

ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

HAVERHILL AREA WORKING PARTY

**Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 11 November 2010 at 4.35 pm
in the Board Room, former Gurteen's Factory site, Chantry Mills, Haverhill**

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

BY INVITATION: Ms Rebecca Bacon, photographer from 'The Design Office'
(for Minute 34 below only)
Ms Tina Hanks, Haverhill Town Centre Manager
Mr G Mussett, Clerk to Haverhill Town Council
Haverhill Town Councillor Mrs E McManus

25. Substitutes

No substitutions were declared.

26. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

27. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28. Declaration of Interests

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

29. Gurteens' Former Factory Site, Chantry Mills, Haverhill

(Councillor Mrs Gower declared a personal interest as a Member of the Development Control Committee and remained in the meeting for the consideration of this item.)

Immediately prior to this meeting, at 2.00 pm, the Working Party undertook a tour of the former Gurteens' Factory Site, Chantry Mills, Haverhill. The tour was largely conducted by representatives of Bidwells Property Consultants, who, in partnership with the Borough Council's officers, had formulated a Development Brief for the future re-development of the site. The Development Brief had previously been adopted by the Council on 29 June 2010 as non-statutory planning guidance for the determination of future planning and listed building applications associated with the site. (Full Council Minute 29 (A)(3) referred). Members had noted on the tour that in order to satisfactorily redevelop the site, Bidwells may propose that some of the listed buildings of less or moderate historical importance on the site may need to be demolished, to provide additional car parking for example.

Members largely supported the redevelopment of the site, but considered some caution should be expressed in respect of how to proceed with the scheme. A detailed discussion was held, which included that:-

- (a) the existing Design Brief had been formulated to address how the site would be developed as a whole to avoid development taking place in a piecemeal fashion. This approach should be maintained;
- (b) as the majority of the buildings on the Chantry Mills site were Grade II listed, it was imperative that the market was adequately tested to ascertain an accurate reflection of the type of development uses that would be most suitable for the site. The proposed uses would need to be attractive for prospective investors/purchasers/lessees, to ensure that consent should be granted for the demolition of certain buildings it was fully justified; and
- (c) further investigations should be undertaken into identifying potential locations for new vehicular access to the site, including assessing the impact any new access may have on the historic setting of the remaining listed buildings and neighbouring properties.

Members also noted that to proceed with the demolition of any listed buildings approval would also be required from English Heritage.

30. Haverhill Partnership Review

(Councillor Mrs Gower declared personal interests as Suffolk County Councillor for Haverhill East and Kedington Division and also as Chairman of the Haverhill Partnership Forum. The Chairman, Councillor A Whittaker declared a personal interest as one of the Borough Council's nominated representatives on the Havebury Housing Partnership Board. Both Members remained in the meeting for the consideration of this item.)

The Working Party received and noted Report B283 (previously circulated), which provided an update on the Haverhill Partnership Review in the context of developing the Haverhill Locality Pilot Project.

The Haverhill Executive Group (HEG) had previously been established to develop and progress the Haverhill Locality Pilot Project. One of the issues that had been addressed was to investigate the purpose of the various bodies established within Haverhill and whether their roles and functions were necessary for the development of Haverhill. The HEG wished to proceed towards a less bureaucratic, single multi-agency collaborative body, which could build upon existing structures and partnerships in the town and focus activity and resources to achieve the best possible outcomes for Haverhill. Initial investigations had indicated a number of partnership bodies existed in Haverhill, but these were working in isolation with many of the same individuals/organisation representatives sitting on each body. There also appeared to be a clear crossover between each partnership regarding what each was trying to achieve. A potential solution would be to rationalise the structures, reduce duplication and effort, harness the good work and commitment already in place and build on this to add greater value for the people of Haverhill.

Attached as Appendix A to the report was a pictorial diagram illustrating the concept of 'ONE Haverhill'. The 'ONE Haverhill' proposal aimed to combine all organisations delivering services in Haverhill to pool resources and share a single vision for the town. Section 3.2 of the Report detailed how the 'ONE Haverhill' concept could be applied to incorporate the existing representation of the current structures into the new partnership.

Some concern was expressed regarding Section 3.2.2 (b) of the Report, which stated, *'consider absorbing Haverhill Area Working Party members in to the newly formed 'ONE Haverhill' structure....'*. Members considered that the work of the Working Party as a body of the Borough Council, had been extremely successful with many completed schemes and capital projects in Haverhill being developed through this forum. Whilst not averse to greater partnership working, some Members considered that in addition to the Clerk to Haverhill Town Council, Haverhill Town Councillor Mrs McManus and the Haverhill Town Centre Manager, other partners, such as representatives of Suffolk County Council and Havebury Housing Partnership, should possibly be invited to Working Party meetings as regular non-voting attendees, instead of incorporating the Working Party into the 'ONE Haverhill' structure.

