

Haverhill Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

Held on **Tuesday, 27 January 2026** 8.00pm at Haverhill Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill

Present: Mayor Councillor Q Cox
Deputy Mayor L Miller-Jones
Councillor A Brown
Councillor J Burns
Councillor J Crooks
Councillor B Davidson
Councillor P Firman
Councillor P Hanlon
Councillor M Martin
Councillor J Mason
Councillor D Smith
Councillor L Smith
Councillor A Stinchcombe
Councillor J Teixeira

Apologies: Councillor A Luccarini
Councillor D Page
Mr E Pinnock

In Attendance: Colin Poole, Town Clerk
Vicky Phillips, Deputy Clerk
David Roach Suffolk County Councillor

There were no members of the public present.

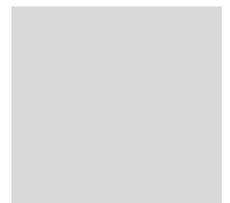
Welcome:

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

MINUTES

C26 **Apologies for Absence**
/001 The above apologies were noted.

C26 **Declaration of Interests and requests for dispensation**
/002 There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.



C26 /003 Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held Monday, 15 December 2025

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon seconded by Councillor J Burns that the minutes of the meeting held Monday, 15 December 2025 be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

C26 /004 To note progress of actions arising from the minutes not covered by this Agenda

a) C25/170b – Ambulance Report – Falls First Responder Volunteer Scheme

CP reported that he had sent the letter proposing a 'falls first responder' scheme and had subsequently met with Trust and commissioners from the ICB. It was a positive meeting, and they are looking at how such a scheme could work. They will need to adhere to local and national rules regarding such schemes, e.g. obtaining DBS checks etc and will need to work out how there can be two different levels of volunteering: falls first responders and community first responders. It was acknowledged that this was not a silver bullet but the scheme could potentially free up some ambulances and mean that people who are lying on the floor would be seen to sooner. CP also reported that a discussion took place around calls being placed for ambulances by care homes and the percentage of people that were transported to hospital from them after a fall, which may indicate a no-lift policy being operated by some establishments. The scheme would be a pilot in Haverhill, which could then be implemented more widely.

We will be kept informed of progress.

b) C25/170c – County Councillors – The removal of old signage at Burton End has been reported and waiting for the work to be done, although not a priority. Members asked the Clerk to find out if we can remove the sign ourselves.

c) C25/179c) - Broader range of civic Awards report – the Deputy Clerk is working on the report, to be tabled at a future meeting.

Clerk

Deputy Clerk

C26 /005 Reports from District/County Councillors on issues pertinent to HAVERHILL and the PUBLIC FORUM

a) Police Report:

Suffolk PCC Precept Proposal

It was proposed by Councillor Burns and seconded by Councillor A Brown that we add in a comment requesting funding for local policing.

RESOLVED

b) Ambulance Report:

Councillor A Stinchcombe reported that Councillor J Mason had taken the report to Health and Scrutiny and ambulance response times is now on the scrutiny meeting programme. Councillor J Mason thanked Councillors Stinchcombe and Brown for their help.

c) Suffolk County Councillors: (see Appendix i)

Councillor J Mason had circulated his report ahead of the meeting. He added that since he had circulated his report a couple of things had moved on:

- i) High Street Signage: several signs have now been erected, and the priority of traffic flow has been changed to allow priority to eastbound traffic. There will still be some work to do due to the positioning of underground utilities, post locations etc. Highways are going to look at amount of signage to ensure that signage doesn't dominate the street

scene. Councillor J Mason has also requested a pedestrian zone sign at the entrance to Peas Market and priority signs to be lit.

- ii) The proposal for a Blue Light Hub is moving forward. West Suffolk Council are preparing a technical document which will need to be signed off by Police, Fire and Ambulance services. The lead officer is Alex Wilson and the Town Council may want to make representations in due course.
- iii) Burton Centre Lights: the footpath between Camps Road and the car park is dark as some lights are not working. The property team are looking at solutions going forward, including LED fittings and light sensors, as part of a wider town centre lighting strategy.

Councillor Mason will continue to report the TRO outside the Cinema

Cllr Mason

Councillor D Smith reported that recently signs had been put up incorrectly along Helions Park Avenue, these should have been placed outside the Bull Public House. Councillor J Mason will follow up.

Cllr Mason

County Councillor D Roach reported:

- Work on the potholes along Coupals Road by the Golf Course, which belongs to Essex County Council, will be done in March. The County Council are trying to hurry this along.
- Suffolk County Council were unable to help regarding poor broadband provision to the Shetland Road area.

Councillor J Mason reported that he, along with other Councillors, had attended an excellent training session on fraud. It was requested that the Clerk contact PC Jack Oakley regarding the possibility of providing a training session which was open to the public.

Town Clerk

d) District Councillors:

Councillor P Hanlon reported that the West Suffolk budget included £1,000,000 for wider public realm improvements for Haverhill town centre, this is in addition to the £693,000 already committed. Councillor P Hanlon will be working with the Town Centre Enhancement Group and will report back on further details.

Councillor Hanlon

Councillor D Smith reported that residents have raised concerns over the lack of safety equipment around SUDS and attenuation ponds, particularly that at this time of year they are not draining away. Councillor Smith had therefore requested officers to contact Anglian Water. The Clerk mentioned that he had contacted Simon Collins at West Suffolk District Council regarding their policies on such safety equipment, as West Suffolk District Council had cleared the area around the attenuation pond at Cleves Road, so could belong to them.

Councillor P Firman reported that the upgrade work had started at Abbeycroft Leisure, beginning with refurbishing the soft play area first.

e) Town Councillors:

- i. Councillor Burns had circulated his report (attached appendix ii)
- ii. Councillor T Brown enquired if there was a possibility that a project be undertaken to enhance the unused little brick shed near Sturmer Arches, belonging to Anglian Water. Although it may eventually be knocked down, it could be enhanced in the meantime.

Town Clerk

- iii. Councillor Joe Mason has reported fly tipping near Quakers Lane, however, West Suffolk Council said that as it is on private land they cannot remove it. Councillor J Mason wondered if this was something the Community Wardens could remove. The Clerk explained that the Community Wardens have been stopped from taking some items to the new recycling centre, but he is working on resolving this and will email Councillor Mason once this has been sorted.
- iv. Councillor Q Cox reported that he would like to thank the Haverhill Silver Band, who were outstanding and should be recognised as a great cultural asset for Haverhill.

f) Public Forum:

None.

C26 **Mayor's Report**

/006 Mayor Cox had submitted his report (appendix iii).

C26 **ONE Haverhill Partnership**

/007

a) Report from Clerk

The Board meeting has taken place, a date to be confirmed for the next meeting.

b) Stourview Wellbeing Centre

The building is now in the Town Council's possession, and the two members of staff are in post. They have been working hard over the last couple of weeks getting the building ready for use. The Clerk thanked Councillor J Burns who, with very little notice, has been installing the I.T. Policies and procedures are being written, quotes are being requested from flooring contractors, and it is now in use as a warm space for older people. The first of our partners, Reach, are moving in and starting work from February. The Mental Health Action Group have visited the site. It is also very positive that the groups who showed an interest initially have now confirmed they are coming.

There will be an official opening of the hub in March/April time, to be confirmed.

Councillor D Roach left at 8.51pm

C26 **Financial Matters**

/008

a) Authorisation of payments:

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns, seconded by Councillor J Teixeira that the listed payments totalling £106,384.26 was authorised.

RESOLVED

b) Grant Applications over £2,000

None

C26 **Budget and Precept 2026/27 (Appendix iv)**

/009

a) To approve the 2026/27 budget

The clerk presented the 2026/27 budget and the recommendations from the Finance Committee for the following budget:

Net Expenditure:	£2,392,598
Net Income:	£ 734,755
From Reserves:	£ 46,000
Balance:	£1,611,843
Precept:	£1,618,023
To Reserves:	£ 6,180

It was proposed by Councillor J Burns seconded by Councillor M Martin that the proposed budget for 2026/27 be adopted.

RESOLVED

b) Approve the precept for 2026/27

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor D Smith that a precept for 2026/27 of £1,618,023 be adopted. This represents an increase of 2½% or 9p p/week on a Band D property, meaning the Town Council contribution by Band D council taxpayers would be £198.10 per year. Band B council tax, representing 48.23% of dwellings in Haverhill, would rise to £154.08 an increase of 7p p/week.

RESOLVED

c) Authorise the Chairman and Clerk to serve the precept demand upon the District Council

It was proposed by Councillor D Smith, seconded by Councillor J Burns to authorise the Chairman and Clerk to sign and serve the precept demand upon the District Council

RESOLVED

Town Clerk

C26 Limited Community Governance Review

/010 The Clerk had circulated an email from West Suffolk District Council regarding a limited Community Governance Review of parish and town councils.

The Clerk went on to explain to members the background for separating the existing West Haverhill parish ward into two parish wards (West and NW Haverhill) to establish coterminous boundaries following LGBCE changes to county divisions. This was brought about by a gap created when boundary changes were made by the LGBCE. The change would take effect at the next parish council elections in 2027.

NOTED.

C26 West Suffolk Traffic and Speeding Group

/011 An email was circulated prior to the meeting from the Chair of Lidgate Parish Council requesting a the Town Council's views on the review of Suffolk County Council's policies and procedures on road safety and rural speed limits.

It was proposed by Councillor D Smith, seconded Councillor J Burns to support the idea of a 40mph buffer zone on an approach to a village, which would allow drivers to slow gradually.

RESOLVED

It was noted that recent policy changes allows for greater freedom for parish councils to request 20mph zones, making it a local choice for individual village needs.

Town Clerk

C26 Adoption of Committee Reports

/012 a) Planning Committee:

It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon, seconded by Councillor D Smith that the minutes of the meetings held 15th December 2026 and 12th January 2026 and any recommendations contained therein, be agreed as a true record.

RESOLVED

b) Leisure and Community Committee:

Minutes of the meeting held 19th January 2026 to be tabled at the next meeting.

- c) Finance Working Party:
Minutes of the meeting held 20th January 2026 to be agreed at the next meeting.

C26 /013 **Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting will be held on Monday, 23 February 2026

C26 /014 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**
It was proposed by Councillor P Hanlon seconded by Councillor M Martin, 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 – Matter protected by data protection
RESOLVED

C26 /015 **Public memorial**
The Town Council are considering ways that people who have contributed to Haverhill are celebrated, therefore, it was proposed by Councillor J Mason, seconded by Councillor J Burns that the matter be reconsidered at a later date.
RESOLVED

C26 /016 **Closure**
It was requested that the closure of the bus service be added to the next agenda.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.39pm.

Town Clerk

**Deputy
Town Clerk**

Signed Date.....
Chairman

- Appendix i) - County Councillors' reports**
- Appendix ii) – Town Councillors' reports**
- Appendix iii) – Mayor's report**

Appendix (i)
County and District Councillor Report, December 2025

Report by Cllr Joe Mason

In this report

1. Suffolk County Council News
2. Highways Update
3. Active Travel, Cyclists, Pedestrians and Rights of Way
4. SCC Haverhill Recycling Centre – Plasterboard
5. Blue Lights Hub
6. Haverhill Library Toilet
7. Suffolk Community Libraries
8. Anaerobic Digester News
9. Ambulance Service and Response Times in Haverhill
10. EV Charging Installations
11. Persimmon (Landscaping & Maintenance Issues)
12. West Suffolk Council News & Updates
13. Community
14. Addendum (SCC LGR Letter to Minister)

1. Suffolk County Council News

Extraordinary Council Meeting was held on January the 9th to discuss LGR and the implications of holding elections. Lots of discussion and opinion in the chamber, locally and in the National Media, which I don't need or intend to contribute to in this report. Please note the following from the Full Council Debate and the subsequent decision by Cabinet to send to the government the information they asked for:

Suffolk answers Government's question on LGR capacity

Suffolk County Council has written to the government detailing the scale of the work needed to deliver local government reorganisation (LGR) in the county.

It follows a request from ministers for council leaders in 63 areas of the country to explain the implications of delaying their 2026 elections on the major reorganisation programme. The government will then make the decision on whether to postpone the polls.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/suffolk-answers-governments-question-on-lgr-capacity>

Please see Addendum for the letter sent to Alison McGovern MP.

Council writes to Minister requesting change to Red highways rating

In the letter below to Simon Lightwood MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department for Transport, Councillor Paul West, Suffolk County Council Cabinet member for Operational Highways explains why Suffolk's Red status under the new map and traffic-light rating system should be changed to Amber.

This follows a meeting with DfT officials and officers from the council, who explained that the methodology used by the DfT had incorrectly given Suffolk a Red status over spending on highways maintenance, resulting in an overall Red.

Dear Minister,

On behalf of Suffolk County Council, we write to formally place on record a factual error within the Department for Transport's Local Highway Maintenance Ratings, published on Sunday 11 January 2025.

Suffolk has been rated Red for capital spend. This assessment is based on factually incorrect figures. Over the last two financial years, and consistently over the past five years, every pound received by Suffolk County Council through the Highway

Maintenance Grant has been fully invested in the highway service... for more visit link <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/council-writes-to-minister-requesting-change-to-red-highways-rating>

**Suffolk County Council backs new 20mph speed limit policy for communities
It will now be easier to lower the speed limit on roads appropriate for a 20mph zone.**

Published: 09 Jan 2026

A new 20mph speed limit policy to enhance road safety and improve quality of life across Suffolk's communities has been agreed by county councillors.

Suffolk County Council's Cabinet has backed the proposal to make it easier to reduce the speed limit, where appropriate, in residential and high-pedestrian areas to 20mph.

Under the new scheme any applications for a 20mph limit in an area where recorded average traffic speeds are 28mph or under is likely to be approved.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/suffolk-county-council-backs-new-20mph-speed-limit-policy-for-communities>

Department for Education acknowledges progress - and sets clear expectations for Suffolk's SEND improvement

The partnership responsible for overseeing and delivering services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Suffolk has been praised for making important improvements by the Department for Education.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/department-for-education-acknowledges-progress-and-sets-clear-expectations-for-suffolks-send-improvement>

2. Highways Update

Monthly safety inspections continue across our main roads, and any defects meeting intervention criteria will be repaired within the required HMOP timescales.

- **Haverhill Town Centre Signs** Mostly installed now with opposing priorities on Camps Road now corrected. A couple of posts need to be de-illuminated and despite best efforts Highways have come up against an UKPN issue meaning they need to re-programme those works. I don't have a date for that but will continue to monitor
- **Relief Road** The Relief Road, some problems with street lights and toucan crossing lights not working. Highways and UK Power Networks are on it, though disappointing is taking so long. I have requested the Hesco fencing to be removed.
- **Allington Walk**
No further update: This road is still scheduled a resurface but has been pushed back to February – No further update.
- **Withersfield Road** I am pleased to confirm that the resurfacing for sections of Withersfield Road remains scheduled for delivery in 2026/27.
- **Bypass / A1307 cutback and signage issues** Lobbying hard on the need for a cutback. At the moment, Highways have not been able to identify any planned work that they could utilise in the short or medium term to do anything meaningful or cost effective. I have been told there may be more opportunities in 26/27 and with bird nesting season not far away, it is going to be more achievable to review this in the new financial year and see if we can get anything planned from 1st Sept 26. Initial quotes for the cutback are between £30 - £40k which is proving a barrier

for full works to be ordered. In the meantime, the Community Liaison Engineer and the Highway Assessment Officer are going to visit together next week to assess anything that may be HMOP and if there is that will obviously trigger a reactive order in isolation.

Regarding signage, the Community Liaison Engineer provided a detailed report for which elements met safety-defect criteria and which would be logged for consideration within future works programmes.

- **Road Markings** If members are aware of particular locations where you feel road markings require attention, please send them through and I will request these to be reviewed against SCC's HMOP safety standards. Where priority road markings are deemed substantially faded, refresh works can be ordered. Separately, it has been confirmed that the Haverhill Bypass is already commissioned for road-marking renewal in 2026/27.
- **Potholes – General** Please can members report potholes that appear in their wards. I am doing what I can and residents are increasingly using the online tool. <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk/>
Call 0345 606 6171 to report a highways problem that poses an immediate danger to the public.

3. Active Travel, Cyclists, Pedestrians and Rights of Way

- **Haverhill Local Transport Plan** No further Updates. The HLTP is progressing and officers are identifying projects for delivery across the Town. I believe I will have more to share next month.
- **New Pelican/Toucan Crossing on Wrattling Road** No further update, still awaiting date for the installation.
- **Raised Table on Ann Suckling Road** Awaiting Installation date. A draft minor works licence was issued to Persimmon (Friday 23 January). Once the agreement is signed and returned, Persimmon will be able to appoint a contractor, book road space, and confirm traffic management arrangements, although the timing for works is ultimately dependent on the developer.
- **Greenfields Way dropped Kerbs & Path from Clements School to The Doctors Surgery (Bus Stop)**
No further updates: Still awaiting notification of an installation date. I continue to raise It had been paused due to other planned works on Greenfield Way. This has now been lifted. No date but expecting installation in January/February, weather permitting.
- **Bus Improvement Scheme**
No further updates
- **Persimmon agree to install path to improve severance between Persimmon & Saxon Crescent Estates**
For around the past three years I have been working with Persimmon Homes, West Suffolk Council and Havebury to secure a pedestrian path linking the Saxon Crescent and Boyton Place estates. While small in scale, these works are costly and had not previously progressed.
I was very pleased to recently receive confirmation from Persimmon Homes that the path would be delivered, and works have now started on site. In addition, Persimmon has reinstated the pedestrian access into Farrant Road Car Park, which had not been restored following earlier emergency works by Anglian Water.

Together, these improvements reduce severance between the estates, restore access to the car park and make the area safer and more accessible for residents, particularly families and children.

The path was not a requirement of the original planning permission, which predated the Saxon Crescent development, and its delivery reflects a positive, community-minded approach by the developer. Credit is due to Persimmon Homes for delivering these works.

4. SCC Haverhill Recycling Centre - Plasterboard

Plasterboard and gypsum are now being accepted for disposal at Haverhill's Recycling Centre on Homefield Road. I visited the site today and can confirm the service is live and already being used. While it might sound like a small change, it will make a real difference locally. For some time, plasterboard disposal has been a genuine frustration for Haverhill-based tradespeople, with many having to make long round trips to centres such as Bury St Edmunds or Saffron Walden just to dispose of a common waste material. That often meant a 40-mile round trip, adding unnecessary time, fuel costs and disruption to working days.

This issue has been raised with me repeatedly by local builders and small businesses over recent months. Waste disposal sits with Suffolk County Council, and I was keen to see Haverhill treated fairly and provided with the same facilities already available elsewhere in Suffolk, particularly following the investment in the new recycling centre.

I'm grateful to Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy, Planning & Waste, **Cllr Chris Chambers**, for his support in helping make this happen. His backing has been key in ensuring this service is now available locally. The change will support local trades, make things easier for residents carrying out DIY projects, and encourage proper disposal and recycling rather than material being stored or disposed of incorrectly. There is a disposal charge for tradespeople, in line with existing waste rules, but having the facility available in Haverhill is a significant step forward.

5 Blue Lights Hub

As reported in the press in December. Pleased this current proposal is now public. I've had some really positive and constructive discussions over the past year with Nick Timothy MP, Tim Passmore PCC and colleagues from across the emergency services, and it's great to see genuine momentum building around the proposal for a Blue Lights Hub in Haverhill. A meeting was held with West Suffolk Council officers including Cllr Indy Wijenayaka and key stakeholders from Police, Ambulance & Fire Services, as well as MP Nick Timothy & PCC Tim Passmore.

I recognise this isn't the first time a Blue Lights Hub has been discussed in the Town, however, for many years there has been little progress. I welcome the input and contributions from all involved who all now seem keen to make something happen.

<https://tinyurl.com/33s66vxs>

6. Haverhill Library Toilet

No Further update

7. Suffolk Community Libraries

Suffolk Community Libraries would like residents to comment on the new website which aims to make it better for all users. It has information about all 45 libraries in Suffolk, plus book recommendations, events for all ages, wellbeing resources, parenting advice, and much more. <https://orlo.uk/cUj9U> . There is a short online survey about our website! <https://orlo.uk/UMbVa>

8. Anaerobic Digester News

No appeal was lodged in December. Acorn continue to say they will submit a new planning application. I think it unlikely but we await developments, but for the moment the existing applications refusal remains in place.

9. Ambulance Service and Response Times in Haverhill

As requested by the Town Council I attended Health Scrutiny and spoke on the topic of Ambulance Response Times in Haverhill. See video of speech & discussion.

<https://youtu.be/UXGmkcjheTU?t=9257> This was well received and a commitment was made to add this to the forward works programme for Health Scrutiny. I have asked for confirmation regarding when it will be scheduled. Now elections have been postponed it will be possible to begin to schedule a workshop with stakeholders present. I would like to thank Cllr Tony Brown and Alan Stinchcombe for their contributions, which were invaluable in helping me represent their and the Town Council's concerns.

10. EV Charging Installations

- Ash Grove - this is in build batch 2 with works expected to start in February (Believ are just applying for the permits and licences at the moment). Unfortunately it didn't quite make it into build batch 1, because SCC needed to approve some additional funding here to subsidise the grid connection (which is costlier than average).
- Westward Deals - High Level Design ready and resident letters have gone out. Assuming no issues, this site would be in build batch 3 (works commence in Q1)
- The other high priority sites from our A list are either surveyed and awaiting High Level Designs (HLDs) to be produced, or awaiting survey – at this stage SCC can't estimate which build batch they'll go into.

Car parks have also been progressing in parallel, but on their own timeline (as depend on the landowner entering into a Lease with Believ):

- Haverhill Leisure Centre – surveyed and High Level Design with WSC for approval
- Ehringshausen Way – surveyed and High Level Design with WSC for approval
- Lower Downs Slade – surveyed and High Level Design with WSC for approval
- Leiston Road car park – WSC have confirmed their approval for us to survey
- Kedington Community Centre – surveyed and High Level Design ready to share with Parish Council

11. Persimmon (Landscaping & Maintenance Issues)

Persimmon have been working to correct issues relating to landscaping. They are keen for residents to contact Customer Care for issues. Discussions ongoing.

12. West Suffolk Council News

Affordable housing planning consultation opens Consultation has begun on a planning document which aims to help all involved in the delivery and development of new affordable homes in West Suffolk.

The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is primarily aimed at developers as well as registered providers who manage affordable housing schemes on a day-to-day basis.

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr20250106ws01.cfm>

Positive environmental progress marks strong step towards carbon reduction

West Suffolk Council's latest environmental performance report reveals continued progress toward reducing carbon emissions and enhancing sustainability efforts.

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr20260122ws02.cfm>

Start-up grant opens doors for West Suffolk entrepreneurs

Aspiring entrepreneurs and newly established businesses in West Suffolk are being given a major boost through a startup grant initiative.

Warm spaces and additional support for West Suffolk residents this winter

Community activities are being put on across more than 40 warm spaces this winter with West Suffolk Council providing additional support and advice to residents

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/news/pr20251212ws02.cfm>

Other updates

13. Community

- Burton Centre Court – No further update. Announcement has been further delayed
- I continue to liaise with the community police team on a range of issues around town.
- I am now starting to organise this Year's Great British Spring Clean from 13th - 29th March. I would welcome any offers from fellow councillors or members of the community in offering to lead a Group Litter Pick.

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Please note this report does not in any means include all the casework I am undertaking now or projects I am engaged with and trying to move forward for the betterment of the community. Where I have stated 'no further updates' or 'ongoing,' please refer to previous month's reports.

Members are always welcome to contact me should they need any information or assistance relating to issues across the Cangle District.

For Reference:

There have been some further changes to committees I have been appointed to. At **Suffolk County Council** (SCC) I am responsible for Property & County Farms and I would welcome representations made to me on any SCC owned property owned in the area. At SCC I now sit on:

- Education & Children's Scrutiny Committee
- Minerals & Waste Policy Working Group
- Police and Crime Panel

(As I am now portfolio holder for Property & County Farms, I have had to step down from Development & Regulation and Scrutiny Committees to avoid potential conflict of interests.)

At **West Suffolk Council** I sit on

- Performance & Audit Scrutiny Committee

At **Haverhill Town Council** I don't currently sit formally on any committees, but I will of course attend if summoned or need to act in capacity e.g. as a County Councillor such as the Haverhill High Street Enhancement Group or if the agenda requires my attendance such

as the Planning Committee, Energy & Sustainability Committee and Community & Leisure Community, which I have attended on a number of occasions over the last year.

Appendix (ii)

Town Councillor Reports

Cllr John Burns

- **Great Wilsey Park:** Application made for additional ~350 units north of Green Road & Shetland Road. Asked that link footpath between Green Road & Donovan Way be completed ASAP to avoid young people walking in the road to/from school as well as update to the replacement signals for Chalkstone Way/Wratting Road junction.
- **Police Matters:** Crime stats for November 2025 distributed on 7th January. Attended 2nd Community Alcohol Policy meeting. Due to attend “no cold calling burglary training” on 26th January at the police station.
- **SCC Highways:** New signs finally installed in way of the High Street but still 3 x new signs missing to meet the original 1999 TRO specifically over Saturday road closure of the High Street. 2 to replace those at entry to High Street and one new for outside the Bull PH.
- **Combined Authority:** Nothing to report.

Greater Cambridge Partnership: No further updates.

Parking: Still no perceived benefit from the so-called increase in enforcement.

Markets: Still awaiting another meeting.

Sturmer Arches: Nothing to report.

Fox PH (Wratting Road): Nothing to report.

Vixen PH (Millfields Way):

This went to delegation panel and understand no representation was made. The Chair/Vice Chair then decided it could be delegated to officers who in turn, I have been told, will be approving the application despite concerns over parking and waste collection particularly.

Strasbourg Square: See above.

Other work (in no particular order):

Setup new digisign system in the Zone allowing HAC Marketing staff to keep updated remotely rather than Zone staff having to.

Setup refurbished laptop for additional staff member for Youth Skills at the Zone.

Ordered replacement trailer board for the barrier trailer as the brake lights have failed on it. Waiting for wardens to fit when the weather gets better and before next needed.

The Digisign Wi-Fi link failed following a town centre blackout just before Xmas. The screens themselves are working OK but means HAC staff cannot directly update it. I have been working with the tech team on trying to resolve this but looks like the antennae system has failed so I've ordered a replacement. The only way to update the screens is to remove the cover & open the doors to allow the temporary Wi-Fi we setup to communicate to the outside world rather than being blocked by an effective Faraday cage.

Picked up the barriers post Xmas tree cut down.

Installed temporary 5G Wi-Fi facility for the Wellbeing Hub as well as arranging for FTTP to the building after a survey of what communication equipment is installed – all of which obsolete. Ordered and setup 2 x laptops for the new staff and ordered till system equipment for the new café. Ordered some network equipment and currently working on requirement for internal network facilities for both staff and hirers once the FTTP becomes available in around 2 weeks' time.

Working on next phase of HTC IT upgrade (server replacement) plus security arrangements for backups and protection of data.

Currently working on revisions to the till system for HAC bar to allow multiple cash/card reconciliations during the day to cater for more than one show/event a day.

Filmed the HAC panto before and after Xmas including providing clips for the cast plus now working on full edited versions for future reference.

Provided usual weekly financial income stats from the till system for the various sites to HTC management plus attending various HTC meetings.

END

Appendix (iii)
Mayors Report
December 16th 2025 to January 27th 2026

The start of a New Year and I am looking forward to the positives it may bring and dealing with any challenges it may bring. Only a few events to report on, but some incredible events too.

21st December
Methodist Church Carol Service

It is always a pleasure to support the Methodist Church, Moses and the warm congregation. It was a lovely event with some great carols and a different way of presenting the nativity story that was engaging, funny and great to watch. The band were great, the actors were fabulous and the congregation were their marvellous selves.

Carols for All Concert

From the Methodist Church to the Old Independent Church and the *Carols For All* Concert. This was with Haverhill Silver Band, the District Operatic Society and The Haverhill Singers. What a treat it was; amazing Carols with the Haverhill Silver Band as outstanding as ever, bringing a huge amount of joy, together with the amassed singers who were absolutely fabulous. The concert has been going for over 50 years which is something to be proud of. I would recommend it to everyone. I have enjoyed this year with so many carols. I left feeling elated with a warm fuzzy feeling inside. Thank you to all those that make this happen. It is a real credit to yourselves and Haverhill and Haverhill is honoured to have you.



13th January Army Cadets Presentation

It was a pleasure to take part in the presentation evening. The Cadets stole the show demonstrating the skills and learning that has taken place since they became cadets and great to hear the impact it has had on their lives. Certificates were awarded to individuals which is great to see success being rewarded. The evening concluded with a new standard being presented to the Army Cadet Force by Haverhill company Bernhard and Co., to replace the previous one of 60 years. It is great to see local business supporting local groups. This company is a world-renowned specialist for grass care in sports. They are keen to be more involved in the town and it was great to meet Steve Nixon MD of the company.



Epicentre Event

Supporting the growth of businesses in Haverhill and giving presentations on being Mayor, the things I do, and what I am involved in promoting. It was a well-attended event and good to meet more local business people. A really supportive group regarding the town and how it will support it. An event the Town Council should be more involved with.





Only a few events but always amazing positives coming from them.

Cllr Quinn Cox
Mayor of Haverhill

Appendix iv)

Haverhill Town Council

27th January 2026

Item 9 Budget Setting briefing 2026/27

On January 20th 2026 the Finance Committee resolved to recommend adopting the proposed budget set out in this document.

Councillors are reminded of legal principles:

Principles:

This working document has been compiled on the following basis

1. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires all local councils in England and Wales set a lawful budget. Estimates of expenditure and income must be 'best estimates' made in good faith. The budget must balance, with the balancing sum being the precept.
2. Take into account comments by Councillors on 29th September 2025 (Full Council minute C25/132):
 - a. Council resolved that the direction of the Budget should be to focus on the effective delivery and completion of current initiatives, rather than start new projects, notwithstanding any windfall opportunities caused by LGR
3. Take into account the effect of inflation (estimate 3%) and salary uplift (NJC= guess 3%, RLW/NMW = known 6.75%) on existing budget lines.
4. Zero-based budgeting recalculating costs each year, using inflation-uplift basis only where no other information is available, inflation rate used = 3%.
5. Take into account revisions to the tax-base – West Suffolk have estimated the new tax base as 8167.71, an increase of just 89 dwellings.

Detailed Commentary

There are no significant changes to report. We are working off actuals for November 2025, month 8. The previous budget forecast used data from month 7, so there is not

any significant change in financial circumstances that would indicate any budget changes. As a reminder as to what was reported to Full Council in December:

