

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

FULL COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday 31st October 2023 at 7.00pm at Haverhill Arts Centre,
High Street, Haverhill



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

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

Apologies: Councillor Q Cox
Councillor M Martin
Councillor L Miller-Jones
Councillor D Page

In Attendance: Councillor D Roach (West Suffolk Council)
Colin Poole, Town Clerk
Jane Lomas, Council Administrator

1 member of the public was present.

Welcome:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the meeting was being recorded.

MINUTES

C23 **Apologies for Absence**
/125 The above apologies were noted.

C23 **Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation**
/126 None.

ACTION

C23 /127 **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held Monday 25th September 2023 and Tuesday, 10th October 2023**

It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon, that the minutes of the meeting held 25th September 2023 be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the minutes of the meeting held 10th October 2023 be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

C23 /128 **To note progress of actions arising from the minutes not covered by this Agenda**

C23/115c)ii. Clerkin site – The Town Clerk has emailed Colin Wright at WSC and is awaiting his response.

C23/115c)iii. Grass cutting – Cllr Brown reported that progress is being made in the implementation of improvement.

Corn Exchange – Auction House has been informed that HTC will not be bidding.

Town Clerk

C23 /129 **Polling Stations and Districts Review**

Councillors provided the following feedback:

- Haverhill East: The Croft - people reportedly were deterred from voting because they believe they will be charged for parking. This is being looked into.
- 8th May Cllr Burns sent an email to Ben Smith re New Croft. On election day there was a football match from 7pm so voters could not get in to park. JB will forward his email to Councillors.
- Persimmon and Redrow Estates: the nearest polling station to Persimmon is the Cangle school which isn't suitable for increased numbers of traffic. Possibly a new polling station is required for this area.
- Haverhill West: The Rugby Club is close to a school, and it is very congested, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day. Using it for an additional polling district would exacerbate this. There is no pavement and added traffic could present a danger. The ATC building on Withersfield Road might be a better alternative polling station.
- Chalkstone Community Centre: the room allocated was too small to accommodate wheelchair users.
- New Cangle School: people drove into the car park where teachers were parked and it was chaotic.
- Park Road: a long walk to the voting room.
- Not a good idea to have two polling stations in the same room.
- The Arts Centre studio was suggested as a possible polling station.
- St Felix church lobby was too small.

The Clerk will feed this back to the Elections Manager

CllrJ Burns

C23 /130 **Consultations**

a) Climate Change Bill: It was agreed that the Town Council will not comment collectively.

b) Vaping: Councillors had a robust discussion around the effects of legislation concern vaping. It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor J Mason that HTC comments on the consultation supporting the banning of disposable vapes.

Councillors voted 5 in favour and 6 against.

LOST

**C23
/131**

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

a) Police Report

Representatives attending the police liaison meeting scheduled for 2pm Tuesday 7th November: Cllr Burns, Cllr Hanlon. It was agreed that a later time would be easier for Councillors to attend. The Town Clerk will request a start time of 4pm or later.

Town Clerk

b) County Councillors – see Appendix 1

Councillor J Mason: see report attached (Appendix 1).

Suffolk Libraries Consultation – it would be useful if Councillors would review and circulate the consultation widely.

Cllr D Roach reported:

- He is meeting with Highways and touring the town, highlighting issues. He asked that any known problems be reported to him so that he can discuss with Highways. Cllr Burns asked if Cllr Roach could speak to Highways about providing an app for the public to report issues.
- The anaerobic digester is expected to be debated by the County Committee in February.
- SCC is keen for the public to report all recent storm and flooding damage so that a complete picture is gained.

c) District Councillors – see Appendix 2

Councillor J Burns: see report attached (Appendix 2)

d) Town Councillors

- i. Cllr L Smith reported that she recently attended a public forum meeting about the biodigester. It was well attended and there were 690 objections.
- ii. Cllr Firman reported that the number of market stallholders has been increasing. An incentive of free rent for twelve weeks over Christmas has been offered. Cllr Burns suggested that existing traders might be offered a rent reduction of 50% for introducing new traders.
- iii. Cllr Burns informed the meeting that there is a Teams meeting on 7th November at 6pm with the Chief Constable and PCC regarding their new policing model. Registration to attend is via the PCC website.
- iv. Cllr D Smith reported he recently attended a new Police & Crime committee meeting which has had a positive start.
- v. Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan – implementation was stopped two years ago. Following a meeting in March this year, The Chief Executive of WSC will be visiting towns to understand needs.

e) Public Forum

There is a significant amount of subsidence at the roundabout from the Sturmer direction, at the turning for Homefield Road. This issue has been ongoing for a year. Cllr Roach will investigate.

C23/132 **Grant Applications over £2,000**

Positive Futures £4,400 to continue free weekly sports sessions for youth at Haverhill Leisure Centre: This was debated by Councillors and there was concern that awarding the full amount would use a significant portion of the remaining budget. It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor A Luccarini, that Catch 22, Suffolk Positive Futures be awarded a grant of £2,000 and be encouraged to apply to District Councillors for the outstanding amount.

RESOLVED

C23/133 **Mayor's Report:**

Mayor's report – see appendix 3.

C23/134 **ONE Haverhill Partnership**

Nothing to report.

C23/135 **Adoption of Committee Reports**

a) Planning Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor R André that the minutes of the meeting held 3rd October 2023 and 16th October 2023 be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

b) Leisure & Community Committee:

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor D Smith that the minutes of the meeting held 12th September 2023 be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

c) Energy & Sustainability Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor A Luccarini, seconded by Councillor J Burns, that the minutes of the meeting held 18th September 2023 be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

C23/136 **Financial Matters**

a) Authorisation of payments:

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor A Luccarini, that the listed payments totalling £101,004.64 be authorised.

RESOLVED

b) External Auditor Report:

It was proposed by Councillor A Luccarini, seconded by Councillor L Smith, to receive the External Auditor Report for the financial year 2022/23 and note publication of conclusion of audit.

RESOLVED

c) Provisional bookings for Haverhill in the Park 2024:

It was proposed by Councillor M Marks, seconded by Councillor A Luccarini, to approve the sum of £5,000 to underwrite the provisional booking of bands for Haverhill in the Park 2024.

RESOLVED

d) Science Festival 2024:

The Town Clerk reported that it is anticipated that this event will be fully funded through external funding. It was proposed by Councillor J Mason, seconded by Councillor A Brown, to approve the sum of £10,000 to underwrite the Haverhill Science Festival 2024 to enable speakers and activities to be provisionally booked, funding applications to be written and sponsorships secured.

RESOLVED

C23 **UKSPF Funding**

/137

WSC has agreed to HTC's proposal for a second digital display in Market Square under the Levelling Up programme for capital spend to support work in the High Steet. However, it is highly unlikely that the work would be completed by the deadline of 31st March 2024. The Town Clerk asked if there were any other proposals that could be delivered within the specified timeframe and it was agreed that The Town Clerk will speak with WSC in the first instance, to ascertain if there is a work-around solution to the deadline.

Town Clerk

C23 **Actions taken under delegated powers**

/138

None.

C23 **To receive urgent correspondence**

/139

The Town Clerk was copied into correspondence between Wetherspoons and WSC Licensing regarding the placing of tables, chairs and planters at the top end of Market Square. The Town Clerk responded on behalf of HTC highlighting the civic and community use of this space.

NOTED

C23 **Dates of meetings 2024**

/140

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor L Smith that approval of the calendar of meetings for 2024 be added as an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting, along with a review of which meetings are held online and which are held in-person.

RESOLVED

Town Clerk

C23 **Date of next Meeting:**

/141

Tuesday, 28 November 2023 **commencing at 7:30pm**

C23 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

/142

To resolve 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 – future planning, as publicity would

undermine the Council's ability to have unfettered debate and result in less robust, well-considered or effective policies.

Proposed by Councillor A Luccarini, seconded by Councillor A Brown.

RESOLVED

The public part of the meeting closed at 8:30pm.

