

**MINUTES**  
**of the Meeting of HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL**  
 held at  
**The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich**  
 on  
**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7.01pm**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Councillors Calver, Chant, Davidson, Fay, Ferguson (from 8.03pm) Fowler, J Henderson, McLeod, Morrison, Powell, Richardson, Saunders, D Smith, G Smith and Todd</b>
<b>In the Chair:</b>	<b>Councillor I Henderson</b>
<b>Clerk:</b>	<b>Ms L Ballard</b>
<b>Also present:</b>	<b>0 members of the public</b>

The chairman informed members that he had been asked to take an emergency item in relation to repairs at the Hill School Site. The chairman said the clerk had advised that this wouldn't accord with proper practices and instead an Extraordinary meeting could be held. Members were content to proceed with considering the item at this meeting.

<b>144/22</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> None
<b>145/22</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u></b> None
<b>146/22</b>	<b><u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u></b> None
<b>147/22</b>	<b><u>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></b> Members acknowledged a list of recent engagements attended by the mayor, which had been previously circulated. The mayor referred to the performance by Spring Meadow pupils which everyone who attended agreed was fantastic.
<b>148/22</b>	<b><u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u></b> <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of Harwich Town Council held on 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2023 (circulated separately) were approved as a correct record.
<b>149/22</b>	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b> • <b>MIN 128/22</b> – Members <b>noted</b> correspondence from the Dept. of Business & Trade following a letter to the Secretary of State, Kemi Badenoch regarding the reduce opening hours of the Royal Mail collection office in Kingsway. Cllr Calver remarked that there was such a delay in response from the MPs office, which has resulted in much time chasing, but feels that there is little more which can be done at this time. Members agreed not to pursue.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MIN 135/22</b> – The clerk confirmed the arrangements for Battle of the Atlantic 80 on 28<sup>th</sup> May. There will be a wreath laying at 11am, to which local organisations (MNA, RNA, RBL, Trinity House, HHA, RNLI, HIP etc.) have been invited and for which it's hoped will include a poem/reading, a minute's silence and a bugler playing 'The Last Post'. The clerk agreed to work up some promotional material for social media and talk with the H&amp;M Standard.</li> <li>• <b>MIN 124/22</b> - Cllr G Smith referred to the public question segment of the previous meeting and the issue raised regarding the plastic railings along the prom. He's spoken with TDC and is informed that there is movement in the cliff face along the toe end of the sea wall, causing arching. This will be monitored for 6 months but TDC is hoping it'll be fixed for the new season. Cllr Smith has kept the member of the public informed.</li> </ul>
<b>150/22</b>	<p><b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MIN 103/22</b> – Members <b>noted</b> receipt of the PCSO agreement extension (change form) which has been signed and returned. A review will be required in June/July 2023 to consider the longer-term provision.</li> </ul>
<b>151/22</b>	<p><b><u>MAYOR MAKING ALLOWANCE</u></b></p> <p>Members reviewed the annual allowance for Mayor Making in light of increasing costs. Cllr Morrison suggested increasing the allowance to £1500 per annum although stressed this was a maximum and not a target.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To increase the allowance to £1500 for the next 4 years, commencing 2023.</p>
<b>152/22</b>	<p><b><u>ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To approve annual subscriptions which become payable during the 2023/24 financial year.</p>
<b>153/22</b>	<p><b><u>REGULAR PAYMENTS</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To authorise regular payments that will arise during the course of the 2023/24 year including those made by variable direct debit, in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.6.</p>
<b>154/22</b>	<p><b><u>INTERNAL AUDITOR</u></b></p> <p>Members reviewed the effectiveness of the arrangements for internal audit provision and the clerk confirmed the various criteria which was to be assessed.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To accept the Scope of Work and agree the provisions for the arrangements for internal audit are effective.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To appoint Heather Heelis of Heelis &amp; Lodge as the Council's Internal Auditor for the 2023/24 financial year at a cost of £420 to be expended from the audit budget. Also, to relay the thanks of the council to Heather.</p> <p><b>FURTHER RESOLVED:</b> To approve the Scope of Internal Audit work.</p>
<b>155/22</b>	<p><b><u>REQUEST FOR FORMER MAYOR'S PORTRAIT</u></b></p> <p>Members considered a request from Richard Pugh on behalf of the Harwich Museum, to rehome the portrait of former mayor William McLearn Jnr at the museum. Mr Pugh offered to provide a quality photograph to Harwich Town Council to retain in its archives.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To grant the request.</p>
<b>156/22</b>	<p><b><u>HAVE YOUR SAY ON ELECTORAL DIVISIONS IN ESSEX</u></b></p> <p>Members considered a consultation on division boundaries in Essex. If they're minded to increase number of electors within the Harwich division, to recommend including Ramsey &amp; Parkeston within that division.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To make representations.</p>

