



Annual Report Civic Year (May 2023 to April 2024)

Introduction

Outline of Council

Haverfordwest Town Council (HTC) serves the area of Haverfordwest and is made up of 17 elected members who represent the five wards, advised by the Clerk to the Council.

Haverfordwest has a population of 14,596 based on the 2011 Census.

Chairman to Council / Mayor and Admiral of the Port of Haverfordwest: Cllr. Jill Owens

Clerk to the Council: J Raymond who was succeeded by Vanessa Lewis Camacho in November 2024.

The Town Councillors by ward at the end of the Civic Year are:

Castle: Cllr J Hackett, Cllr R Thomas-Turner

Garth: Cllr J Brady, Cllr C Black,

Portfield: Cllr A Brooker, Cllr H Lewis, Cllr B Simister, Cllr R Thomas

Prendergast: Cllr K Jones, Cllr T Moses, Cllr S Pearce

Priory: Cllr J Owens, Cllr M Lewis, Cllr P Lewis

There were 3 vacancies – 1 each in the Castle, Garth and Priory wards.

The offices of the Town Council are located at the Old Wool Market, Quay Street, Haverfordwest and are open to the public from Monday to Friday 9.30am until 3.30pm.

During the year 2 members of staff left the Town Council leaving 1 full time employee, 2 part time employees and 2 contracted advisers.

	<p>Haverfordwest Town Council is responsible for the following services in the town:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picton Centre (community centre) currently under a leasing arrangement with Pembs Youth Services • Priory Saltings (nature reserve) • St Martins Cemetery • Lower Prendergast Cemetery • Upper Prendergast Cemetery • Civic Events • Christmas light display in the town centre • Floral displays in the town centre and other town improvements • Sports Pavilion (sports changing facility) • Community Garden (under the management of Grwp Resilience) • Sole Trustees of the Bridge Meadow Trust Haverfordwest, which provides recreational areas and facilities • Providing financial grants and support to local organisations and good causes.
<p>Council Structure</p>	<p>Scheduled Full Council meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month except in August and in May. The Annual Meeting and Mayor Making Ceremony is usually held on the third Thursday in May.</p> <p>There are two standing committees who meet on a monthly basis, except during May and August. The Emergency Committee meets only as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management, Estates and Strategy Committee: This committee is appointed to make recommendations and decisions about the general administration and management of property and estates. • Personnel, Policy and Finance Committee: This committee is appointed to make recommendations and decisions about all matters relating to the personnel, policies and finances of the Council. • Emergency Committee: This committee is appointed to make resolutions in relation to any matter deemed as urgent or an emergency by the Town Clerk and/or the Mayor/Chairman. <p>There are two sub-committees who meet as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing Sub-Committee: This sub-committee is appointed to make decisions about all staffing matters, subject to budget and expenditure limits decided by the Personnel, Policy and Finance Committee. • Christmas Lights Sub-Committee: This sub-committee is appointed to make decisions on the provision, maintenance and installation of Christmas lights.

Council's Vision and objectives
(following a change in Council and Administration these are due to be revisited and to look to the longer-term plans of HTC during Civic Year 2024-2025)

The Council's current vision statement is "Many voices, one town, heart of the county"

The Council adopted a vision statement and objectives which were considered when drafting action plans.

To support the setting of the annual budget and precept, two of the standing committees draft action plans which set out the Council's objectives for the subsequent financial year. Both committees have overseen the enactment of certain activities, which were the subject of earlier action plans but for whatever reason some actions were not taken forward, in the second half of the Civic Year being reported on here.

Finances

The main source of income is the precept, this is an amount of council tax paid by households in Haverfordwest which is collected by Pembrokeshire County Council. The annual precept raised a total of £388,444 costing the average Band D Council tax payer £78.75. In December HTC calculates the money it needs to raise in order to provide for its services and fund any projects planned. It then deducts any other income it expects to receive leaving a net amount known as the precept. Members of Council and its Officers are responsible for the spending of public money in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and are conscious of the Council's responsibility towards maintaining services and ensuring best value for its precept payers. An audit of the Council's finances and internal controls is carried on a yearly basis by an independent internal auditor.

