

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL**  
 held at  
**The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich**  
 on **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2016** at **7.08pm**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Councillors Ashley, J Brown, Calver, Carr, Erskine, Fay, Fowler, 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, 1 members of the press</b>

The Mayor agreed to consider a request for use of the Chamber, after Item 15, in order to expedite the matter.

The Mayor informed members that Cllr Erskine has resigned his position as a UKIP representative and formally asked members to accept Cllr Erskine as an independent Cllr for West Central Ward for the remainder of this term of office. Members accepted.

<b>168/15</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> Cllr B Brown
<b>169/15</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u></b> Cllrs Erskine declared an interest in item 11 as his spouse is a pharmacy manager. Cllrs Erskine and I Henderson declared an interest in the minutes of the meeting in terms of MIN 153/15 . Essex Fire and Rescue consultation and left the room during the discussions.
<b>170/15</b>	<b><u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u></b> Dr Rogers referred to the council's involvement in the Harwich tourism group, and the event which he attended in February at The Waterfront. He has no direct commercial interest but was in a suitable position to independently assess the information presented on the night and said that given the current economic and employment situation, he applauded the efforts to focus on tourism given that the renewables sector was unlikely to have an impact in Harwich. He added that with tourism in mind, there was no mention of the negative visual impact that may be deterring tourism, such as the litter on A120, hoardings, derelict sites, images on the promenade etc. and raised concern over the impact on tourism if these issues aren't addressed. He felt the group might have put too much emphasis on the Mayflower Project's plans to build a replica of the Mayflower. He also referred to the ongoing parking problem and the ability of either Harwich or Dovercourt to cope with additional visitors who arrive by road transport. He asked what Harwich Town Council will do to improve the visual amenity of the area and ensure parking isn't a major impediment to success. He also asked what Harwich Town Council will focus on with regards to tourism if the Mayflower

	<p>project fails to succeed as hoped.</p> <p>Cllr I Henderson said the remit of the Tourism Group is to promote the town and work with those who are able to have a positive effect on tourism. He mentioned the new branding for Harwich and Dovercourt, and the new tourism website, along with connections with the port and the voluntary sector. He understands the issues raised but these need to be raised at the appropriate level, either local, district or county. The group is about the voluntary and commercial sector working together for the good of the town. The Mayflower Project has said the build will be delivered on time but this isn't the full extent of what can be celebrated. Harwich has its own history in connection to the Mayflower and this will be promoted and celebrated as well. The Group will look at the whole picture, not just the build.</p> <p>The Mayor said there is much to do and it all takes time, but progress is being made.</p> <p>Cllr J Henderson asked if Dr Rogers was referring to the stone images on the grass banks along the promenade when talking about unsightly areas, and said paint had been made available for that purpose and that she would be happy to contact Tendring District Council to make sure these were painted again.</p> <p>Cllr Henderson also confirmed that the recent graffiti on the oval hut, opposite the skating rink, is being made a priority by the district council.</p> <p>Cllr Calver mentioned that in reference to the Mayflower Project, someone present at the launch of the logo did question representatives of the Mayflower Project about their confidence in meeting their deadline, and the Vice Chair of the Mayflower Project gave a 100% guarantee that the project would be delivered on time and the build would commence this September.</p> <p>Cllr C Powell said our tourism plans will extend beyond 2020.</p> <p>Cllr Ashley said the litter on the A120 is a countrywide problem not just Harwich.</p>
171/15	<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 the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Boogie Shoes at the High School; Brightlingsea Civic Service and Women's Day of Prayer. He also referred to a Meet and greet and dinner event with children and teachers from Vallance. He also attended the High Sherriff Awards and an Easter Coffee Morning at the local stroke base.</p> <p>He gave thanks to the Council staff during the office refurbishment in the Guildhall as it's been a difficult time with the intermittent interruptions, noises and strong smell of paint.</p>
172/15	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016 (previously circulated) be approved by the Chairman and signed as a true record.</p>
173/15	<p><b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></b></p> <p><b>MIN 149/15</b> . litter on the A120. Cllr I Henderson referred to an occasion when travelling behind one of the waste transfer vehicles and witnessed the rubbish spilling out as it was inadequately secured. He suggested the Council write to the district and county councils and request they contact their contractors and ask them to net the back of the trucks before they start out. Cllr Erskine said it's Kevin Bentley who to write to, and copy to Cllr Mick Talbot and Essex Police. Cllr Fay suggested copying to the Transport Minister.</p> <p>Cllr C Powell said the vehicles all have nets, they're just not using them but they can only be fined if they're caught otherwise there's no evidence.</p>

	<p>Cllr J Henderson said there's so few traffic police to witness what's happening. Cllr Ashley said it's a lot to do with the residue in the containers but also that the vehicles aren't fit for the purpose intended.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To send a letter(s) to the appropriate organisations.</p> <p><b>MIN 153/15</b> . Cllrs I Henderson and Erskine left the room. Cllr Calver said that we are part way through the EFRS consultation but have heard nothing from our MP, and we should know what representation he's making on our behalf.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> send letter as a matter of urgency to ask what representation he's made on our behalf and ask whether he's in agreement with HTC's stance that Harwich retains its full-time fire-fighters.</p>
174/15	<p><b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u></b></p> <p>None</p>
175/15	<p><b><u>SURE START CHILDRENS CENTRES</u></b></p> <p>Members considered the consultation on proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres.</p> <p>Cllr Erskine gave a background on the current facilities and the changes to be made under the proposals in that the central hub will be in Clacton once the Windmill Centre closes. He said this will affect the whole community, not just those living close to the existing centre; it will also hinder those who aren't able to travel. Cllr Fowler agreed with Cllr Erskine's concerns and commended the support that these services provide and raised concern on the impact this will have once taken away. Cllr I Henderson feels strongly about this consultation as it was one of the best projects brought in at Government level. He referenced some of the points made in the consultation to justify the proposals and how these were unfounded. He further referred to some of the new options under the consultation and felt this was a financially motivated consultation. He felt that we should be stating that we want a full service, locally, accessible to those who need it locally. We should make it clear that we are not accepting these proposals. We are a deprived area with many people who need these services the most. We have the highest areas of child poverty and fuel poverty. More people are needing to use the Food Bank and Winter Warmers.</p> <p>The Mayor referred to some of the other known Government priorities and compared them with the need for money to be spent in this area.</p> <p>Cllr Calver suggested that we need to put our response in letter form rather than simply respond to the consultation. He asked Cllrs Henderson and Erskine if this will be given due consideration if done in this way. Both councillors confirmed yes as if submitted directly to the Cabinet members responsible, as it will be dealt with as a petition.</p> <p>Cllr Morrison thanked Cllr Henderson for briefing everyone as it was a hefty consultation to read.</p> <p>Cllr J Henderson asked what help is given to those vulnerable stakeholders to ensure they are given the opportunity to respond to the consultation.</p> <p>Cllr F Powell said there are a lot of families needing support locally, and it's only put pressures on other support services.</p> <p>Cllr Erskine referred to some of the tangible changes to be made in terms of sites. He feels we should propose that The Windmill is brought up to a Family Hub Delivery Site rather than withdrawn totally, as he feels it can easily accommodate this. We also need a Family Hub Outreach, to remain in St Nicholas Hall, in Bathside to support residents in this area.</p> <p>Cllr C Powell suggested that Cllrs Calver, Erskine and I Henderson work together to put a proposal together.</p>

	<p>Cllr Carr suggested we come together as a community to address this issue. Cllr Calver said we shouldn't forget the capabilities and resources of the Council. This is a county wide level because it can only be funded at this level. Cllr I Henderson mentioned that the County Council have a statutory duty to provide these services.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To send a letter to Essex County Council.</p>
176/15	<p><b><u>SEASONAL LIGHTING DISPLAYS 2016</u></b></p> <p>Members considered the quotation to renew the contract with LITE for the installation and storage of Christmas Lighting Displays.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To renew contract with LITE</p>
177/15	<p><b><u>INTERIM AUDIT</u></b></p> <p>Members considered the report of the Internal Auditor following an Interim Audit on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To accept the report and draw up an action plan to address the points raised.</p> <p><b>FURTHER RESOLVED:</b> To accept the Scope of Audit.</p>
178/15	<p><b><u>PHARMACY CLOSURES</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Erskine refrained from partaking in the discussions as his wife is a pharmacy manager.</p> <p>Cllr McLeod raised awareness of the Campaign to secure the future of independent pharmacies, by the National Pharmacy Association, following Government proposal to close some local establishments. He read aloud the petition wording.</p> <p>Cllr Ashley said that people are being encouraged to visit their local pharmacy rather than A&amp;E but are now proposing to close some local pharmacies.</p> <p>Cllr Calver suggested that all members agree to sign the petition and asked the local journalist present, if this could be promoted in the local media to encourage local residents to sign the petition, and also for HTC to put the petition (or a link to it) on the HTC website. Cllr J Brown also suggested people complete the feedback forms if using the Boots pharmacy.</p>
179/15	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ENVIRONMENT &amp; COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment &amp; Community Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016 (previously circulated) be received.</p>
180/15	<p><b><u>ACCOUNTS</u></b></p> <p>Payments and receipts, current balances, financial activity against budgets and earmarked funds were noted.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> to authorise payments as presented.</p>
181/15	<p><b><u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES</u></b></p> <p>~ Cllr Erskine attended a TDALC meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and said there was no chairman's report but reinstatement of white lining was discussed. Other matters raised were Police resources, weight limits and Trading Standards, as well as concern over dog fouling in Wix. He said there is now DNA testing available to identify whose dog is fouling. Finally, road side litter on the A120 was discussed. Cllr Erskine discussed his concerns with Cllr Mick Talbot who was present.</p> <p>~ Cllr Todd attended the MNWB meeting at Felixstowe on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and they again expressed their thanks to HTC for providing the shuttle buses for the cruise ship crews again this season. He asked the MCA rep about the sulphur</p>

	<p>emissions and reported that they've tested 90%+ of vessels since the new legislation was implemented, and just 1 fell below standards but the sanctions are yet to be decided.</p> <p>Cllr Fowler attended the Harwich Conservation Panel meeting but there was nothing further to report. She reported no correspondence or notification of meeting dates from the RBL, and only today, received a communication, via the Clerk, from Richard Colley of the HDCA, which she read aloud. Cllr Fowler also attended a meeting of the HIP Liaison committee and mentioned the passing of retired Stena Line Director, Pim de Lange. She reported a 24% increase on the freight traffic (Hoek route) due to the industrial action in Calais and migrant crisis which had affected the Eurotunnel. The 3<sup>rd</sup> exit lane opened in partnership with the UK Boarder Agency in October, and the new passenger boarding bridge is due to be completed this year along with new escalators. There are no approaches for the Harwich to Esbjerg route. The Harwich to Rotterdam route is up, Petrochem volumes down, and cruise ships will see the quietest year with just 13 calls. Hutchinson Ports are in the throes of having another periodic survey carried out on the disused Train Ferry Gantry and the report is due shortly. Cllr Todd said the emphasis is on preservation rather than restoring it for use. Cllr C Powell said that Hutchinson Ports would be open to possible funding the moving the gantry to a new location if a location could be found.</p> <p>~ Cllr Henderson said HTC will be contacted about a forthcoming Boundary Commission Review in due course and suggested we take up the opportunity to respond</p> <p>~ Cllr J Henderson attended a Teen Talk committee meeting. They have had interest from prospective trustees who have also attended a couple of meetings. The take over from CAMS is an issue, since there is a 22-week wait to see if people can be referred. CAMS were using All Saints House but the new body isn't so there are no children's mental health services operating out of All Saints House.</p> <p>~ Cllr McLeod attended the Crime Prevention Panel and confirmed they are still active. He also attended the Older Peoples Forum and commended it.</p>
182/15	<p><b><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members noted a letter from local resident regarding Cllr Fowler which was read aloud by the Clerk.</li> <li>• Members considered a letter from a local resident regarding pollution in the River Stour. Cllr I Henderson suggested this letter should be responded by those who have the technical expertise to do so. He referred to Project Clearwater a major funded investment by Anglian Water to improve water quality in and around our local waters, and which demonstrated the quality of our water, and which is further supported by our Blue Flag award for Dovercourt Beach. Cllr Fowler said some of the residents' questions are answered on the Harwich Haven Authority website. Cllr McLeod suggested we acknowledge the letter and offered to refer it to the appropriate body, which is the MMO (Marine and Maritime Organisation). Cllr I Henderson suggested we forward it to the HHA and ask them to respond and copy in HTC. The Clerk agreed to acknowledge the letter and forward it onto the HHA.</li> </ul> <p>~ Cllr Carr raised concern over the Mayflower Medical Centre having closed their patient list and with the risk of the Fronks Road surgery risking closure, we face losing much needed services.</p>
183/15	<p><b><u>USE OF GUILDHALL CHAMBER</u></b></p> <p>Members considered a request from the Crime Prevention Panel for free use of the Chamber for the period May 2016 . April 2017</p>

	<b>RESOLVED:</b> Agreed
<b>184/15</b>	<b><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></b> The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on <b>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 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.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**