C23 Budget 2024/25

/143 This was a forum for Councillors to put forward and discuss ideas for the budget 2024/25:

Costs – Continue to seek to make prudent cost savings where possible. It was noted that the council favoured local suppliers but they were often not the least-expensive choice. The council wants to maintain good relations with suppliers whilst ensuring they are offering good value.

Precept – Last year saw an 18% increase. Whilst it may not be realistic to freeze council tax the focus should be on keeping the precept rise as low as is possible.

Energy bills – Energy bills are coming down but to put that in context they are currently running at around £12,000/month. HTC has signed new deals at lower costs. If energy prices go down, this will make a big difference to the budget.

CCTV – Costs to upgrade should be investigated.

Events – It was agreed that although the Town Council holds popular events for residents of Haverhill perhaps more events next year could be reimagined to reduce costs:

The Community Events Working Party should review all events and be prepared to answer the questions:

- Do we have it again?
- Could it be reworked to be less expensive?
- How can we attract higher audience numbers?

The clerk thanked the meeting for their guidance.

C23 Closure

/144 The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:04pm.

Signed

Chairman

Date.....

Appendix 1 – County Councillors' reports

Appendix 2 – District Councillors' reports

Appendix 3 – Mayor's Report

APPENDIX 1 – District Councillor’s report

Councillor Joe Mason

Suffolk County Council met on the 19th October. I would like to remind members that I am one of 3 County Councillors and that you can also contact Councillors Roach & Sowa for information relating to the County Council and or their divisions. Please note that any comments or opinions are entirely my own and not of either Cllr Roach or Cllr Sowa.

This month I have added at the end of the report an October Focus on Highways and Flooding from Cllr Paul West mostly in response to areas I think would be of interest to members regarding e.g. Weeds Treatments and surfacing. In addition to this I have added an addendum separate to this report in the email regarding a Councillor Update regarding Storm Babet.

Local issues I am engaged with, and Topics covered in this report.

1. Haverhill's New Recycling Centre
2. Highways Update
3. Highways Locality Funding
4. Persimmon Estate & Relief Road
5. S106 – Improvement to Ann Suckling Road and Wratting Road
6. Camps Road Repairs
7. Lorry Lay-by on A1017
8. Anaerobic Biodigester
9. Glebe Biodiversity Project
10. WSC Council News
11. Suffolk County Council News
12. OCTOBER FOCUS - Highways and Flooding

1. Haverhill’s New Recycling Centre

No update again this month, work continues, site visit delayed till April next year – slow progress made due to fire. Estimated September 2024 opening which is somewhat disappointing.

2. Highways Update

Milestone have now taken over from Keir and are catching up on a backlog of jobs that have built up during the transition. I am awaiting timescales on all current projects.

Missing signs, town centre, Ehringhausen Way Delivery Drop off Zone and any other TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) issues: Have sent reminder emails and awaiting a response regarding timescales.

Bus Stop, Greenfields Way. As reported last month this has been Green lighted, no timescale yet communicated. Have emailed to chase and awaiting a response.

3. Highways Locality Funding

- Slow Signs approved for Howe Road. All processed and awaiting installation date.
- Dropped Kerb on Clements Lane. All processed and awaiting installation date.

4. Persimmon Estate & Relief Road

- Work continues. I had a tour across the site with West Suffolk Planner, Stuart McAdam from Persimmon, and site staff discussing design and snagging issues. I raised concerns regarding completion and hitting the end of Spring 2024 target deadline. This is when they told me of significant difficulty with contract arrangements with CADENT who had increased their charge for diverting the gas mains from approx. £1,3 Million to £5.5 Million.

Whilst sympathetic to the vast increase in cost I emphasised the importance of a timely completion and asked for a press release. Please see attached letter I received. The key takeaway is that Persimmon have decided to absorb the additional costs. I still believe there will be delays as we are now experiencing worse weather, but I am confident this road will be completed next year though it may well be the end of Summer rather than the end of Spring as promised by Persimmon last year. Needless to say I will be applying pressure for an earlier completion

- Again, I am disappointed to report my profound concern regarding the work Persimmon have been doing on the play park and general landscaping. I have made clear my frustrations at the lack of delivery for residents. Children have nowhere to play. This is unacceptable and I am chasing multiple times each week. Persimmon seem to be struggling with their 3rd Party contractors who are not fulfilling agreements. I am not particularly sympathetic to this and have insisted on facilities being completed and the amenity provided for residents as soon as possible.

