

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL**  
 held at  
**The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich**  
 on **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 7.00pm**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Councillors B Brown Calver, Erskine, Fay, I Henderson, J Henderson, Morrison, C Powell, F Powell, Smith and Todd</b>
<b>In the Chair:</b>	<b>Councillor McLeod</b>
<b>Clerk:</b>	<b>Ms Lucy Ballard</b>
<b>Also present:</b>	<b>2 members of the public and no members of the press and Les Nicoll on behalf of Essex Fire &amp; Rescue service</b>

The Mayor welcomed Les Nicoll from the Essex Fire & Rescue Service  
 The Mayor agreed to consider a letter received in the office this morning, after Item 16, in order to expedite the matter.

<b>124/15</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> Cllrs Ashley, J Brown, Carr and Fowler
<b>125/15</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u></b> Cllr Calver declared an interest in the emergency item. Cllr I Henderson and Cllr Erskine declared an interest in item 5 as they hold membership of Essex Fire authority.
<b>126/15</b>	<b><u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u></b> Dr Rogers asked what questions or request for info has Harwich Town Council put to TDALC in the last 12 months, and what other useful information has been received from TDALC. Cllr Erskine, as HTC representative, confirmed there is very little useful information which comes from the meetings. It's generally a talking shop as there's a lot of members but not much action from it. Matters are put to the chairman but often actions are referred back to individual parish councils.  Dr Rogers asked if his concerns over litter on the A120 could've been put to TDALC. Cllr Erskine said he has raised this previously to the TDALC, and a letter was sent to Highways England but they are not responsible for the clearance. He's unsure whether the matter was ever followed up. He confirmed that he's found that TDC are responsible for clearance. Cllr Calver said he was sorry Dr Rogers was disappointed with the efforts made by HTC as it was agreed to take one step at a time; firstly being to establish the responsible organisation. As HTC has now done that, the issue is back on the agenda for further discussion.

127/15	<p><b><u>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></b></p> <p>The Mayor gave an account of some of the engagements attended since the last meeting, including attending a concert of the Choral Society, the pensioners concert at the caravan camp, the Christmas lights switch on, a carol service at Central Church, and a number of Christmas meals (Rotary and Timeline). He also mentioned a forthcoming event in aid of the Mayoress Appeal, the Mayoress Dance party night on 29<sup>th</sup> January.</p> <p>The Mayor offered a vote of thanks to HTC staff and councillors for all their efforts during 2015.</p> <p>Cllr Morrison, as Deputy Mayor, attended the children's concert in December. It was a lovely evening with a full church.</p> <p>Cllr I Henderson thought it would be nice for HTC to write a letter of thanks to Kirsty Ayling for her hard work in putting together a great Xmas event.</p>
128/15	<p><b><u>PARISH SAFETY VOLUNTEERS</u></b></p> <p>Members welcomed Les Nicoll on behalf of Essex County Fire &amp; Rescue Service, who briefed members on the new volunteering initiative for recruiting Parish Safety Volunteers. Started about 2 years ago. The idea is that, particularly for the outer villages, who wait extended periods for a fire engine, to recruit volunteers (currently recruited 80). There are 290 parishes in Essex and 80 volunteers are not sufficient. They have liaised with the police to see what could be done to spread the message about fire safety. They are looking for 2 volunteers per parish to spread the message about fire and home safety. The parish benefits because these would be community minded people who can be a link to the police station or for community safety advice. They would fit free smoke alarms and then give information about security of your home. The volunteers are a link between the authorities and the community. They would be considered the safety expert within the parish. Currently recruited 10, who have just completed their training. He needs the support of HTC to spread the word to encourage uptake of the scheme. Hopefully it could be an HTC volunteer.</p> <p>Cllr McLeod asked if Neighborhood Watch is a similar scheme. Les confirmed they are using them but they are covering independent streets, and they need like-minded people who can cover a wider area.</p> <p>Cllr Calver asked if their hope would be that the council would be a point of public contact. Les confirmed yes, and they had recruited more people but they still would benefit from volunteers to deliver the message of the police and fire service. Les said whilst they have a functioning fire station then they can have their volunteer based there and communicate via there. Cllr C Powell thought it would be good to agenda it for a future meeting for discussion.</p> <p>Cllr Morrison thinks they do a wonderful job and agreed it's a catch 22 situation as everyone should have these services. Her worry is that if we continue with obtaining volunteers then are we eroding jobs? Les felt not necessarily as there are gaps in the resources. He is simply offering a solution. He's always hopeful that jobs will come back as there are peaks and troughs.</p> <p>Cllr Todd asked when they call for volunteers, do they have a type of person in mind or can anyone apply. Les said anyone can apply and they select accordingly.</p> <p>Cllr J Henderson said the Neighborhood Watch route is good for liaising with the Police. She raised concern about lone working of volunteers. Volunteers enter homes in pairs; however salaried employees are risk-assessed and go in alone. Les was asked if he would attend a future meeting to bring along information gleaned from Wivenhoe Town Council so this can be further considered.</p>
129/15	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 25<sup>th</sup></p>

	<p>November 2015 (previously circulated) be approved by the Chairman and signed as a true record.</p> <p><b>FURTHER RESOLVED:</b> That the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (previously circulated) be approved by the Chairman and signed as a true record.</p>
130/15	<p><b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MIN 109/15</b> – Members considered responses from TDC and Highways England regarding concerns raised about litter forming on the A120. The Clerk agreed to send copied of the letters to Dr Rogers. Cllr Erskine also confirmed that if there are any heavy duty items fallen, or dead animals then Highways England will come out and clear this themselves rather than relying on the district or county councils.</li> </ul> <p>Dr Rogers referred to the transfer station and said if you travel on a bus you get a better view of the transfer station and said there isn't any litter on the inside of the boundary. He feels it's coming from the waste lorries and it should be dealt with at source. Cllr Erskine confirmed that when the issue was first raised there was litter flying out of the trucks as there weren't any nets. Cllr Kevin Bentley was challenged over this to ensure Veolia, and any other contractors, place better security on the trucks. When the trucks are full they are closed, it's when they're empty, they don't always close them, and it's the residual waste that comes out.</p> <p>Cllr McLeod referred to TDALC and that they don't have any executive powers and much gets talked about rather than actioned.</p> <p>Cllr J Henderson said she saw hand picking prior to Christmas but that 4 times a year just isn't sufficient, but recognised that with the resource cuts it might not be realistic to get the desired results.</p> <p>Cllr Calver said there is not a quick fix and all we can do is lobby as HTC have no authority. All seem to be in agreement that it's the lorries rather than the station that's causing the problem, and we should now put the problem to TDC and state that all the info we're receiving suggests it's the waste lorries and ask whether they share that view and what steps they're taking to address it.</p> <p>Cllr I Henderson said the lorry drivers should take personal responsibility so should we include the police. He also referred to the Environmental legislation surrounding this and said people should be more aware of the penalties.</p> <p>Cllr J Henderson said we should ask TDC if there were more collections in previous years. Has it become more noticeable with fewer cleans.</p> <p>Cllr Erskine added that those responsible for the Colchester side of the A120 may make more effort than TDC in keeping the road clean so could TDC members put pressure on TDC to keep up the standards.</p> <p>Cllr B Brown said he hasn't been able to look into this before now but would try to follow up on this.</p> <p>Cllr Calver proposed that HTC writes to both TDC and Essex Police cc to MPs Bernard Jenkin and Douglas Carswell MP, stating that the information being made available to HTC indicates that the waste transfer vehicles are responsible for the build up of the majority of litter and debris on the verges, central reservations and carriageway of the A120, and HTC believes this to be both dangerous to road users, and costly, and unsightly to the local environment. The Council asks that both TDC and the Police advise the Council as to whether or not they share these views and if so what action is being taken to deal with the issue.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To send letters</p> <p><b>MIN 115/15</b> . Members called in the decision regarding the cessation of black bin bags by TDC, and it's been referred back to cabinet for a decision. But it</p>

	<p>was found that Tendring district, as compared to other districts ceasing the service, is actually offering the worst waste collection service in Essex as other councils collect green waste free of charge, once a week, large loads, and glass. TDC confirmed the reason they have the worst service is because TDC has the lowest council tax. The Cabinet meeting is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> January. Cllr I Henderson further mentioned that those who don't adhere to the Environmental Pollution Act 1990 (s46) and put the wrong receptacles out with their rubbish will be given a warning and then issued a fixed penalty fine which could be £75, reduced to £50 if paid within 14 days. If not paid then could be fined £1000. Cllr C Powell asked if there are particular bags to purchase. Cllr I Henderson said TDC recommend black bags. Basildon for example say people can use any waste bags except green or pink as these are used for other purposes. Cllr F Powell read the recommendations from the TDC website.</p>
131/15	<p><b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u></b>  <b>MIN 095/15</b> . Members considered a response from the Ministry of Defence and agreed that a copy should be forwarded onto Stephen Harriss and the press.</p>
132/15	<p><b><u>NEW AUDIT REGIME</u></b>  Members considered whether to opt out of the Sector Led Body following the introduction of new regulations regarding the way in which a council's external auditor is appointed. Opting out would render the Council responsible for appointing their own external auditor and needing to meet the extensive legislative requirements for doing so.  <b>RESOLVED:</b> To not to opt out and allow the Sector Led Body to appoint the council's auditors.</p>
133/15	<p><b><u>EMERGENCY PLAN</u></b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b> To adopt version 2.2 of the HTC Emergency Plan  Cllr C Powell said that after the next Planning meeting, a discussion will be required to ensure all members are offait with that's involved and HTC's obligations.</p>
134/15	<p><b><u>2016/2017 BUDGET AND PRECEPT</u></b>  Members gave consideration to the estimates for income and expenditure for the 2016/17 financial year, taking into account any under/overspends, along with recommendations to earmark funds. Cllr Morrison gave a run down on the impact of the precept.  <b>RESOLVED:</b> that the council precept on Tendring District Council for £165,178 (figure after LCTSS grant has been deducted) based on a summary of the detailed figures in Appendix A, having an impact of £32.02 per annum, or 62 pence per week, for a Band D council tax payer based on a tax base of 5159 and Cllr Morrison confirmed this represents a freeze on the 2015/16 cost. Cllr Morrison extended her thanks to both the Clerk and Cllr Calver for their input in putting the budget together.</p>
135/15	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING</u></b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b> that the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015 (previously circulated) be received.  <b>FURTHER RESOLVED:</b> that the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (previously circulated) be received.</p>

136/15	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST FINANCE &amp; GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING</u></b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b> that the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (previously circulated) be received.  Members also considered the recommendations of the Committee in terms of grant funding to The H&amp;D United Services Club and <b>FURTHER RESOLVED:</b> To accept the recommendations and grant £2500 s137 funding.  Finally, members considered the decision of the Committee to expend £2500 as a contribution towards the creation of a new website to promote Harwich &amp; Dovercourt and <b>FURTHER RESOLVED:</b> To ratify the decision of the committee and fund from the Regeneration budget.</p>
137/15	<p><b><u>ACCOUNTS</u></b>  Payments and receipts, current balances, financial activity against budgets and earmarked funds were noted.  <b>RESOLVED:</b> to authorise payments as presented.</p>
138/15	<p><b><u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES</u></b>  None</p>
139/15	<p><b><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></b>  “ Members considered some correspondence between the Chairman of Ramsey &amp; Parkeston Parish Council (RPPC) and Tendring District Council (TDC) Leader Neil Stock concerning the deterioration and reduction of services proposed by TDC. Cllr I Henderson referred to the suggestion that the provision of black bin bags was a front line service, which contradicts the feeling direct from TDC. Cllr Calver commented that the letter didn't appear to fully answer the concerns raised. Members agreed to send a letter of acknowledgement to Cllr Elmer.</p>
140/15	<p><b><u>REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO OBTAIN PHOTOS OF THE CARVINGS ROOM</u></b>  Cllr Calver left the meeting whilst members considered an emergency item received in the office today, requesting permission to take photographs of the Council's Carvings Room to accompany a Guildhall-themed blog, which will be added to the website of a local organisation, with a view to promoting Harwich &amp; Dovercourt. <b>RESOLVED:</b> to approve the request and make the necessary arrangements for the photographs to be taken.</p>
141/15	<p><b><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></b>  The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on <b>Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016</b> at <b>The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich</b>, at <b>7.00pm</b>, or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.</p>
142/15	<p><b><u>EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS</u></b>  Pursuant to Sub-Section 2 of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the meeting was closed to the press and public for the transaction of the under-mentioned business:  “ <b>Loop System</b></p>

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.22pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**