Members acknowledged that the Borough Council's recent capital investment in Haverhill was likely to decline in future years, and therefore the role and functions of the Working Party were likely to evolve in another direction. However, Members considered that any future decisions made for the benefit of Haverhill should be made by a reasonable proportion of elected Members and not officers, in order that the residents of Haverhill were sufficiently represented by those elected to represent them. The proposed representation on the 'ONE Haverhill' Board of one officer and one elected Member per organisation, equating to one vote, was not considered appropriate to adequately represent the residents of Haverhill.

The Working Party noted that consultation on the 'ONE Haverhill' proposal would be communicated by the HEG to the respective individuals, groups and organisations affected by the changes; to which the Borough Council would be able to formally respond. Implementation of a new structure would be targeted for April 2011, should the necessary agreement by all parties concerned be met.

31. Queen Street Shop Front Grant Scheme: Update

The Working Party considered Report B284 (previously circulated), which provided an update on the current progress of the Shop Fronts Grants Scheme in Queen Street, Haverhill and sought approval for the implementation of a time limit for the submission of the necessary applications for planning permission or advertisement consent to enable the grant assisted work to progress.

In December 2009, the Working Party indicated its intention to award grants for shop front improvements at nine business premises in Queen Street following the submission of 11 applications (Report A387 refers). The award of the grants under the Scheme was subject to specific time restrictions for implementation, requiring the work to be carried out within six months from the notification of the award of the grant, or six months from the grant of planning permission or advertisement consent, where applicable.

To date, none of the schemes which were successful in their grant applications had been implemented and contained in Appendix A attached to the report, was a tabular list of the individual grant awards and their current status. Although time limits had been imposed between the award of the grant and implementation, or between obtaining the necessary consents and implementation, it was not thought necessary to impose a time limit between the award of the grant and the submission of the application for the necessary consent. However, experience had proved that this was where significant delays appeared to be occurring.

Consideration was given to introducing a time limit for the submission of necessary applications for planning permission or advertisement consent and for undertaking the work that was to be grant assisted. It was suggested that applicants should be given up to March 2011 to prepare the necessary submissions with a period no greater than six months to be allowed for the approved works to be implemented.

In addition, the Working Party noted that Quick Service Shoes, a successful applicant to the Scheme and located at 11 Queen Street, had already obtained the necessary advertisement consent but had not undertaken the works within the specified six month timeframe due to problems experienced with the chosen supplier. Members therefore, considered it appropriate to enable this business further time to carry out the works and grant an extension until March 2011.



RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) a time limit to March 2011 be given for the submission of planning/advertisement applications, as detailed in Section 4.1 of Report B284, and this limit be added to the Queen Street Shop Front Grant Scheme;**
- (2) the business located at 11 Queen Street, which had already obtained the necessary advertisement consent but had not undertaken the works within the specified six month timeframe, as detailed in Section 3.4 of Report B284, be granted an extension until March 2011 to carry out the works; and**
- (3) all successful applicants to the Scheme be advised of the timescales that will now apply.**

32. Review of Car Parking in Haverhill

The Working Party considered Report B285 (previously circulated), which sought approval for proposed alterations to parking charges in Haverhill for 2011/2012, prior to their incorporation into a detailed report for consideration by the Cabinet on 19 January 2011.

The Working Party noted the new management initiatives implemented in some of the car parks in Haverhill in 2010/2011, as outlined in Section 2 of the report. Particular consideration was given to the new improved gritting service and the future plans to re-line the Lower Downs Slade car park.

Members also noted that the Council undertook a review of the parking charges applicable to off-street car parks located in St Edmundsbury on an annual basis. Like all other fees and charges there was a need to keep parking charges under review in order to maintain a good quality service and keep pace with rising costs. The variation in car park charges was also aimed at ensuring parking occurred in the most appropriate location for the length and nature of stay.

The proposed amendments to the parking charges in Haverhill in 2011/2012 were as follows:-

- (a) to assist brief drop-ins and offer more customer choice, a 30p short stay option be introduced at the Ehringshausen Way car park, which would include The Meadows car park. However, this offer did not extend to the adjacent Leisure Centre car park where the majority of parking related to use of the Leisure Centre where the average parking durations were in excess of 1 hour;
- (b) increase a limited number of charges by between 10p and 30p;
- (c) make season tickets available online; and

- (d) amend the rate of excess charges.

The rationale and possible impact of the proposals were detailed in Section 3.5 of the report and a table of the current and proposed charges were contained in Appendix A attached to the report.

The Head of Property Services and Engineering tabled information which enabled Members to compare the current and proposed level of parking charges in Haverhill with charges made by other towns in the eastern region. The Working Party considered the proposed changes acceptable when compared to those levied elsewhere in the region. He also informed the Working Party that the following amendments were required to Section 3.5.3 of the report, in connection with discounts given for the purchase of season tickets:-

- (a) *'the price is based on the all day price in the relevant car park, discounted by 25%'*, be amended to read, *'the price is based on the all day price in the relevant car park, discounted by 30%'*;
- (b) *'to reflect the greater administration involved in over-the-counter sales it is suggested the online discount remains at 25%...'*, be amended to read, *'to reflect the greater administration involved in over-the-counter sales it is suggested the online discount remains at 30%...'*; and
- (c) *'...but the over-the-counter discount is reduced to 20%'*, be amended to read, *'...but the over-the-counter discount is reduced to 25%'*.

A detailed discussion was held regarding the promotion of season tickets, having ascertained that the income generated from the sale of season tickets was relatively modest at approximately £3,700 per annum, and were mainly purchased for the Town Hall car park. Suggestions were made to ensure the scheme was promoted to a greater degree on the Council's website and also on the backboards in the car parks where season tickets were available.

Some concern was expressed regarding the stringency of inflicting the proposed excess charges, as detailed in Section 3.5.4, particularly if users overstayed the time displayed on their ticket by 'a few' minutes. It was emphasised that whilst abuse should not be tolerated, it was important that car park users were not discouraged from visiting the town. The Working Party was informed that discretion would be exercised in respect of expired tickets.

Discussions were also held on the amount of time given to park free of charge in the Tesco car park before enforcement action would be taken, and parking problems currently experienced in The Pightle.



RECOMMENDED:-

That the following recommendations of the Haverhill Area Working Party on the proposed amendments to car parking charges in Haverhill in 2011/2012, be included in the composite report to Cabinet for consideration on 19 January 2011 in respect of this issue:-

- (1) to assist brief drop-ins and offer more customer choice, a 30p short stay option be introduced at the Ehringshausen Way and The Meadows car parks, as outlined in Section 3.2 of Report B285;*
- (2) a limited number of charges be increased by between 10p and 30p, as detailed in Appendix A to Report B285;*
- (3) as detailed in Section 3.5.3 of Report B285:-*
 - (a) season tickets be made available to purchase online at a discounted rate of 30% against the all day price of the relevant car park; and*
 - (b) the discount offered for over-the-counter season ticket sales be reduced to 25% against the all day price of the relevant car park; and*
- (4) as detailed in Section 3.5.4 of Report B285:-*
 - (a) the rate of excess charges be increased to £70, discounted to £30 if paid within 14 days; and*
 - (b) should an appeal be lodged against the charge and lost, the previous option of allowing appellants to pay a discounted charge within seven days after the appeal has been rejected, be discontinued.*

RESOLVED:-

That the season ticket car parking scheme be promoted to a greater degree on the Council's website and also on the backboards in the car parks where season tickets are available.

33. Haverhill Town Centre Management: Update on Work Programme

The Working Party received and noted Report B286 (previously circulated), which provided an update on progress on the Haverhill Town Centre Management Work Programme.

The Haverhill Town Centre Manager tabled an addendum to the Report, in connection with the Town Centre Management activities outlined in Tables 1 and 2 of the Report. She then duly responded to questions raised including:-

- (a) the footfall count, referred to in Item H of Table 1, would be undertaken as part of the 'Marketing Master Classes' project, as detailed in Item C;
- (b) as a result of the Markets Review, the Town Centre Manager had offered her support to the Parking Services Manager if required, to help progress the Haverhill Markets Forum with the market traders;
- (c) the replacement bus shelters, the Real Time Passenger Information or the clock had not yet been installed by Suffolk County Council (SCC) at the recently refurbished Haverhill Bus Station. The Town Centre Manager would continue to pursue with these issues with SCC.

The Working Party was pleased to note the positive response to the Haverhill Shopper Survey 2010 that had been distributed as part of the Marketing Master Classes project. Of the two thousand paper-based Shopper Surveys distributed, more than a thousand had been returned, with an additional 44 forms completed online. Analysis of the responses would be undertaken in December 2010, with a view to forwarding recommendations for possible consideration by the Working Party at the end of January 2011.