5. S106 – Improvement to Ann Suckling Road and Wratting Road

Awaiting an Update

6. Camps Road Repairs

Very frustrated that the rollercoaster section on Camps Road has still not been fixed. Anglian Water are required to do this work and I have been chasing the Network Assurance team to see if this can be done as a matter of urgency. Works will likely cause a road closure. Keen to get a date so that it doesn't clash with Fireworks on 2nd December.

7. Lorry lay-by on A1017 nr Aragon Road

Awaiting Timescales for closure

8. Acorn Anaerobic Biodigester.

Attended Muck Off Acorn Presentation. The meeting was well represented by residents and had good representation from Council members to listen to concerns raised. I submitted my objections on the Portal and we now wait till February (possibly 1st) for SCC to make a decision.

9. The Glebe Biodiversity Planting Project

I continue to be involved in a consultation with residents on the Glebe regarding a biodiversity project to help resolve antisocial behaviour. West Suffolk officer Jon Eaton is carrying this out and is liaising with highways.

10. West Suffolk Council

West Suffolk Council made the decision to Cancel the Western Way Project.

11. Suffolk County Council

I attended Scrutiny in October that examined the very costly and complicated measures undertaken by County to protect its IT Systems. Full Council was on the 19th October, with only one motion submitted.

Motions to Council

Motion 1 – Proposed by Councillor Richard Rout and seconded by Councillor Andrew Reid. **PASSED** '1. Suffolk County Council recognises and notes the huge contribution made by our County's farmers, growers and wider food and drink industry to the local economy, environment and rural communities.

2. Suffolk County Council commits to further enhancing our partnerships alongside our arable, livestock, and dairy farmers to enhance our magnificent countryside.
3. Suffolk County Council commits to supporting our local farmers, growers and food and drink sector by, where possible, ensuring that all food and drinks provided at council organised events is sourced from local suppliers; to always include meat and dairy, alongside plant-based produce.
4. As part of tackling the environmental priorities for Suffolk County Council; The Council will consider ways to encourage residents, where possible, to shop locally, taking advantage of home-grown, affordable and nutritious produce, including meat, dairy and plant-based options, thus reducing food miles to our tables and boosting the local economy.'

More than 200 properties flooded by Storm Babet

True number could be much higher as councils urge people to report all flooded premises and government funding available to those who report flooding.

Published: 26 Oct 2023

Interim figures show more than 200 properties in Suffolk were flooded by Storm Babet.

The number of flooded premises, including businesses and homes, is expected to be higher as Suffolk councils and emergency planners work together to compile a full list.

Councillor Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, said:

It is absolutely key that all residents who suffered flood damage report the incident. I understand that the pressures of finding somewhere to live or work, or stripping out damaged belongings may have dominated people's lives since Friday, but I would urge them to take the time to fill in a flood report online. We know that this financial support is urgently needed, and we will do everything in our power to get it out to home and business owners as soon as possible.

On Wednesday, Communities Secretary Michael Gove and Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey announced a number of financial measures to support those who have experienced exceptional localised flooding.

Under the measures announced:

- Flooded households in affected areas can apply for up to £500 to give cash quickly to help with immediate costs.
- Households and businesses significantly affected by recent flooding will be eligible for 100% council tax and business rates relief for at least three months.
- Small-to-medium-sized businesses in affected areas will be eligible for up to £2,500 from the Business Recovery Grant to help them return quickly to business as usual.
- Eligible flood-hit property owners will be able to apply for up to £5,000 to help make their homes and businesses more resilient to future flooding via the Property Flood Resilience Repair Grant Scheme.

The support will be made available through a scheme known as the Flood Recovery Framework, which is used in exceptional circumstances to support councils and communities following severe flooding.

The full details of the scheme are yet to be announced by the Government, including where residents can apply and who is eligible. Suffolk County Council will share updates once received. To report a flood visit the report a flood in Suffolk page.

Alternatively, you can call the customer service number on 0345 606 6171.

Council seeks your views for next year's budget

Suffolk County Council is keen to hear from Suffolk residents, businesses and local communities, as it decides how it will spend money next year.

An online consultation has been launched, and a number of focus groups will be held, to explain the council's current financial situation, along with the chance for Suffolk residents and businesses to have a say on Council Tax proposals.

“To hear from Suffolk residents about the services they use, and their thoughts on Council Tax for next year, will be very helpful as we plan ahead” Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council’s deputy leader and cabinet member for finance and environment.

The council’s budget setting process will take into account the responses to the consultation, advice from council officers, elected members from political groups, businesses and partners in health and other public service organisations across Suffolk.

Results of the consultation will be included in the report considered by the council when agreeing the budget in February 2024.

Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council’s deputy leader and cabinet member for finance and environment, said: “When we ran this survey last year, we had a fantastic response from around 2,700 Suffolk residents and businesses. I would welcome even more people completing this year’s short survey, to contribute to our decision-making.

“Last year it gave us excellent insight into the public’s priorities, with social care services for adults and children being high on that list. This aligned with the council’s thinking and we invested an additional £50m in these areas for this current year.” The council’s budget consultation helps to explain the council’s finances, what it has been doing to save money, and how it can generate more money to spend on public services.

The two main ways in which the council can increase the budget, are an increase in the money it receives from government, and/or through Council Tax.

There are three key questions, the first is on which services people have recently used, the second asks for thoughts on seeking a greater contribution to Council Tax to help fund public services, and the third on which service area you would like to see more money spent.

Cllr Rout continues “For years this administration has managed our finances well, and we have built up appropriate reserves to be able to see us through difficult times. We’re facing those times now, but can only spend our reserves once, meaning our budget for next year will bring new challenges.

“We continue to lobby government, to demonstrate the challenges we are facing, despite our success making savings each year. Many other councils are doing the same, Suffolk is not alone in this.

“To hear from Suffolk residents about the services they use, and their thoughts on Council Tax for next year, will be very helpful as we plan ahead.”

The online consultation opens on 25 October and closes on 4 December 2023, and can be found at www.suffolk.gov.uk/budget. Focus groups are also being organised with local community groups and members of the public, details of which will be shared on the council’s website and social media channels.

OCTOBER FOCUS - Highways and Flooding

Portfolio Holder for Operational Highways and Flooding,- Cabinet Member Report to County Council – Paul West **1. Preparations for winter service**

The 1 October marks the start of the winter season and preparations for this with our new contractor Milestone are well underway. The county currently has salt stocked within the operational depots and further salt is being delivered across our depots to achieve the required resilience levels. The winter fleet is currently undergoing pre-season checks and servicing and will be making their way to Suffolk from their summer home in Ripon, North Yorkshire imminently.

Operative refresher training will be undertaken over the next few weeks and as we draw nearer to the start of the season some gritting vehicles may be spotted out on the network as drivers undertake route familiarisation and further training.

2. Review of Surface Dressing Programme for 2023

The surface dressing season runs between April and August when the weather is at its optimum. This year’s programme was a more condensed programme that commenced on 18 May, with the main bulk of the programme concluding on 16 June. Crews then returned on 17 July to complete the remaining sites on the programme. These sites required smaller plant due to the size of some of the roads. During this return visit, crews also completed remedial works from the previous season and any other outstanding surface dressing and associated works. 89 of the total 95 sites

were completed (94% of the programme) covering approximately 81 miles of road resurfacing over an area of approximately 23,567m².

Some sites were not able to be completed for a variety of reasons including development works, network availability and site constraints requiring more in-depth planning.

132 Sites have been commissioned for the 24/25 surface dressing programme some requiring validation before the programme can be finalised and confirmed.

3. Grass Cutting Programme

The cyclical grass cutting programme this year has been split into two component parts; urban cutting and rural cutting. Rural cutting is our traditional rural safety cutting programme that is undertaken across the entire county, this is normally undertaken using a tractor mounted flail on roads greater than 30mph.

Our rural cutting programme (2 cuts on the A and B road network and one cut on the C and U class network) is fully complete. The autumn cutting sites including legally designated Roadside Nature Reserves and informal verges managed for wildlife is under way and will be complete before the end of September.

A small number of Roadside Nature Reserves require cutting in December and February. Milestone, the incoming contractor, is aware of those and is programming cutting according to the Ecologist's recommendations.

Urban cutting within the Ipswich area was previously done under a service level agreement by Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) tied into their overall amenity cutting programme. As part of an IBC savings plan the amenity cutting has been dropped and they are not able to deliver Highways grass cuts independent of a larger programme.

Suffolk Highways commissioned Vertas to undertake the safety cuts which Suffolk Highways require. The first cut in late spring was a challenge in some areas. Finalising the new contract terms left us with a slightly late start, growing conditions had been good, so the grass was very long which slowed the cutting and Vertas had to learn the geography and plant/equipment required for Ipswich verges. They worked hard to get back on programme and progress on the second cut has much improved. To ensure Ipswich verges are left in the best possible state ready for the first cut next spring, we have added a third cut towards the end of the growing season.

Our current grass cutting programmes are available on our website and updated weekly. You can view these, here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads-pavements-and-verges/trees-grass-and-weeds/grass-cutting>

4. Weed Treatment Programme

The 2023 weed treatment programme commenced during the first week of April, with two countywide treatments planned this year. This year acetic acid based herbicides were used for the cyclic weed treatment.

This is the first year our cyclic treatment has been undertaken without the use of Glyphosate. A marked increase in the number of weeds, especially woody, tough growth has been noted in all areas.

All three contractors providing the service have reported challenges using acetic acid and Suffolk Highways will be reviewing the outcome of this change in approach on conclusion of the current programme which will conclude in October.

5. Drainage and Flooding Update

So far, this financial year, 52 drainage issues from the priority list have been resolved.

36 were attended and rectified by the Combi Vehicles and Civils Crews, this was funded from the additional drainage investment approved by Cabinet in December 2021.

16 were delivered from other planned works programmes or collaborations, primarily the major planned drainage works programme.

6. Public Rights of Way and Green Access Update

New Partnership Between Green Access and Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Teams

A new partnership between the Council's Green Access and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) teams and PHOEBE (Promotion of Health, Opportunity, Equality, Benevolence and Empowerment), an Ipswich based charity offering specialist advice and counselling services to black and ethnic minority women and children, launched at Snape Maltings on Tuesday 29 August.

The Green Access team worked with PHOEBE last year to identify specific cultural barriers to countryside access. The Green Access and AONB teams are enabling PHOEBE members to access the countryside for its health and well-being benefits, part of wider work by the AONBs and Green Access team to address inequalities in countryside access. The partnership with PHOEBE will help inform future interventions that will be offered to other community groups facing similar barriers to visiting the countryside. PHOEBE embraced this partnership with great enthusiasm and passion, creating a group called 'Ambling African Women', setting up a Twitter account <https://twitter.com/AmblingAfricans>, creating a group logo with t-shirts, and developing a programme of countryside visits throughout this summer. The Green Access team and AONB are supporting PHOEBE with funding, transport, guided walks, and training.

The launch was an inspirational event with participants including 30-40 women from the PHOEBE centre expressing their enthusiasm for the partnership. Officers said how humbling it was to hear some of the women's, including refugee's stories and find out more about their lives, motivation and talents.

This partnership is in part a culmination of 'Discovering Suffolk', one of the Council's 2020 Fund projects. Discovering Suffolk has delivered a new Suffolk walking app, is installing QR codes to raise awareness of countryside access and is now focused on working with less advantaged community groups. This current workstream has been developed with input from Public Health, research by the University of East Anglia's School of Economics, and partnership working with the AONB's Landscapes for All Officer.

