

MINUTES of the Meeting of the HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
 held
Remotely
 on **Wednesday 10th June 2020 at 7.05pm**

Present:	Councillors Calver, Chant, Davidson, Fay, Ferguson, Fowler, I Henderson, J Henderson, McLeod, Morrison, Powell, Richardson, Saunders, G Smith
In the Chair:	Councillor A Todd
Clerk:	Ms Lucy Ballard
Also present:	0 members of the public, 0 member of the press

001/20	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllr D Smith
002/20	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u> Cllr I Henderson declared a personal interest in the pensions nominations items item as his Essex CC colleague sits on the Essex pension Fund.
003/20	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> None
004/20	<u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u> RESOLVED: That the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of Harwich Town Council held on 25 th February 2020 (circulated separately) were approved as a correct record.
005/20	<u>ALLOWANCES 2020/21</u> Members considered the recent recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and reviewed the decision previously take by delegated authority. Cllr Morrison felt the allowance should once again be frozen. RESOLVED: To ratify the decision made by delegated authority and retain the existing councillor allowance of £768 per annum for 2020/21, payable in two instalments (June and December); and to reduce the Mayoral allowance from £2900 back to £2400, payable in two instalments in consultation with the Mayor. The justification for the higher than recommended amount for the Chairman is due to the Mayoral position incurring additional costs to that of a councillor and the anticipation of Mayflower 400 events once the current social distancing restrictions have been lifted. FURTHER RESOLVED: To ratify the decision made by delegated authority in terms of the levels of allowance for Mayor Making and travel and subsistence.

006/20	<p><u>INTERNAL AUDIT</u> Members received the year end internal audit report and noted there were no additional comments/recommendations to make in relation to the audit. RESOLVED: To accept the Audit Report. Members also reviewed the effectiveness of Internal Audit and FURTHER RESOLVED: That the current provisions were satisfactory. Cllr Powell thanked the clerk for her compliance work.</p>
007/20	<p><u>EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL</u> Members considered the findings of the review of the Council's system of internal control, which was carried out by the clerk and approved by delegated authority on 26th March. The clerk confirmed that amendments had been made to reflect new processes in relation to the new card payment reader as well as the change to the frequency of petty cash reconciliation and a few wording changes to improve clarity. RESOLVED: To accept the findings and agree that there are sufficient controls in place to effectively mitigate the risk to the Council's finances.</p>
008/20	<p><u>RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS</u> Members reviewed the arrangements for risk management for 2019/20 and whether these methods were appropriate going forward. The clerk confirmed that any business that might have either a financial or reputational impact on the council should be suitably risk assessed and a record will be kept of these for review at year end. RESOLVED: To accept the current arrangements and agree to this method for 2020/21.</p>
009/20	<p><u>SIGNIFICANT EVENTS</u> Upon receipt of a report compiled by the clerk, members reviewed the financial impact of previously identified significant events which had occurred either during the 2019/20 financial year or after year-end and considered the recommendations in terms of whether to include these in the accounting statements. Cllr Calver advised members that despite the initial guidance received, councils weren't actually eligible to receive funds under the Business Support Grant, but that this had no initial impact upon on the council's finances as the funds would've been earmarked to support local organisations after Covid-19 rather than to offset any Covid-19 losses or expenses. RESOLVED: That sufficient provision had been made to account for the financial impact of any identified significant events and therefore determined that it was not necessary for these to be reflected in the accounting statements.</p>
010/20	<p><u>ANNUAL RETURN SECTION 1 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT</u> Having resolved that the council has a sound system of internal control, members acknowledged the provisions under Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR). RESOLVED: To approve the Annual Governance Statement in Section 1 of the AGAR.</p>
011/20	<p><u>ANNUAL RETURN SECTION 2 - ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS</u> Members reviewed the final Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020 in conjunction with the Accounting Statements in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR).</p>

	RESOLVED: To approve the accounts for year ending 31 st March 2020 and to approve the Accounting Statements in Section 2 of the AGAR.
012/20	<p><u>MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS</u></p> <p>Members considered whether to adopt a letterhead which could be used by the Mayor of the day. Cllr Powell felt it appropriate for the Mayor to have their own headed paper for personal correspondence and liked the design used by the High Steward.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To create a letterhead for the Mayor to use for personal correspondence, a template for which would be provided for use at their discretion.</p>
013/20	<p><u>APPRENTICESHIP</u></p> <p>Cllr Morrison asked members to consider ceasing the current apprenticeship scheme at the council once the current apprenticeship came to an end, which was expected to be at the end of July.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To cease the apprenticeship scheme at Harwich Town Council when the current apprenticeship ends in 2020.</p>
014/20	<p><u>RECRUITMENT</u></p> <p>Cllr Morrison asked members to consider the recruitment in relation to a new Administrator position for the council, which was to be advertised internally in the first instance.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To recruit to new Administrator position.</p> <p>It was agreed to move discussion about the financing of the position to confidential business.</p>
015/20	<p><u>PENSION NOMINATIONS</u></p> <p>Members noted the requirement to submit nominations for membership of HTC staff to the Local Government Pension Scheme, which has followed a 28-day period of public notice as follows: "As required by legislation notice is hereby given that the post of 'Administrator' will be admitted to membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme operated by Essex County Council, following the necessary 28 days public notice. This item will be included in the agenda of the meeting of the Town Council on 10th June 2020".</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the post of 'Administrator' will be admitted to membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme with effect from the commencement of appointment.</p>
016/20	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on a date to be advised.</p>
017/20	<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-mention business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator Recruitment

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 7.34 pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE