

MINUTES of the Meeting of the HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
 held
Remotely
 on Tuesday 6th April 2021 at 7.30pm

Present:	Councillors Calver, Chant, Davidson, Fay, Ferguson, Fowler, I Henderson, J Henderson, McLeod, Morrison, Richardson, Saunders, and G Smith
In the Chair:	Councillor I Henderson (until 7.55pm) then Cllr A Todd
Clerk:	Ms Lucy Ballard
Also present:	1 member of the public, 0 member of the press and Admin. Assistant Jessica Griffiths.

The Chairman experienced connection difficulties and was unable to join the meeting until 7.55pm.

122/20	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllrs Powell and D Smith
123/20	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u> None
124/20	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> None
125/20	<u>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u> The Mayor did not provide a report on recent engagements attended since the last meeting.
126/20	<u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u> RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of Harwich Town Council held on 17 th February 2021 (circulated separately) were approved as a correct record.
127/20	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u> MIN 119/20 – Members considered a response to a letter sent to Cllr Kevin Bentley of ECC regarding salt/gritting provision within Harwich. Cllr I Henderson informed members that ECC was taking responsibility for the salting/gritting but since the council needed to review its position on the Salt Bag Partnership Scheme, suggested this issue was referred to the E&C committee for reporting back to Full Council.
128/20	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u> MIN 038/20 – Members received confirmation of the renewal agreement had been received for PCSO provision wef 1 st April for 2-year period, which had been signed and returned.

129/20	<p><u>ALLOWANCES 2021/2022</u> Members reviewed councillor allowances for the forthcoming year, without reference to the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, since this had not been received. Cllr Calver proposed a freeze to the councillor, Mayoral and Mayor Making allowances and to accept the recommendations in terms of the mileage and subsistence rates. RESOLVED: To retain the existing councillor allowance of £768 per annum for, payable in two instalments (June and December); retain the Mayoral allowance of £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 many costs throughout the year to support the engagements. FURTHER RESOLVED: To set the Mayor Making allowance at £750 for 2021/2022. FURTHER RESOLVED: To accept recommendations in terms of mileage and subsistence allowances.</p>
130/20	<p><u>ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS</u> RESOLVED: To approve annual subscriptions which become payable during the 2021/22 financial year.</p>
131/20	<p><u>REGULAR PAYMENTS</u> RESOLVED: To authorise regular payments that will arise during the course of the 2021/22 year including those made by variable direct debit, in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.6.</p>
132/20	<p><u>INTERNAL AUDITOR</u> RESOLVED: To appoint Heather Heelis of Heelis & Lodge as the Council's Internal Auditor for the 2021/22 financial year at a cost of £420 to be expended by the audit budget. FURTHER RESOLVED: To approve the Scope of Internal Audit work.</p>
133/20	<p><u>ANNUAL PARISH MEETING</u> Members discussed whether to proceed with an Annual Parish Meeting in 2021 given the current conditions and restrictions due to the pandemic. RESOLVED: Not to proceed in 2021.</p>
134/20	<p><u>MAYOR MAKING 2021</u> Cllr I Henderson asked members to consider a change of venue for the 2021 Annual Statutory and Mayor Making meeting, due to the need to ensure social distancing can be met. The clerk confirmed that legislation provided for the meeting to take place in the church and that a risk assessment had been put together to ensure the event could be well managed. It was noted that on this occasion, it would not be wise to have a Mayoress' party since this comprised of several people from different households, which would be impossible to manage with the need to socially distance within the church. RESOLVED: To agree to hold the 2021 Annual Statutory and Mayor Making meeting at St Nicholas Church.</p>
135/20	<p><u>SKATEPARK EVENTS</u> Members considered a couple of options for skate park events for 2021, which included a festival along the lines of what has been held previously, and an event to support the Talent Pathway Programme, which seeks to find the next Olympic skateboard champions. Cllr J Henderson referred to the skate park festival which previously coincided with the Tour de Tendring and mentioned that there is no confirmed date for that yet but suggested that once this is</p>