The partnership is considering setting up similar groups to Ipswich in Bury and **Haverhill**, and the RSPB have offered a free day at Minsmere

Public Rights of Way Customer Reports

The Public Rights of Way service continues to receive a high number of customer reports, currently on a par with the levels in 2020 and 2021 during the periods of lockdown. A higher level of grass cutting reports have been received over the summer months due to the enhanced growing conditions compared to 2022. More than 95% of those reports are currently being responded to within the published service standard of 20 days.

7. Flood and Water Update (This report was written pre storm Babet See Storm Babet Addendum in email)

Reducing the impact of flooding for households across Suffolk. The Flood and Water Management Team has commissioned a new scheme to install Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures to 22 residential properties within East Suffolk. The properties were selected on the basis of either known or predicted risk of significant surface water flooding. Locations include Lowestoft, Kettleburgh, Aldringham Cum Thorpe, Kesgrave and Martlesham.

PFR is designed to increase the resilience of a property by restricting the possible routes for water to enter the living areas of a home. The PFR measures that will be installed as part of this project include flood doors, flood barriers, watertight airbricks, non-return valves and sump pumps. The work commenced in August 2023 and is due to be completed by December 2023. Looking forward further schemes are being developed to support the protection of more homes across the county and will be

delivered in 2024. The scheme is funded by Environment Agency Flood Grant in Aid, Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy and Suffolk County Council.

Sudbury Surface Water Flood Alleviation Scheme nearing completion A scheme to construct flood attenuation basins at Aubrey Drive, Sudbury has been designed to reduce the risk of significant surface water flooding to properties in the town. The scheme includes two attenuation features, an upper and lower basin. The lower basin is situated on public open space and is now fully operational, this has been designed to retain the character and purpose of the public open space it was before. The difference is that it has been designed to hold water temporarily during high

rainfall events and remainder of the time will be a usable open space. The upper basin is scheduled to commence construction in summer next year and is currently undergoing legal agreements and planning approval. The proposed location is currently public open space, and the design will incorporate more tree and shrub planting to enhance biodiversity, whilst providing temporary flood storage during high rainfall events. The overall impact of the two basins will reduce the risk of flooding to 35+ homes in the town, many of which have a history of regular flood events. The scheme is funded by Environment Agency Flood Grant in Aid.

Learning how to improve water management with Suffolk farmers Suffolk's Flood and Water Team organised a highly successful study day on local farms with the support of Sustainable Water Solutions LLP. With the help of the teams at Home Farm Nacton and James Foskett Farms we learnt a significant amount about their farming operations and in particular how they secure licenses, capture, store and use water to increase yield and ensure high quality food. The objective was to gain knowledge and improve engagement with landowners to enable the team to design better flood risk reduction projects and take opportunities to realise the full value of stored flood water, such as habitat creation, irrigation resource, groundwater recharge and recreational use.

8. Air Quality Update

The Wider Determinants team in Public Health and Communities attended public engagement events over the summer to talk to the public about the health impacts of air pollution which will be used to inform future initiatives around air quality. The team has also presented to several external partner meetings including Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care

Partnership, meeting to discuss how community teams travelling around Ipswich can reduce their air pollution emissions and help support the improvement of air quality in this area.

A Q&A session for all councillors was delivered on 8 September. Officers leading on the various workstreams relating to air quality provided information on the health impacts of air quality, and what is being done across Suffolk County Council to improve air quality in Suffolk. Presentations were followed by an opportunity for Councillors to discuss the topic and share views. The Wider Determinants team also worked with Suffolk-wide partners to submit a bid for Defra Air Quality Grant funding to deliver air quality initiatives in 2024-25. We expect to be notified by Defra about whether the application was successful in February or March 2024.

