

## HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL

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### MINUTES

#### of the Meeting of HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL

held at

The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich

on

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 7.13pm

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Councillors Calver, Chable, Davidson, Fay, Fowler, McLeod, Powell, Richardson, Smith, Todd and Wade</b>
<b>In the Chair:</b>	<b>Councillor P Morrison</b>
<b>Clerk:</b>	<b>Ms L Ballard</b>
<b>Also present:</b>	<b>Rev. Canon Ian Smith</b>

A minute's silence was observed in respect of former Honorary Archivist Ray Plummer and former mayor Bill Mixter, following both their passing earlier in December.

Prayers were taken by the Rev. Ian Smith

<b>104/25</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> Cllrs Armstrong, I Henderson, J Henderson and Saunders
<b>105/25</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS</u></b> None
<b>106/25</b>	<b><u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u></b> None
<b>107/25</b>	<b><u>MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS</u></b> Members acknowledged a list of recent engagements attended by Cllr Morrison, which had been previously circulated. Cllr Fay referred to the Christmas lights switch on event, which he undertook on behalf of the mayor. He reported it as a bustling event and a very good evening.
<b>108/25</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 26 <sup>th</sup> November (circulated separately) were approved as a correct record.
<b>109/25</b>	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b> <b>• MIN 93/25</b> – The clerk reported on a response to a letter to the MP regarding banking closures and hubs. Members favoured the option of the MP making an application to LINK on the council's behalf but felt that a case should be made to include exactly what services are needed in the town. Cllrs Chable and Fay agreed to collate ideas from members to be sent onto the MP. <b>RESOLVED:</b> to request the MP makes the application to LINK on the council's behalf and to bring to his attention the other non-transactional services that are required in the town.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MIN 96/25</b> – The clerk reported that a letter to Greater Anglia regarding the Manningtree to Harwich branch line had been acknowledged but no response had been received. Cllr Chable offered to chase a response before the next meeting.</li> </ul>
110/25	<p><b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MIN 173/23</b> – Members referred to the potential for a visit from the HMS Venturer to Harwich following the completion of its build in 2027. The clerk relayed her efforts in attempting to connect with the Royal Navy in this regard and having obtained a new contact, would write again.</li> </ul>
111/25	<p><b><u>HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL TELEPHONE BOX</u></b></p> <p><b>MIN 028/22</b> - 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 but would not be responsible for any damage or theft of the contents. There have been no reported incidents or antisocial behaviour as a result of the box being utilised in this way. She also confirmed that arrangements were in place to carry out maintenance this Spring.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To continue agreement for a further year.</p>
112/25	<p><b><u>PCSO</u></b></p> <p>Members considered a proposal for the continuation of PCSO presence within Harwich. The clerk has written to the TDC Chief Executive to confirm their intentions but is yet to receive a response. Members recalled that HTC's involvement was conditional upon TDC agreeing to part-fund and agreed to defer consideration until confirmation is received by TDC.</p>
113/25	<p><b><u>SKATEPARK FESTIVAL</u></b></p> <p><b>REF: MIN 76/25</b> – It was confirmed that the date of the postponed 2025 skatepark festival would be on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May and the cost was unchanged at £2750 (with a £275 cancellation fee), to be expended from the Skatepark Festival EMR. The clerk had liaised with TDC officers who felt that on this occasion, it would be appropriate to liaise with the manager of the adjacent Dovercourt Lifestyles in terms of arrangements for the day.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> to proceed with the project at a cost of £2750 to be expended from the Skatepark Festival EMR.</p>
114/25	<p><b><u>ARCHIVES DIGITALISATION PROJECT</u></b></p> <p>Members considered a proposal for the digitalisation of the Harwich Archives at the Guildhall and the expenditure associated with the formulation of grant funding applications.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To proceed with the project at an initial cost commitment of up to £4675 to be expended from general reserves with further costs to be expended from the same.</p> <p>Cllr Calver confirmed that an inception meeting was required with the consultants before the end of January to agree a programme of works.</p> <p><b>FURTHER RESOLVED:</b> to appoint Cllrs Calver and Morrison to lead on the project.</p>
115/25	<p><b><u>SHELTER AT HARWICH INTERNATIONAL PORT</u></b></p> <p>Members considered backing a proposal for a shelter to be installed on the platform at Harwich International Port Railway Station.</p>

	<p>Cllr Davidson reported on action taken at Ramsey &amp; Parkeston Parish Council but their efforts had been unsuccessful. He asked for HTC to back their continued efforts to seek to have a shelter installed.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> to send a letter of support to Ramsey &amp; Parkeston Parish Council to accompany their request.</p>
116/25	<p><b><u>BUDGET &amp; PRECEPT</u></b></p> <p>Members gave consideration to the estimates for income and expenditure for the 2026/27 financial year, as recommended by the F&amp;GP Committee. The chair confirmed that the Tax Base had been confirmed and this would yield a small surplus which can be allocated in the new financial year along with any remaining underspends and LCTSS grant received.</p> <p>The chair thanked the clerk, her team and all members for helping to keep the council finances in good order.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> that on a budget of £254778, the council precept on Tendring District Council for £233589, having an impact of £39.68 per annum for a Band D council taxpayer based on a confirmed Tax Base of 5887 and representing a 5% increase on 2025/26. 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 76p per week.</p>
117/25	<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 Powell reported that the Accelerator programme had finished and the final projects were to be completed, including the map boards which will be installed around the town. The Tourism group has plans for planters in the area with possible lighting.</li> <li>• Cllr Wade reported on the RBL activities and reported that the Poppy Appeal raised in excess of £16k in 2025.</li> </ul>
118/25	<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>• Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025</li> </ul> <p>Members considered recommendations from the committee in relation to grant funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spring Meadow Primary School - £1320 and Harwich International Shanty Festival - £3000</li> </ul>
119/25	<p><b><u>ACCOUNTS</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To receive the financial report and to approve accounts for payment as per the schedule (circulated separately).</p>
120/25	<p><b><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED IN THE POST OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence was received from The Bottle Kiln (Wetherspoon) in relation to local events and rejuvenation. The clerk relayed a response from Cllr I Henderson and members felt a response from HTC was warranted to draw attention to the Visit Harwich website and also that the council is aware that an invitation has been extended to the manager of the Bottle Kiln, to join the Tourism Group and be a part of the process that achieves so much for the town.</li> </ul>

121/25	<p><b><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></b>  The next meeting of Harwich Town Council will be held on <b>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026</b> at <b>The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich</b> at <b>7.00pm</b>, or at the rise of the Town Planning Committee, whichever is the later.</p>
122/25	<p><b><u>EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS</u></b>  Pursuant to Sub-section 2 of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was <b>RESOLVED:</b> that the meeting was closed to the press and public for the transaction of the under-mention business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Draft Funding Strategy for Essex Pension Fund</b></li> <li>• <b>High Lighthouse Licence</b></li> </ul>

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 8.18pm

**DATE**

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