

# Annual Reports from Councillors Appointed to Outside Bodies 2019/20

## 1 Age Concern – Bob Davis

Age Concern was supporting residents with a number of engagement activities. The Corona virus brought this to an abrupt end with all the activities including trips to the seaside on hold. There is regular contact with participants via phone conversations all looking forward to the centre re opening.

## 2 Fawbert and Barnard's Educational Foundation – Joel Charles

It has been another busy year for the foundation. My colleagues and I who sit on the Board of Trustees have been working closely with Sue Spearman, the Headteacher of Fawbert and Barnard's Primary School, to identify new opportunities to support the education of children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The school receives pupil premium funding for a number of pupils but the funds do not always cover all the extra-curricular activities organised during the academic year.

The foundation's steady income means that it is able to fund small grants for educational trips and resources to help improve the attainment of, primarily, disadvantaged pupils. In 2019, the foundation received a total income of £1,775.99 and spent £1,509 on school grants.

Trustees agreed to provide grant funding to support a number of activities undertaken by pupils during Arts Week 2019. The school also invited back the Young Shakespeare Company because the workshops were so well-received by pupils. Sue Spearman said that the pupils produced a significant amount of high-quality work as a result of the drama workshops. Trustees were delighted to support these opportunities.

The school also submitted a request to fund the cost of class dictionaries, atlases and maths equipment to help with in-year budget pressures. Trustees normally provide grants for extra-curricular activities but took the decision last year to support the school to ease its budget challenges.

Later in the year, the foundation also allocated funding to help with the cost of the school pantomime, new reading books and a grant to be used at the Headteacher's discretion to offer further help to disadvantaged pupils.

At each Board meeting, Trustees receive an update from the Headteacher about wider school business. A funding application has been submitted to reopen the front entrance of the school, which will need to include additional safety measures on London Road. Sue Spearman has also started a park and stride scheme to encourage more pupils to walk to school. The team at

Fawbert and Barnard's continues to work with parents to address parking concerns during peak drop-off and pick-up times.

The Board is keen to receive more grant requests from external applicants and will be looking at options to encourage more submissions. I am personally interested to look at wider opportunities to fund specific educational projects submitted by individual pupils who want to further an interest in their studies. The foundation looks forward to building on the success of last year and supporting more children to achieve their educational ambitions.

### **3 Harlow Arts Council – Jean Clark**

The Harlow Arts Council is a voluntary umbrella organisation for the visual and performing arts in the Harlow area. Its role has been greatly reduced, as it no longer gives grants, lends technical equipment or administers rehearsal space. Its main function is to monitor the arts and host a summer festival/Garden Party.

Last year, we met early in the year. We initially had real funding problems. When we eventually managed to secure funding, we had to delay the Festival from July to September 8th. This was organised mostly through email. Some performers struggled to come, due to the later date. However, it was still a very positive, enjoyable Festival. The weather was fine and holding it in the museum gardens is always a huge part of its success.

We met this year in February and early March. Incidentally, I was appointed the official room booking person, due to a change in council rules! We had set the date for this year's Art of the Garden Party for July 12th. We were looking forward to this and had many creative ideas for both performing and funding. And then Covid 19 accelerated and we went into lockdown. Obviously, the Festival had to be abandoned.

The future of the arts is a matter of gloomy debate in the press. Hopefully, Harlow Arts will be more resilient!

### **4 Harlow Occupational Health Centre – Frances Mason**

There have been 3 Board Meetings, the 4th cancelled due to Covid-19. I was unable to attend 1 of the 3 Board Meetings, due to hospital treatment.

Overall, for a relatively small organisation up to December 2019 they had seen an increase in new business through their web-site. The figures for the year-end October 2019 has reported a profit of £11,264 which is encouraging especially when the previous year a loss of £6K was recorded.

A Loan taken out with Harlow Health Centres Trust will have been completed by 31.12.2019 saving £6390.00 for 2020.

Staff received a 2% increase with effect from January 2020.

Across the board increases at an inflationary rate of 1.75% were made.

Christmas Card Charity Donation for 2019 was made to The Chocolate Run, (helping Harlow's Homeless and vulnerably housed) with the company matching monies raised by employees.

Contract meetings took place with Epping Forest District Council and Princess Alexandra Hospital. Other work comes from Essex Police, Essex Fire & Rescue Service and Harlow Council, to name a few.

HOHC have been having problems in Edinburgh Place where seemingly a 'new site' for dumping 'white goods' seemed to be developing, these matters were reported to Harlow Council and Environmental Health Team were involved.

Additional Expense will be incurred this year with IT moving to Windows 10.

The Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has created new challenges to HOHC. As the work tends to come in within a 2 week timeframe and with Essex Police initially stopping recruitment, they were faced with the situation to furlough most staff, with the exception of the Chief Executive and a Health Professional who remained in place to keep business ticking over. Business quickly increased and it has been a particularly challenging 3 months. They took advantage of the 'bounce back' loan, (£560 pm) particularly as they had finished the loan to Harlow Health Centres Trust. Very soon afterwards recruitment screening interviews started to be booked again along with occupational health screening etc.

HOHC have adapted their building to ensure processes in place to meet the challenges of Covid-19 with Social Distancing, Sanitisers, PPE etc. Limited staff (4) have now returned working a couple of days a week from home, or in the office. Although technology has been used for some assessments there is still need for face to face assessments with Doctor. In total HOHC have current staff of 12, 3 employees are full-time, there is a flexible workforce to ensure satisfactory home life at the same time covering the requirements of the business.

For information HOHC offer the following services to local companies:

- Medical Assessment (initial and new)
- Assessments other inc Drivers/Confined Space
- Screening Tests All inc COSHH
- Audio/Vision/Blood/Lung Function
- New Starter & Paper Screens
- Health Promotion inc OHA Screens Voluntary
- Physiotherapist
- Counselling
- Training Courses All
- Immunisations Work

In the way most Companies may be considering doing things differently, this pandemic has created opportunities which will be under review. They are

currently involved in screening Shielded staff who will be in the process of returning to work for a number of organisations.

## **5 Essex Police & Fire Commissioner Panel – Frances Mason**

In the role as a Panel Member ie critical friend, I have attended Essex Police & Fire Crime Panel Meetings in July, October, December 2019, February and June 2020.

In addition, I have been on a number of sub groups attending additional meetings in Chelmsford & Witham in relation to:

Essex Fire & Rescue IRMP (Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2024)  
Essex Police & Crime Plan Extension (2020-21)

The sub groups have been with 4/5 panel members and have worked through to final publication of both documents. EPFC Roger Hirst personally thanked the group for involvement of the recent Extension Plan which was completed within a very short time short timeframe.

Decisions made during 2019/20 relate to:

Appointment of Essex Fire & Rescue Section 151 Officer  
Appointment of 2 Independent Panel Members  
Budget Setting Process  
Essex Precept (2.94%)  
Quarterly Performance Reports

Although operational issues are not discussed in this panel, I have influenced important decisions from Harlow's perspective and raised important issues i.e. Permitted Development in terms of Essex Fire & Rescue Service IRMP.

## **6 Stansted Airport Consultative Committee (STACC) – Danny Purton**

I have continued to play an active role on this statutory body that seeks to represent the views of many sectors of the society to the Airport Management.

Due to a change in Representation following last year's Council Elections in Uttlesford and retirements I was asked and agreed to take the leadership on Environmental Issues and have since led and Chaired the EI Group focussing on:

- Noise Action Plan
- Benchmarking with other Airports
- New Aircraft Routing system

I am also playing a part on a study into the Regional effect of Stansted in terms of Traffic, Public Transport, Skills Training, the Economy and other strategic issues

Since Lockdown virtual meetings have been held most recently to consider the Airport management Recovery Plan including safety measures for passengers – maintaining highest levels of Public Transport access – Border Force – rising re-introduction of flights.

#### **7 North Essex Parking Partnership – Danny Purton**

I continued to play a very active role in this organisation as a representative from Harlow but also as Vice-Chairperson. Apart from ensuring that we established our quota of schemes for the coming year I also participated in the introduction of 3PR school safety projects in Harlow.

#### **8 Great Parndon Community Association – Danny Purton**

I have been working with the Management Group to assess the Lease arrangements with Harlow Council and since lockdown the Access to Grants available through various schemes. I am an active user of the GPCA facilities.

#### **9 Epping Forest Community Transport – Danny Purton**

I attended the Annual Meeting and was informed about the activities of the service which is expanding in the Harlow Area – I was urged to raise the issues of financial support from Harlow Council towards the service which is in need of funds.

#### **10 Essex Waste Partnership – Essex Flood Prevention Board – Danny Purton**

The Environment Portfolio covers both of these functions and I have continued to attend the meetings held in Chelmsford to discuss co-operation and joint activities for the benefit of Harlow.

#### **11 PATROL – Stansted Gateway Transportation Board – Danny Purton**

There have been no meetings of these bodies although most of the issues have been covered by other organisations.

#### **12 Essex Health Scrutiny and Overview Committee – Tony Edwards**

Reviews and scrutinises matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services in the County of Essex. Including primary, secondary, tertiary care, and public health, and may involve reviewing the work of commissioners (such as local clinical commissioning groups), providers of health services (such as hospitals) and other organisations in the health sector. I have attended Committee Meetings and undertaken training. Items discussed have included the re provision of Princess Alexandra Hospital, the performance of Clinical Commissioning Groups and latterly the impact of Covid19 on the Care Sector.

### **13 Harlow Arts Trust – Tony Edwards**

I have attended a number of Committee meetings which have concentrated upon developing a sound Business Plan. Together with Councillor Harvey I spoke at a Seminar extolling Harlow as a Sculpture Town. The Gibberd Gallery curated a number of exhibitions including the Harlow 20/20 Open. The Trust also successfully launched a Sculpture Town digital App and Website which encourages and facilitates people to visit and learn about the sculptures. <https://sculpturetown.uk/>

### **14 Welfare Panel – Tony Edwards**

Along with other Councillors I have been a member of the Welfare panel. The primary role of the panel is to look at what assistance may be given to tenants who have significant arrears. It also agrees recommendations in the unfortunate event of the Council having to consider eviction proceedings.