

HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
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MINUTES
of the Meeting of HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
 held at
The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich
 on
Tuesday 6th September 2022 at 7.04pm

Present:	Councillors Calver, Chant, Davidson, Fay, Ferguson, Fowler, J Henderson, McLeod, Morrison, Powell, Saunders, D Smith, G Smith and Todd
In the Chair:	Councillor I Henderson
Clerk:	Ms L Ballard
Also present:	1 member of the public, 0 members of the press, Sergeant Moss of the Tendring Community Policing Team.

The chairman welcomed Sergeant Moss and said that during Mayor's Announcements, she would be available to answer any questions members might have.

056/22	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Cllr Richardson
057/22	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u> None
058/22	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> <p>A resident of Dovercourt raised concern over the apparent policy decision at the district council to not cut the grass on Dovercourt promenade during 2022. He referenced the many fires which had occurred in recent months and asked if HTC could question the policy decision with a view to having it modified to help prevent fires should there be another dry spell. Cllr I Henderson raised these concerns in writing to Ian Taylor who agreed to investigate but had heard nothing further. He mentioned that some residents had asked for the grass not to be cut to encourage wild flower growing, but that wasn't the reason why it hasn't been cut. Cllr I Henderson gave assurances that this would be taken up with the district council, probably by the ward councillors. Cllr Calver asked the clerk if this could be agreed under the item of 'Matters Raised by Members'.</p> <p>The same resident referred to the wooden seat by the town centre mural, which had been removed in recent days. Cllr G Smith confirmed that the bench was damaged when a vehicle veered off the road recently and as such had been removed. The resident asked if all other damaged seats in the parish would be taken away and repaired (referencing the one on the promenade by the tunnel). Cllr G Smith said whilst there was no confirmed timescale, it is TDC's intention to replace the whole lot in due course, with some remedial repairs, as necessary, in the meantime. Cllr Morrison referred to the expectation that memorial benches, which are paid for by family</p>

	<p>members, are subject to repair, although it was acknowledged that not all benches were memorial ones.</p> <p>The chairman thanked the resident for his questions.</p>
059/22	<p><u>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></p> <p>Members acknowledged a list of recent engagements attended by the mayor, which had been previously circulated.</p> <p>Cllr Calver congratulated the Mayor on the way he led at the Kindertransport memorial unveiling. The Mayor thanked Cllr Calver for writing the speech.</p> <p>Reference was made to the extent of the cordon and road closure during the event and the reasoning behind this was explained by Sergeant Moss.</p> <p>The Mayor asked if Sergeant Moss had anything to raise with members. She referred to the recent promenade fires and suggested this was due to carelessness rather than malicious intent.</p> <p>Cllr J Henderson asked if there had been an increase in crime and disorder over the summer at the caravan camp. Sergeant Moss said there hadn't been and very little had been reported.</p> <p>Cllr I Henderson referred to nuisance neighbours and anti-social behaviour and felt the local policing team were very pro-active but the local authority didn't appear to be. Sergeant Moss confirmed that if it's council owned premises, the police put pressure on them to take enforcement as they share the same powers in this regard under the Anti-social behaviour Act.</p> <p>Cllr Ferguson asked about speeding drivers, driving the wrong way down a one-way street. Sergeant Moss said permission hasn't been given for this. In Church Street, after the property fires in June, permission was initially given to residents to enable this.</p> <p>The chairman thanked Sergeant Moss for her time.</p>
060/22	<p><u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of Harwich Town Council held on 19th July 2022 (circulated separately) were approved as a correct record.</p>
061/22	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></p> <p>MIN 54/21 - Cllr J Henderson thanked those members who turned up at the skatepark event, and assisted with litter picking. The event was well attended and everyone seemed to have a great time.</p>
062/22	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 96/21 – It was confirmed that the Kindertransport statue had been sited along The Quay along with 1x information board (The Quay), 1x information board (West End Beach sign) and 1x bench (Mayor's Garden) and 1x Sound bench (Mayor's Garden). These now feature as assets of HTC and are appropriately insured. <p>Cllr Calver asked if it would be appropriate for the council to write to the KT Memorial Trust congratulating them on their achievement of raising the money and bringing the project to fruition. The clerk confirmed that she would attend to this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 140/21 – It was confirmed that the delays encountered due to finding of historical materials on the former Starlings Site, the new HTC Christmas tree will now be held in storage until such time as the project is resumed and

	completed. Cllr Henderson confirmed that contractors were back on site continuing other works.
063/22	<p><u>CIVIC SERVICE REQUEST</u></p> <p>Members considered a request from the RNLI for a civic service to mark the 200th anniversary of the RNLI in July 2024.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To grant the request and hold a civic service to mark the occasion.</p>
064/22	<p><u>FLAG POLICY</u></p> <p>Cllr Calver asked members to agree to amend the flag policy to include the lowering of flag to half-mast on the day of the funeral of anyone with a significant connection with Harwich Town Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To amend the policy with immediate effect.</p>
065/22	<p><u>DOVERCOURT MAIL COLLECTION OFFICE</u></p> <p>Cllr Calver raised concerns over the reduced opening hours at the local Royal Mail collection office in Kingsway, citing this as unacceptable. He proposed the council writes to Royal Mail opposing the alteration in the strongest possible terms and request that the original opening hours be reinstated. He also asked that a letter is sent to Bernard Jenkins MP, requesting he takes this up with the responsible minister to see if Government has a Service Level Agreement in place with Royal Mail to protect the public against such reductions.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To write the letters to the CEO of Royal Mail and to Bernard Jenkins MP.</p>
066/22	<p><u>NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT 2021/22</u></p> <p>Members noted receipt of the conclusion of the Audit for year ended 31 March 2022. The Clerk confirmed that there were no matters to address this year and therefore no plan of action was required, and that she had already carried out the necessary actions as instructed by the external auditor. Cllr Morrison proposed a vote of thanks to the clerk for the excellent work carried out throughout the year. The clerk thanked members for assisting her to ensure the council remained compliant.</p>
067/22	<p><u>EXTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT</u></p> <p>Members considered the option to opt out of the SAAA Central External Auditor Appointment Arrangements. The clerk informed members that the advice was not to opt out since the process for independently appointing and auditor was both lengthy and complex.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Not to opt out of the arrangements and to use the auditors as appointed by the SAAA for the period of 5 years commencing from the 2022/23 audit year.</p>
068/22	<p><u>INTERIM POLLING STATION REVIEW</u></p> <p>Members considered the consultation in relation to a polling station review in the Dovercourt Tollgate ward, which had a deadline of 19th September. The proposed change is to move the polling station from Long Meadows Community Centre to Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery. A number of members gave their thoughts about the proposed change of venue with concerns raised including the lack of parking, congestion in the adjacent street and disruption to the school. Cllr Calver said the school was used previously but was withdrawn as a venue some time ago. Cllr J Henderson said it made sense to keep the current venue as other wards have done the same to specifically avoid the disruption that comes from using a school. It was unanimously RESOLVED: To decline to support the proposed new venue and</p>

	suggest the current venue continues to be used since this has all the appropriate facilities.
069/22	<u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES BY THE COUNCIL</u> None
070/22	<u>MINUTES OF THE LAST ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING</u> Members received the Minutes of the Allotments Committee meeting held on 27 th July 2022 (circulated separately). Members also received the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary Allotments Committee meeting held on 24 th August 2022.
071/22	<u>ACCOUNTS</u> RESOLVED: To accept the financial report and to approve accounts for payment as per the schedule (circulated separately).
072/22	<u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted receipt of latest report(s) issued by PCSO Ryan Duffett, <i>for information</i>. • Members referred to the public question raised about the grass cutting on the promenade and RESOLVED: to send a letter to TDC requesting the grass cutting policy be amended to ensure that grass is not allowed to become long during protracted periods of hot dry weather to avoid the risk of fire. • The clerk drew to the attention of members a letter of thanks from the Kindertransport Memorial Trust following the official unveiling of the memorial statue on 1st September.
073/22	<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on Tuesday 18th October 2022 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich at 7.00pm , or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.
074/22	<u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u> RESOLVED: that 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ex-gratia Payments

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 8.05pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE