

HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 5th AUGUST 2009 at 7.15pm

at THE 1912 CENTRE, COW LANE, HARWICH

Present: The Mayor, Councillor J Wares, in the Chair
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor S Tyrer
Councillors: B Brown, L Double, G Calver, A Colbourne,
D Rutson, R Callender, P Burke, M Gardner, B Howlett
and D McLeod

The Clerk to the Council, Mrs E Novorol

Also present: 1 member of the press and 7 members of the public

38/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Morrison, L Payne, S Henderson and J Brown.

39/09 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillors Double and Calver declared a personal interest in Harwich and Dovercourt Cricket Club. Councillor Rutson declared he is a member of Tendring District Council's Licensing Committee.

40/09 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor gave details of engagements she has recently undertaken including the Harwich Festival of the Arts and the Sea Festival. She thanked the organisers for their hard work in promoting the town.

41/09 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 24th June 2009 (previously circulated) be approved by the Chairman and signed as a true record.

42/09 450th ANNIVERSARY OF THE VISIT TO HARWICH BY QUEEN ELIZABETH I

Reference minute 24/09, the Mayor advised that the first meeting of the Working Party had taken place and relevant organisations have been invited to take part in the events. A further meeting has been arranged for 12th August to progress the ideas put forward.

43/09 COUNCIL MEETING AT THE HARWICH SCHOOL

Further to minute 29/09, Councillor Rutson informed members that he

has contacted the school with a view to arranging a council meeting at the Harwich School site but did not expect a response until the start of the academic year in September.

44/09 HOOK OF HOLLAND EXCHANGE VISIT

The meeting was advised that Mr Paddy Roomer cancelled his visit planned for 14th July, indicating that he would come to Harwich during August. The Clerk confirmed that no date has been put forward as yet.

45/09 PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN RETIRING MAYOR'S SPEECH

a) REPLICA OF THE MAYFLOWER

Members were informed that Mr Tom Daly has agreed to speak to the Council on 26th August 2009 at 7.00pm, regarding the proposal to construct a replica of the Mayflower.

b) NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE – FEASIBILITY STUDY

Councillor Rutson informed the meeting that he could not give further details at present as he was awaiting the report from Ingleton Wood.

46/09 HARWICH MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT: CONSTITUENCY NEWSLETTER

Ref. minute 33/09, the response from Douglas Carswell MP, regarding distribution of his constituency newsletter, was read to the meeting.

RESOLVED: to write to Mr Carswell asking that he immediately ensures that the Harwich area and surrounding villages receive his newsletter and to confirm to Harwich Town Council that he will do so.

47/09 MINESWEEPERS MEMORIAL

Councillor Double asked for a vote of thanks to the Guildhall staff and in particular, to Susan Anderson, for their perseverance and hard work in achieving the restoration of the Minesweepers Memorial.

48/09 COUNCILLOR PETER HALLIDAY, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE: TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL

Councillor Peter Halliday invited councillors to put forward their questions.

Councillor Double asked why the Conservative and Community Representative administration has chosen to cancel the projects which were to enhance leisure facilities in Dovercourt.

Councillor Halliday replied that he does not believe in borrowing £1.25million to build 'flagship leisure sites'. He stated his belief that gyms should be with the private sector and not be a council scheme. Councillor Burke asked what facilities for the disabled and elderly will be provided in Harwich and Dovercourt.

Councillor Halliday advised that he is looking to work with Harwich Hospital in providing such a facility.

Councillor McLeod questioned the condition of the Boating Lake and Skating Rink and asked what could be done to improve these.

Councillor Halliday advised that there are no costings or proposals in place and that, if there had been, the new administration would not have stopped them

Councillor Calver referred to the Harwich Annual Town Meeting when Councillor Henderson confirmed his support for proposals to restore these sites, stating that he had been assured all such projects were going ahead.

Councillor Halliday responded that decisions will be made based on figures.

Councillor Tyrer queried reports that the District Council is paying for Blackberrys and tickets to Clacton Air Show for its members. She also raised concerns that money could not be found to provide soap in public toilets remarking that Harwich is fed up with being treated as 3rd class citizens.

Councillor Halliday again emphasised that he does not believe borrowing money to finance a leisure centre would help Harwich. He added that the new administration disagrees with much of the Harwich Masterplan: building flats and houses was not the best way forward. Councillor Howlett referred to efficiencies and savings to increase future spending. Councillor Halliday replied that there is already a deficit for next year's budget which can be plugged using previous underspend. A discussion regarding national expenditure and borrowing followed.

Councillor Calver stated that there is no better case in the district for development than Dovercourt swimming pool and asked if, as the previous administration intended to go ahead, was the present one choosing not to do so? Councillor Halliday said he would not borrow for these projects and mentioned excessive money spent by the previous administration.

Councillor Tyrer stated that investment not made in the swimming pool could result in health and safety issues and asked if the District Council could ensure this will not happen. Councillor Halliday stated that the maintenance budget will be used to cover any work needed.

Councillor Burke asked how long it will be before local residents can use the gym at the hospital which was promised for April 2009.

Councillor Halliday will deal with this as soon as possible.

The Mayor, Councillor Wares asked Councillor Halliday to join her in a visit to Dovercourt swimming pool to assess its condition.

49/09 PROJECTS IN HARWICH AND DOVERCOURT PROPOSED BY THE PREVIOUS TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

Councillor McLeod gave a statement regarding projects in Harwich and Dovercourt which had been previously proposed. Councillor Double advised that plans had been put forward by officers and not by

members. Councillor Colbourne raised his concerns regarding parts of the Harwich Masterplan. Councillor Colbourne mentioned that projects which were to have happened in April were not going ahead under the new administration.

RESOLVED: to invite Councillor Steven Mayzes, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, together with the previous holder, Councillor Pierre Oxley, to attend a future meeting of Harwich Town Council to discuss leisure facilities in Harwich.

50/09 MINUTES OF THE GUILDHALL COMMITTEE

Councillor B Brown presented the minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2009 (previously circulated).

RESOLVED: that the minutes be adopted.

51/09 MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Councillor A Colbourne presented the minutes of the meeting held on 16th July 2009 (previously circulated).

RESOLVED: that the minutes be adopted.

52/09 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Councillor L Double presented the minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2009 (previously circulated).

RESOLVED: that the minutes and all recommendations, be adopted.

53/09 ESSEX REGISTRATION SERVICE – MODERNISATION CONSULTATION PROCESS

Members considered responding by 31st August 2009 to the Essex County Council consultation document and questionnaire on proposals to reorganise the service from 1st December 2009.

RESOLVED: that members will make their own individual responses.

54/09 GENERAL PRACTITIONERS' PRESCRIPTIONS ON SUNDAYS

Members considered the inability of local residents to obtain prescribed medicines on a Sunday.

RESOLVED: to write to Dr Zollinger-Read advising that Harwich Town Council has become aware of this, expressing the Council's extreme concern and requesting immediate action.

55/09 MEN'S HEALTH CLINIC AT THE FRYATT HOSPITAL, HARWICH

Councillor Rutson reported that members of the Primary Care Trust wish to talk to Harwich Town Council at an informal meeting to be held on 13th August at 2.30pm at the Park Pavilion. Members of the Fellowship of the Sick would be invited and any Councillors who wish to attend would be welcome.

56/09 REPORTS OF UNPROVOKED ATTACKS IN HARWICH AND

DOVERCOURT

Councillor Calver raised concerns regarding attacks on and intimidation of members of the public around Cliff Park. He mentioned that there is fear in the town and that nasty incidents involving a gang of young thugs have taken place. Members were informed that, in just two days, a petition signed by 250, had been collected indicating the widespread fears of such attacks. **RESOLVED:** to write to Harwich police advising that Harwich Town Council requires them to ensure they receive resources to deal with the problem and then to confirm that they will deal with it.

ADDENDUM: to ask for an immediate response which is adequate and, if necessary, for the Mayor and the Clerk to arrange an emergency meeting of the council and the police.

57/09 BRIEF REPORTS OF MEMBERS

Councillor Colbourne informed members that he will not be paying his subscriptions to the Community Representatives Party and that he has advised Councillor Henderson of this. He stated that he will continue to work as an Independent member.

58/09 ACCOUNTS

Payments and receipts, current balances, financial activity against budgets and earmarked funds were noted.

RESOLVED: to authorise payments as listed in Appendix A.

59/09 THE LICENSING ACT 2003

Members noted:

- a) Application 09/00952/PREMVA 'to extend the hours of sale of alcohol by one hour Mondays to Saturdays' – Somerfield, 270 High Street, Harwich.
- b) Application 09/00611/PREMGR 'to sell/supply alcohol for consumption off the premises Mondays to Saturdays from 08.00 hours to 23.00 hours and Sundays 10.00 hours to 22.30 hours' – Iceland, 126-250 High Street, Harwich. Members asked to defer comments until in receipt of clarification.

60/09 TEEN-TALK (HARWICH)

The meeting noted details of Teen Talk's work and the invitation to attend its Annual General Meeting on 18th November 2009.

61/09 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on Wednesday 16th September 2009 at The 1912 Centre, Harwich at 7.00pm, or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.

62/09 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

That the press and public be excluded from discussion of this item because of the likelihood that confidential information could be disclosed:

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 29th July 2009.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.44pm

TOWN MAYOR AND CHAIRMAN

DATE