(Gordon Mussett, Clerk to Haverhill Town Council left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

34. Haverhill Town Centre Management: Update on New Photographic Images of Haverhill

The Working Party considered Report B287 (previously circulated), which sought approval for photographic images to be used for future marketing and promotion of Haverhill, and for the production of promotional postcards.

As part of the Haverhill Town Centre Management Work Programme and following a procurement process, 'The Design Office' was commissioned to capture new images of Haverhill within the previously approved budget of £3,500. The specification for the portfolio set out themes to be met, with several images contained within each theme, and these were detailed in Section 3.1 of Report B287. The Town Centre Manager tabled additional information, which provided further details relating to the background and brief for the project.

Upon approval and settling of the invoice, the Borough Council would be granted copyright of the images and these photographs could be used for the purpose of promoting Haverhill to visitors and investors. The Working Party considered it appropriate that the portfolio should be available for use by media, partners, businesses and residents in print and electronic format.

Following receipt of a presentation of the images from Rebecca Bacon, photographer of 'The Design Office', a detailed discussion was held. The Working Party considered that a further report should be brought back to the next meeting on 16 December 2010 to address the following issues:-

- (a) potential initiatives and suggestions of where the photographs could be utilised, and for these to be emailed to the Haverhill Town Centre Manager;
- (b) whether and how the 'CB9' branding or the Queen Street logo could be applied to each image, as appropriate, together with suitable captions to ensure that those not familiar with the town could easily associate the images with Haverhill;
- (c) whether montages of specifically chosen photographs could be produced and if so, examples be provided;
- (d) whether permission could be sought from Haverhill Town Council, who had originally commissioned the work from 'The Design Office', for the recently taken photographs of St Mary's Church to be included in the portfolio; and
- (e) images also be provided depicting 'Haverhill at night', which should include the illuminated Queen Street gates and Murton Slade.

Members also noted that one or some of the images would be used for the production of promotional postcards. The Town Centre Manger invited suggestions for images to be used for the postcards; however the Working Party considered that a list of 'top ten' preferred images should be emailed to the Town Centre Manager by Saturday 4 December 2010 from Members of the Working Party, the Clerk to Haverhill Town Council and Haverhill Town Councillor Mrs McManus, to enable a shortlist of images to be considered in further detail at its next meeting on 16 December 2010. The Working Party expressed a preference to producing 1,000 units at a cost of £125, however as this matter required further consideration, which may result in an increase in costs, the budget required for the project would be recommended to Cabinet at its next meeting on 19 January 2011.



RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) the selected portfolio of photographic images for future marketing and promotion of Haverhill, as detailed in Section 2 of Report B287, be approved; and**
- (2) subject to (1) above, the portfolio of images, which would have copyright granted to the Borough Council, as outlined in Section 4.2 of Report B287, be available for use by the media, partners, businesses and residents in print and electronic format, upon request.**

RESOLVED:- That,

- (1) a report be brought back to the next meeting of the Working Party on 16 December 2010, providing details of:-
 - (a) potential initiatives where the photographs could be used, utilising suggestions of the Working Party emailed to the Haverhill Town Centre Manager by Saturday 4 December 2010;
 - (b) whether and how the 'CB9' branding or the Queen Street logo could be applied to each image, as appropriate, together with suitable captions to ensure that those not

familiar with the town can easily associate the images with Haverhill;

- (c) whether montages of specifically chosen photographs could be produced and if so, examples be provided;
 - (d) whether permission had been given by Haverhill Town Council, who had originally commissioned the work from 'The Design Office', for the recently taken photographs of St Mary's Church to be included in the portfolio;
 - (e) images be provided depicting 'Haverhill at night', which include the illuminated Queen Street gates and Murton Slade; and
- (2) a list of 'top ten' preferred images be emailed by Members of the Working Party, the Clerk to Haverhill Town Council and Haverhill Town Councillor Mrs McManus to the Haverhill Town Centre Manager by 4 December 2010 to enable a shortlist of images for the development into promotional postcards to be produced and included in the report detailed in (1) above.

(Councillor Aitkens left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

35. Dates of Future Meetings

The Working Party confirmed the following dates for future meetings:-

16 December 2010;
27 January 2011;
24 March 2011;
9 June 2011;
21 July 2011;
8 September 2011;
27 October 2011; and
15 December 2011.

All dates are Thursdays and the meetings will commence at 4.15 pm.

The meeting concluded at 6.46 pm.

**A WHITTAKER
CHAIRMAN**