

MINUTES of the Meeting of the HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
 held
Remotely
 on **Wednesday 17th February 2021 at 7.10pm**

Present:	Councillors Calver, Chant, Davidson (until 7.56pm), Fay, Ferguson, I Henderson, J Henderson, McLeod, Morrison, Powell, Richardson, Saunders, D Smith and G Smith
In the Chair:	Councillor A Todd (until 7.57pm) and then Cllr I Henderson
Clerk:	Ms Lucy Ballard
Also present:	1 member of the public, 1 member of the press and Admin. Assistant Jessica Griffiths.

106/20	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllr Fowler
107/20	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u> None
108/20	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> None
109/20	<u>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u> The Mayor confirmed that no engagements had been attended since the last meeting.
110/20	<u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u> RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of Harwich Town Council held on 12 th January 2021 (circulated separately) were approved as a correct record.
111/20	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 095/20 – Cllr Morrison briefed members following a joint meeting with officers and the Chief Executive of TDC and Bernard Jenkin regarding Ambulance Response Times. She felt we should be congratulating ourselves for raising this important issue as it has resulted in an additional ambulance to be placed at Harwich Ambulance station. She felt that, whilst it's an important issue, the meeting focused too fully on the need to alter the culture within the trust rather than the original issue of capacity. The meeting was advised that the MP would be meeting with other East of England MPs and Ian Davidson, following which, another meeting would be arranged with HTC, TDC and the MP. Cllr Morrison welcomed the wider input but felt we shouldn't lose sight of the original reason we raised the issue. Cllr Morrison proposed that HTC requests a meeting with TDC to discuss to consider a joint approach in relation to our local requirements and that she and Cllr I Henderson represent HTC at the meeting.

	<p>RESOLVED: To proceed with arranging a meeting between HTC and TDC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 100/20 – The clerk reported that following the submission of precept request for 2021/22, confirmation was received from the precepting authority of an LCTSS grant of £6297. The amount would add to the Council's reserves.
112/20	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u> None</p>
113/20	<p><u>HILL SCHOOL RENTS</u> Members considered offering an extension, to their tenants, to the rent holiday by 6 months (until Sep21) to be funded from the additional income as a result of the LCTSS grant awarded for 21/22. The clerk confirmed that the loss of income would total £2602.50 and would be adequately covered by the income referred to above. RESOLVED: To extend the rent holiday until September 2021.</p>
114/20	<p><u>INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT</u> Members considered the Internal Auditor's report following an Interim Audit on 18th January. The Clerk confirmed that the Auditor had stated that HTC is doing a great job and there were no issues of concern. There were no recommendations made and therefore no plan of action required. Grateful thanks to clerk and the team for keeping the council compliant.</p>
115/20	<p><u>ANNUAL REPORT</u> Cllr Todd asked members if they would be happy to defer this item until a later date but also to consider whether or not to compile a report for 2020/21. RESOLVED: To defer consideration of this item to a future meeting and not to proceed with an annual report this year.</p>
116/20	<p><u>SEASONAL LIGHTING DISPLAYS 2021</u> Members considered the quotation for continuation of services for the installation, removal and storage of council-owned seasonal displays for the 2021/22. RESOLVED: To accept the quotation and continue with services from LITE at a cost of £3682 to be expended from the Christmas lights budget. FURTHER RESOLVED: To ensure the lights are installed, checked and working in good time for the last week of November and taken down after the 12th night (from 6th January 2021). Quay lights go on straight away and in the high street to coincide with any event in the town.</p>
117/20	<p><u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES BY THE COUNCIL</u> Cllr Powell briefed members on the repairs to the Harwich Foot Ferry and said it was at a point where they're almost finished and it's in dry dock to finish the painting. It's hoped to have it back up and running for the beginning of this season. Cllr J Henderson mentioned that Teen Talk committee meetings are still going ahead and they have been able to manage these with the restricted conditions whilst helping people remotely. There are lots of campaigns on social media and they should be congratulated on being able to keep in touch with the young people and on what they're achieving during these difficult times. Cllr Morrison mentioned that the Ark Centre had not any meetings but they are carrying on as best as they can to support local families and should also be congratulated for being able to continue to deliver their services in a time when they're needed the most.</p>

118/20	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING</u> Members received the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary Allotments Committee meeting held on 11th January 2021 (circulated separately).</p>
119/20	<p><u>ACCOUNTS</u> RESOLVED: To accept the financial update and to approve accounts for payment as per the schedule (circulated separately).</p>
120/20	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members acknowledged receipt of the latest report(s) from PCSO Ryan Duffett. <p>Cllr G Smith identified a new hot spot and asked the clerk if this could be communicated to the PCSO for investigation as he’s witnessed a number of Covid breaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Todd raised an issue over the new ‘Freeports’ bid and has sent an email to HIP (Felixstowe) to ask whether the bid related to the Navyard or Harwich International Port. He read from the email reply which confirmed the bid involved HIP. He has subsequently written to ask that if Bathside Bay is involved in the bid, then will this affect the Train Ferry Gantry. The current planning permission expires on 31st March and he’s asked TDC, as the planning authority, that if the permission gets renewed, would the information come forward to HTC. If the original planning permission isn’t extended then they’ll need to put in a new application and we would need to look closely to see how this affects the Train Ferry Gantry. <p>Cllr I Henderson said the bid would include the construction of a small boat harbour and he wonders if the Train Ferry Gantry could be tied in with their compensation commitments. Cllr Calver asked if we could prompt them to explain what would be included in the compensation package if the Bathside bay goes ahead under this bid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr I Henderson briefed Council after members of the HTC office team and councillors came together on Saturday to distribute grit salt to the community following concerns over the lack of gritting on non-priority roads and pathways. He suggested that Essex County Highways was informing callers that the parish council is responsible for this, which is incorrect and felt that this should be raised directly with them. We only obtain a small amount of salt through the Winter Salt Bag Scheme and this is earmarked for the High Street. The clerk agreed to send a letter to Highways to confirm it’s not HTC’s responsibility to grit the non-priority roads and to clarify who actually is responsible for this. <p>Cllr Henderson confirmed that the team had a de-brief and will be looking into this issue further before next winter.</p> <p>Members thanked the office team for their assistance last weekend. Cllr Ferguson thanked Estates Supervisor Andy Wells for delivering some salt to Church Street, which enabled her to treat some of the road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr I Henderson referred to email request received regarding the SOS Bus, which is a public service provided by several third sector organisations who assist with homelessness and also have resources to help drug and alcohol recovery. They are intending to bring the bus to Harwich and wanted support from HTC for this as well as suggestion on where to be sited.

	<p>RESOLVED: To offer HTC support for bringing the SOS bus to Harwich and suggest that the most suitable siting would be outside of Dovercourt train station as this is central.</p> <p>Cllr Ferguson offered her time if they required any volunteers and the clerk said she would offer this to them on her behalf.</p>
121/20	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held remotely on Tuesday 6th April 2021 at 7pm or at the rise of the Planning Committee meeting, whichever is later.</p>

Having commented on how nice it was to have attendance from both the public and press, the Vice-Chairman closed the meeting at 8.03pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE