

HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
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MINUTES
of the Meeting of HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL
 held at
The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich
 on
Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7.42pm

Present:	Councillors Armstrong, Calver, Chable, Davidson, Fay, McLeod, Morrison, Powell, Saunders, Todd and Wade
In the Chair:	Councillor M Fowler
Clerk:	Ms Lucy Ballard
Also present:	0 members of the public, 1 member of the press, the High Steward and Mrs Strachan and Rev. Kirsty Emerson

The chairman informed members that for expedience, she would bring forward the resignation of the High Steward item, under Item 17.

120/23	<p><u>RESIGNATION OF THE HIGH STEWARD</u></p> <p>Cllr Calver spoke on the history of the existence of the High Steward and that in Harwich the post was created under the King James Charter in 1604. Harwich Town Council takes the position seriously as some areas choose not to appoint one and the role remains dormant and others appoint to a royal. In Harwich, the position has always gone to someone of great esteem in the community.</p> <p>When the previous High Steward passed away, the decision to appoint Mr Strachan was unanimous and for the last 16 years, both Chris and Celia have represented the town in the most dignified way and have done the council proud. Cllr Calver spoke further on the virtues of his time in the role stating it as an incredible honour before proposing a vote of thanks to Chris and Celia for their services to this council and the community.</p> <p>The chairman suspended standing orders to allow Mr Strachan to say a few words, when he explained his reasons for standing down.</p> <p>Cllr Morrison talked about some of the other High Stewards in the country and those who have held the position.</p>
121/23	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>Cllrs I Henderson, J Henderson, Richardson and Smith</p>
122/23	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u></p> <p>None</p>
123/23	<p><u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u></p> <p>None</p>

124/23	<p><u>MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS</u></p> <p>Members acknowledged a recent engagement attended by the mayor since the previous meeting, which had been previously circulated.</p> <p>Cllr Morrison attended the Rotary Club Christmas meal, along with Cllr Chable, and the Women's Inner Wheel luncheon to mark their 100th anniversary on behalf of the Mayor. She talked about some of the achievements she learned as part of her research for the engagement.</p>
125/23	<p><u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of Harwich Town Council held on 30th November 2023 (circulated separately), were approved as a correct record.</p>
126/23	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 103/23 – Members noted responses from both TDC and Essex Highways in relation to public questions raised at the last meeting. The clerk relayed that the missing sign in Lee Road would be replaced as required, the enforcement team at North Essex Parking Partnership has been alerted to the parking of vehicles on red lines and an inspector will assess the fading white lines at the junction of George Street and Main Road. The resident who raised the questions has been informed. <p>In relation to the red lines, Cllr Armstrong said she'd not observed anyone parking on the red lines along Beach Road and the ones that are abused are those by Lidl.</p>
127/23	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIN 071/23 – The clerk reported on the initial meeting of the Dementia Fundraiser Working Party meeting where it was confirmed that the intention was to organise a 2.4 mile charity walk and that she was making further enquiries with the Alzheimer's Society on how best to achieve this and what support they might be able to give.
128/23	<p><u>HARWICH HARBOUR FOOT FERRY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT</u></p> <p>With reference to MIN 097/20, members reviewed the current partnership agreement and considered whether to renew. Cllr Powell met with other partners and wanted to point out that the foot ferry doesn't make a profit but the proprietor wants to continue and the partnership funding helps significantly. By committing for a 3-year basis offers additional security.</p> <p>Cllr Wade felt the figures provided didn't give a sufficient picture. Cllr Calver felt it brought many visitors to the town and enables people from our community to visit other communities.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To renew the partnership agreement, commencing in April 2024 at a cost of £1000 per annum, to be funded from the Economic Regeneration budget and to be reviewed every 3 years.</p>
129/23	<p><u>TENDRING DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY</u></p> <p>Members considered a request from Agewell East to become the lead organisation for the TDFC Harwich sub-group.</p> <p>Cllr Morrison was in favour of this and suggested Cllr Fowler takes the role of lead member, to be supported by Cllrs Todd, Saunders and Chable.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To agree to take on the role of lead organisation for the duration of this council and to nominate Cllr Fowler as lead member.</p>
130/23	<p><u>SKATE PARK FESTIVAL</u></p>

	<p>Members considered contracting Maverick Industries to facilitate a skate park festival to coincide with the 2024 Tour de Tendring event, which was expected to be on 19th May. The clerk confirmed the quote was £2750 plus an applicable cancellation fee of £250, which would apply if the event had to be rescheduled due to poor weather and is to cover the payment of the pro-skaters. Cllr Calver confirmed there was sufficient funding to enable this event to go ahead for the remainder of this council</p> <p>RESOLVED: To proceed with the festival at a cost of £2750, to be expended from the Skatepark Festival EMR, accepting the aforementioned cancellation fee, on the condition that this can be delivered in conjunction with the 2024 Tour de Tendring event and that if it can't for any reason, that the event date be reviewed. Cllr J Henderson has agreed to be the lead member.</p>
131/23	<p><u>LEISURE FACILITIES</u></p> <p>Members considered whether to investigate options for other facilities or amenities for the site of the putting greens. Cllr Chable felt this would work best under a working party and asked Cllr Calver if he would chair it.</p> <p>RESOLVED: to proceed with making initial enquiries, appointing a working party to comprise of Cllrs Calver, Morrison, Saunders, Chable and Wade with Cllr Calver as lead member, and to report back to a future meeting of the council.</p>
132/23	<p><u>HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL TELEPHONE BOX</u></p> <p>With reference to MIN 028/22, members considered a request from local artist Rachel Matthews to extend the agreement for use of the phone box as a community art space for a further year. The clerk confirmed that the council would continue to insure the box in the usual way and that Ms Matthews would cover the contents. There have been no reported incidents or antisocial behaviour as a result of the box being utilised in this way.</p> <p>Members felt this has been very successful and felt it to continue would be a wonderful idea.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To continue agreement for a further year.</p>
133/23	<p><u>BUDGET & PRECEPT</u></p> <p>Members gave consideration to the estimates for income and expenditure for the 2024/25 financial year, as recommended by the F&GP Committee. The clerk confirmed that following the FGP meeting, the Tax Base had been confirmed.</p> <p>RESOLVED: that on a budget of £237456, the council precept on Tendring District Council for £212629, having an impact of £37.79 per annum for a Band D council taxpayer based on a confirmed tax base of 5627 and representing a zero increase on 2023/24. The justification being that HTC would be able to maintain all current provisions including the Grants and Economic Development budgets and maintain sufficient reserves and which would only cost a Band D householder 73p per week. It was additionally agreed that any remaining underspends at year end would be allocated at the outset of the new financial year.</p> <p>Cllr Calver offered a vote of thanks to the clerk.</p>
134/23	<p><u>BRIEF REPORTS BY MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES BY THE COUNCIL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Morrison referred to some photos of the new sensory room at the Ark Centre, which had received funding help from HTC and which had been

	<p>circulated to members. At a meeting in December, it was reported that they are still working stringently on keeping the money coming in and have received a number of public donations. Many staff are still working without pay to ensure the facility keeps running.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr McLeod attended a TDALC meeting and they're concerned about the various closures of the A120 which has a knock-on effect as traffic is diverted through the surrounding villages.
135/23	<p><u>COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES</u> Members received the Minutes of the following meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance & General Purposes Committee – 12th December 2023 <p>RESOLVED: Members also ratified recommendations of the committee in terms of grant funding to:</p> <p>Spring Meadow Primary School (£1230)</p> <p>Cllr McLeod reminded members that Grassroots offers funding up to £1000.</p>
136/23	<p><u>ACCOUNTS</u> RESOLVED: To accept the financial report and to approve accounts for payment as per the schedule (circulated separately).</p>
136/23	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted receipt of latest report(s) issued by PCSO Sue Groves, <i>for information.</i> • Members noted the latest Harwich Festival report <i>for information.</i>
137/23	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on Tuesday 20th February 2024 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich at 7.00pm, or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.</p>
138/23	<p>Exclusion of Press and Public Pursuant to Sub-Section 2 of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the meeting to be closed to the press and public for the transaction of the under-mentioned business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macebearer

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 8.44pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE