreliable.
- **Railway walk resurface:** This was completed both at the Manor Road and Howe Road ends with good feedback from users.
- **Castle Hill Site:** Work continues apace with sales ongoing.



- **Atterton & Ellis site:** Still no further updates.
- **Police Matters:** The June crime stats were distributed on 4<sup>th</sup> August however the July stats are not yet available from the police.uk database. The last 'Constables County' was issued in July.

Tim Passmore attended the Chalkstone Fun Day on 10<sup>th</sup> August with local policing officers & staff with some good feedback about local issues.

I attended a very informative visit to the control room at Police HQ in Martlesham. It is obvious it needs a complete revamp in terms of space and facilities. Interesting they run with an average of 16 staff/officers on duty at any one time compared to Norfolk (around 40) but manage very similar call rates which have been increasing across the country quite significantly over last 12 months.

I attended (online) the Accountability & Performance Panel meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September. The next Police & Crime Panel is being held on 7<sup>th</sup> October in Ipswich.

Work is still ongoing to appoint a new Chief Constable with DCC Rachel Kearton acting as Temporary Chief Constable.

Locally there has been a spate of quite obnoxious graffiti iwo the town centre including some on the morning of the King's proclamation. There appears to be some sort of communication disconnect between WSC and the police as to how these are managed which I am trying to resolve.

- **SCC Highways:** Still no news on restoring the missing signs iwo the High Street. That is now 11 months since the roads were reopened. Yet again I have chased for updates. I somewhat despair.
- **Combined Authority:** No further news.
- **Greater Cambridge Partnership:** No further news.
- **Parking:** I am still not impressed with the management of CPE and have made my views very much made clear to WSC officers and the Cabinet Member. Issuing just 7 tickets for Queen Street in a year compared to 450 in Lower Downs Slade car park shows where the emphasis is being taken. I had cause to report vast numbers of vehicles illegal parking on the grass verges outside the New Croft yet again.
- **Markets:** The West Suffolk markets review was approved, and work is now ongoing to implement the recommendations that the group, which I chaired, produced. The first obvious one is the monthly makers market is now integrated into the normal market in the High Street which has had some good feedback from both sides as well as the public. The next makers market is pm Sat 1<sup>st</sup> October which a currently scheduled 25 stalls added to the usual market traders.
- **Sturmer Arches:** Still no news from WSC. I am researching via the online catalogue what documents I need to order from the National Records archive in Kew and try to organise a trip down there. I'm also speaking to the Suffolk Record Office to see if they can confirm where the 1972-1974 HUDC documents are hiding themselves.
- **Vixen PH (Millfields Way):** No further updates. WSC planners tell me they keep asking the owner what is going on but to no avail. I think they regret stating the planning permission was still extant when I wanted it time expired just because a wall had been knocked down.
- **Strasbourg Square:** Still awaiting plans by WSC for renovation. They keep stating they are working on it but considering this is now 12 months since they told me it would be done "in the spring" you can see how frustrating it is. Businesses are complaining that their customers are having difficulty parking because many of the spaces are now using it as their own private car park. I have reported this to WSC to see what can be done in the short term.

- **Market Square:** Still nothing been done on this regarding the dips. I suspect it may well be getting worse. The top part was finally cleaned after constant requests but there is still one dirty area left. The outside edges are owned by SCC but the interior is WSC. The vegetation at the top end is now mainly weeds.
- **Remembrance 2022:** Planning for this continues. The parade will start at 2.20pm Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November from the “Cleales” car park behind the High Street with a planned start at the cemetery around 3pm. As previously advised the parade will be led by the BSE Sea Cadets with a salute on the Market Square after the service. A RBL led event will take place on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 11am outside the front of St Mary’s Church in the High Street.
- **Other work:**
  - Continue to assist with IT and CCTV systems for Kiosk, Zone and Arts Centre whilst dealing with staff requests. Added functionality to Zone till system to allow for management of parties and items consumed.
  - Have been monitoring use of the Splash Pad water consumption on a weekly basis as well as Kiosk takings. I have also spent several early mornings with the Community Warden jet washing the surface but moss in the air and things such as suntan oil, shoes and clothing adds to the grime. We are not alone as other local pads have similar problems. A local experienced contractor has looked at the pad and will be providing a quote to clean the surface using a hot washer jet system prior to the site being formally closed for the winter.
  - Facilitating broadcast of TC council meetings at the Arts Centre.
  - Filming of shows at request of artistes at the Arts Centre.
  - Various WSC meetings continue.
  - Spent 7 days (and many hours) with others working on the very successful Haverhill in the Park event.
  - Worked with others on removing bunting in the High Street following sad death of HM Queen, flag raising/half mast and the Proclamation event.
  - Usual ton of emails and questions answered as well as many online and occasional physical meetings.

## **APPENDIX 4 – Mayor’s Report**

### **Mayor Bruce Davidson**

11<sup>th</sup> July 2022 – 17<sup>th</sup> September 2022

39 engagements over a 2 month longer period – see attachment. Also managed to still sneak in a 4-day Holiday!

3 main events worthy of a mention have to be:-

- 1 East Town Park, Chalkstone & Clements Fun Days
- 2 Haverhill in the Park
- 3 French Visitors Pont St Esprit - Haverhill Twin Towing Association

After the euphoria of these events – we were all brought down to earth with a bang with the sad passing of our beloved Queen Elizabeth II on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Haverhill Town Council did us proud in the roll out of London Bridge and the staging of the Haverhill Proclamation of the Accession of King Charles III, at of course very short notice.

Indeed it has been an absolute pleasure to work alongside the staff of Haverhill Town Council and the volunteers who get involved, since I took office on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue &amp; Event</b>	<b>Attending</b>
1	12/07/2022	Terrific Tuesdays	Mayor & Consort
2	14/07/2022	Westfield Primary Academy – 10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Mayor & Consort
3	17/07/2022	Stowmarket Civic Service	Mayor
4	19/07/2022	Haverhill Twin Town Ass – Summer Lunch (Hundon)	Mayor
5	21/07/2022	Haverhill Job & Skills Fair	Mayor
6	22/07/2022	West Suffolk Council - Homefield Road	Mayor
7	24/07/2022	Felixstowe Civic Service	Deputy Mayor
8	27/07/2022	Haverhill Hearing Club	Mayor
9	27/07/2022	BBC Radio Suffolk – interview with the Mayor	Mayor
10	31/07/2022	Ipswich Charity Night	Deputy Mayor
11	03/08/2022	Picnic in the Park (East Town Park)	Mayor
12	05/08/2022	Haverhill Men's Social Group	Mayor
13	05/08/2022	Zone 3 <sup>rd</sup> Anniversary	Mayor
14	07/08/2022	Cleves Place Care Home	Mayor
15	10/08/2022	Chalkstone Fun Day	Mayor
16	11/08/2022	Jim Morgan Funeral	Mayor & Deputy
17	12/08/2022	Town Pastors	Mayor
18	15/08/2022	West Suffolk Homefield Road	Mayor
19	17/08/2022	Clements Fun Day	Mayor
20	19/08/2022	HTTA – French Visitors welcome & guided tour of Haverhill	Mayor
21	19/08/2022	GENXRADIO – interview about Haverhill in the Park	Mayor
22	19/08/2022	HTTA – French Visitors - hog roast	Mayor
23	20/08/2022	Haverhill in the Park	Mayor
24	24/08/2022	HTTA – French Visitors - farewell dinner	Mayor
25	06/09/2022	GIDEON – Bible Presentation	Mayor
26	07/09/2022	Haverhill Library	Mayor
27	07/09/2022	Haverhill ATC – AGM	Mayor
28	09/09/2022	Signing Book of Condolence & Wreath Laying	Mayor
29	11/09/2022	Suffolk Proclamation of Accession of King Charles III – Ipswich	Mayor & Consort
30	11/09/2022	Local Proclamation of Accession of King Charles III – Haverhill	Mayor & Consort
31	13/09/2022	Clements School	Mayor
32	13/09/2022	Cleves Place – Condolence Book	Mayor
33	14/09/2022	Meadows – Condolence Book	Mayor
34	14/09/2022	Eastcotts – Condolence Book	Mayor
35	14/09/2022	Swallows – Condolence Book	Mayor & Consort
36	14/09/2022	Acorn – Anaerobic Digestion Plant Exhibition – Withersfield	Mayor & Consort
37	15/09/2022	Family History - Ridgewell Museum	Mayor & Consort
38	17/09/2022	County Service of Commemoration & Thanksgiving – Bury	Mayor & Consort
39	17/09/2022	Civic Service of Commemoration & Thanksgiving - Haverhill	Mayor & Consort