1. **Pay generally:** The staffing budgets have come down due to a reduction in the employer's pension contribution rate dropping from 20% to 17%. In addition, the reduction in activity at the Zone presents a further reduction.
2. **Payroll Charges:** This has been set to reflect current costs.
3. **Training:** I have changed the basis of calculation on this as we have entered into a new online training contract to reduce costs. This has reduced training costs by £2000.
4. **Insurance:** the insurance for the Community Trust has doubled, apparently as Aviva no longer apply a multi-business discount – we were not even aware we were getting a discount and no such leap occurred for the town council. We only got notice of this a couple of weeks before renewal so it was not possible to carry out a robust review, but we will be looking to find a less expensive provider from November 2026.
5. **Stationery/photocopying/postage:** Reduced further to reflect lower usage of postal.
6. **Telephones:** Increased further to reflect charges.
7. **Bank Charges:** Unchanged. Whilst we've been under-budget in 2025/26 the bank has notified that charges will rise. There is also a cost to depositing cash, which whilst cash use is far lower than in previous years, we still need to provide for cash sales.
8. **Contribution to Haverhill In Bloom:** This has been kept the same – I hope our marketing department will be able to run a sponsorship campaign this year.
9. **Arts Centre:** Continues to perform well in terms of sales. The marketing costs have increased notably and I have asked for an explanation, but as this has translated into higher sales it still looks like there can be a very modest reduction on the financial support from the precept.
10. **Bar and coffee bar:** Bar income is down, unexpectedly, but coffee bar cost of sales has improved greatly, allowing for a slight reduction in support needed from the precept.
11. **Zone:** We have changed the entry criteria to allow for anyone 12 and under to access the soft play, and from January the opening days reduced from five to four, to reduce the cost of operating on days which historically have low footfall, similar to the successful changes at the Kiosk.
12. **Arts Development:** I have applied an uplift here as we are more involved in tackling antisocial behaviour and grants for arts-based projects to engage the community often require match-funding. The public have responded positively to recent interventions, e.g. Post Office poppy wall.
13. **Events:** I have allowed for increased costs as it has not been possible to keep within the tight budget on the very small events. I am talking to our soft play insurers about potentially operating the bouncy castles ourselves, which would be a gamechanger for the event finances, with that one item taking half the budget for the small events.
14. **Splashpad and kiosk:** Amending the opening period made a huge difference to the sustainability of the kiosk and, coupled with the cleaning regime for the splashpad made a big difference to the cost of running the splashpad and reduced the number of complaints on cleanliness.
15. **Contribution to Haverhill Community Trust:** This is funding for maintaining the Old Town Hall and Clements Community Centre (£75,000) and the youth work delivered out of the Zone (44,000). Both are slightly lower than last year.
16. **Contribution to Haverhill Arts Centre:** £569,000 is the subsidy for the operation of the Arts Centre (2025=£574,000)
17. **Income Deficit Support:** This is the additional subsidy paid to offset the income needed but not generated by the Zone. £166,500 in 2026/27 compared to £172,000 this year. It is lower because of the reduced operating times for the Zone, from January 1st 2026.

There is not enough data on the impact of reducing Wednesday operations and changing the height restrictions to make any bold predictions, but common sense is that these are positive contributions.

18. **Projects:** £35k from precept 2025=£40,000) Notwithstanding the requirement to consolidate, I can reassure councillors that I have allowed for projects already in the pipeline. For clarity these are:
- i. 2026 is national year of reading, and Haverhill has low literacy levels. We know that there is a National Literacy Trust initiative for Haverhill next year, so funds are set aside to support it.
 - ii. A fund to cover to cover any costs that might arise for Vision 2030, or contribute to a reserve for the project.
 - iii. An allowance for a project the Mayor asked me to initiate, which is match-funding to leverage West Suffolk funds into Haverhill, to bring back the town centre manager. West Suffolk gives annual funding to the Newmarket and Bury BIDS, and would have given annual funding to a Haverhill BID if it had not been torpedoed. Councillors are constantly buttonholed by town centre businesses to do more to help the High Street and business generally. We had a town centre manager in 2022 and it made a huge difference. I am awaiting WSDC confirmation of funding.
 - iv. Energy & Sustainability Working Party have identified a maze project for the Chalkstone Open Space, but that has a reserve so we do not need to fund that separately.

19. Impact on precept

The overall impact on the budget is set out below. The figures are for
 1 the last financial year (2024/25),
 2 the current financial year's budget (2025/26),
 3 the 2026/27 budget in the right-hand column
 4 the percentage change

The disappointingly low increase in the taxbase means there is only £17,000 (1.1%) of additional precept gained through growth. Therefore, the rest of the money needed to fund the work of the council has to come from operational savings, reserves and increases in council tax.

The lower pension costs, reduction in some operations and better income generation by the Arts Centre means that overall costs are down by 1.29%. Unfortunately, income is predicted to be lower by 11.25%, so the actual gap to balance has grown.

	1	2	3	4
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	%
Net Expenditure	£2,109,435	£2,423,937	£2,392,598	-1.29%
Net Income	£645,143	£827,923	£734,755	-11.25%
From Reserves	£20,000	£38,000.00	£46,000	
Balance	£1,444,292	£1,558,014	£1,611,843	+3.45%
Precept	£1,445,072	£1,561,365	£1,618,023	+2.50%
Band D	£182.33	£193.27	£198.10	+2.50%

Increase/week	13p	21p	9p	
%age	3.99%	6%	2.5%	
Band B	£141.81	£150.32	£154.08	

Band B is the CT band for 48.23% of dwellings in Haverhill and the increase is 7p per week for this band.

Resolutions

9a Councillors are asked to approve setting an expenditure budget of £2,392,598 and income budget of £734,755, with a further £46,000 to be drawn from reserves.

9b Councillors are asked to approve the setting of the precept for 2026/27 at £1,618,023, which is a 2.5% increase on the previous financial year, and to note that the Band D precept will be £198.10, which is a 9p a week increase.

9c Councillors are asked to approve the signing of the precept demand to be served on the District Council

Colin Poole
Responsible Financial Officer 21st January 2026