

# Haverhill Town Council

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

### FULL COUNCIL

Held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 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 B Davidson  
Councillor P Firman  
Councillor P Hanlon  
Councillor A Luccarini  
Councillor M Martin  
Councillor J Mason  
Councillor L Miller-Jones  
Councillor D Page  
Councillor L Smith  
Councillor A Stinchcombe

**Apologies:** Councillor Q Cox  
Councillor H Sowa

**Absent:** Councillor J Crooks

**In Attendance:** Ms Helen Cullup, Manager of The Link  
Councillor D Roach – Suffolk County 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

**C24** **Apologies for Absence**  
**/120** The above apologies were noted.

**C24** **Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation**  
**/121** None.

**ACTION**

**C24 /122** **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024**  
It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor P Hanlon that the minutes of the meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 be agreed as a true record.  
**RESOLVED**

**C24 /123** **To note progress of actions arising from the minutes not covered by this Agenda**

C24/109 Antisocial behaviour at Jubilee Park – PC Jack Oakley has been unable to obtain CCTV monitoring of the park. Councillor Burns raised this with the PCC and the Chief Constable. The issue has been escalated to the Superintendent will who raise it with West Suffolk Council.

**C24 /124** **The Link**

Ms Helen Cullup, Manager of The Link gave an informative update regarding the activity taking place there, and the various agencies bringing services to Haverhill. The Link is a community lounge, funded by the Salvation Army Initiative Fund for two years. It is a place where residents can connect and receive help for things such as form filling and CV writing. Signposting is provided in a meaningful way and support is given to individuals for as long as they need it. Mrs Cullup has been in post for two months and the programme is growing – over 200 visitors a month. Reach uses the premises on Mondays and Thursday afternoons; The Link is open on all other weekdays. Aspirations are to open longer during the day and at weekends but the volunteer base needs growing to facilitate this. Mrs Cullup explained that there are now a number of asylum seekers who have taken residence in Haverhill. In order to support them, it would be useful to know how many are coming to the town as the Salvation Army and The Link would like to hold events to support them. Funding for these events would be greatly appreciated.

**C24 /125** **Reports from District/County Councillors on issues pertinent to HAVERHILL and the PUBLIC FORUM**

a) **Police Report** – No report received. The Town Clerk has been contacted recently by the Police Inspector offering another engagement meeting and is currently co-ordinating dates.

Mayor Smith attended the PCC Chief Inspector's Forum last week and said it was a positive meeting. Councillor Burns recorded the meeting and the video will go live once it has been approved by the PCC.

b) **Ambulance Report** – The Town Clerk is in the process of co-ordinating diaries of key people to arrange a date to meet and discuss ambulance response times in the Haverhill area.

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

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

Councillor Mason highlighted the issue with Quakers Lane (Item 3 in his report). He sent a photo of the significant injuries to the resident who was hospitalised which resulted in much interest and discussion with

**Town Clerk**

Highways, giving the issue further traction towards achieving a resolution.

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor A Brown, that the Town Clerk write to the Chief Executives of West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council on behalf of Haverhill Town Councillors to establish ownership of the Quakers Lane byway and the responsible party to resolve this dangerous issue.

**RESOLVED**

**Councillor D Roach** thanked Haverhill Town Council for all the work entailed in hosting the Knife Angel.

Most of his work recently has been regarding fostering and adoption. He is working with countywide stakeholders to bring a fostering and adoption roadshow to the county.

**Councillor A Luccarini** raised the issue of car parking at Mott's Field. This is problematical when people are attending football as the parking is insufficient.

**d) District Councillors**

**Mayor Smith** reported that the Thriving Communities Fund has recently closed and applications are being assessed.

**Councillor P Hanlon** reported that there is now special yearly funding in place for the CAB.

**e) Town Councillors' matters to report**

**Councillor J Burns:** see report attached (Appendix 2).

- f) A member of the public reported that there was a car accident this morning at the junction of Chalkstone Way near Sturmer Arches. It is difficult for drivers to see oncoming traffic as they turn right, when driving into town. He suggested that the Council liaise with Highways and Suffolk County Council to explore ways of reducing accidents at this site, for example lowering the speed limit. Councillor Roach will refer to the relevant parties, although he feels it is unlikely that the speed limit will be reduced.

Town Clerk

Cllr Roach

**C24** **Mayor's Report** – See Appendix 3.  
**/126**

**C24** **ONE Haverhill Partnership**  
**/127** The Board met in September and the new Chair, Henry Wilson led the meeting. It was a positive meeting and initiatives are coming together, especially around the area of health.