Please note: all reports by cabinet members can be viewed by visiting [https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(19-10-2023\),%20County%20Council](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(19-10-2023),%20County%20Council)

APPENDIX 2 – District Councillor's report Councillor John Burns

Report by John Burns on Town activities October 2023

- **Great Wilsey Park:** Work continues at a slow pace.
- **Police Matters:** Crime stats for August 2023 were distributed on 10th October. The September edition of Constables County is available here: <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/snt-newsletters-sept-2023>.
- **SCC Highways:** No updates provided direct to me.
- **Combined Authority:** No further useful updates.
- **Greater Cambridge Partnership:** Work progresses on the Dean Road crossroad closure and installation of new roundabout at Bartlow Crossroads.
- **Parking:** No further updates. Problems still exist at New Croft with verge parking.

- **Markets:** No further updates except for fact Sharon Fairweather is doing a grand job on the Maker's Markets and trying to find new regular traders in what is (to use a pun) a very difficult market environment nationally.
- **Sturmer Arches:** No further updates available.
- **Atterton & Ellis site:** Still no news.
- **Fox PH (Wrattling Road):** No further updates.
- **Vixen PH (Millfields Way):** This was due up for auction again this week, but the auction appears to have been put back to 6th December and, as of yet, it is not listed for that date. (Same applies for the Corn Exchange).
- **Strasbourg Square:** Work was carried out to weed the new beds but will see what it looks like over winter. The hoarding around the old Vixen PH have been replaced in preparation for the mural.
- **Other work:**
 - Completed FTTP rollout to all of the sites that could support it.
 - Continue to regularly approve HTC/HCT invoice payments.
 - Worked with Operations Manager on handing over Splash Pad maintenance and cleaning processes.
 - Attended various HTC meetings both physically and online facilitating live broadcast where relevant.
 - Working on Remembrance event with rest of the organising team with due allowance for current health problems I have. Decision about filming/live streaming to be taken over next few days.

APPENDIX 3

Mayor's Report

Mayor's Report for Haverhill Town Council Tuesday 31st October 2023

I had the pleasure of attending U3A's annual open day, where I was able to witness many of the groups that are available to our residents of a certain age. I was presented with a year's honorary membership of the Haverhill branch, and promptly signed up for the history group.

I attended Havebury's drop in event at the Clements Community Centre, where many of the different Havebury services had representatives available for residents to raise any concerns.

The following day I was at the One Haverhill Partnership board meeting, representing the Town Council.

There was a wonderful talk put on by Haverhill History Society at St Mary's church from Stained Glass artist Derek Hunt, which I was fortunate enough to attend. A sample of his work can be seen at St Felix church in our town, and, I believe, Clements surgery. Who knew stained glass could be produced by so many processes?

The following week saw successive engagements which brought into sharp focus the full range of our human existence. I was delighted to accommodate Amanda Williams from the National Literacy Trust (formerly Get Suffolk Reading) in presenting free books to children in Reception classes at four of our Primary schools. Then I had a meeting with Linda McEnhill, CEO of St

Nicholas Hospice, to witness the magnificent and compassionate work that they do with end-of-life care for patients and their families.

A bit of light relief came with Haverhill and District Town Twinning Association's quiz. We didn't win a prize, but the fish and chips were superb.

Last week I did a brief piece to camera for WSC's press department explaining how wonderful it was for the Town Council to host one part of the Mutiny in Colour exhibition.

I think the most joyous engagement this time round was experiencing the spectacular Joseph and His Technicolour Dreamcoat production put on by the Youth Section of Centre Stage. Every aspect of the performance was incredible, from the production, the musicians, to the performers themselves. Definitely some stars of the future there. The event had a poignant note, as money was being raised for the Smile of Arran charity which was set up in memory of Arran Tosh, a former member of Centre Stage who had taken the role of Potiphar when they production was staged ten years previously, but tragically lost his life to a brain tumour at the age of 13. Some of the cast that year were on the production team this time around.

The final engagement was the Chair of Braintree, Diana Garrod, event at Braintree Museum. Diana is also Chair of Sturmer Parish Council and runs a chiropractice in Haverhill. She is also a supporter of many of our events in Haverhill. Unusually, the event contained a quiz. Again, we didn't win, but the questions were mainly Braintree-centric, so I shouldn't be too harsh.

Obviously, coming up soon will be the Remembrance Day events, so I hope to see as many of you there as possible.