

ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

HAVERHILL AREA WORKING PARTY

**Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 22 October 2009 at 4.15 pm
in the Conference Room, Samuel Ward Arts and Technology College,
Chalkstone Way, Haverhill**

PRESENT: Councillor A Whittaker (Chairman)
Councillors Ager, Aitkens, Cox, Mrs Gower, McManus, Redhead,
Mrs Richardson and Mrs Rushbrook

BY INVITATION: Councillors Marks and Price
Tina Hanks, Haverhill Town Centre Manager
Haverhill Town Councillor Mrs E McManus
Mr Paul Scarlett and Mr Patrick Stephenson, Architects, of Brown
and Scarlett Architects for Agenda Item 5 only

45. Substitutes

No substitutions were declared.

46. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Mr G Mussett, Clerk to Haverhill Town Council.

47. Minutes

Councillor Cox made a number of observations and wished the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2009 to be amended to the following:-

- (a) minute 36:*Councillor Whittaker declared a personal interest as Vice Chairman of Governors at Parkway Middle School...*, and not 'a' as printed; and
- (b) minute 38: to insert in the second paragraph, '*Councillor Cox wished to place on record that a resident of Quakers Lane had expressed his concerns to him regarding the proposal to provide vehicular access through Quakers Lane in order to allow deliveries to local businesses to exit via the Town Hall car park, as the resident considered this would endanger pedestrians that frequently used Quakers Lane.*'

The Working Party accepted Councillor Cox's proposed changes and subject to the amendments detailed above, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

48. Declaration of Interests

Members' declarations of interests are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

49. Land at Millfields Way, Haverhill

The Working Party received and noted a presentation from Mr Paul Scarlett, accompanied by Mr Patrick Stephenson, Architects of Brown and Scarlett Architects in respect of the planning design brief for the land to the north of Millfields Way, Haverhill as requested at the previous meeting of the Working Party on 10 September 2009.

Mr Scarlett presented the draft proposals for the design brief and the Working Party noted that these required much further work and development. The brief incorporated the themes identified by Mr John Popham, Planning Consultant, as detailed in Section 3 of Report A200, which was previously considered by the Working Party on 10 September 2009. Mr Stephenson highlighted the sustainability elements of the scheme which would contribute to achieving the minimum target of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Mr Scarlett and Mr Stephenson comprehensively responded to questions raised including that a detailed report providing a worked-up scheme would be presented to the meeting of the Working Party on 14 January 2010.

(Mr Paul Scarlett and Mr Patrick Stephenson left the meeting.)

EXEMPT INFORMATION – EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC TERMS OF FORMAL RESOLUTION

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act.

(The Working Party by specific invitation requested that Town Councillor Mrs E McManus remain within the meeting.)

50. Friday Market Extension into the High Street, Haverhill: Update

The Working Party considered Report A267 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the proposed move of Haverhill Market held on Fridays into the High Street, subject to a number of issues detailed in the report. In addition, the Working Party considered Exempt Appendix E to Report A267 (previously circulated) which was detailed under Agenda Item 14 and provided the entire consultation response of Councillor Anderson summarised in Section 2.4 of the report.

On 10 September 2009, it was agreed that officers would undertake further consultation in relation to the proposed Friday Market extension and this work had now been undertaken and was contained in Report A267. For ease of reference, a copy of Report A201, considered at the previous meeting, was attached as Appendix A to the report with an updated table summarising the feedback received to the extended consultation attached as Appendix B. Appendix C was a document containing the signatures of 19 Friday Market traders confirming that they wished to see the market extended into the High Street on Fridays. The representation submitted by the Haverhill Locality Planning Network was attached as Appendix D, which indicated general support for the proposal; however some concern had been expressed regarding the restriction of access to the High Street by Blue Badge Holders and the suitability of

Quakers Lane as a route for both vehicles and pedestrians. Exempt Appendix E contained comments received from Councillor Anderson and these were summarised in Section 2.4 of the report.

A detailed discussion was held and particular reference was given to the concerns expressed by the Haverhill Locality Network and Councillor Anderson regarding access for Blue Badge Holders to the High Street. Councillor Cox suggested that the small car park, which was under the ownership of the Borough Council and located adjacent to the rear of the Stevens' Solicitors building, could be an option to potentially address the issue of providing adequate disabled access to the High Street. This car park was approximately 60 yards from the High Street and could be designated parking for Blue Badge Holders only. Members considered other potential options to mitigate this issue; however, it was generally recognised that sufficient Blue Badge car parking spaces were located in close proximity to the High Street and a Shopmobility scheme operated in Lower Downs Slade to assist the disabled. Whilst the concerns of all the consultation responses should be considered, it was also important to recognise the level of support shown for the existing proposals.

Some concern was expressed that inadequate consultation had been held and that all residents of Haverhill should have been consulted on the proposals. In response, the officers stated that Suffolk County Council (SCC), as the Highway Authority, would shortly be placing consultation advertisements for the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in respect of the previously planned traffic restrictions in the High Street and Queen Street. Should the proposal to extend the Friday Market into the High Street be approved, the Borough Council would need to make a formal response to SCC explaining that changes to the current TROs would be required before the extension could take place. Should concerns be expressed regarding the changes to the TROs to enable the extension to proceed, opportunities to submit representations to SCC in respect of this issue would therefore, be provided for all residents of Haverhill.

In response to questions, the Working Party was informed that:-

- (a) all Friday Market traders were in support of the proposals; and
- (b) Market Square was thought to be owned by the Borough Council, however, the Head of Planning and Economic Development would circulate confirmation by email.

The majority of Members welcomed the proposals and acknowledged the hard work of the officers to progress the scheme.



RECOMMENDED:-

That the proposal to move the Haverhill Market into the High Street on Fridays as detailed in Report A201 (Appendix A to Report A267), be approved subject to:-

- (a) confirmation of the necessary Traffic Regulation Order by Suffolk County Council to support closure of the High Street from its junction with Quakers Lane to Eden Road;***
- (b) submission of and granting of a licence to operate the markets in the extended location on Fridays; and***
- (c) provision of physical works to enable vehicular access from Quakers Lane via the Town Hall car park if required.***

RESOLVED:-

That a written response be provided by the Head of Planning and Economic Development in respect of confirming the ownership of Market Square, Haverhill.

(The Working Party resolved to revert back to public session.)

51. Draft Development Brief: Chantry Mills, Gurteens Factory Site, Haverhill

The Working Party considered Report A268 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the draft Development Brief for the Chantry Mills, Gurteens factory site, Haverhill for public consultation.

The draft Development Brief for Chantry Mills, Gurteens factory site had been jointly prepared by the Borough Council's officers and Bidwells Planning Consultancy for adoption as non-statutory planning guidance, to inform future decisions on the potential redevelopment and reuse of the site. The Gurteens business was considering relocating elsewhere within Haverhill to a more suitable site and the company had engaged Bidwells with the intention of promoting the sale of the site on the open market. Consequently, the officers together with Bidwells had produced a draft Development Brief, which was attached as Appendix A to the report, to inform potential interested parties of the possible reuse and redevelopment opportunities of the site. The draft document had indicated that some areas within the brief were subject to further negotiations between the officers and Bidwells. These negotiations had now been held and the updated brief with the agreed text inserted was tabled at the meeting for consideration by the Working Party.

The Working Party recognised that the significance of the buildings contained on the site and that options should be carefully considered in terms of assessing whether it was economically viable to convert and develop the buildings or whether the option to demolish some of them should be pursued. Compromises may have to be made to ensure practical, economical and affordable solutions were adopted in order to successfully regenerate the site.

In response to a question, the Working Party was informed that Bidwells Planning Consultants would launch a full public consultation exercise that would involve extensive consultation with all residents of Haverhill.



RECOMMENDED:-

That the draft Development Brief for the Chantry Mills, Gurteens Factory Site, Haverhill, as detailed in Appendix A to Report A268, as amended, be approved for public consultation, which will be undertaken locally and in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

52. Queen Street Shop Fronts Grant Scheme: Process for Assessment of Applicants and Approving Grant Funding

The Working Party considered Report A269 (previously circulated) which sought approval for the process by which applications submitted by businesses located in Queen Street, Haverhill for grants towards shop front improvements were considered, in accordance with the approved Queen Street Shop Fronts Grant Scheme.

On 6 May 2009, the Working Party approved the details of the design and delivery of the Queen Street Shop Fronts Grant Scheme (Report Z687 referred). As part of the approved scheme it was agreed that, to assist with the initial design costs, a partnering arrangement between the Borough Council and three local shopfitting companies would be arranged, whereby the three businesses would absorb the costs of any unsuccessful design work, but would be guaranteed the work for any successful bids with which they were involved. Although a number of companies were invited to become part of the partnering arrangement, there was no positive response to the invitation and on 3 August 2009, the Shop Fronts Grant Scheme was launched without this arrangement with a deadline for the submission of applications as 2 October 2009.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer informed the Working Party that ten grant applications had been received within the period up to the deadline of 2 October 2009. He tabled a map which indicated the locations of the shops where applications had been submitted within the specified timescale. In addition to the application received following the expiry of the deadline, which was detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the report, a further application had been received following the publication of the agenda and papers. These two application sites were also identified but annotated separately on the map.

It had become apparent during the process that the lack of a partnering arrangement had led to difficulties for some businesses in obtaining the necessary expertise to submit their applications. Further details of obstacles experienced by potential applicants were contained in Section 3.2 of the report and accordingly, it had not been possible to present a final list to this meeting of eligible applications for consideration by the Working Party, as specified in the assessment criteria detailed in Report Z687. Consequently, it was suggested that a working group comprising three Members, supported by officers, be established to assess the submitted applications and make recommendations to the next meeting of the Working Party on 10 December 2009.

The Working Party was pleased to note that several applications had been submitted, and considered it appropriate that all applications contained all the necessary supporting information before their assessment by the working group. It was agreed that Councillors Ager, Cox and Mrs Richardson would form the working group which would make recommendations to the next meeting of the Working Party on 10 December 2009.

As the discussion had centred on Queen Street and was therefore relevant to this item, concern was expressed that whilst the Queen Street Enhancement Scheme had significantly improved the aesthetics of Queen Street, litter and debris emanating from the USA Chicken premises had caused extreme detriment to the appearance of the street scene. In response, the officers stated that Haverhill Town Centre Management and other neighbouring traders located in Queen Street were currently addressing this issue and were urging the proprietors of USA Chicken to clear and maintain the area as a matter of urgency.

RESOLVED:- That

- (1) following receipt of all necessary information, a working group comprising Councillors Ager, Cox and Mrs Richardson, supported by officers, assess the submitted applications against the agreed criteria for the Queen Street Shop Front Grant Scheme, as contained in Appendices A to D of Report Z687; and
- (2) details of all submitted applications for a shop front grant, together with recommendations of the working group, be presented to the next meeting of the Haverhill Area Working Party on 10 December 2009 for determination.

53. Queen Street Enhancement Scheme: Update

The Working Party considered Report A270 (previously circulated) which was the Project Status Report (PSR) in respect of the Queen Street Enhancement Scheme as at 16 October 2009.

The Head of Planning and Economic Development informed the Working Party that good progress was being made and that the scheme would be completed on time and within budget. The installation of street lighting and tree planting were yet to be undertaken, and a number of 'snagging' issues were being addressed. The official opening ceremony date had been confirmed as 13 November 2009 from 10.00 am and invitations would be circulated in due course. The Italian Market would be held in conjunction with the opening ceremony. In addition, Councillor Mrs Richardson reported that the public art would be installed at a later date, possibly in spring 2010.

In response to questions, the Working Party was informed that:-

- (a) having met with representatives of Tesco on site, it was believed that the residents of The Pightle were parking temporarily in this location while they were unable to access their new designated parking area; and
- (b) the alleged nuisance caused by young people congregating around a seating area located in Queen Street was now being monitored by closed circuit television (CCTV) in order that evidence could be gathered to support any further action that may be taken.