**C24** **Financial Matters**  
**/128** a) **Authorisation of payments:** It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor L Miller-Jones, that the listed payments totalling £198,997.63 be authorised.

**RESOLVED**

- b) Issuing of a Lloyds debit card: It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor R André, that Kerry Wallis, Finance Administrator, be issued with a Lloyds debit card with a cash limit of £1,000 to enable her the use of counter services at the Post Office/Banking Hub.

**RESOLVED**

**C24 Adoption of Committee Reports**

**/129**

a) Planning Committee:

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor R André, that the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024, and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

b) Personnel Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor L Smith, seconded by Councillor M Martin, that the minutes of the Personnel Working Party meeting held 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 and the recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

c) Leisure and Community Committee:

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor D Page, that the minutes of the Leisure and Community Committee meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and any recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

d) Energy and Sustainability Working Party:

It was proposed by Councillor L Miller-Jones, seconded by Councillor L Smith, that the minutes of the Energy and Sustainability Working Party meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and recommendations contained therein, be adopted.

**RESOLVED**

**C24 Actions taken under delegated powers**

**/130**

None.

**C24 Date of Next Meeting**

**/131**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**C24 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**/132**

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

**RESOLVED**

**C24** **Budget 2025/26**

**/133** The Clerk asked councillors for any comments, observations or proposals ahead of him preparing the first draft (working document) for the budget 2025/26:

Precept – As more dwellings are built in town the expectation is that there should be more council tax receipts, although the impact of tax relief schemes and discounts can significantly reduce this.

Suppliers – The council should continue to look for ways to make cost savings where possible on procurement.

Warm Spaces – With the changes to eligibility for the winter fuel allowance, the council should look to continue to offer 2-hours of warm space every day.

Asylum Seekers – support, e.g. through The Link.

Mental Health – The Mental Health Action Group (REACH) would like to carry out a mailing to let residents know what support is available. If the group creates the leaflet, could HTC fund the mailing costs through a grant?

Chalkstone Open Space – A living maze for young people using bee-friendly plants. This project should be progressed in any case.

'Fixing Fund' – A small pot of money for fixing things around the town, e.g. drop kerbs. Although strictly not HTC's responsibility it helps the lives of residents by getting the job done where funding is not available elsewhere. It is noted that Chalkstone and Clements could be aesthetically enhanced.

Events – Continue our programme of events.

Splash Pad – The long opening period adds significantly to the maintenance costs for this. Consideration should be made regarding reducing the opening period from, for example, Whitsun to the end of the summer school holidays.

Contributions to be made to an earmarked fund for the Splash Pad, The Zone and the Kiosk to help with future major expenditure for maintenance/refurbishment.

Stage Lighting upgrade – This is a capital outlay but will save staff time (staff won't physically have to move the lights) and electricity (LEDs are cheaper).

Additional Storage – Our growing stock of event equipment requires additional storage capacity.

Computing – Windows 10 will become legacy next year, meaning that in October 2025 there will be no security on PCs and laptops. The Windows server is 9 years old. A possible solution is to move to Rialtas Cloud solution.

Arts Centre Refurbishment/Development – Whilst there are plans for a major refurbishment, in the short term the Arts Centre needs a mini-facelift, particularly the toilets.

**Budget Working Party** – Councillors André, Burns and Davidson will work with the Town Clerk to create a draft budget for Full Council to review.

**C24**      **Closure**  
**/134**      The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.39pm.

Signed .....      Date.....

**Chairman**

**Appendix 1 – County Councillors’ reports**

**Appendix 2 – Town Councillors’ reports**

**Appendix 3 – Mayor’s report**

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

### **County and District Councillor Report, September 2024 Cllr Joe Mason**

Suffolk County Council will next sit in October as will West Suffolk Council which is holding an extraordinary meeting to discuss proposals to Waste Collections to increase recycling rates. It’s been a busy summer for me, engaged in lots of community projects/issues some of which I hope to report back on in the coming months in my capacity as a Councillor or Chair and an organiser of the Haverhill Show Committee/Haverhill Car Boot Sales and Haverhill Santa. I attended Haverhill in The Park as both a volunteer and spectator. I was most impressed with the organisation of the event, the acts and attendance. Congrats to all involved in making it happen. The knife angel programme and events has been particularly impactful and I’m keen to pass on my thanks to all involved in making it successful.

I don’t tend to report back on the individual committees I sit on unless I believe there is something of specific relevance to Haverhill residents, but it might be useful to know if there was something members wanted me to take forward to any of these. Of course, I meet and discuss on a regular ongoing basis. issues relating to Highways and with Planning e.g. the anaerobic digester. I have taken on the role of Conservative Group Shadow Cabinet portfolio holder for Families and Communities and I am keen to work collaboratively with the portfolio holder for families and communities, Donna Higgins, other members of the administration and officers to seek improvements across our District for the benefit of residents.

Currently I formally sit on the following committees.

#### **Suffolk County Council**

- Scrutiny Committee
- Children & Educational Services Committee
- SCC Shareholder Group

#### **West Suffolk Council**

- Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

#### **In this report.**

1. Suffolk County Council News
  2. Haverhill’s new recycling centre and the old Chalkstone Way site
  3. Highways Update
  4. Persimmon Estate
  5. Anaerobic Biodigester
  6. Menshed
  7. Banking Hub
- .....
8. West Suffolk News
  9. Addendums

# 1. Suffolk County Council News

Full Council next meets in October and so there is little to report

Main Headlines include:

## [Suffolk County Council launches £500,000 Culture Project Fund to Boost cultural activity across the county - Suffolk County Council](#)

Suffolk County Council is pleased to announce the launch of its new £500,000 Culture Project Fund. This initiative is aimed at strengthening and supporting local arts and museum projects in our local communities across the county.

This fund's goal is to improve the cultural landscape in Suffolk, benefiting communities through diverse and impactful initiatives that align with the council's key priorities: health and wellbeing, economic development, environmental protection, and value for money.

## [Sunnica challenge ends as two councils pull out](#)

Judicial review proceedings from four local councils against the Sunnica solar farm project will not be pursued after West Suffolk Council and Cambridgeshire County Council chose to withdraw from the process. Whilst not local to Haverhill there are concerns regarding decisions now being made on appeal ignoring local concerns about 'Green Projects' including perhaps the proposed anaerobic digester close to Haverhill & Withersfield.

## [£500 million investment in Suffolk scrapped by Government](#)

Suffolk's proposed in principle devolution deal, which would bring more than £500 million to the county over 30 years, has been scrapped by the Government. We have not had yet much time to discuss this, but the costs incurred in getting it this far are not insignificant and the decision by the Government has been received with some significant disappointment and frustration.

## [Council's investment in Simpler Recycling](#)

Suffolk County Council continues to prepare for significant changes to national recycling and waste collections, which will come into effect by the end of March 2026.

### **Other items I am or have been engaged with**

## 2. Haverhill's new recycling centre & the old Chalkstone Way site

Nothing new to add other than the site seems to have broadly welcomed by the community, with no particular issues highlighted to me. My attention now turns to the repurposing of the old site off Chalkstone Way.

As you know the recycling centre at Chalkstone Way is now closed to the public and the new site is open at Homefield Road. The site operators, FCC Environment, are going through the process to surrender the site's environmental permit with the Environment Agency.

The Environment Agency's lead times dictate this process. In some cases, it can take up to two years to complete.

In the meantime, the site is being kept secure by FCC, the previous site operator, and SCC will consider proposals for its future use. If it's determined the site has no use for the waste service, the site will be declared surplus to operational requirements, and it will then be down to the property team to determine its future use as part of the SCC portfolio. If someone has a meaningful opportunity for the site, then the property team would review and consider these.



### 3. Highways

#### Quakers Lane

Please note my email below sent to Senior Highways Officers, Chief Exec SCC Nicola Beech and Chief Exec WSC Ian Gallin.

*For many years local Haverhill councillors have wanted a solution to Quakers Lane, but since April I have been liaising with a Mrs Caroline White who runs the Ex Serviceman's Club, off Quakers Lane. Today I met with her. She has seen elderly people trip and fall and has had to look after them until the ambulance arrived. The latest resident to injure themselves was hospitalised [with profound injuries] and had to cancel a planned holiday.*

*The ex-serviceman's club is frequented by many elderly people who find navigating Quakers lane really hazardous as they struggle to lift their toes due to their age and reduced mobility to avoid tripping hazards. I struggle to believe that liability does not lie with one or both of the councils and by either grace or good fortune no claims have been made. This is not sustainable and inaction will lead to future injury to residents.*

*I understand that the section from the social club to the Recreation Way/Mill Road end is shown as owned by West Suffolk District Council, however I do believe both Council's should work together to find a solution. Silo thinking won't resolve this whereas a collaborative response will likely be more productive. I cant emphasise enough the frustration that exists in the town at a locally political level and also with residents and high street users.*

*During the Development and Regulation training there was some discussion regarding changing the status of such byways. What will be required to ensure that this whole thoroughfare can be made safe and navigable for pedestrians? This is not a county road/byway. This is in the Town Centre and provides an important pedestrian route through from nearby housing.*

*Sadly cars do use it and this damages the surface. Use of bollards would fix this in one fail swoop and allow any repairs to be lasting repairs. It doesn't need to be a road and traffic should be prevented from accessing it.*

High level talks between councils are currently taking place and my request is being properly looking into. I do believe this to be a good opportunity for movement on this long-standing issue. I may yet join the long list of councillors who have tried and not succeeded in getting a resolution, but I will continue to pursue this, on behalf of residents, until I have a final categoric answer as to what can be done to improve this neglected part of the Town.

As a result of my email above the 'larger' issues with the maintenance of the top section of Quakers Lane (from the Club towards Recreation Road) are already logged at Cabinet Member level on CR:489145 – a full response on this will be sent out as soon as the relevant parties within Suffolk Highways and WSDC have responded.

I've raised the defect(s) on the section of Quakers Lane leading from the High Street towards the ex-serviceman's club under CR:490173 for inspection by the Assessment Officer for the area – I've noted there are several in this section of road. I'm keen to work collaboratively with others, whether fellow County Councillors, Town Councillors or District Councillors to support this long standing issue being resolved.

#### **State/Condition of Block paving on the High Street**

Block paving, especially to carriageways is always something of a maintenance burden – particularly in areas that receive stress/pressure from vehicle wheel movements – as observed on Haverhill High Street through the 'chicane' narrowing outside Costa, and in the various parking and loading bays. The pressure from the wheels turning when steering pushes and loosens the blocks – which in turn loosen their neighbours etc. This is the case if the blocks are laid in sand and in locations where they are set in concrete.

There is sadly no cure for this; block paving is, from a purely Engineering perspective, a relatively poor surfacing material. Although they have high aesthetic value, they have very low resilience to traffic movement and are best suited to areas with very light or occasional traffic,

or reserved for pedestrian areas. When they are used as a carriageway surface – especially in areas with HGV traffic, we unfortunately have a cycle of damage and maintenance that cannot be avoided.

I have been told that this by no means limited to Haverhill. There are identical issues in multiple Town Centres where block paving has been used – such as Bury St. Edmunds, Newmarket, Mildenhall and Brandon.

Highways will maintain block work in line with their Highways Maintenance Operational Plan (HMOP) – for both carriageway and footway defects and to the same criteria as if this were an asphalt surface:

Carriageway Potholes – 40mm in depth & 200mm in diameter (or greater).

Carriageway Level Difference, where individual blocks/slabs have risen or fallen – 25mm (or greater).

Footway potholes – 20mm in depth & 200mm in diameter (or greater).

Footway Level Difference, where individual blocks/slabs have risen or fallen – 20mm (or greater).

As a rule of thumb, these are generally raised as level difference defects, rather than as potholes – as is more common for the loose/dislodged slabs to form a ‘trip hazard’ (level difference).

I have been asked to advise members of the public/business owners on the High Street to report issues with any block work/slabs to Suffolk Highways as they occur. These will then be inspected by the Assessment Officer for the area – and any reactive orders raised as appropriate. These reports also help us to prioritise planned surfacing work (such as wide scale repairs to areas of block work – as was done here a few years ago to multiple parking/loading bays and areas of footway on the High Street).

### **Haverhill Town Centre Signs**

Many thanks to Cllr John Burns who met with me to audit the Town Centre signs. This was shared with Highways and responses given, with some minor changes agreed and carried out that don't require new TRO's. I consider the Town Centre signage issue to be closed for now. Though I would welcome the newly formed West Suffolk High Street Enhancement Group, when it finally meets, to consider reviewing what the Town Centre needs in way of traffic management.

### **Other Works**

My locality officer has included the bent ‘dead end’ sign on the entrance to Broad Street; and the missing directional sign for Withersfield on the Cambridge Road/Withersfield Road roundabout.

I have already notified Highways of other missing signs along the A1017 and A1307, but these will be delayed as most directional signs are considered as non-statutory.

The damaged/missing bollards by the Corn Exchange has been visited by our Assessment Officer and have last week been replaced.

The faded zebra crossing markings next to these and also the ones outside the Council Offices that I also requested) have both been ordered for renewal. These are on a different priority and are both on CAT6/14 calendar weeks.

Resurfacing work is still planned across our Town. I don't have a schedule. The deadline for all works is May 2025 coinciding with the formation of the new administrations following the

County Elections. I have been informed that most work will be done before December, but this is very much in the hands of Milestone and not SCC.

