

MINUTES of the Meeting of the HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
 held at
The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich
 on **Tuesday 10th May 2016 at 7.00pm**

Present:	Councillors Ashley, B Brown, J Brown, Calver, Carr, Fay, Fowler, I Henderson, J Henderson, Morrison, C Powell, F Powell, Smith and Todd
In the Chair:	Councillor McLeod
Clerk:	Ms Lucy Ballard
Also present:	2 members of the public, 1 members of the press

The Chair thanked all for their cooperation throughout his year in office. He also thanked Rev. Astrid Tiesema for her support, as well as the office staff for their commitment during the year with the ongoing changes.
 He referred to item 9, which will be deferred to confidential business.

185/15	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllr Erskine
186/15	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u> Cllrs Calver and Fowler declared an interest in item 19 as trustees of the Harwich Society. Both left the room during the debate and vote. Cllr I Henderson declared an interest in the EFRC discussion under item 6 as he sits on the Fire Authority, but has received a dispensation to remain and discuss.
187/15	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> Betty Holbrook referred to Esplanade Hall, and raised concern. She doesn't think it should've been closed, but stated that it's not in as bad a condition as what people think. The Harwich Society are now on board to assist and there's many local tradesmen willing to do the necessary work. It would make a lovely community hall, which would be well used. Dr Rogers attended the Annual Parish Meeting in April. He had 8 questions but he left at 8.10pm before having an opportunity to ask the.. He asked how the APM can remain more useful for residents. His problem, specifically, was that he only heard the near-side chatter between members and couldn't hear the police briefing, which whilst brief in itself, led to much further debate on policing issues leaving little opportunity for any other public inclusion. He asked why the meeting is not more accessible to residents. Cllr Morrison said hopefully next year it'll be held in the Guildhall and the Loop system will be installed. All residents get an opportunity to ask questions but the policing issues are important. Cllr Morrison also said had there been more public, then public questions would've taken priority. Cllr J Henderson said, as a ward councillor, she's accessible most times for residents to ask questions, so attendance numbers will fall as other forms of successful communication enable people to

	<p>air their issues throughout the year and don't have to wait until the APM to ask their questions. Cllr C Powell confirmed it was disappointing that very few attend the meetings. Cllr McLeod agreed the order of the agenda could be switched to allow public questions first. Cllr Calver agrees that it's a meeting of the parishioners and if we chose to have a police briefing in future, it should fall after public questions and not before. Cllr J Brown also confirms he prefers face-to-face interaction with residents but regular surgeries help.</p>
<p>188/15</p>	<p><u>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></p> <p>The Mayor gave an account of some of his final engagements of the municipal year, including attending a civic supper with the TDC Chairman, as a fundraiser for the Mayflower project; and hosting an end of term charity dance raising £900 with thanks to all. He most recently attended the Blessing of the Waters in Brightlingsea and many other meetings including the VE commemoration service at the Dovercourt Cross War Memorial. He finally thanked all once again.</p>
<p>189/15</p>	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 29th March 2016 (previously circulated) be approved by the Chairman and signed as a true record.</p>
<p>190/15</p>	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></p> <p>~ MIN 173/15 . Members considered a response from Bernard Jenkin MP in relation to the Essex Fire & Rescue Consultation, which was read aloud by the Clerk. Cllr Smith said the response was poor. Cllr Morrison was outraged, and feels that the MP doesn't understand that the 3 options put forward takes away full-time fire fighters, which is what we want and need. He should've talked to the fire fighters and to his constituents rather than just the fire authority. Cllr I Henderson said that the MP doesn't live locally and therefore doesn't understand the needs of local people or how our local fire service works. He hasn't looked into any detail about the extent of the on-call provision and the shortage of retained fire fighters throughout Essex. He hasn't listened to his constituents or the fire fighters, or his own party. Cllr C Powell said that the MP for Suffolk has listened to his residents and as a result the cuts have been reduced. Cllr Ashley referred to the port, docks, Bramble Island and oil refinery, demonstrating the absolute need for a full-time service, and gave anecdotal evidence. Cllr Fowler said there's no mention of safety being an issue. Is there no price on human life? She stated the MP should be ashamed. Cllr Calver said the MP does know the risks and feels it's a betrayal to the local people and to the fire fighters. Cllr Morrison said that she has absolute respect for our fire fighters, both full-time and retained. However it remains a fact that the retained don't have the same amount of training as full-timers, nor can they respond to calls in the same timeframe, or operate the water rescue. It is a struggle to get 4 retained fire fighters out of 12 and the engine has to be taken off the run frequently. Cllr Ashley also referred to the number of properties and residents increasing in Harwich and Dovercourt to justify the need to retain the full-timers. Cllr Smith proposed a letter is sent back expressing our disgust at the MP's response. Also to demand an explanation as to why he was prepared to make up his mind having only talked to management and not with the fire fighters working in his constituency, looking after the residents in his constituency. Cllr I Henderson said that he's ignored all his elected representatives, who've put their comments forward. Cllr J Brown suggested we ask him to attend a meeting to offer his explanation in person. Cllr Calver suggested the letter includes that it's the belief of HTC that the MP should call a public meeting to hear the views of the people</p>

	<p>of Harwich and explain his actions to them. RESOLVED: To send a letter to the MP. MIN 175/15 . Members considered a response from Cllr Madden in relation to the Children's Centre Consultation. Cllr Morrison said the response wasn't satisfactory and she thanked Cllrs I Henderson, Erskine, and Calver for putting together the letter that was sent from HTC. Cllr I Henderson confirmed all concerns were covered. He said they haven't done the outreach to bring those people in who need the services. Cllr Calver said the thanks go to Cllrs Henderson and Erskine, for their hours of research on the issue. HTC have put a compelling case together. Cllr I Henderson said there's nothing more we can do apart from await the results of the consultation.</p>
191/15	<p><u>TRAINING & CONSULTANCY BUDGET</u> RESOLVED: To top up the Training & Consultancy budget by £3k to aid staff and member development.</p>
192/15	<p><u>BOUNDARY AT BOATSWAINS CALL ALLOTMENT</u> Cllr J Henderson briefed members about an on-site meeting with the landowner of the property at the southern end of the Boatswain's Call allotments land, and it was RESOLVED: To accept the boundary as marked out by the Estates Supervisor, and agreed by the landowner of Capital House. The responsibility for the maintenance of the (southern) boundary, is deferred until a response is received from the landowner of Capital House.</p>
193/15	<p><u>ASSOCIATION HUT</u> Members considered a recommendation from the Allotments Committee to lease out the Association Hut sited at the Dunns Meadow allotment site. The terms for doing so were considered under confidential business. RESOLVED: To enter into a lease.</p>
194/15	<p><u>FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL</u> Members considered some necessary amendments to the Financial Regulations and Internal Control measures to facilitate some changes to working practices. Members also review the effectiveness of those control measures. RESOLVED: To accept the alteration to Financial Regulation 6.18 FURTHER RESOLVED: To approve amendments to the Internal Control Measures and surmised that there were sufficient controls in place to effectively mitigate the risk to the council's finances.</p>
195/15	<p><u>ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS</u> RESOLVED: To approve annual subscriptions which become payable during the 2016/17 Municipal year.</p>
196/15	<p><u>COUNCILLOR AND MAYORAL ALLOWANCES</u> Members considered the recent recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and reviewed the present arrangements. RESOLVED: To accept the recommendation of £768 per annum for councillors, payable in two instalments (June and December); and £2400 Mayoral allowance, payable in two instalments in consultation with the Mayor.</p>
197/15	<p><u>REGULAR PAYMENTS</u> RESOLVED: To authorised regular payments, including those made by variable direct debit, in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.6</p>

198/15	<p><u>BANK MANDATE</u></p> <p>Cllr Calver confirmed this poses a slight alteration to our usual system and since that the future Chair of FGP would be unable to act as signatory then the future Vice-chair has been suggested instead. He further confirmed that since the deputy Mayor-elect works out of town that this is a practical move which means signatories are more easily accessible.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To make the necessary bank mandate changes needed to remove or add signatories for the Municipal Year based on the following authorisations: Town Mayor and Vice-chair of F&GP.</p> <p>FURTHER RESOLVED: To retain Cllr Dave McLeod as a signatory for the 2016/17 Municipal Year and to appoint Cllr J Brown as an independent member to periodically review the bank reconciliation in accordance with regulation 2.2.</p>
199/15	<p><u>INTERNAL AUDIT</u></p> <p>Cllr Morrison thanked the Clerk for the amount of hard work that had been put in to ensure the Council remains compliant with all audit requirements. She said that it's very much appreciated.</p> <p>Members received the year end internal audit report and discussed any recommendations made.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To accept the Audit Report.</p> <p>Members also reviewed the effectiveness of Internal Audit and FURTHER RESOLVED: That the current provisions were satisfactory.</p>
200/15	<p><u>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT</u></p> <p>Having resolved that the council has a sound system of internal control, members acknowledged the provisions under Section 1 of the Annual Return.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the Annual Governance Statement in Section 1 of the Annual Return.</p>
201/15	<p><u>ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS</u></p> <p>Members reviewed the final Accounts for the year ended March 31st 2016 in conjunction with the Accounting Statements in Section 2 of the Annual Return.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the accounts for year ending March 2016 and to approve the Accounting Statements in Section 2 of the Annual Return.</p>
202/15	<p><u>CAREER TRACK</u></p> <p>Cllr Morrison brought members up to date with the progress made in seeking to appoint a Career Track apprentice to Harwich Town Council (MIN 154/15). She confirmed that a second organisation had been sourced which could utilise an apprentice for a minimum of 5 hours per week to make the position viable, as the minimum required for appointment is 30 hours per week. The 5 hours will be gifted as HTC will fund the full hours of the post holder.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To proceed with the recruitment of a Career Track apprentice.</p> <p>Members further agreed that it wouldn't be possible to take on a Work Experience student this year as a result.</p>
203/15	<p><u>ESPLANADE HALL</u></p> <p>Members considered a request by the Harwich Society, to assist them in acquiring the building from St Nicholas Church. Cllr I Henderson provided some background to the research undertaken to establish ownership of the property.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To write to the Friends of Esplanade Hall and the Harwich Society offering the support of the Council, to bring it back into community use.</p>
204/15	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE</u></p>

	<p>MEETING RESOLVED: that the Minutes and Confidential minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 11th April 2016 (previously circulated) be received.</p>
205/15	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING</u> RESOLVED: that the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 21st April 2016 (previously circulated) be received.</p>
206/15	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING</u> Cllr I Henderson confirmed receipt of a copy of a letter from the MP (addressed to Stephen Kavanagh) regarding the issue of Williamsburg Ave (MIN E85/15) . Cllr Fay declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item but remained in the room. He said there's been a lot of input and the current planning issue may go some way towards resolving the problems. He gave a more detailed update of measures taken to address the issue. Cllr Calver congratulated the committee, and officers for their hard work and successful outcomes this year. RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Community Committee held on 28th April 2016 (previously circulated) be received.</p>
207/15	<p><u>ACCOUNTS</u> Payments and receipts, current balances, financial activity against budgets and earmarked funds were noted. RESOLVED: to authorise payments as presented.</p>
208/15	<p><u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES</u> " Cllr Morrison attended, on behalf of the Mayor, the Crime Prevention Panel meeting in April and various topics were discussed including lack of car tax, Green Flag award, Youth shelter and outdoor gym. " Cllr C Powell confirmed the Festival of the Arts are progressing nicely with this year's festival and are operating all year round. " Cllr Fowler attended a Conservation panel meeting earlier this month where Esplanade Hall was discussed. She reported having met with the General Manager of the HDCA, who confirmed the AGM was held in December 2015 and an invitation was sent in November. They are awaiting a 25-year full-repairing lease to be completed before applying for funding to continue with their refurbishment works. " Cllr I Henderson reported on the successful weekend with the first cruise ship arrival and commended those who helped to prepare for its arrival, including delivering the leaflets to businesses. The DTG were at the port in period costume welcoming passengers, the Harwich Society were on hand for tours, the HTC-funded crew shuttle bus was operating, and the Guildhall was open with visitors being welcomed by councillors and the Mayor. Cllr Morrison said it was a pleasure obtaining feedback from the businesses when distributing the leaflets.</p>
209/15	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u> " Members considered a request from Bernard Jenkin MP in relation to parking restrictions in Kingsway, Dovercourt, which was read aloud by the Clerk. Cllr Calver gave some background on the issue, dating back to 2008. The original intention was to place the market in Station Road but the retailers launched a petition and got backing for it to be located in the High Street. HTC's decision was to accept the will of its electors. Cllr Calver proposed we write to the MP and advise that as he appears to be suggesting that the market is relocated, that</p>

	<p>we ask for his proposals for HTC to consider. Cllr Ashley suggested some alternate routes to enable the parking to be reinstated by introducing a single one-way system. Cllr C Powell said to turn left from Harwich into Bay Road had previously been considered and ruled out.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To write to the MP.</p> <p>“ Members considered an email in relation to a possible Party in the Park. Cllr C Powell said that as the park belongs to TDC and suggests he asks TDC for assistance.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To refer the request to Tendring District Council.</p> <p>“ The Chair read aloud a letter from Harwich Haven Authority following a letter of concern from a resident having been forwarded by HTC. Members noted its receipt. The Clerk agreed to contact the HHA and ask them to host a visit where discussions can be had about the issues raised and how best to address these.</p>
210/15	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next meeting of Harwich Town Council is expected be held on Tuesday 21st June 2016 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, at 7.00pm, or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.</p>
211/15	<p><u>EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS</u></p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Track remuneration

The Chairman thanked all, including the members of the public, for their cooperation during this last year. The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 8.45pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE