

# Haverhill Town Council

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

### FULL COUNCIL

Held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.00pm 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 J Crooks  
Councillor P Firman  
Councillor P Hanlon  
Councillor A Luccarini  
Councillor M Martin  
Councillor J Mason  
Councillor D Page  
Councillor L Smith

**Apologies:** Councillor A Cox  
Councillor B Davidson  
Councillor L Miller-Jones

**In Attendance:** 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

**C24 /017** Apologies for Absence  
It was proposed by Councillor D Page, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that the above apologies and the reasons for absence be accepted.  
**RESOLVED**

**C24 /018** Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation

**ACTION**

Haverhill Town Council adopted the General Power of Competence on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2023. All decisions are taken using that power unless otherwise stated.

It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that Councillors A Brown, P Firman, P Hanlon, A Luccarini, J Mason, D Smith and L Smith be given dispensation to stay and take part in the debate under C24/022: Street Trading Consultation.

**RESOLVED**

**C24 /019** **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

It was proposed by Councillor M Martin, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that the minutes of the meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 be agreed as a true record.

**RESOLVED**

**C24 /020** **To note progress of actions arising from the minutes not covered by this Agenda**

C24/002b: The Casual Vacancy has been advertised on the Council's website and on the noticeboards both in centre of town and within West Ward. A press release has been sent to the Haverhill Echo. Recruitment packs have been emailed to all Councillors.

**C24 /021** **Reports from District/County Councillors on issues pertinent to HAVERHILL and the PUBLIC FORUM**

a) **Police Report** - No report received.

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

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

Councillor Mason informed the meeting that further to his report Item 4. Persimmon Estate, the turf at the playground has not been stolen. The site is in disarray and he is meeting with planners tomorrow.

c) **District Councillors**

No report was given.

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

**Councillor J Burns:** see report attached (Appendix 2) Councillor Burns has received a detailed inspection report regarding the Sturmer Arches which he will review in detail.

Councillor Burns reported that contractors are looking at moving the equipment out of Lloyds Bank, including the safe. This might have been a suitable building for a banking hub.

e) **Public Forum**

Mr E Pinnock thanked the Councillors for all their work in supporting the new recycling plant which is due to open between June and September this year.

**C24** **Street trading Consultation**

**/022**

Councillors considered their response to WSC's street trading Consultation. It was generally agreed that:

- Charges for street traders should be fair and on a pro rata basis (eg per hour rather than per occasion).
- A separate fee should be charged for each stall.
- Retailers might be asked to complete the Consultation form as they will benefit from the extra footfall.
- Enforcement for trading without a licence should be in place.
- Rather than 'consent streets', traders should be allowed to apply to trade on any road within the town.
- Consultation with HTC should be made by Licensing before granting any licence, ensuring that each application is made on a case by case basis.
- Criminal record checks should not be made on street traders when applying for a licence.

It was proposed by Councillor A Brown, seconded by Councillor A Luccarini that the response to West Suffolk's street trading consultation be made collectively by Haverhill Town Council, and not on an individual basis.

**RESOLVED**

**C24** **Knife Angel**

**/023**

The Knife Angel statue is a national project against violence. Following the sad loss of Harley Barfield, who was tragically killed in January last year, Harley's father is working to bring the Knife Angel to Haverhill in September and is keen to begin fundraising but in the first instance, will require a £4,000 returnable deposit. This is an opportunity to show residents and visitors that Haverhill is a compassionate and safe place to live, work and visit where violence is not tolerated. This project should be seen as taking a *preventative* approach to all violence including knife crime, county lines and domestic violence.

It was proposed by Councillor A Luccarini, seconded by Councillor J Crooks that HTC underwrites the £4,000 returnable deposit necessary to enable the Knife Angel statue to come to Haverhill.

**RESOLVED**

The Clerk advised that the Council will endeavour to support Mr Barfield in the logistics of his endeavour.

**C24** **Grant Applications over £2,000**

**/024**

None.

**C24** **Mayor's Report:**

**/025**

Deferred until the next meeting.

**C24 /026** **ONE Haverhill Partnership**  
Science Festival work is on track for the website to go live and events to be published shortly.

**C24 /027** **Adoption of Committee Reports**

a) Planning Working Party: It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon seconded by Councillor M Martin that the minutes of the Planning Working Party meeting held 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

b) Energy & Sustainability Working Party: It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the minutes of the Energy & Sustainability Working Party meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

**C24 /028** **Financial Matters**

a) Authorisation of payments: It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor A Luccarini, that the listed payments totalling £24,009.94 be authorised.

**RESOLVED**

**C24 /029** **Actions taken under delegated powers**

The Clerk reported that further to C24/013 a contract has been signed for a replacement van for the Parish Handyman. The van is a 2019 high-top Ford Transit which has a larger capacity than the previous van, and will negate the need to hire a van to transport equipment for some smaller events. The net cost of the van is £9,000 after the insurance settlement.

**C24 /030** **To receive urgent correspondence**

None.

**C24 /031** **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 commencing at 7:00pm.

**C24 /032** **Closure**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7:46pm

Signed .....  
**Chairman**

Date.....

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

**County and District Councillor Report, February 2024**  
**Cllr Joe Mason**

The period since the last report has been an interesting and particularly challenging one. Suffolk County Council, indeed Councils across the country are having to make difficult decisions and focus their attention.

In this report.

1. Suffolk County Council News
2. Haverhill’s New Recycling Centre
3. Highways Update
4. Persimmon Estate & Relief Road & S106 – Improvement to Ann Suckling Road and Wratting Road
5. West Suffolk News

**1. Suffolk County Council News**

**The SCC Budget Overview**

The 2024-25 Budget setting process has been the most challenging faced by the Council for many years, with £105.0 million of additional pressures needing to be recognised resulting from a combination of increasing demand, inflationary pressures and rising interest rates (of which £33.0 million relates to 2023-24 Budget variance continuing into 2024-25). This is well in excess of the £52.6 million of additional funding available through increases in grants and local taxation (of which £7.0 million relates to additional funding above budget received in 2023-24 continuing into 2024-25).

To address this, the Council has developed plans for £43.1 million of savings (of which £14.7 million relates to savings identified as part of the 2023-26 Medium Term Financial Plan) in 2024-25. This is in addition to the £66 million of savings and mitigations that the Council has delivered over the past five years by working smarter and leaner. However, despite the £43.1 million of savings equating to over 6.2% of the Council’s 2024- 25 Net Expenditure Budget, there remains a shortfall of £8.7 million which is needing to be draw down from the Council’s unallocated reserves.

This challenging position is consistent with the national position, with recent research by the County Council’s Network suggesting that England’s largest councils will need to make at least £1 billion in savings to balance their 2023-24 budgets, and a BBC investigation reporting that councils expect to be £5.2 billion short of balancing their budgets by April 2026. Although the

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Council's unallocated reserves are sufficient to cover the £8.7 million budget shortfall, continued drawdowns from reserves are not sustainable. Unless further funding is provided by Government, or even further spending cuts are made by the Council, the Council is forecasting that it will run out of unallocated reserves by the end of 2026-27.

Alongside pressures to budgets funding from core funding, the Council continues to experience significant pressures in relation to expenditure funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, with a funding gap of £28.3 million expected in 2024-25, rising to £60.8 million in 2026-27. Although a statutory override exists which allows a negative DSG reserve to be held, this cannot be a permanent solution, with increasing deficits adding even further pressure to the Council's borrowing costs.

The Council's 2024-29 Capital Programme is a key part of its financial plans. The Capital Programme was reduced in size by £12.0 million following a review over the summer of 2023 prompted by increasing pressures on the Council's capital financing budgets resulting from increases to inflation and rising interest rates. In light of current pressures the Capital Programme includes no new standalone schemes that have not been previously approved during 2022-23 either by Cabinet or the Capital Strategy Group, but only includes updated figures for its rolling programmes of works. This is consistent with the tight financial position, meaning there is no borrowing headroom to finance new projects.

The budget was voted on and passed at Full Council on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February.

Please note: The following topics have been raised as concerns in relation to the SCC budget.

### **Household Related Support Grant Cut**

The Household Related Support Grant will be cut in phases in the next couple of years. There will not be a cliff edge on Housing Related Support, but I understand it will eventually be reduced in stages to zero from the SCC budget hopefully providing District Councils the time they need to take on this aspect of housing support if they wish too.

£1million is being spent cut from this scheme in 2024/25 and a further £2 million in 2025/26

The pressures on budgets at County are so high non-statutory services, however important you think they are, have needed to be rationalised.

Housing Related Support is a non statutory part of Suffolk County Council business. Housing support is the Statutory responsibility of the District Councils.

Under Adult Social Care SCC support will still be given that falls under its statutory responsibilities.

Please visit <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/county-council-leader-responds-to-district-and-borough-councils-letter-regarding-housing-related-support-1> where you can read the message from the horses mouth so to speak.

### **Household Support Fund**

There has been understandable concern about cuts to the Household Support Fund. Indeed Henry Wilson from REACH attended full council and asked a question related to this. I asked SCC Leader Cllr Matthew Hicks to clarify the Council's position after being challenged on this in an email from a Haverhill Town Councillor.

Cllr Matthew Hicks, "Suffolk County Council has not voted to stop the Household Support Fund. Whether HSF continues beyond 31 March 2024 is a matter for Government. We greatly value this support in Suffolk, which has enabled us to make more than 104,000 awards of support across Local Welfare Assistance, Free School Meals, help with housing and food, in the last financial year.

Through the LGA, Suffolk County Council has joined our Local MPs in lobbying the Government for this support to continue.

Please be assured that Suffolk County Council will ensure The Holiday Activity Fund will continue to offer activities and meals to children who are eligible for free school meals, during the school holidays at Easter, Summer and Christmas. Around 14,500 children currently take up

this offer in Suffolk. SCC will continue to fund this programme in 2024 using grant funding from the Department for Education.

You may also be interested to know that Suffolk Public Sector Leaders have allocated £1.5m to support the Tackling Poverty Collaborative Communities Board sub-group, to develop Sustainable Food programme, which aims to develop sustainable food solutions and support income maximisation.

SCC is also protecting its contribution of funding to Citizens Advice across Suffolk, to help those who need specialist support and advice.

The Household Support Fund is just one aspect of a system-wide response in Suffolk to support families in need, and we will continue to play our part and work with our partners across the system to offer support where it is needed.

### **Archives moving to the Hold in Ipswich**

During full Council it was announced there will be a working party to establish which documents/materials will remain in West Suffolk. Councillors on all sides supported this and it is likely continued discussions between West Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council and other Stake Holders will take place.

On Feb 1<sup>st</sup> then portfolio holder Cllr Bobby Bennett:

“The background is that, in February 2023, the County Council agreed to invest £3.4m in a brand-new purpose-built facility on Western Way in Bury St Edmunds, as part of West Suffolk Council’s proposals for the area. Despite being outside the town centre, this purpose-built facility would have been within easy reach of many educational facilities and on public transport routes. This decision was taken to give improved access to the public, as the building on Raingate Street is in such a condition, and without full disabled access, that it was detrimentally impacting the service offered and, furthermore, to remain in Raingate Street would require significant investment.

Sadly, in September 2023, West Suffolk Council’s new administration took the decision not to proceed with the Western Way development, thus removing the option to relocate to it. In the light of their decision, and over £5m of investment being needed in Raingate Street, which is outside our affordability, the difficult decision was taken to propose closing the branch.

This decision was not taken lightly, however, with the above context and the wider pressures on the County Council’s budget, we are left with no room for manoeuvre. We are however open to conversations to consider any requests from depositors to make alternative local arrangements for private collections as part of our planning process and to advise on key considerations such as public access, security and preservation. **Whilst we still need to move forward with budgetary certainty and a decision needs to be made on 15th February, we have considered the request for a working party and would like to suggest the following way forward.**

**We plan to engage with stakeholders once the decision has been made and while we no longer have the funds to construct or operate a new archive facility in Bury St Edmunds, we would propose to convene a working party to determine how those archives that depositors request to remain locally are able to do so.**

Detailed preparation for the relocation of the archives will commence after proposals have been approved by full Council. At this stage, a fully costed transition plan will be developed, to include measures to ensure the safe relocation and cataloguing of collections in line with archival standards and consultation with the National Archives. We would take account of any original conditions stipulated by depositors and consider any requests to make alternative local arrangements for key collections at this stage.

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The wider context is that the need for County Council services that care for Suffolk's most vulnerable residents, namely adults and children's services, is increasing faster than the funding we receive for them. Over the last year, what we need to spend on Children's Services has increased by 28% and Adult Care by 14%. In order to invest more in these services that care for our residents who are most in need, difficult decisions need to be made about the other services we deliver and how we deliver them. The proposal around the archives is an example of this.

## **New funding for arts, but difficult decisions remain by Councillor Richard Rout**

The next couple of weeks are an incredibly busy and important time at Suffolk County Council, and will impact everyone in Suffolk.

On 15 February at the full council meeting, councillors will debate our proposals for how we spend the council's budget from April onwards. The meeting will determine how much council tax you and I will have to pay, and how much money is spent on the services that many people rely on – particularly to help support those adults and children who need it most.

It's a process we're very familiar with, it happens every year. However, this year feels very different. I've said on many occasions that this is the most difficult budget the council has had to work on. We've all been feeling the inflationary pressures driven first by Covid and then the war in Ukraine. Whether it's filling your shopping basket or running your business, many of us are having to make sacrifices and prioritise what we can and can't spend money on. I know for many it's also highlighted the importance of having some money put away for a rainy day.

Suffolk County Council is in the same position – although a large organisation, we don't have an endless supply of money. We are also having to make really difficult decisions about what we can and can't spend money on, and we really value those 'rainy day savings' – the reserves we've built up over the years. The council can draw down on these reserves, but they can only be used once. The need for our key services is increasing at such a rate, that our funding isn't keeping pace. Over the last year alone, what we need to spend on children's services has increased by 28% and on adult care by 14%. Without additional funding, this means difficult decisions have to be made, so we can prioritise these services.

We continue to lobby the government for more funding and last week it recognised the pressures that local authorities were under, and announced a further £600m to share across the country's councils. Of course, any additional funding is good news – and we absolutely welcome it. I have no doubt this wouldn't have been possible without our efforts to lobby government, alongside Suffolk's MPs and county councils around the country. As a result of this, we plan to suggest providing a new £500,000 fund for our arts and heritage organisations around the county.

We've always stated our support for the arts in Suffolk and pledged to take up any opportunity to continue that support. We understand the value of the sector's work, and how it helps support the council's ambition of looking after the health and wellbeing of Suffolk's residents.

We still propose to end the £528,000 core funding to nine organisations at the end of March 2025, at which point the new fund will start. But importantly, this new fund will be open to all arts and heritage organisations, ending the funding disparity that favoured some towns and organisations over others. We'll work with the sector to ensure this new pot is straightforward to apply for and that the funded projects meets the council's priorities. However, I'm afraid this positive result cannot mask the significant financial pressures that the council continues to face. The funding we receive from government still does not solve the situation that many councils around the country, like Suffolk, find themselves in.

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Over the next two years, we must put £74 million towards caring for adults and children who need support. We need to make savings of £65 million, which includes £11 million of staff savings. And even after the further funding from the government, we will still need to take many millions from our reserves to help balance our budgets. This is not sustainable and fundamental reform of how children's services and adult social care is funded is needed to ensure councils like us remain on a secure financial footing.