A discussion was also held regarding the only item annotated red on the PSR in respect of the proposed gateway feature works located adjacent to the Star/Express Burger premises. The officers had considered that the costs were too high to proceed with construction of the feature. However, the Working Party considered that this was an important element of the Queen Street Enhancement Scheme and it would be disappointing not to continue with the proposals. Further investigation should therefore be undertaken to establish whether the estimated costs could be met from the existing budget and for these costs to be brought back to a future meeting of the Working Party for consideration. In addition, Members considered the wall and gates located to the rear of the police station should receive cosmetic attention to enhance their appearance and whether these costs could also be met from the existing Queen Street Enhancement Scheme budget.

RESOLVED:- That

- (1) further investigations be undertaken into constructing the proposed gateway feature adjacent to the Star/Express Burger premises as originally planned;
- (2) investigations be undertaken into whether the wall and gates located to the rear of the police station could receive cosmetic attention to enhance their appearance; and
- (3) costs to implement these additional improvement works detailed in (1) and (2) above be ascertained and whether the costs could be met from the existing Queen Street Enhancement Scheme budget; and
- (4) a report be presented to the next meeting of the Working Party on 10 December 2009 for consideration.

54. Haverhill Community Football Project: Update

(Councillor Cox declared a personal interest as an affiliated member of the Suffolk and Cambridge Football Association and the Football Association and remained in the meeting for the consideration of the meeting.)

The Working Party received and noted Report A271 which was the Project Status Report for the Haverhill Community Football Project as at 6 October 2009.

The Head of Property and Engineering Services reported that the contractor had commenced ahead of schedule. The groundwork contractor responsible for the pitches had completed the new pitches ahead of programme which was extremely good news with every chance that the grass would be firmly established and ready for the next playing season. The Working Party also noted that the project was financially on target. However, it was also reported that vandalism had recently taken place on the site which had meant that additional security had been employed. As a result, long term security measures such as the installation of CCTV cameras may be required for the future protection of the facility.

The Working Party was disappointed to learn about this vandalism, particularly as the scheme was for the benefit of the whole community and that it was frustrating that a minority wished to potentially disrupt the progression of the scheme. Members agreed to highlight this issue at other forums that they attended in a different capacity.

55. Haverhill Town Centre Street Furniture: Notice Boards/Information Signs

The Working Party considered a narrative item which sought approval for a map/directory to be included on one of the bespoke Notice Board/Information Signs at Haverhill bus station.

On 23 April 2009, the design for the bespoke Notice Board/Information Sign for Haverhill town centre was approved by the Working Party. Three boards had been manufactured and one was to be installed at the bus station. It was proposed that this board should include a 'wayfinder' map and business directory for visitors arriving in Haverhill.

The Working Party supported the design for the 'wayfinder' map, however, the following amendments were suggested:-

- (a) the map contained within the Sign should be repositioned to enable further business premises located on the High Street to be identified;
- (b) the Shopmobility facility should also be identified on the map;
- (c) the opening times for the Shopmobility facility and the Public Conveniences located adjacent to the Borough Council's offices in Lower Downs Slade should be included on the removable panel that contained the business directory and therefore, enabled regular updates to be undertaken; and
- (d) a larger arrow identifying 'You Are Here' information be incorporated.



RECOMMENDED:-

That the map/directory for inclusion on one of the Notice board/Information signs located at Haverhill Bus Station, as presented to the Haverhill Area Working Party on 22 October 2009, be approved, subject to the following amendments:-

- (a) the 'wayfinder' map contained within the Sign be repositioned to enable further business premises located on the High Street to be identified;***
- (b) the Shopmobility facility also be identified on the map;***
- (c) the opening times for the Shopmobility facility and the Public Conveniences located adjacent to the Borough Council's offices in Lower Downs Slade be included on the removable panel that contains the business directory and therefore, enables regular updates to be undertaken; and***
- (d) a larger arrow identifying 'You Are Here' information be incorporated.***

56. Haverhill Schemes: Update

(a) Haverhill Bus Station Refurbishment

The Head of Planning and Economic Development drew relevant issues to the attention of the Working Party. Particular reference was given to the installation of the bus shelters which were not considered appropriate for the size of the bus station. The Working Party considered that a letter be written to Suffolk County Council expressing strong concern that the shelters were totally inadequate and not fit-for-purpose as they did not provide sufficient capacity for all customers of the bus station. Members considered that the shelters should be removed and replaced with structures of an appropriate capacity.

