

# Haverhill Town Council

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

### FULL COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7.30pm at Haverhill Arts Centre,  
High Street, Haverhill



**HAVERHILL**  
TOWN COUNCIL

**Present:** Mayor Councillor D Smith  
Councillor R André  
Councillor A Brown  
Councillor J Burns  
Councillor Q Cox  
Councillor J Crooks  
Councillor B Davidson  
Councillor P Firman  
Councillor P Hanlon  
Councillor J Mason  
Councillor L Miller-Jones  
Councillor D Page  
Councillor L Smith

**Apologies:** Councillor A Luccarini  
Councillor M Marks  
Councillor M Martin

**In Attendance:** Colin Poole, Town Clerk  
Jane Lomas, Council Administrator

2 members of the public were present.

### Welcome:

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

### MINUTES

**C23** Apologies for Absence  
/145 The above apologies were noted.

**C23** Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation  
/146 None.

**C23** Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023  
/147

It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that the minutes of the meeting held 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 be agreed as a true record.

**RESOLVED**

**ACTION**

**C23 /148** **To note progress of actions arising from the minutes not covered by this Agenda**

C23/115c)ii. Clerkin site – Colin Wright, WSC has reported that the head lease of the property was returned to the Council last summer. However, there were sub tenants in place. Once WSC had full vacant possession, gas and electricity systems needed to be tested and made compliant. A number of inhouse appraisals are being carried out to explore the best option for the property going forward, ensuring good revenue income for the Council. Tidying up will also need to be carried out to meet future EPC regulations. The Council needs to include this in part of the terms of the 2024/25 budget-setting process. A number of enquiries have been received for the site, but WSC is not in a position to progress until the works are progressed and interested parties have been made aware of that.

C23/129. Polling stations – Cllr J Burns circulated his email to Ben Smith to Councillors. The Town Clerk has spoken to Ben Smith who is planning to visit the polling station sites at Haverhill to investigate concerns and issues.

C23/131a). Police liaison meeting – it is not possible to change the time of 2pm.

C23/137. UKSPF funding – WSC is able to work with HTC to find a solution.

**C23 /149** **Reports from District/County Councillors on issues pertinent to HAVERHILL and the PUBLIC FORUM**

a) **Police Report** - Cllr J Burns and Cllr P Hanlon attended the Police liaison meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November. The new Policing initiative was discussed: there will be one Community Lead Officer for South Haverhill and two for the rest of Haverhill. There was concern among Councillors that Haverhill needs more Police resource. The Town Clerk advised that Haverhill is not less-well served than any other of Suffolk. The issue is that Suffolk is under-resourced as a whole.

b) **County Councillors** – see Appendix 1

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

- i. Local Plan – it is noted that there is nothing specifically for Haverhill in the Local Plan.
- ii. Provincial House – a press release today has announced that WSC will be debating the use of Provincial House as a learning centre. Cllr Mason is optimistic that the debate will go well.
- iii. Greenfield Way bus stop – Cllr Mason has received notification that the bus stop at Greenfield Way has been approved by WSC but there is no date from Highways when work will commence.
- iv. Layby at Aragon Road – discussions are being held between WSC and SCC regarding Civil Parking Enforcement. Checks on the layby will be made outside of normal working hours. It is unclear whether the layby will be closed.
- v. Anglian Water – It was proposed by Councillor Q Cox, seconded by Councillor L Miller-Jones, that the Town Clerk write to Anglian Water on behalf of Haverhill Town Council, to raise the issues of water leaks at the junction of Wratting Road with Chalkstone Way, and in Camps Road.

**RESOLVED**

**Clerk**

**c) District Councillors  
Councillor A Brown**

- i. Ambulance waiting times. Cllr Brown reported that he is pursuing the East of England Ambulance Trust (EEAT) and the local MP regarding ambulance times but has not received any response to date. There has been no improvement over the last year and Haverhill waiting times for an ambulance for critical emergencies are significantly longer than the national target. The Town Clerk advised that there was dialogue between HTC and EEAT but this was paused by HTC because of the elections. The Town Clerk will arrange another meeting. It was agreed that the subgroup representing Haverhill will comprise: Cllr Brown, Cllr Cox, Cllr Miller-Jones and Mr Stinchcombe.

It was proposed by Councillor L Miller-Jones, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon, that the Town Clerk writes to the East of England Ambulance Trust requesting a further meeting to discuss the Town Council's concern regarding ambulance waiting times.

**RESOLVED**

It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor A Brown that Mr Alan Stinchcombe be co-opted to the subgroup scrutinising ambulance waiting times.

**RESOLVED**

- ii. Lighting along Railway Walk (Manor Road and Chalkstone Way) – Cllr Brown has notified WSC that there is no lighting. This has been passed to SCC and hopefully this will be rectified soon.

**d) Town Councillors' matters to report.**

**Councillor J Burns:** – see Appendix 2

**e) Public Forum**

Mr E Pinnock expressed his dismay that the Planning Committee meetings are online. He does not own a computer so he is, in effect, excluded. Cllr D Smith thanked Mr Pinnock for his comments and advised that this will be discussed by Councillors in Agenda Item 13.

Mr A Stinchcombe said that he is very pleased to be appointed to the subgroup scrutinising ambulance waiting times.

**Town Clerk**

**Town Clerk**

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

/150

- a) Families Together Suffolk, £4,892 towards the continuation of their perinatal service in Haverhill. The Town Clerk will circulate the full application and consideration will be moved to the next Full Council meeting.

- b) It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor J Burns that Haverhill Silver Band be awarded a grant of £2,000 towards acoustic improvements to a new rehearsal space.

**RESOLVED**

**C23** **Mayor's Report:**

/151

- a) Mayor's report – see appendix 3.  
b) It was agreed by Councillors that the benches on Railway Walk are a brilliant addition to the town – well designed and attractive, a piece of art.

Cllr A Brown asked that HTC send a letter of thanks to Wayne, c/o A Brown.

It was proposed by Councillor D Smith, seconded by Councillor L Miller-Jones that a vote of thanks be given to Councillor Brown and AG Drilling for the benches on Railway Walk.

**RESOLVED**

**C23** **ONE Haverhill Partnership**

/152 Nothing to report. The next meeting has been moved to 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**C23** **Adoption of Committee Reports**

/153 a) Planning Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor R André, that the minutes of the Planning Working Party meetings held 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

b) Finance Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the minutes of the Finance Working Party meeting held 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

c) Leisure & Community Committee:

It was proposed by Councillor D Page, seconded by Councillor A Brown, that the minutes of the Leisure & Community Committee meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

**C23** **Financial Matters**

/154

a) Authorisation of payments: It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the listed payments totalling £112,550.13 be authorised.

**RESOLVED**

b) Insurances – main policy: To note that that the insurances have been reviewed and the main policy for both the council and Community Trust are now with Aviva. There are still a couple of activities that have not been insured. Risk assessments have been forwarded to Aviva and it is expected there will be a 1-2 week delay in restarting these activities.

**NOTED**

c) Insurance – Soft Play at the Zone: To note that the Soft Play activity at the Zone is now insured through Accelerant as Aviva stated that soft play centres now fall outside the remit of their parish council insurance product.

**NOTED**

d) Insurance – Christmas event and fireworks: To note that event insurance has been obtained for the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas event and fireworks through Convex event insurance as Aviva do not wish to insure events of this type.

**NOTED**

e) Mayoral Chain: Councillors considered the replacement of the Mayoral chain as the existing one has run out of space. The proposed cost for a replacement to provide space for the next 50 Mayors is £162 per Mayor. In light of the cost of living crisis, it was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor L Miller-Jones that current chain remains for use

by the Mayor, but that no news names are added. This decision may be reviewed in future years.

**RESOLVED**

**C23** **Actions taken under delegated powers**

/155 None.

**C23** **To receive urgent correspondence**

/156 None.

**C23** **Meetings 2024:**

/157 a) It was proposed by Councillor D Page, seconded by Councillor J Burns, that the calendar of meeting for 2024 be approved.

**RESOLVED**

b) In-person and online meetings: Councillors discussed in-person and online meetings and the accessibility to as many residents as possible. The Town Clerk presented a spreadsheet illustrating attendance at meetings in person and online, and views on YouTube. Councillors noted that Full Council, leisure and Planning were the three most-watched/attended meetings.

It was proposed by Councillor Q Cox, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that there be a public consultation to find out the opinions regarding in-person and online meetings.

**LOST**

Councillors felt it would not be possible to gain a meaningful representative response, as an online survey would be biased towards online meetings, and a non-online survey was impractical. In any case, as the vast majority of people have no interest in attending council meetings regardless of how they are held, what would we make of their responses?

It was proposed by Councillor B Davidson, seconded by Councillor J Mason that as well as Full Council and Leisure & Community meetings, Planning meetings will be held in-person.

**RESOLVED**

c) Vacancies: Councillor J Mason has stepped down from Appeals, Energy & Sustainability and Finance Committees and vacancies exist on those three bodies.

**NOTED**

**C23** **Date of Next Meeting**

/158 Monday, 18 December 2023 commencing at 7:00pm.

**C23** **Closure**

/159 The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:19pm

Signed .....  
**Chairman**

Date.....

**Appendix 1 – County Councillors’ reports**  
**Appendix 2 – Town Councillors’ reports**  
**Appendix 3 – Mayor’s Report**

**APPENDIX 1 – County Councillor’s report**  
**Councillor Joe Mason**

Suffolk County Council didn’t meet in November with the next sitting on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December. West Suffolk Council did not sit again in November. Since the election in May and the first Council we have only had June & October Full Council meetings.

**West Suffolk Council**

There is little to report at West Suffolk, as we await direction from the new administration. The next meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> will hopefully shed some light on the new administration’s priorities.

**WSC Victim of Fraud**

In the press this week is a report of a £52,000 fraud that West Suffolk Council has been a victim of.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-67530165>

**Exciting new opportunity for local market stallholders**

West Suffolk Council has announced three deals for local market stallholders, with the aim of making it more accessible for aspiring stallholders to participate in our markets. The following deal is the only one that impacts Haverhill.

- Free trading for 12 weeks – stallholders can trade at markets in Brandon, Newmarket, Haverhill and Mildenhall for 12 weeks at no cost. This offer is ideal for entrepreneurs wanting to experience trading at a market or testing out new products.

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr231027ws01.cfm>

**Suffolk County Council**

I attended Scrutiny which was focussed on the new Highways contact with Milestone. Structured differently and intended to address a number of the issues the Council had with the Keir contract. Most notably Milestone should be fixing more potholes in a given location, not just the reactive one that is reported but also others in close proximity that are nonurgent but have also been reported.

I specifically asked for a 6month RAG rated review of how well the new contactor is performing. I also asked for a review of the Suffolk Highways reporting tool, passing on the frustrations expressed by some members of the Town Council – on this last point hopefully I will have more to report in the coming months.

**White Ribbon Day -**

White Ribbon is the UK’s leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls. The annual White Ribbon campaign strives to change long-established attitudes, behaviours and systems around masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and men’s violence against women.

This year, individuals and organisations are being encouraged to make consistent choices and actions so that we *#ChangeTheStory* for women and girls to live their lives free from the fear of violence.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/suffolk-pledges-to-change-the-story-this-white-ribbon-day>

### **Adult Social Care Services -**

Suffolk County Council's Adult Social Care service have been rated "Good overall" by the Care Quality Commission.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/suffolk-county-councils-adult-social-care-service-rated-good-overall-by-care-quality-commission>

### **Extra £108 million for Suffolk's roads**

Suffolk County Council has welcomed the Government announcement - which is part of a Department for Transport plan to pump £609 million into highway maintenance in the East of England. £107,590,000 has been ringfenced for Suffolk over the next decade, including £3.4 million in this financial year.

### **OFSTED &CCQ invite everyone who uses SEND services in Suffolk for feedback in new inspection survey.**

The inspection, which looks at how Suffolk County Council and NHS health partners, support young people with SEND, and their families, will last for three weeks. As part of this inspection, young people, parents and carers who use SEND services are being encouraged to give feedback as part of an online Ofsted survey.

<https://ofsted.smartsurvey.co.uk/p/AreaSend/10284398>

### **Next year's SCC budget**

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. 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.

[https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Budget24\\_25/](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Budget24_25/)

### **New fund delivers digital boost for Suffolk.**

Almost £250,000 of funding was announced at an event today, giving a boost to the county's ambitions to reduce the number of people excluded from the benefits of digital technology.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/new-fund-delivers-digital-boost-for-suffolk>

### **Suffolk Libraries**

As mentioned in the meeting last Month, a reminder to all councillors that there is a consultation on the future of Suffolk Libraries. I recommend all members complete this and pass onto their contacts and social networks.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Libraries2023/>

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 Wrattling Road
6. Anglian Water
7. Lorry Lay-by on A1017
8. Anaerobic Biodigester
9. Glebe Biodiversity Project
10. Suffolk County Councillor Award

### **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.

### **Highways Update**

I have been informed by Highways that there is no backlog, and I am pressing for action on the following:

Missing signs, town centre, Ehringhausen Way Delivery Drop off Zone and any other TRO (Traffic Regulation Order issues previously discussed at Town Council. - Awaiting timescales – no explanation given for delays top this much needed work

### **Bus Stop, Greenfields Way.**

No timescale yet communicated.

### **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.

### **Persimmon Estate & Relief Road**

Persimmon continue to fail to deliver amenity spaces on the Play/Park area. Bad weather is likely going to hamper progress until late February at the earliest.

Still awaiting timescales from Persimmon and confirmation of the new works programme following Persimmons dispute with CADENT. Whilst resolved it is uncertain how much further delay there will be until the opening of the relief road

### **S106 – Improvement to Ann Suckling Road and Wrattling Road**

Awaiting an Update

### **Anglian Water**

I have been very frustrated with Anglian Water who have been very slow to respond to issues. Water cascading down Old Rope Walk is now fixed as is the leak off a private residence onto Wrattling Road. The rollercoaster section on Camps Road has still not been fixed. I have been told that a fix will be done in January. A full 12 months since when the defect was first reported.

### **Lorry lay-by on A1017 nr Aragon Road**

This has been escalated to a political level. Discussion between District & County Councils regarding Parking Enforcement. Still awaiting timescales for closure but have been told that this is now with the Transport Strategy and Legal Team. Uncertain as to when or if the layby will be closed, whilst councils iron out wrinkles regarding enforcement.



### **Acorn Anaerobic Biodigester.**

Acorn have been presented with an extensive list of clarifications from Suffolk County Council planning officers based on concerns raised during the consultation. I do not know, with such a high number of requests from SCC that Acorn will be able to respond quickly. February is still expected for a decision, but of course is subject to Acorn submitting further papers and meeting the requirements set out by the planning officer.

### **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 anti-social behaviour. I am funding a biodiversity/planting project and am awaiting final costs before this work is carried out.

### **Open Mind Meaningful Support**

This month I presented a Suffolk County Council Councillor award to this lead organisers Charmaine Slade and Jodie Claydon on behalf of all the volunteers who do so much good work with people suffering from poor mental health.

<https://www.suffolknews.co.uk/haverhill/news/this-award-came-as-a-huge-surprise-and-i-m-delighted-to-acc-9340653/>

## **APPENDIX 2 – Town Councillor’s report Councillor John Burns**

- **Great Wilsey Park:** Work continues at a slow pace.
- **Police Matters:** Crime stats for September 2023 were distributed on 10<sup>th</sup> November. Suffolk Constabulary have a new website at <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/> and it looks like Constables County has finally been abandoned in favour of online statistics. Remember that the Haverhill policing area covers a lot more than just Haverhill town including Highpoint prison, and to Chevington in the north, Glemsford in the east and Little Bradley in the west so take any statistics published there with a pinch of salt.
- **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. No obvious effort made in the town to reduce illegal parking.
- **Markets:** No further updates except for token efforts to try to appease now been 18 months since the markets review was approved. Astounding lack of effort by WSC.
- **Sturmer Arches:** No further updates available.
- **Atterton & Ellis site:** Still no news.
- **Fox PH (Wratting Road):** No further updates.
- **Vixen PH (Millfields Way):** This was sold privately outside of the auction and new owners already talking to WSC planners. Let’s hope they understand what is involved and that WSC

do not roll over and accept what they just want without any due consideration of what businesses, residents and community want.

- **Strasbourg Square:** Mural was painted on new hoarding. Some good comments although a couple of adverse ones seen about CND logo being used.
- **Other work:**
  - Continue to regularly approve HTC/HCT invoice payments.
  - Attended various HTC meetings both physically and online facilitating live broadcast where relevant.
  - Worked on Remembrance event with rest of the organising team with large number of public attending and very successful livestream.

END

### **APPENDIX 3 – Mayor’s Report**

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Obviously, the main engagements attended since my last report were the Armistice and Remembrance Day events, which began with an impeccably observed two minutes silence opposite the Post Office on Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup>. A good number of residents and veterans turned out for the occasion, with young Archie Pannell playing a fine rendition of the Last Post.

That afternoon the focus turned to Bury St Edmunds where I attended a wreath laying service in the Rose Garden of the cathedral to commemorate the participants of many services from the area in the Second World War.

Our own Remembrance Parade and Service was slightly different this year, and not only because it was stewarded for the first time by Danny Kidd. I thought he did a tremendous job after stepping up at short notice. Our thanks have been passed on to him.

Another change was the parade joining up for an orderly dismissal on the market square. I felt that this was a great improvement on previous years when, after passing the dais for the salute, the parade would just disintegrate along the High Street.

Congratulations to everyone that was involved in making the event a huge success, all our staff and volunteers, and the residents of Haverhill who came along in huge numbers to show their respect.

Other events attended included the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Haverhill Family History Society, which continues to thrive after starting from such humble beginnings. Many resources and objects of interest were on display, and a special award was made to Charmian and Brian Thompson.

I attended the Haverhill Silver Band concert at the Arts Centre, although I only caught the second half due to work commitments. The band is currently being led by Assistant MD Matt Brown while Paul Filby is unavailable, but you wouldn’t have noticed as they quite literally never missed a beat. Another fine and varied programme.

I was invited to a celebration of the work done by the Local Conversation in Haverhill South at the Clements Community Centre. I have been involved in this since its inception nearly ten years ago but, sadly, the project is ceasing. It has been a pleasure working with, initially, Jon Eaton, Elaine Hewes and Amy Morton, and latterly Helen Cullup and Jay Mills, as we tried to improve the health and wellbeing, and general environment of the community. Thank you to the small hard core of residents involved – Dawn, Alex, Beryl, Darren, Jill, Finlay, Kira, Peter, Nicola, Mark, Max (sorry

if I've missed anyone) for your help and support over the years. The project may have finished but we have the legacy of the pump track and community allotment as a lasting testament.

Lastly, although not in an official capacity, we had the pleasure of seeing Centre Stage's production of *Educating Rita* at the Arts Centre. The two actors involved put in tremendous performances. We really are lucky to have the company in our town.

We now move into a busy Christmas period, kicking off with the Christmas Fun Day and Fireworks this Saturday and the Civic Carol Service next Wednesday.

I hope to see many of you there.

David