Other streams of income are: long-term lease agreement for occupancy of the Picton Centre, hire of the Sports Pavilion, burial charges and administration costs for the Bridge Meadow Trust Haverfordwest.

As at 31 March 2024, expenditure totalling £321,207, including staff costs, ie salaries, PAYE, NI, Pension and related expenses of £106,235.00. Other expenditure totalling £214,972.89 is recorded within the Income & Expenditure statement. The Council has no external borrowing but retains general reserves to deal with unforeseen emergencies and also earmarked reserves for specific expenditure that the Council believes it may incur in the future.

Progress against the Pembrokeshire Well-being Plan Objectives

Pembrokeshire Public Services Board (PSB) Well-Being Objective	Steps taken by HTC that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How the five Ways of Working have been used to shape the activity (summary in appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (summary in appendix B)
<p>Who We Are</p> <p><i>We want to help our people, communities and organisations so that we can support ourselves and each other</i></p> <p><i>Priority 1 – Living & Working</i></p> <p><i>Priority 2 – Resourceful Communities</i></p>	Community Engagement	<p>Meetings of Council are held in a hybrid format (in person and virtually) to enable all members of the community to attend.</p> <p>The Council regularly publishes information and updates its website and social media page to ensure the community is kept up to date and that they are given the opportunity to engage and/or participate with Council.</p> <p>Civic events are open to members of the public to attend. These both commemorate and continue the historical traditions of the town.</p> <p>Councillors and the Town Clerk regularly engage with stakeholders on planning matters, regeneration projects and community interest projects, to consider and make public representation. New Ward Surgeries have been introduced and are being held regularly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Wales • Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Resilient Wales
	Provision of grant funding	<p>The projects supported are to benefit the community and to be undertaken by the community.</p> <p>Criteria in accordance with the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act and application scoring is used to ensure that the five ways of working are considered in order to maximise the reach of each award.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Wales • Healthier Wales • Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities
	Town Council Offices	<p>Currently situated in the historic Old Wool Market building discussions are ongoing with architects to establish a vision of the building's future purpose and its reconfiguration and restoration. A Task & Finish Group has been established to move this forward. In the interim, the staff have been relocated to the front of the building facilitating contact with visitors with internal redecoration making it more inviting and engaging. The Council also provides meeting space for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

		several local trustee organisations and for the regional meetings of One Voice Wales.	
	Provision of a sports changing facility	The Sports Pavilion enables sports teams and schools cross country events to participate in leisure and recreational facilities and is located on the Haverfordwest Lower Racecourse. This green space is owned by the Council and managed by the Portfield Recreation Committee, whereas the Upper Racecourse is leased to Haverfordwest Racecourse (Public Park) Trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Wales • Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Resilient Wales
	Provision of a community centre	The Council has a leasing agreement with Pembs County Council (PCC) to provide the facility as a youth centre. This is known as The Edge Youth Centre and has become a popular place for young people to meet, particularly with it being located next to the Skatepark.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Wales • Equal Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Resilient Wales
	Provision of burial grounds	The Council owns and manages three cemeteries – Lower Prendergast, Upper Prendergast and St Martin’s. Upper Prendergast and St Martin’s are still active cemeteries. The cemeteries are maintained by the Council’s Groundsmen, and outside Contractors, where necessary, and have ongoing programmes of repair and renewal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales of Cohesive Communities • Healthier Wales
	Provision of Festive Displays	The Council provides and maintains the lights display over the festive period. It promotes the switching on of the display with an event in conjunction with other town stakeholders ensuring the increase footfall from the event is of benefit to the local businesses and organisations. The Council funds the installation of two lit Christmas trees, one in front of St Mary’s Church and the second one in the Riverside Shopping Centre during the festive period and supports the Christmas Lights Switch On event. These activities are very well received by the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales of Cohesive Communities
	Branding	The Council was a stakeholder in the new branding for Haverfordwest, created to be more engaging and enabling a better connection with a more recognisable image, and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Equal Wales

		continues to support this initiative wherever possible. It is intended to review the Town Council's own branding, vision and logo in the Civic Year 2024-2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wales of Cohesive Communities
Pembrokeshire Public Services Board (PSB) Well-Being Objective	Steps taken by HTC that contribute to the Well-being Objective	How the five Ways of Working have been used to shape the activity (summary in appendix A)	Which national Well-being Goals does this work support? (summary in appendix B)
<p>Where We Live</p> <p><i>We want to protect and enhance our natural assets whilst optimising economic prospects, accessibility and health for all</i></p> <p><i>Priority 3 – Tackling Rurality</i></p> <p><i>Priority 4 – Protecting our Environment</i></p>	Priory Saltings Nature Reserve	<p>The Priory Salting's Nature Reserve is the former location of the town waste site which has been reclaimed as a public open space and nature reserve. It hosts a circular footpath with mixed habitat and riverside location. The Salting's is part of the Cleddau Reaches walkway that connects the town centre with green open spaces. Unfortunate vandalism has resulted in the destruction of the board walk which has affected the accessibility for some members of the public with the Priory Ruins.</p> <p>The pathways and meadow areas are cut regularly in season, with the costs met from grant funding received from the local authority. However, it is intended that this activity is taken in-house.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthier Wales Resilient Wales Wales of Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales
	Cleddau Reaches walks	<p>The installation of a footbridge to the north of the town centre which connects the walkway at Bridge Meadow to the Old Mill Grounds route has enabled a valuable asset for the benefit of our community. Regular visitors can enjoy the walk that benefits from enhanced biodiversity, wildlife and river views, well maintained walkways, physical and mental health benefits from being in nature. The Town Council is a member of the Cleddau Reaches Project organised by Pembs County Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthier Wales Resilient Wales Wales of Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales
	Town Centre floral arrangements	<p>The Council has funded the provision and maintenance of the town centre floral arrangements for a number of years. Pembs County Council source, install and maintain these on the Council's behalf with Riverside Shopping Centre maintaining the arrangements in its area. Compliments about the wonderful</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Globally Responsible Wales

		flower displays are regularly received by the town centre businesses and organisations. The Council is keen to look at more ways to bring such pleasure for town residents and visitors alike, either directly or through providing financial assistance to local organisations, for example, the Haverfordwest Yarn Bombers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wales of Cohesive Communities
	Bridge Meadow Haverfordwest Trust	<p>The Town Council is the sole Trustee. The green space is maintained to support recreation and wellbeing for the community. The play park area is popular with local families and organisations.</p> <p>The area has benefitted from additional footpaths and a footbridge installed with funding received through the Cleddau Reaches project, these now connect to provide a circular route alongside the river. While more urgent and necessary repairs have been carried out, a lack of Trustee Board meetings during the Civic year has impacted the amount of maintenance and repair work required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthier Wales Resilient Wales Wales of Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales
	Community Garden (now renamed Gardd Gumunedol Hwlffordd)	The Community Garden project, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, was completed in 2023 with accessible raised beds and planters, wildflower furlongs, lawn, fruit trees and supporting amenities such as compost bins and a polytunnel. Now managed by Grwp Resilience, around 30 volunteers are actively engaged in maintaining the garden and in running a range of wellbeing activities on location including during school half-term. Meet ups are twice weekly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthier Wales Resilient Wales Wales of Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales
	Lower Prendergast Cemetery	<p>The cemetery is no longer active. It is managed to create a more biodiverse habitat for wildlife and pollinators, as well as provide an amenity for the community.</p> <p>Previous work including new steps with handrails, a bee garden, new fencing and the levelling of a mown walk with wildflower seeding has enhanced this area.</p> <p>The boundary stone wall is being repaired in a three-stage phase of contracted works. The third and final stage remains to be completed and forms part of the Council's future plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthier Wales Resilient Wales Wales of Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales

	Lower Racecourse	This green space is maintained by the Council and is available to the public with its own parking and Sports Pavilion with facilities to hire. A popular place for dog walkers. The Groundsmen have started to develop small meadow areas between trees and seating areas. The council provide and manage waste and dog bin facilities at the Upper and Lower Racecourses which is welcomed by regular dog and other walkers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Wales • Resilient Wales • Wales of Cohesive Communities Globally Responsible Wales
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Looking forward

What has worked well for Council	Partnership working: Council continue to work with its partners to deliver services for the community and town, such as Pembs. County Council, Haverfordwest Business Circle, Gardd Gumunedol Hwlffordd, Riverside Shopping Centre, Pure West Radio, Haverfordwest Museum, and the Cleddau Reaches Project.
The barriers faced by Council	<p>Financial resources: Council considers the financial implications to the public purse with all decisions and how it looks to funding streams to assist the delivery of services.</p> <p>Relatively high turnover of Councillors: A new process of induction and mentoring will be introduced for all new Councillors. Current Council members are learning to work more collaboratively in meeting Council objectives and to bring the Council forward. A more focused approach to individual Councillor training will be developed.</p> <p>Staffing issues: lack of staff has limited the abilities of the Council to achieve some of its aims during this civic year. The staffing and administrative structure (people and processes) is being reviewed and improved.</p>
Matters that the PSB could support delivery or progress with	Community and Town Councils in Pembrokeshire should have more inclusion in the updates and considerations of the PSB. New administration to better understand PSB developments and case examples of how the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act goals are being applied by other town and community councils. Well-being and future Generations (Wales) Act training is to be rolled out to all Councillors to coincide with a strategic planning session in the Autumn.
The Council's main priorities in 2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Wool Market: move forward with the reconfiguration and considered restoration discussions of this historic building that is home to the Town Council Offices. Provide public meeting facilities opportunities including upgrade IT to facilitate improved hybrid meeting functionality for all Council meetings.

- Community Engagement: Continue to improve engagement and communication with the community to support a wider knowledge of our purpose and to broaden the Council's understanding of and response to community needs.
- Town Centre - erect summer bunting as well as Christmas Lighting.
- Upper Prendergast Cemetery - replace gates and front railings. Ensure resources are in place to manage and maintain all green spaces and cemeteries to the high standard expected by the members of the public, using the Council's own facilities staff as far as possible.
- Staffing - restructure administration, facilities and finance functions – adopt better systems and recruit new staff, as appropriate.
- New Councillors – a revised system of induction and mentoring will be introduced. Improve focus on Councillor training and approach to co-option of new Councillors to bring broader skills to membership
- Community Garden – encourage greater use by volunteers, facilitate public events, training courses and family days during school holidays wherever possible. Support collaboration with the VC Gallery in Haverfordwest.
- Civic Events - bring back the Civic Service (not held since Covid) and review effectiveness of holding Annual Meeting at the Mayor Making ceremony rather than by separate meeting.
- Lower Racecourse - replace the aged height restriction barrier and gates on the carpark. Support the Racecourse (Public Park) Trust to install pathways/kissing gates to enable full accessibility.
- Upper Racecourse - install extra dog bin following public feedback
- Facilities resources - apply for funding for a new ride on mower and trailer.
- St. Martin's Cemetery - implement Living Lawns project (Local Places for Nature).
- Priory Saltings – ensure, as far as is possible, that this is more accessible to members of the public and for necessary improvements and replacement board walk works are carried out. Implement Living Lawns project (Local Places for Nature).

- Administration - commission and implement new accounting software and new website to improve efficiencies. Review HTC branding alongside longer term strategic planning sessions.
- Bridge Meadow Trust – ensure governance compliance and instigate a rolling programme of maintenance and repair to the play and recreation areas.

Appendix A: Ways of Working

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives a legally-binding common purpose of seven Well-being Goals and five Ways of Working designed to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Long term



The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.

Prevention



How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

Integration



Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

Collaboration



Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

Involvement



The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

Appendix B: National Well-being Goals

A prosperous Wales	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the Global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately, and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
A resilient Wales	A nation which remains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
A healthier Wales	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.
A Wales of cohesive communities	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
A globally responsible Wales	A globally responsible Wales. A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being, and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).