It is good that York Road and most of Norton Road has been resurfaced. I might have an update for the Town Council meeting regarding the small section still not completed and remains in poor condition.

Highways agreed that the Hanchett Display Board could be removed, due to its poor and unsafe condition. Many thanks to the West Suffolk Parks team for its removal.

### **Missing Roundabout Sign & Ehringshausen Way Bus Stop**

I requested the missing Roundabout sign on Ehringshausen Way to be reinstalled. It has now been installed, oddly on an existing Bus Stop post. I have requested a new bus stop flag for this to be installed. Apparently both can be placed on the same pole. Not particularly aesthetic in my opinion, but at least is an attempt to reduce street sign clutter.

### **Greenfields Way Bus Stop**

I have had some very frank and pointed conversations about the continued delay to the proposed bus stop on Greenfields Way funded by then County Councillor, Paula Fox. The delays are unacceptable and I have been assured there will be a plan provided by Milestone for the completion of this project before the end of the year. There has been many legal difficulties in getting this over the line, but 4 years to deliver is far in excess of what is acceptable even taking these legal bottlenecks between multiple parties to resolve.

### **Delivery Bay – Cineworld (Ehringshausen Way)**

I'm happy that I can report some (cautiously) positive news regarding the missing Traffic Regulation Order for the loading bay on Ehringshausen Way outside the cinema.

There was a meeting with the Traffic Regulation Team, head of Enforcement and the various District Councils responsible for Parking Enforcement to address issues with TRO's.

They are supplying Highways with a county-wide list of anomalies by the end of September (TRO's with timing/signing issues or those that were missed entirely during the CPE consolidation in 2019).

Once these have been received, these are going to be put together and will be officially raised and formalised - paid for by the Transport Strategy team (to include correct signs, road markings and updating to Traff-Web etc).

This will mean that these 'missing' TRO's will finally be enforceable – and in the case of Ehringshausen Way, the loading bay will be strictly for loading – and not to be used for general parking.

As members might well know, this is not a quick process – as each individual TRO requires its own legal framework. However, at least we have now had confirmation that the ball has started rolling and it is at least better than the previous updates that have been given – which have all been unsatisfactory variations on: "we know about these and they are on a list"

Currently there are around 70 issues in West Suffolk (approximately 190 across the county).

From October the orders will start to progress. Once these have started to be processed, I have been promised a more accurate timescale.

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

I have attended multiple meetings with WS Planners and Highways regarding the Persimmon Development. Discussions continue about issues on a wide range of issues relating to the NW site including Ann Suckling Road and the new Estate on Saxon Crescent. Attached is the latest Persimmon update. Please note the Further Updates section on page 3 refers specifically to issues I have been chasing and which Persimmon have responded to.

There is a whole range of issues I am working on regarding the Persimmon Estate, from dropped kerbs to planting and landscaping, but specifically I would like to share:

**Farrant Rd** – Highways have snagged. No design work has yet received from Persimmon. Needless to say this is most frustrating and resident are getting frustrated with the lack of delivery.

**Howe Road Bus Gate** to Persimmon Site - ANPR - Automatic Number Plate Recognition is being considered. An enforcement method is needed to prevent rat running. So far concern has been raised by cab drivers who would prefer it opened up, but this is not something Highways or West Suffolk Council Support.

**Wratting Rd Puffin Crossing** at approximate location

<https://w3w.co/lifetimes.scrambles.surprised> has moved forward and it is hoped for a mid-2025 delivery. It is essential the increased flow of students/pedestrians from the Persimmon estate have an opportunity to cross safely here. (As evidenced in the Persimmon S106 improvements for transport infrastructure) Please note this Puffin Crossing will be converted into a Toucan Crossing when money is made available for a cycling route from the Persimmon Estate, Along Ann Suckling Road to this location and then on to Samuel Ward.

**Saxon Crescent Dopped Kerb and other Issues on Saxon Crescent**

Freshwater have agreed to install a missing dropped kerb on Ann Suckling way without which has resulted in pedestrians with push chairs from Saxon Crescent walking along the road unsafely. This is expected to be installed by Freshwater in the coming weeks.

Havebury have taken on the wider Saxon Crescent Estate and my discussions continue with West Suffolk to resolve snagging and landscaping issues, resulting from poor delivery from the Freshwater.

### **Future Phases**

Phase 5 has been submitted with the local Centre expected to drop imminently. I remain concerned following discussions with West Suffolk Planner regarding some of the material choices Persimmon seem to be pursuing and contrary to what the Town Council Working party wished to see.

**Wratting Road Crossing**

No further news – Discussions ongoing

## **5. Anaerobic Biodigester**

There is no further update as Acorn seem to be slow to respond to the list of additional information and mitigations relating to issues arising from their application. Planning will not apply a time limit due to the applicant appealing that decision which would result in the final decision on the planning application as a whole being taken away from SCC.

The delays are frustrating but nothing can be done until Acorn complete and submit additional information including further proposals of mitigation.

## **6. Menshed**

I would not normally include grant applications in my report but as many members will have been made aware, Menshed is now based at the old caretaker's house at Samuel Ward Academy. They were recently burgled and lost some of their equipment. Thankfully they have received donations of equipment from the community to help with what was lost. I have agreed to help fund security measures to make the site more secure.

This group does important work in the town and surrounding area working supporting people with their mental well-being. I am keen to encourage members, especially ward members, to contact the group and arrange a visit.

## **7. Banking Hub**

I received notification from CAUK that works are progressing well on the Permanent High Street Banking Hub premises and they should have news regarding an opening date before too long. As members now know the Temporary Hub is now open in the Library, providing access to cash and everyday banking services to the community whilst they progress the permanent home for the Hub.

The address and opening hours of the Temporary Banking Hub are as follows:

**Haverhill Library, Camps Road, Haverhill, CB9 8HB Opening Hours: Monday 9am-1pm, Tuesday to Friday 9am-5pm**

They are currently advertising an information "Drop in Session" for Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September

## **8. West Suffolk Council News**

### **Families & Communities**

Two weeks ago, in my capacity as shadow portfolio holder for Families & Communities, I met with officers Lesley-Ann Keough and Jon Eaton, as well as Portfolio Holder Cllr Donna Higgins.

We discussed the need for the council to achieve income maximisation for people eligible for benefits, and I raised a number of 'low level' issues across the portfolio offering some collaborative working to support the council and of course by extension residents. Two specific 'asks' I am willing to share to the Town Council from that meeting is that there is a lack of information/guidance on Bonfires and on Fireworks. Each year I get correspondence from residents on these two topics. Many District Councils include guidance on their Websites and I believe it is an omission. It was a productive meeting which I hope is of benefit and we have agreed to meet quarterly going forward.

### **Winter Fuel Payments**

I attended Cabinet on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September and spoke/asked a question on West Suffolk Council's response to Winter Fuel Payments

*"This morning I met with REACH and this afternoon I spoke with Citizens Advice. It is a real challenge to reach out to those people who are entitled to benefits but have not claimed e.g. Pension Credit or Attendance Allowance. Partner organisations like these are invaluable working with people who need support. Entitlement to benefits should not be seen as extra or a bonus, it is what people should be*

getting based on need. The council must do everything it can to reduce the numbers of people not claiming what they are entitled to.

*In Suffolk, indeed across the country we have a brewing Winter Fuel Crisis. It's worth noting some Councils across the Country including e.g. Basildon, Blackpool & the London Borough of Bexley are introducing Funds/schemes and it is more than likely other councils will step in. A harsh winter could be devastating, with a further likely energy price increase in January. The measures by these councils bravely recognise the vulnerable position that many will face in the months ahead.*

*I know I am not alone about being concerned if we fail to act now. Will the Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities meet with the Section 151 Officer to discuss the possibility of creating a Winter Fuel Discretionary Fund, centrally managed by West Suffolk Council, to support people who fall outside the eligibility criteria and are going to be severely affected by the changes to Winter Fuel Payments?*

*This isn't just coming from me. Henry Wilson, Founder of REACH today specifically asked me if this could be brought to Council. I also spoke today with Citizens Advice's Chief Executive Officer Carol Eagle who is keen for such an initiative to be put in place. As such I invite the council to ensure that those who now miss out and are now vulnerable have the support of their local district council with the creation of Winter Fuel Discretionary Fund or something like it. Secondly, please can the portfolio holder confirm whether the Warm Spaces initiative is going to be reviewed or extended and information when this will be shared across our communities."*

A vague and somewhat unsatisfactory answer was given, and I look forward to hearing from the Council what measures they are now considering to mitigate the damage caused by the changes to Winter Fuel Payments.

I am highly motivated on this topic and I am also working with councillors at Suffolk County Council on a County Wide response.

## **Waste Collection & Recycling**

At West Suffolk Council proposals are being put forward to Full Council in October to approve changes for Waste Collection & Recycling in response to Government Legislation. The changes will see additional bins provided e.g. to separate Card and Paper from other recyclables to prevent contamination prior to recycling. I am most concerned that there will be an attempt to change collection of black bin waste to a three-weekly cycle. Something I can not support. Too many people in the ward I serve have children in nappies and have dog waste. On the Persimmon estate and others we have a high proportion of young families and a change to 3 week collection to black bin will not be acceptable as it will become unhygienic and most unpleasant for the community, particularly in warmer weather.

## **Biodiversity and Community Orchard – Glebe**

Funding for a second and additional planting project on the Glebe is in place with planting set for late October/early November. The creation of a Community Orchard in an unused green space behind some house along Chapple Drive is in process and it is hoped planting can take place this October.

## **Woolpack planting project – Gateway to Haverhill Town Centre**

Many thanks to councillors who offered to contribute to the Brick Planter project outside the Woolpack. After a considerable number of meetings and discussions West Suffolk have now agreed to clear and plant this and grant funding will no longer be required. This work will likely be done in the new year.

I am engaged in numerous other grounds maintenance issues/highways around Town.

## **Stour View Medical Centre**

It is now common knowledge that West Suffolk council purchased Stour View Medical Centre. I welcomed the decision but there is a real lack of information about what will happen with this site. I have pressed for more information to be shared with local members.

## **Better Access to Health & Mental Health Services**

I continue to press the need for better Health & Mental Health Services/provision, and I am calling on the council to work with partners to help deliver better access to Health Services in the Town.

## **West Suffolk Council News Stories**

### ***Cabinet backs strategy for Affordable, Available and Decent Homes***

A new West Suffolk housing strategy, setting out actions to try to address affordability, living conditions and homelessness, has been backed this evening.

Earlier this year, West Suffolk Council asked residents, town and parish councils, housing associations, local NHS trusts and developers to give their views on the various challenges around housing as well as some of the possible actions that the council could take to try to address them.

That shaped a draft Housing, Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy which Cabinet members discussed this evening, agreeing to recommend it to council to adopt when it meets on 19 November.

### **Don't fall for text message parking fine scam**

West Suffolk Council is warning residents and members of the public not to respond to a text message stating that they have received a parking fine. The text message is fake and is part of a national scam.

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**Please note this report does not include all the work I am undertaking at the moment or projects I am engaged with and trying to move forward for the betterment of the community. Members are always welcome to contact me should they need any information or assistance relating to issues across the Cangle District.**

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

- **Great Wilsey Park:** Have asked Redrow for further updates generally but specifically about the lack of traffic lights at junction of Chalkstone Way & Wrating Road that are part of the masterplan traffic mitigation proposals that are now well overdue. Redrow were kind enough to sponsor Haverhill in the Park.
- **Police Matters:** Crime stats for July 2024 were distributed on 7<sup>th</sup> September. I helped facilitate the PCC & Chief Constable meeting at HAC on 19<sup>th</sup> September. Sadly, despite numerous posts and adverts on noticeboards, virtually no member of the public turned up perhaps suggesting that they have no concerns. I made a video of the meeting which will be made public once approved by the PCC's office.
- **SCC Highways:** As described in Cllr Joe Mason's report I met with him on 29<sup>th</sup> July to review the town centre road signs that have been installed and what has not so that he could report back to SCC. Although he has stated that it is considered closed outside any new TRO activity, I believe the existing TRO has not been met particularly over where it starts and especially as the sign changes were agreed months ago. It is very frustrating that even after 3 years SCC still cannot get it right which is not for lack of trying by all persons involved in our town.
- **Combined Authority:** No further updates.

- **Greater Cambridge Partnership:** Seems they are voting next month on whether to progress with the new busway from Cambridge South to Four Wentways despite numerous objections driving it across open countryside.
- **Parking:** I have again this last week reported to the police the illegal parking in way of Westfield School resulting in damage to verges (30 vehicles I found parked) and unnecessary traffic jams at school times as CPE has failed to take any action for months. Similarly, it seems that despite promises, the HCSA is failing to monitor and manage the parking on the verges outside New Croft as well perhaps because SWA installed bollards at their premises following the summer resurfacing of their own car park. Numerous cars parked there last week.
- **Markets:** I have requested an update from the Portfolio Holder as to what progress has been made, what is being done both short and long term, and what items have been abandoned from the 2002 review I chaired as it has gone very quiet again.
- **Sturmer Arches:** Still nothing to report.
- **Fox PH (Wratting Road):** No further news known.
- **Vixen PH (Millfields Way):** No further news known.
- **Strasbourg Square:** Nothing new to report.
- **Other work:**
  - Attended various HTC meetings online and in person.
  - Helped facilitate and worked 6 days on Haverhill in the Park including providing the till systems for the burger bar and filming facilities.
  - The failed pump on the Splash Pad could not be repaired as we were told incorrectly by the supplier it is a 400vAC 3 phase, but it was proven to be 240vAC single phase. The direct replacement pump is specially made in Italy and has a 2-month lead time. It was therefore decided to defer repair until early next year to maximise any warranty period. In the meantime, only one pump has been working which means some of the features did not operate to their full potential, but I am not aware of any complaints made either to HTC or via the Kiosk. Regular cleaning was implemented with an interim more extensive hot water clean made at beginning of this month with aim to introduce a contracted service next season. The pad will be closed for the winter on 30<sup>th</sup> September pm and arrangements made to decommission the system which includes emptying the tanks and blowing air through the pipes in case it goes below freezing.
  - Working with HTC staff assisted in removal of bunting and barriers from the Market Square and elsewhere.
  - Helped with Knife Angel installation, opening/closing ceremonies and with the get-out planned for early 30<sup>th</sup> Sept. Sourced & help install 4G CCTV for duration. Made video of both install and opening with closing to come.
  - Worked on assisting WS Training with network printing problems at Clements.
  - Carried out several IT related tasks at Zone, Kiosk and HAC including changes to till software specifically for HitP as well as changes to management reporting tools.



## APPENDIX 3 – Mayor’s report

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

In the two months since our last full council Liz and I have carried out the usual variety of events and engagements. On many of those occasions when my consort has been unable to be there I have had the company of Cllr Pat Hanlon attending in his role as Chair of West Suffolk Council.

Most notable from the period has been the visit to our town of the Knife Angel, the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression. It has been a major coup to bring this iconic and thought-provoking statue to Haverhill, and a huge feather in the cap of our town. The circumstances which saw it come here, and a huge thanks to the Barfield family for their part in making it happen and sharing their experiences, are well documented, but I would like to pay tribute to our council officers and staff, especially Sara Marsh, who brought together all of the logistical elements that made the month long visit of the Angel an experience that has reached out to the whole of the community and beyond. We must make sure the message it conveyed is carried forward, and the tragic fate of young Harley is never repeated in our town.

When Lady Clare, Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, came to Haverhill for Suffolk Day she expressed her wish to be given a tour of Haverhill, warts and all! We were able to oblige when we combined it with her visit for the ceremony to welcome the Knife Angel. After meeting with some of our senior officers, who explained some of the many works undertaken by the council on behalf of our residents, the Town Clerk and I accompanied Lady Clare and Stephen Singleton, one of her Deputy Lieutenants, to visit two companies on the industrial estates. Both companies were remarkable in their own way; the first was Nyobolt, a start-up company that has discovered a ground-breaking new way to accelerate the recharging of batteries for heavy machinery, and Bernhard, a global leader in sports turf management and technology that previously went under the name of Atterton and Ellis, a name which I am sure is familiar to us all. It was certainly an eye opener to see the quality of expertise under our noses, and which we don’t do enough to celebrate. We then visited the Clements estate where our visitors were able to see for themselves some of the challenges facing elements of our community, and also some of the projects we are putting in place to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. Lady Clare said she had always had a soft spot for Haverhill, and the community spirit we encapsulate, and enjoyed her visit immensely and looked forward to the next time that she could come here.

August saw the visit of our friends from our French twin town of Pont St Esprit. Thank you to the committee of Haverhill and District Town Twinning Association for inviting myself and Deputy Mayor Cllr Quinn Cox to a number of events that they put on to mark the occasion. It was obvious that our visitors much appreciated the effort put in to make their stay an enjoyable one. I think my efforts to make a speech in French were well received, even if HTTA members didn’t understand a word! The most important thing in my mind was the connections made between some of our visitors, who are teachers back in France, and Samuel Ward and Castle Manor schools. It is vital that we connect the young people of our towns in order to engender the spirit of entente cordiale in future generations.

Other events of note, in no particular order or level of importance, were Haverhill in the Park, the Estate Fun Days, Friends of 1451 Haverhill ATC BBQ, the welcoming of Rev Moses John as the new minister for Haverhill Methodist Church, the Battle of Britain Service in Bury St Edmunds, the Haverhill Silver Band concert, Haverhill u3a’s open day, and the annual Air Cadets Award Ceremony. The last three events were held here at the Arts Centre, which shows what a pivotal role this building has in bringing together our community.

I would like to thank Cllr Cox for his support, and for standing in for me when I have been unavailable.

And thanks, as ever, to Vicky for managing what can be a hectic diary.