To support those most in need, we are proposing to ask you to contribute more this year through your council tax. We don't do this lightly. 77p in every £1 of this will go to supporting those who need it most in Suffolk. If that's not you, or anyone in your family, there is someone out there who absolutely needs that support. The remaining 23p of every pound that you contribute will go towards everything else that we do, from running the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service to maintaining our roads and footpaths.

### **New cabinet structure will strengthen SEND reform by Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council.**

"In recent weeks, readers will no doubt have seen a lot of news stories about SEND services in Suffolk, following the latest inspection report published by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This week I have taken decisive action to strengthen my cabinet in a reshuffle – including creating a much greater focus on improving SEND.

Experienced cabinet member Cllr Andrew Reid will take the role of cabinet member for SEND and education. The role previously included oversight of skills, but to enable more political focus and accountability on urgent improvements on SEND services, this has now been moved to Cllr Richard Smith to sit alongside his existing responsibilities for economic development, transport strategy and waste. Cllr Debbie Richards will support Cllr Reid as deputy cabinet member for SEND. Working with the DfE, we are also establishing a new SEND Improvement Board, with an independent chair. This is a requirement following the Ofsted/CQC inspection.

Continuing the changes to children and young people (CYP) leadership, serving cabinet member Cllr Bobby Bennett has been appointed as cabinet member for CYP services. Two deputy cabinet members have been promoted to cabinet roles – Cllr Philip Faircloth-Mutton is now cabinet member for equality and communities and Cllr Craig Rivett is cabinet member for public health and public protection. Alongside these changes, further new faces come in as deputy cabinet members. Cllr Nadia Cenci becomes deputy cabinet member for property and county farms, Cllr David Roach becomes deputy cabinet member for fostering and adoption and Cllr Heike Sowa joins as deputy cabinet member for transformation. I am confident in the determination and tenacity of both Andrew and Debbie to help council officers drive those improvements forward. As a cabinet, we have a collective mission - we must see real and lasting improvement in SEND services and deliver on the wider ambitions of this council. The people of Suffolk deserve nothing less.

Separately, there has also been change at a senior officer level within SEND services, with two senior leaders having left the organisation late last year and interim leadership in place. A new executive director of children and young people is in the process of being recruited. The application window closed last week. This will be a key executive role and we are specifically looking for someone who understands SEND, knows what success looks like and who can deliver the much-needed cultural change that is needed and that Suffolk children and their families deserve. I am sorry and deeply disappointed that the speed of change has been too slow and am determined to deliver improvements through leadership change, investments and culture change. Most importantly, I want the experience of children and families to be far better, emotionally sensitive and timely.

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Getting this right for the children and young people in Suffolk is my top priority – a commitment shared by councillors and senior leadership team. This is not an empty pledge. We remain steadfast and resolved to go further and faster with our reforms. Driving forward SEND reform will be paramount. Our job will be to build on the good work that is already underway, including investing more than £55 million to create more than 1,250 additional places in specialist and mainstream schools and the creation of specialist SEND support teams and training for all Suffolk schools to support them to meet the additional needs of children in mainstream schools. If approved by councillors next week, we are also proposing the additional investment of £4.4m in 2024/25 and £3.4m in 2025/26 to expand our statutory SEND teams and secure sufficient educational psychology resource to improve the quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care assessments and reviews. This investment comes at a time when Suffolk County Council is facing its most challenging budget.

Despite this challenge, it is right that we continue to invest in those who need it most and improve our service for the children, young people and families in Suffolk.”

## **Other News**

### **[Have your say on Suffolk’s local transport plan](#)**

#### **Residents are invited to share their views on how they travel to help inform Suffolk’s Local Transport Plan.**

The plan sets out a long-term vision for transport in Suffolk and covers key themes such as decarbonisation of transport, strengthening the local economy, promoting health, wellbeing and social inclusion, and creating better-connected places that encourage a range of transport choices.

#### **Adult Social Care CQC Assessment**

It was announced by the Care Quality Commission that, following their assessment, Suffolk County Council’s Adult Social Care Services (ACS) has been given a rating of “Good” overall for the quality of social care services provided. This was recognised as a fantastic result for the service and was achieved after weeks of hard work by the directorate as they pulled together hundreds of pages of evidence and arranged over 40 meetings for CQC, who in turn held interviews with staff, partners, and people with lived experience.

### **[Suffolk children’s services leadership overhaul](#)**

Suffolk County Council has today announced further changes to the leadership of services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Three senior councillors - Rachel Hood, James Reeder and Chris Chambers - have resigned from their posts as cabinet and deputy cabinet members. It follows the departure of the county council’s executive director of people services and director of children and young people late last year.

### **[County Council Leader responds to District and Borough Councils letter regarding Housing Related Support](#)**

In response to a letter received from the Leaders of the District and Borough Councils regarding the County Council’s proposed budget changes relating to Housing Related Support, the Leader of Suffolk County Council, Cllr. Matthew Hicks, with support from Cllr. Beccy Hopfensperger as Cabinet Member for Adult Care, have issued the following reply.

## **2. Haverhill’s New Recycling Centre**

No updates. I will be visiting in April.

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### 3. Highways

This week I asked SCC Highways to email Haverhill Town Council regarding Haverhill Town Centre Signage. I will comment more on this during the Town Council meeting. This email read:

***“I am writing to provide you with an update, as my team have been commissioned to organise the reinstatement of the original Haverhill town centre signage (which relates to an existing TRO) following the expiration of an ETRO trialled throughout the COVID pandemic.***

***Having spoken to the design engineer working on this scheme, I’m confident that we’ll be in a position to send a job pack to our Operations department by 29<sup>th</sup> February (latest). It typically takes them a maximum of two weeks to check through our proposals and provide us with accurate costings. Once we hear back from them, we’ll be in a position to raise a construction order.***

***Cllr Mason has explained to me how long Haverhill have been waiting for this work to take place, for which I can only apologise. Please rest assured that I have raised his concerns with my manager, who will do her best to fast-track the programming of this project. As soon as I’m in a position to provide you with accurate installation dates, I’ll be in touch.***

***Thank you for your continued patience.***

***Community Works Project Lead”***

#### **Potholes**

The roads are in poor condition at the moment which is not unusual at this time of year. I even note that Tesco’s car park is particularly pothole ridden. Although the bad weather has had an impact, I do not wish to use this as an excuse, but I am also sure members are aware that this is not just a Suffolk issue.

I would like to remind members and members of the community to use the Suffolk Highways reporting tool. If reported we can hold Highways to account for the speed with which they tackle issues. <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>

I will soon be sharing a list of members regarding Haverhill’s share of the £10 Million being spent on Highways Roads – particularly on estates. Initially I was disappointed that not enough roads were identified in Haverhill, and whilst I can not recall them all, Cllr Roach, Cllr Sowa and myself lobbied hard for roads like Norton Close and Clarendon Road to be added - the good news is that they are on the list to be repaired.

#### **Camps Road Road Defect**

After over 12 months of chasing to get either Anglian Water or Highways to take responsibility for the Camps road subsidence I can confirm that works will be taking place this week. Let us all hope this repair will be lasting.

### 4. Persimmon Estate and Relief Road & S106 – Improvement to Ann Suckling Road and Wratting Road

I am meeting with West Suffolk Planning and Highways in the coming week and I will provide an update when I have more.

#### **West Suffolk Council News**

Little to report, as we await the debate on the proposed Budget to be held this week. I have been busy trying to resolve local issues related to unfair parking policies of the Sports centre, West Suffolk Controlled Car Parks, Fencing at Anglian pond and a number of other issues in

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response to resident enquiries.

Online headlines include:

I am meeting with West Suffolk Planning and Highways in the coming Week and I will provide an update when I have more.

### **Energy efficiency retrofits for older properties in West Suffolk**

Tenants of period properties with low Energy Performance Certificates ratings are enjoying lower energy costs and cosier homes thanks to work carried out by their landlords and West Suffolk Council.

### **Councils' loft insulation offer for Suffolk homes**

Funding is available to help Suffolk residents make their homes warmer and save money on their energy bills.

### **Community volunteers plant special oak in honour of the King**

A King's Coronation oak sapling selected from Windsor Great Park by the Crown Estate, has been planted by volunteers in Bury St Edmunds.

### **Local Council Leaders warn of 'catastrophic effect' of Suffolk County Council Budget plans**

The Leaders of Suffolk's district and borough councils have warned of "a catastrophic effect on hundreds of Suffolk's most vulnerable residents" should proposals contained within Suffolk County Council's Budget for 2024-25 be agreed.

### **West Suffolk: trailblazer initiative to boost recycling**

West Suffolk has become the first council in the country to get behind an initiative to increase recycling and support local businesses.

### **Unveiling the 2024 Makers Markets: Where creativity meets the community!**

Our popular Makers Markets are returning in March to Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill, and Newmarket in April.

### **New action plan agreed to tackle village pollution**

A package of measures to try to prevent a village's air pollution problem from getting any worse, has been agreed by West Suffolk Council's Cabinet this evening.

### **Council invests in health and wellbeing and cost-of-living support**

A Community Chest investment of over £450,000 to help people through the cost-of-living crisis and support residents' health and wellbeing, has been agreed tonight.

### **A chance to help shape our new housing, homelessness reduction and rough sleeping strategy**

A consultation which will inform a new West Suffolk strategy to help more people better afford a place to live, improve living conditions and reduce homelessness, has opened.

### **A chance to shape West Suffolk Council's approach to Street Trading**

People from across West Suffolk are being asked for their insight and input to help shape a new street trading policy for the district.

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

- **Great Wilsey Park:** Work continues at a slow pace.
- **Police Matters:** Crime stats for December 2024 were distributed on 8<sup>th</sup> February. No new version of Constable’s County available.
- **SCC Highways:** Cllr Mason trying to chase for updates but think he is getting as frustrated as I am with lack of any action even by those who have known about the problem since Oct 2021.
- **Combined Authority:** No further useful updates.
- **Greater Cambridge Partnership:** Work completed on the new roundabout at Bartlow and Dean Road Crossroads. Based on last time I went to a liaison meeting I believe there are plans afoot to make the entire road 40mph. Further work is scheduled at Wandlebury crossroads.
- **Parking:** No further updates. Problems still exist at New Croft, Westfield and Samuel Ward with inconsiderate pavement and verge parking. The grassed areas in way of Westfield School are now all rutted with cars that have obviously been stuck. Why nobody responsible is taking any action I do not know. There is very little seen of CPE enforcement other than in the car parks. I have reported this and a couple of parking matters elsewhere to the police.
- **Markets:** Still no real updates or progress on the markets review.
- **Sturmer Arches:** Highways England advised me last week an inspection took place last September with a copy just received by them. They have promised me a copy of the review once it had been redacted to remove personal information which I will distribute once received.
- **Fox PH (Wratting Road):** No further updates known.
- **Vixen PH (Millfields Way):** No further updates known.
- **Strasbourg Square:** Nothing new to report.
- **Other work:**
  - Continue to regularly approve HTC/HCT invoice payments.
  - Attended various HTC meetings online and in person.
  - Amended till system for the Zone to allow for reconciliation of refunds for parties. Now working on new feature for HAC bar to allow interval drinks to be processed through the till system directly, rather than being written down and then entered into the till system to save duplication, including printing confirmation of order for customer and for staff to make up the order pre-interval.
  - Awaiting report from digisign manufacturers as to what has caused non-traffic facing sign to not come on. The PC inside is running but appears may be due to a recent windows update.
  - I have reported to the police recent illegal drinking in Queen Street and elsewhere, in contravention of the PSPO, to the police hoping they will have WSC enforcement (whose job it is to enforce) to do something about it in conjunction with them.