RESOLVED:-

That a letter be sent to Suffolk County Council expressing disappointment with the size of the bus shelters installed at the newly refurbished Haverhill Bus Station and that these shelters be replaced with fit-for-purpose structures that would provide sufficient capacity for customers of the bus station.

(b) Haverhill Leisure Centre Refurbishment

The Head of Property and Engineering Services drew relevant issues to the attention of the Working Party including that a detailed project closedown report would be brought to the next meeting of the Working Party for consideration.

In response to a question, the Head of Property and Engineering Services stated that following a report in the local press of a theft from a locker, he would investigate with Abbeycroft Leisure as to whether any faults had been identified which would compromise the security of the lockers.

RESOLVED:-

That, investigations be undertaken with Abbeycroft Leisure as to whether any faults had been identified which would compromise the security of the lockers at the Haverhill Leisure Centre and the response be reported at the next meeting of the Working Party on 10 December 2009.

(With the agreement of the Chairman, items (c), Town Centre Management and (d), Queen Street: Italian Market and Opening Event were taken simultaneously.)

**(c) Town Centre Management (TCM); and
(d) Queen Street: Italian Market and Opening Event**

The Haverhill Town Centre Manager updated the Working Party on a number of issues and schemes including the following:-

- (i) the distribution of the Business Directory would take place following the launch of the Queen Street Enhancement Scheme and the Town Centre Manager wished to record her thanks to the Clerk to Haverhill Town Council and the Arts and Leisure Manager at Haverhill Arts Centre for their assistance with updating the map contained in the Directory;
- (ii) details of the opening ceremony of the Queen Street Enhancement Scheme and the Italian Market scheduled for 13 November 2009 including details of the proposed road closure to accommodate the Italian Market;
- (iii) plans for launching a Haverhill Film Competition aimed at young people aged between 13 to 19 years. This idea had been developed by Cineworld Cinemas who were working in partnership with the TCM and other partner organisations;
- (iv) details of the recent Haverhill Enterprise Exhibition held on 16 and 17 September 2009;
- (v) the Haverhill in Bloom committee had agreed that the Town Centre Manager would only be required to attend monthly meetings, however TCM would continue to promote the objectives of the committee, particularly those that involved the business community;

- (vi) the TCM was working in partnership with the Police to promote the Shop Watch Scheme to more businesses;
- (vii) a monthly column would be written by the Town Centre Manager for inclusion in the Haverhill Weekly News; and
- (viii) the Town Council's provision of a temporary ice rink in Market Square over the Christmas 2009 period would be supported by TCM, including contributing £500 towards its costs.

Enquiries were made into the Town Centre Manager's proposals for undertaking a footfall count and the current situation regarding the displaying of posters in empty shops, as detailed in the previously approved TCM Work Programme 2009/2010 (Report A134 referred) to which the Haverhill Town Centre Manager provided comprehensive responses. A discussion was also held in respect of the proposed layout for the Italian Market and suggestions were made for themes of future markets in Haverhill, which were duly noted by the Town Centre Manager.

(Councillors Ager, Aitkens and Price left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

57. Dates of Future Meetings

The Working Party confirmed the following dates for future meetings in 2009/2010:-

10 December 2009;
14 January 2010;
22 April 2010;
10 June 2010;
22 July 2010;
9 September 2010;
21 October 2010; and
9 December 2010.

The date provisionally scheduled for Monday 8 March 2010 was not confirmed and Members asked that the Committee Administrator provide an alternative date in March 2010 on its usual day of a Thursday. A discussion was also held as to appropriate start times for the meetings in 2010 and there was a general consensus that the meetings should continue to commence at either 4.00 pm or 4.15 pm, which was dependent upon the availability of the meeting room provided at each venue.

58. Friday Market Extension into the High Street, Haverhill: Update

The Working Party had considered Exempt Appendix E to Report A267 under minute 50 above.

The meeting concluded at 6.55 pm

**A WHITTAKER
CHAIRMAN**