

**HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL**  
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Clerk: Ms Lucy Ballard

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MINUTES**

Of the meeting  
held at  
The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich  
on  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 7.07pm

### **Present:**

Cllrs Armstrong, Calver, Chable, Davidson, Fay I Henderson, J Henderson, McLeod, Powell, Richardson, Smith and Todd

**In the Chair:** Councillor Morrison

**Clerk:** Ms L Ballard (Clerk)

**Also Present:** Yazmin Hornsby-Fry (Apprentice Admin. Assistant), Insp. Fryatt and Acting Sergeant Zoe Bowers of the Tendring Community Policing Team.

The Chairman welcomed guest speakers, Grant Fryatt and Zoe Bowers of the Tendring Community Policing Team.

### **Apologies For Absence**

Cllrs Saunders and Wade.

### **Minutes Of The Last Meeting**

With no public present, the chairman asked members if they were content for the minutes to be signed as a true record.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 (previously circulated) be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

### **Briefing From Insp. Fryatt, Tendring Community Policing Team**

Cllr Morrison welcomed Insp. Grant Fryatt (GF) and Acting Sergeant Zoe Bowers (ZB) to the meeting. GF introduced himself and briefed members on his career to date with the police. He confirmed that he is a distant relative of Captain Fryatt.

He proceeded to brief those present on the local policing priorities, which included Anti-Social Behaviour, Violent Crime including violence against women and girls (VAWG), shoplifting, vehicle crime and domestic violence. The new crime and sentencing act will change how crimes are dealt with and are likely to see fewer custodial sentences.

He went on to detail some statistics showing trends over the past 12 months and noted many which had reduced.

Operation SNAG focussed on vehicle crime and a lot of work has been done on drug crime which has brought the figures down.

The following questions were asked:

Where do the Hate Crime incidences come into the statistics? GF said the data doesn't specifically show that as it's included within other crimes.

Are more people reporting crimes? ZB said that since this issue was raised previously, the team had paid visits to those establishments in town who weren't reporting crimes and have been encouraging them to do so dispelling the myth that low-value thefts won't be reported. They have built good relations and continue to work with them.

Should shoplifting be considered a priority since every theft affects everyone as prices increase to cover the lost income. GF said some crime is organised and remains very serious. They do have to balance their resources and it remains to be seen how the changes in the sentencing powers will affect the outcomes, which will place a greater emphasis on the police to find other ways of reducing repeated offences.

Do shops with on-site security fair better? GF said it works as a deterrent and helps with evidence gathering although there is the risk to balance with staff confronting shoplifters and the safety risk this poses. An option is to employ trained SIA staff. Stores do need to take some responsibility as the goods (such as meat) are often non-returnable once removed from the premises so even if the perpetrator is caught the damage is done and the cost can't be recouped.

How much shoplifting is drug-related? GF said the exact figure is unknown but there will be a proportion of it, but inevitably it will involve other criminality and which may involve drugs along the line.

ZB said their Business Crime Team liaises with the shops to offer guidance and advice to try and prevent thefts but this is often at odds with their marketing measures.

What about deterrents such as ASBOs and tagging? GF confirmed that ASBOs were replaced with Criminal Behaviour Orders and tagging is for the courts to decide.

What about county lines and drug trafficking? GF said they continue to give focus to that with some good arrests although there are always new streams coming through. They will continue to enforce as drugs tends to fuel some other crimes.

What about e-bikes? GF clarified that e-bikes with pedals are legal, whereas the scooters aren't. They are a real challenge because they're readily available and quote low cost but since they can't be insured, they aren't legal. In the event they are seized, quite often they're replaced and the activity continues. The speed of them also makes them a challenge, especially in a pursuit. Intelligence from the community is the best way to manage this.

What about the problems with anti-social behaviour at McDonalds and on the local trains.

ZB said the retail park in its entirety have had issues and it's a single group of youths. They have officers working on that. Since it's primarily youths, they deal with it by way of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract, speaking with parents, liaising with schools etc. This could lead to Criminal Behaviour Orders if these measures fail to make an impact. Other teams have been asked to support the local team and matters are improving but parents do need to be supportive to enforce the conditions of the ABC.

Do the police respond to reports of anti-social behaviour as young kids appear not to care about the threat. ZB confirmed there are restrictions for those under the age of 10 years so they prefer to adopt other measures but do require the support of parents.

How are the issues with the caravan park and those living there permanently and without any registration being managed? ZB said it's hard to track everyone who is coming and going, especially given the number of owners who rent their vans privately. Officers do have good relationships with the local managers on site and Operation REASSURE will see a more visible presence at the caravan camp over the summer.

Have police have lost control on drug dealing, which is done openly now? GF said no, dealers are more brazen but people are getting long sentences.

What are the resources presently? GF said the Neighbourhood Policing Team is at the right level as it has to be maintained for funding purposes, but he is looking to increase the team by an extra officer. The response team is based at Harwich and are doing 24/7 shifts.

The new police station is expected to be ready by July and they're organising a local open day to which councillors and the public will be invited to visit.

Who deals with domestic violence? Gf said this falls to the local policing or dedicated Domestic Violence team.

With no further questions or presentation, the chairman thanked Grant and Zoe for their attendance.

#### **Update on Freeport East from Steve Beels**

Steve Beels from Freeport East was unable to attend and the clerk relayed an offer to receive an update in person at the Freeport East offices instead, which members accepted.

#### **Questions From Members Of The Public**

There were no members of the public present.

Cllr Morrison thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.09pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**