157/22	<p><b><u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES BY THE COUNCIL</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr G Smith reported on a meeting of the Ark Centre and informed that there were now 54 children on their books; up from 46 a few months back. They're not sure how the increase in free child care will affect them – they may have to amend their ratios or increase staffing. They're awaiting further funding for an IT upgrade but they've installed new front gates and Les Nicol is looking to join the Board of trustees.</li> <li>• Cllrs Todd, I Henderson and Morrison reported on a recent meeting of the port liaison meeting.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Todd said the Costa cruise line was cancelled this year due to insecure bollards on the quay meaning the ships couldn't be adequately secured. He asked if these could be fixed.</p> <p>He also asked when work would commence to demolish the long arm of the train ferry gantry, and the reply was that it will be when they carry out the works to the marina, which will commence once all the necessary agreements are in place.</p> <p>Cllr I Henderson reported that in 2022 there were 320000 units come through the port with a steady increase in unaccompanied freight and that passenger numbers are also at pre-covid levels.</p>
158/22	<p><b><u>COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES</u></b></p> <p>Members received the Minutes of the following meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allotments Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023</b></li> <li>• <b>Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To consider recommendations of the committee in relation to grant funding for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harwich International Shanty Festival £3250</li> <li>• Harwich Electric Palace - £1905</li> <li>• Harwich Festival - £3300</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Environment &amp; Community Committee – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023</b></li> </ul>
159/22	<p><b><u>ACCOUNTS</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To accept the financial report and to approve accounts for payment as per the schedule (circulated separately).</p>
160/22	<p><b><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members <b>noted</b> receipt of latest PCSO report, <i>for information</i>.</li> <li>• Members <b>noted</b> Letters of thanks from those attending the <b>Flood Memorial Garden</b> Rededication service.</li> <li>• The clerk informed members that she's been advised that the precepting authority would once again be paying an LCTSS grant in 2023/24, which would be allocated in due course.</li> <li>• Cllr McLeod relayed concerns from some local residents about the increase in house builds across the town and the worry over the lack of services and infrastructure. Members discussed their own concerns, in particular the GP provision at the Mayflower Medical Centre.</li> </ul>

161/22	<p><b><u>DRAIN REPAIR AT THE HILL SCHOOL SITE</u></b></p> <p>Members considered an emergency item to cover the cost of repairs to the waste water drain at the rear of building 3 of the Hill School Site, presently occupied by the Harwich Amateur Boxing Club. Repairs were quoted at £550 plus £120 for the initial callout charge although Cllr Davidson warned that further repairs may be required.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To approve the cost and proceed with the works, to be funded from the Hill School Maintenance EMR.</p>
162/22	<p><b><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></b></p> <p>The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on <b>a date to be agreed in June 2023 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich at 7.00pm</b>, or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.</p> <p>The Annual Statutory and Mayor Making Meeting will be held on <b>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich at 11am.</b></p>

The Chairman thanked member for their cooperation over the last two years. He's enjoyed the role as Mayor and the chance to represent the council. He wished everyone the best for the future.

Cllr G Smith wished to thank Cllr Calver for all his support and assistance over the last 8 years.

Cllr Ferguson thanked everyone for an enjoyable time on the council and the support from the officers.

Cllr McLeod commended Cllr I Henderson and thanked him for his services as Mayor of the town.

Cllr Morrison also acknowledged Cllr Todd and the late Sylvie Todd for their double term as Mayor and Mayoress.

The chairman closed the meeting at 8.17pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**