	<p>known, the council enquires as to whether the two events can once again be held together. She asked Council to consider The Talent Pathway Programme as well. It was confirmed that funds were earmarked for the festival and since no event took place in 2020, there was a surplus which could be utilised. The clerk confirmed the costs of both events. Cllr Morrison asked if it would be an agreement in principle at this stage. The clerk confirmed there was still information to be sought for both options and asked if a lead member would be appointed. Cllr J Henderson agreed to do this. Cllr Calver agreed that the Talent Pathway Programme was a great opportunity for the town, and we should confirm our intention to take part as soon as possible. The clerk clarified that members wished to agree in principle to the festival, on condition that it would be held in conjunction with the Tour de Tendring.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To agree, to proceed with the Talent Pathway Programme at a cost of £920 and to agree, in principle, to the skate park festival at a cost of £2750 if it can be held in conjunction with the Tour de Tendring. Both events to be expended from the Skate Park Festival EMR.</p>
<p>136/20</p>	<p><u>TRAIN FERRY GANTRY</u></p> <p>Cllr Todd referred to some correspondence between Tendring District Council (TDC) councillors and TDC regarding the former Train Ferry Gantry and asked for Harwich Town Council (HTC) to endorse this. He has phoned the Planning authority today to check if Harwich International Port had submitted a planning application since the current consents expired on 31st March. Since the deadline has passed, a new application would have to be submitted. Cllr Richardson proposed that a letter be written from HTC endorsing the content of the letter from the 6 TDC councillors. He added that it's vital to stress that the preservation of this historic structure is important not only to TDC councillors but to all Harwich Town Councillors.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Send a letter to Gary Guiver of TDC.</p>
<p>137/20</p>	<p><u>SCHEME OF DELEGATION</u></p> <p>Members considered a scheme of delegation as a means of ensuring council business can be properly executed following the ending of the regulations that permit for remote meetings to be held on 6th May. The clerk informed members that delegated authority was permitted in law and that delegation would support the existing procedures. She referred to a draft scheme of delegation circulated separately. Cllr Fowler suggested a slight addition to item 6 of the draft scheme of delegation, to include '<i>If there is a 'controversial' decision to be made, where members may have differing opinions, that members are informed before the Clerk makes the decision so an informal meeting of all members can be facilitated to hear members' views.</i>' The clerk asked for members to confirm in their resolution, the duration of the delegated powers.</p> <p>RESOLED: To adopt a scheme of delegation which offers delegated authority to the clerk until such time as the council is allowed by the Government to conduct its business either virtually or face to face.</p>
<p>138/20</p>	<p><u>FORMER STARLINGS SITE</u></p> <p>Cllr I Henderson asked members to consider formulating a response to the consultation in relation to the former Starlings site, following a briefing to members by Tom Gardiner of TDC. He suggested we should make the most of the open space for events as much as possible, to attract footfall and support town centre retail. Furthermore, different types of market could be put forward as an idea (craft, food etc). We should reaffirm that we want adequate lighting for security to prevent anti-social behaviour and also the light columns should have electric supply to them which could be used for Christmas lighting</p>

	<p>and also for hanging baskets. The electricity should be supplied to the centre of the square as this could facilitate a Christmas tree. A community information board or electronic screen for information on local events could be included. He also asked HTC to consider asking TDC to hold back on any decisions to build on the old Milton Road car park once the top floor has been removed because he believes the lower level will be needed in the future as an overspill car park. Cllr Calver suggested we add that we ask the TDC officers overseeing this to advise the Planning department that HTC totally supports the proposals for this site and ask that they are mindful that they only allow planning consents in the adjacent area that are sympathetic to this development. Cllr McLeod suggested a listening bench might be a nice touch. It as also suggested that thanks are given to Tom Gardiner for a brilliant and personable presentation.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To submit comments to Tom Gardiner.</p>
139/20	<p><u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES BY THE COUNCIL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr I Henderson reported on a meeting of the Harwich Tourism group on 1st April and that a number of organisations are still interested in visiting the locations of the Mayflower sites (i.e. Christopher Jones house and Esplanade Hall). The Illuminate will be going ahead this year and a date will be agreed in the next couple of months. ‘Octopus Ahoy’ is going ahead and there will be clusters around Harwich and there will be an app launched in June with the main launch on 25th June. The ‘Beside the Seaside’ event will go ahead on Sunday 15th August. • Cllr Todd attended a remote meeting of the Merchant Navy Welfare Board where he reported that no set plans had yet been made to accommodate cruise ships in terms of a crew shuttle bus. He referred to the proposed costs of dredging the stour for further development along Bathside Bay and the need for this in relation to the new Freeport, but the chair failed to comment on this matter. • Cllr McLeod attended a meeting of TDALC during which they discussed matters such as fly tipping in the countryside and potholes on the A120.
140/20	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING</u></p> <p>Members received the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Allotments Committee meeting held on 18th March 2021 (circulated separately).</p>
141/20	<p><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING</u></p> <p>Members received the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23rd March 2021 (circulated separately).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member considered the recommendations of the committee in relation to grant funding applications to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Harwich International Shanty Festival - £2550 2) Harwich Society (Harwich in Bloom) - £3000 <p>RESOLVED: To accept the recommendations and ratify the decision of the committee.</p>
142/20	<p><u>ACCOUNTS</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: To accept the financial update and to approve accounts for payment as per the schedule (circulated separately).</p>

143/20	<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. • Members noted that council was entering the second year of a 3-year long-term agreement for insurance and this year's premium was £4751.22. • Members considered a written request from one of the council's mace bearers to acquire and wear a Guild of Mace Bearer's collarette at future civic ceremonies. The clerk confirmed that there would be no cost to the council. <p>RESOLVED: To grant the request.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clerk referred to some correspondence previously circulated regarding a 12-week call for evidence that has commenced in relation to local authority remote meetings. The clerk confirmed she's looked at the questions and they were factual rather than opinion-orientated and asked whether members were content for her to complete the survey on behalf of the Council. <p>RESOLVED: To permit the clerk to complete the survey on behalf of the council.</p>
144/20	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on a date to be agreed at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, at 7pm or at the rise of the Planning Committee meeting, whichever is later.</p> <p>The Annual Statutory and Mayor Making meeting will be held on Thursday 20th May 2021 at St Nicholas Church, Harwich at 11am.</p>

The Chairman thanked all councillors, the clerk and the team since this would be the last Full Council meeting he would be chairing. He said it had been an honour and a pleasure. Members thanked the chair before he closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE