

MINUTES of the Meeting of the HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
 held at
The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich
 on **Tuesday 18th October 2016 at 7.02pm**

Present:	Councillors Ashley, B Brown, J Brown, Calver, Fay, I Henderson, J Henderson, McLeod, Smith and Todd
In the Chair:	Councillor Morrison
Clerk:	Ms Lucy Ballard
Also present:	9 members of the public, 0 members of the press and the Rev. Rosie Tallowin

Prayers were said by the Rev. Rosie Tallowin.

065/16	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllrs Fowler, C Powell and F Powell
066/16	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u> Cllr I Henderson declared an interest in the item concerning the EFRS consultation, as a member of the Essex Fire Authority, and confirmed he had obtained a dispensation to remain present and discuss.
067/16	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> Betty Holbrook asked if the s106 monies from the development on Main Road had been received. She said she'd like to see the mural banner sorted out but thought the gym in the park could be considered for the monies to be expended on. Cllr I Henderson said the condition was that so many of the dwellings have to be occupied before the monies are released, so he'll chase it up. He also referred to the criteria for how it's spent so this needs to be checked also. There are other avenues for the funding for the gym, which are being investigated. Dr Rogers referred to previous questions raised at the Annual Parish Meeting (APM), and said that at normal council meetings, the Council seem to be in reactive mode. He asked the council to consider a regular addition to the agenda which allow open debates to deal with ongoing issues, which can then be carried forward to the APM. The Council needs to become pro-active. Cllr Calver disagreed and said that on the issues Harwich Town Council are responsible for, we are pro-active and on all other issues, we can only lobby or be reactive. He stated that it wasn't a good use of council time spending hours talking about issues we are neither responsible for or aren't within our remit, and added if we can do something, we do. Cllr I Henderson said we're forward thinking and working with the groups in our town and getting involved in activities promoting tourism and regeneration. Cllr J Henderson spoke on

	<p>behalf of the groups she is part of, and said they work hard to address the issues that matter.</p> <p>Dr Rogers referred to a particular planning application where he felt the Council could've looked at the bigger picture of the issue. Cllr J Henderson confirmed we commented on that application because that's what's asked of us. She said if a bigger issue was raised then she, as ward councillor, would've taken it up directly. Cllr I Henderson said many issues are captured under the emerging Local Plan, to which HTC have submitted comments.</p>
068/16	<p><u>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></p> <p>The Mayor gave an account of some of her engagements since the last meeting, including attending the Air Ambulance Motorcycle Run, which raised in excess of £45k. She reported that the gentleman injured was on the mend. She and the Mayoress also attended the Electric Palace Tendring Thunderbirds event; opened the Dovercourt Art Club exhibition at the Waterfront, was invited by the Rotary to attend the Essex Police Choir event at St Nicolas Church, attended the Senior Crew event at the Mayflower School, the Sea Shanty Festival events including a reception at the Crown Post, and the Harwich Society dinner at the Waterfront. The Mayor also reported that £300 was raised at the Mayoress' Music Quiz last evening, and thanks were given to all those involved and who attended.</p>
069/16	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 7th September 2016 (previously circulated) be approved by the Chairman and signed as a true record.</p>
070/16	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 034/16 – Members considered a response to a letter sent to Essex County Fire & Rescue Service regarding the EFRS consultation. Cllr Smith referred to the letter and said in looking at the figures, which state in a 4-month period they've lost 7 on-call firefighters, wondered how they could be confident they will recruit sufficient numbers needed to facilitate Option 2. Cllr I Henderson had attended a Government review committee and confirmed the figures. He raised concern over there being no change at Dovercourt. He and others on the fire authority will continue to push forward with this issue. Members agreed to note the response. • MIN 054/16 – Members considered a response to a letter sent to Essex CC regarding the proposed changes to recycling centres. The Clerk read aloud a subsequent response which had been received detailing the situation with the compactor. Cllr Ashley confirmed the compaction unit is simply taking up space. He argued the impact in closing the site is no different to the impact in making people wait. He referred again to fly-tipping which will increase as a result of these proposals. Cllr Morrison said it was cost-shunting. Cllr I Henderson said members raised concern at an ECC meeting, and it was declared there will be a three-month review following its implementation. He has also been contacted by the members' union and read aloud their concerns. Cllr J Brown said there is a health & safety issue as people drag their items from their vehicles to the site. Cllr Calver said the peak time is spring/summer which is when it would be better to gauge the impact on users. • MIN 059/16 - Members considered a response to a letter sent to Tendring District Council regarding the upgrade and maintenance of local public conveniences. Cllr I Henderson said it's good news as they've said a refurbishment plan will be put in force. But the season is coming to an end

	<p>and suggested we send the list of events for next year to the TDC officer so they can deploy sufficient resources when most needed. Cllr J Henderson said now that the cleaning has been brought back in-house, it should be easier to adapt to changes in requirements.</p>
071/16	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 037/16 – Members noted that a meeting had been arranged with Archdeacon of Colchester and Canon Margaret Shaw on 2 November to discuss the future use of Esplanade Hall. • MIN 034/16 – Members considered a response to a letter sent to Bernard Jenkin MP on 19th August in relation to the EFRS consultation The Clerk confirmed that a response was still awaited following a subsequent letter sent on 22 September. Cllr Calver said the length of time he's taking to respond is leading to confusion. And this response will be superseded once the next response comes in, so members agreed to note the letter for now. • Cllr Todd raised concern over the disused Train Ferry Gantry. He said that Hutchinson Ports accepted responsibility for it and should preserve it. A survey was completed and scaffolding was erected, however the broken windows have been removed, leaving the listed building open to the elements. He stressed that more action should be taken. He recalls the last letter from TDC was received in May 2015, which Cllr Todd read aloud. The Clerk agreed to contact TDC and Hutchinson Ports to ask them to board the windows and revamp (paint) the structure asap. • Cllr I Henderson referred to a previous public question about Gas House Creek. He went to the TDC cabinet and raised the issue and was told there will be a review of the lease and then if they're not satisfied with the feedback or response they will then decide whether to continue with or revoke the lease.
072/16	<p><u>COUNCIL TAX CAPPING/PRECEPT REFERENDUM CONSULTATION</u></p> <p>Cllr Calver briefed members on proposals to introduce a 2% cap on precept increases, above which a referendum must be held. He said it's counter-productive and we should strongly object to the proposals. He provided an example of the costs incurred in holding a referendum against what could be raised.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Respond to the consultation. (See Garry for wording)</p>
073/16	<p><u>LOCAL HEALTH AND MATERNITY SERVICES</u></p> <p>Cllr I Henderson briefed members on the proposals for changes to the midwife-led maternity unit services provided at the Fryatt hospital, and referred to previous publications, from several years back, which even then suggested the services should or will change. He commended the work of the midwives who have worked in the unit over the years and the difficulties faced by them by not being permitted to talk to anyone over the proposals, and read aloud an anonymous report from one midwife. Cllr Henderson now feels that pregnant women are being scared away from Harwich. He referred to statistics of usage, which he feels only reflect the fear that women are feeling as they are now opting to give birth either at home or at another unit fearing that the services they need won't be available when they need it.</p> <p>Cllr Morrison referred to a meeting she and Cllr Calver attended recently and reported that empty rooms still need to be paid for. She found it disrespectful that no-one turned up to the meeting to explain the proposals.</p> <p>Cllr Calver said Tony Whitmarsh made the point the reason they're removing the ability to give birth at Harwich is because it's more expensive that to do so</p>

	<p>at Colchester. But since this is always going to be the case, we could lose other services that are deemed more expensive to deliver in Harwich.</p> <p>Cllr McLeod asked what else the building/units can be used for. He wanted to receive a breakdown of the costs which have been published. He demonstrated great concern over the loss of the current service.</p> <p>Cllr J Brown questioned previously, when the hospital was built, what happens if the PFI cannot be repaid. He also said other services will be lost due to withdrawn funding.</p> <p>Cllr Ashley referred to the statistics regarding the number of births they can accommodate and asked why they built a unit of that scale and have the figures taken into account that those numbers would never be achieved.</p> <p>Cllr J Henderson referred to her personal experience with the facility and said they've manipulated the figures and scared mums-to-be into not using the unit. She said that the MP says he supports the maternity unit so what is he going to do. Cllr Fay said if the maternity unit can accommodate up to 1000 births each year then we should ask the MP what he plans to do to make that happen, and ask why these services aren't being brought to Harwich. We need to make the building pay for itself.</p> <p>Cllr I Henderson said we should ask to see the figures. We should ask what the charges were over the last 4 years for using the unit; a breakdown of the £8k; more details on where post- and pre-natal services will be delivered; what services will be provided there; and what will be offered (i.e. scans). We should ask for a list of services currently being delivered at the Fryatt hospital and the plans for the future. If they can provide midwives for home births then why can't they permit them to access the unit. Cllr Calver seconded the proposal. He also seconded Cllr Fay's proposal to write to the MP.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To write to Nick Hulme, Chief Executive of the NHS Foundation Trust and also to write to Bernard Jenkin MP.</p>
074/16	<p><u>CO-OPTION</u></p> <p>Members were asked to vote on each of the 2 vacancies for Town Councillor for West Central Ward, in accordance with the Council's Co-option policy.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To co-op Stephanie Struth to the first vacancy and Maison Urwin to the second vacancy.</p>
075/16	<p><u>STANDING ORDERS</u></p> <p>Members considered a slight amendment to the Standing Orders to clarify the minimum number of members required for a committee quorum.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To accept amendment to standing order 4d(x).</p>
076/16	<p><u>MAYOR'S PARLOUR</u></p> <p>Members considered a specification and costs to redecorate the Mayor's Parlour.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To accept the recommendations of the Estates Supervisor and proceed with the works in line with the specification proposed, at a cost of no more than £120 to be expended from the Guildhall Refurbishment budget.</p> <p>It was noted the recommendation of the Estates Supervisor that the windows in the Parlour and ground floor rear need replacing within 5 years.</p>
077/16	<p><u>COUNCIL EQUIPMENT</u></p> <p>Members gave consideration to the acquisition of a couple of items of equipment, to be utilised by Harwich Town Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To purchase a basic toolkit at an estimated cost of £300, to be expended from the Maintenance budget.</p>

	FURTHER RESOLVED: To purchase a strimmer for HTC at a cost of no more than £500 to include the necessary safety equipment, to be expended from the Allotments maintenance budget.
078/16	<u>MAYFLOWER 2020 PROCESSION AND CHURCH SERVICE</u> Cllr I Henderson made a request on behalf of the Tourism Group for a Civic Service to be held on 25 th November 2016 to celebrate the start of the Mayflower 2020 Illuminate. RESOLVED: To agree to the request and hold a civic service on 25 th November 2016.
079/16	<u>HARWICH CREST</u> Members gave consideration to the repairs/refurbishment needed to the Coat of Arms displayed on the Guildhall. RESOLVED: To proceed with the works at an estimated cost of £1680 to be expended from the Guildhall Improvements budget.
080/16	<u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING</u> RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Community Committee meeting held on 12 th September 2016 (previously circulated) be received.
081/16	<u>MINUTES OF THE LAST FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING</u> RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 15 th September 2016 (previously circulated) be received.
082/16	<u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING</u> RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 20 th September 2016 (previously circulated) be received.
083/16	<u>ACCOUNTS</u> Payments and receipts, current balances, financial activity against budgets and earmarked funds were noted. RESOLVED: to authorise payments as presented.
084/16	<u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr J Henderson attended a Teen Talk meeting and reported their biggest issue which is the referral time to the CAMS service, which is sometimes up to 37 weeks. She reported the great service that Teen Talk are providing. • Cllr McLeod said the Harwich Festival Committee are working hard with their various activities and reported being pleased with Briony's input. He also attended the Older People's Forum and reported how good a job they're doing too. • Cllr I Henderson is working hard with the Tourism Group. There's been good feedback from local traders, including the foot ferry service, which has seen increased trade. He referred to a meeting he had with some volunteers (Sara Sparling and Andrea King) to push forward with a Christmas event on 2nd December. • Cllrs Todd and Morrison attended the Port Liaison committee. They reported a 7% increase in freight traffic, partly due to the problems in Dover/Calais. They've employed 4 new port operatives. Bad news is the gangway isn't going

	<p>in until next year, possibly Easter. Rotterdam service down 10% on last year. Cruise ships for 2017 - there's only 7 expected, losing the newer services to the far East. The Sulphur emissions impact is kicking in. Cllr Todd reported that the Britannica is being taken away with the Hollandica to follow, to have the gases removed (see Alan for info). Stena Line lodged a complaint about the closed petrol station on Parkeston Road.</p>
085/16	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted the conclusion of the Audit for year ended 31 March 2016. Cllr Calver referred to the manner in which the audit was signed off in that both boxes in Section 3 were crossed through to indicate there were no issues of concern. He wanted thanks and congratulations to the Clerk recorded. • Members noted receipt of DeFRA News and Update for information
086/16	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on Tuesday 13th December 2016 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, at 7.00pm, or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.</p>
087/16	<p>Exclusion of Public and Press</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"> • Civic Processions

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 8.56pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

Cllr P Morrison