

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL,
HELD ON TUESDAY, 24TH JANUARY, 2023 AT 7.30 PM
PRINCES THEATRE, TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA, CO15
1SE**

Present:	Councillors Harris (Chairman), V Guglielmi (Vice-Chairman), Alexander, Allen, Amos, Baker, Barry, Bray, Bush, Calver, Casey, Cawthron, Chapman BEM, Chittock, Codling, Coley, Davidson, Davis, Fairley, Fowler, Griffiths, C Guglielmi, I Henderson, J Henderson, P Honeywood, S Honeywood, Knowles, Land, McWilliams, Miles, Morrison, Porter, Scott, Skeels, Steady, G Stephenson, M Stephenson, Stock OBE, Talbot, Turner, White, Wiggins and Winfield
In Attendance:	Ian Davidson (Chief Executive), Lisa Hastings (Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer), Lee Heley (Corporate Director (Place & Economy)), Richard Barrett (Assistant Director (Finance and IT) & Section 151 Officer), Keith Simmons (Head of Democratic Services and Elections), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager), William Lodge (Communications Manager), Madeline Adger (Leadership Support Manager) and Keith Durran (Committee Services Officer)

61. SILENT TRIBUTE - VICTIMS OF THE 1953 FLOOD

The Chairman of the Council led all persons present in a silent tribute to the memory of the victims of the Flood on the night of 31st January/1st February 1953.

62. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Clifton, King, Newton and Placey.

63. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 22 November 2022 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

With reference to Agenda Item 16 the Monitoring Officer reminded Members that, under Section 7.3 of Part 2 of the Members' Code of Conduct, they did not have to declare an Interest in relation to the review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances (as considered under Minute 77 below). Therefore, Members had a 'blanket' dispensation to participate in the consideration of that item.

Councillor Baker declared a Personal Interest in relation to Agenda Item 8 (Green Space Petition) insofar as he knew the petitioner.

65. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

The Chairman of the Council (Councillor Harris) made the following announcements:-

The League of TDC Chairmen Group

The Chairman announced that this Group had been launched on Wednesday 11 January 2023 with its first ever meeting held in the Town Hall, attended by past chairmen Val Guglielmi, Jeff Bray, Dan Land, Jayne Chapman BEM, Nick Turner, John White, Peter De Vaux Balbirnie, Alan Goggin, Rosemary Smith, Fred Nicholls, Danny Mayzes and Pat Manning, who had all been presented with a lapel badge.

The purpose of the Group was to grow into a support mechanism for future Chairmen and to assist in fundraising activities to support residents and businesses in the District.

Annual Pride of Tending Awards

The Chairman informed Council that this event, which was one of the highlights of the civic year, would be taking place on Wednesday 9 February. He thanked all those who had submitted nominations and he hoped that as many Members as possible would be present as it was an opportunity to thank all those unsung heroes who did so much good in the local community.

Chairman's Charity Boxing Event

The Chairman stated that this would be a Black Tie event to be held in the Princes Theatre on Thursday 16 March in aid of his nominated charity UK Homes for Heroes. The event had been organised by Seconds Out Boxing Club in Clacton-on-Sea and would be run by Gareth Bayford. More details of this event would be sent out in the near future.

Tending Stars Annual Celebration of TDC Staff

The Chairman announced that he had been delighted to attend this event on Thursday 19 January and he extended his special congratulations to Kieran Charles for winning the Employee of the Year Award.

Holocaust Memorial Day

The Chairman informed Council that he would be attending the Holocaust remembrance service in the Sunken Rose Garden on Clacton Seafront on Friday 27 January. He invited all Members and residents to join him.

66. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There were no announcements made by the Chief Executive on this occasion.

67. STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Updates on: (1) the Levelling Up Fund bid for Clacton-on-Sea; and (2) Freeport East

"Members will already be already aware of the hugely exciting announcement made by Government last week that we – on behalf of Clacton – were successful in a bid for almost £20 million from the Levelling Up Fund."

Our bid focused on plans for redevelopment of Carnarvon Terrace – currently made up of Carnarvon House and the Clacton library building, two sites which are ageing, of their time, and certainly do not inspire a warm welcome to the town for visitors either arriving at the nearby railway station, or following the A133 to the seafront.

The vision is to replace these buildings with new, modern facilities, visually welcoming as a gateway to Clacton. On the site would be a new library and adult skills space, some commercial space, housing, and of course the opportunity to re-design the public realm and part of the High Street car park too.

Now we have secured this funding – and lest we miss the scale of this award, let's not forget this grant is more than our annual general fund revenue budget as a Council – more detailed plans can be worked up. Some work is already underway, with the demolition of Carnarvon House which has been supported by a separate funding award.

I was reflecting just the other day at how wide-ranging a project this will be for us. It will touch upon every portfolio in our Cabinet: proper and better use of our assets; housing; a major planning application; business opportunity and town centre gateway; quality public space; a more attractive appeal for tourists visiting our resort; and of course partnerships will be crucial as we work closely with Essex County Council, the University of Essex and others to deliver this scheme.

Of course, the announcement last week was not a total success, with our separate bid made for £6 million for projects in Harwich and Dovercourt not being successful in this round. When the Clacton bid did not succeed in round one we received some really useful feedback from the Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities to refine our proposals the next time which we did, so I hope we will get the same opportunity for Harwich.

Mr Chairman, on the subject of Harwich, I have the pleasure of updating Members on more good news on Freeport East which has occurred since we last convened. Earlier this month the Government – again the Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities – approved the final business case for Freeport East. This, alongside allocation of initial customs and tax sites, means the Freeport is now in the delivery phase. Crucially this unlocks £25 million of Government funding for infrastructure enhancement.

I attended the launch of Freeport East in Parliament, and one of the key speakers from the University of Essex made the point that Freeport East is the largest project they have been involved in since the founding of the university in the early 1960s. I concur with that opinion. The project is in my view the most significant in the whole eastern region for a generation if not a lifetime. As the Freeport East vision is realised this huge opportunity will realise benefits not only for Harwich but the whole District – centred on jobs, skills and regeneration.

Both of these projects will take time to be fully realised. We are not at the beginning of the end, but at the end of the beginning to paraphrase our Chief Executive who was in turn paraphrasing a certain someone else. Much hard work from our dedicated officers and partners has gone into taking us to this point. And much more will be needed to bring those projects to fruition. I expect that all Members here – and future Members, whoever sits in this chamber after the May elections – can see the opportunity and benefits for Tendring, and will support these two major investments in our District."

The Leader of the Council then responded to questions put to him by Councillors I J Henderson and Steady.

68. STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Action on Climate Change Update

The Environment and Public Space Portfolio Holder (Councillor Talbot) made the following statement:-

“Good evening, Colleagues,

There is value in reminding ourselves of the actual calendar dealing with Climate Change matters for TDC.

- It is 3 years 5 months from our Leaders Motion declaring a Climate Emergency in August 2019*
- It is only 7 years and 11 months until our own aim to be ‘Net Zero Carbon’ by the end of 2030 arrives.*
- And our current Climate Action plan come to an end this year 2023.*

Recognising that this is January of a New Year, I would like to give Members a flavour of the actions planned in the year ahead, subject to formal decision, and a recognition that our local elections take place on 4th May.

I have been pressing to see delivered those items reported and discussed at Lee Heley’s Climate Change meetings with responsible officers, which can be progressed without major building or engineering works being required.

One of these is to reduce the heat loss in our Leisure Centre swimming pools, by fitting covers that can be drawn over the pools when not in use, thereby reducing current heat loss. This work can be started the moment it is formally agreed.

We also expect to fit new LED timer lighting in the three Leisure Centres this Spring, not only a climate change objective but a saving in running costs.

We are expecting to employ a building surveyor whose role will be to put forward recommendations for improvements to our Council buildings to reduce carbon emissions.

Lee informs me that he would expect solar panels to be part of the proposals for our buildings, but we must remind ourselves as always, that funding must be available before projects can be implemented.

As we reach procurement milestones for electricity during 2023, the Council will continue to ensure the electricity used across our various sites is delivered from carbon neutral sources.

The Government has recently published an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. No one can deny that the move to battery electric vehicles and plug in electric vehicles is gaining pace. Alex Porter and myself have engaged on an EV strategy being drafted by

officers, with particular reference to EV charge points in our car parks, ahead of it coming to Cabinet.

James Hill deals 'Inter Alia' with the vehicles and motorised equipment we use. Any alternative to Petrol or Diesel fuelled vehicles, is considered, but currently the market is very thin and very pricey. This means we are continuing with Diesel and Petrol.

James advised me only yesterday that arising from Urban Tree Fund money we will be planting on the:-

Burrs Road, Clacton-on-Sea Open Space – 600 trees, Due to start 30/1/2023

Jubilee Field, Parkeston – 60 trees, started 16/1/2023

Lotus Way, Jaywick – 100 trees, Due to start – soon.

For the sake of the record we will publish when available, the Carbon Emissions data for TDC, our Council.

As I said when I began this report, the Climate Change Action Plan, drawn up by Tim Clarke and Alan Coley's working party, ends this year, so a new plan must be developed to run from 2024 onwards. Expect more on this later!

I am still having no success in meeting with ECC as our Highway Authority, to speak about our special highway needs for EV charging points as a tourist destination. We need these sited on their highways, close to our beach areas. The last date given for us to meet was 14th December, but unfortunately this was cancelled due to sickness at the County end."

Councillor Talbot then responded to a question put to him by Councillor Bush.

69. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE - A.1 - PETITION TO COUNCIL: GREEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

Earlier on in the meeting Councillor Baker had declared a Personal Interest in relation to this item insofar as he knew the petitioner.

In accordance with the Council's approved scheme for dealing with petitions, the Chief Executive formally reported the receipt of an e-petition submitted by Caroline Saye, as lead petitioner, on 15 November 2022. The petition had been signed by 432 persons and stated:-

"We the undersigned petition the council to take no further action in respect of exploring the potential for development /disposal for each of the 69 proposed areas of land reported to Cabinet on 15 July 2022 until such time as a public meeting or meetings have been held to provide all residents with the ability to express their views."

In accordance with the Council's approved scheme for dealing with petitions, this matter would now be investigated and a report would be prepared and presented to the Cabinet on the basis that it contained between 30 and 500 signatures and related to a matter that was an Executive function under the law.

Members were aware that the next practicable ordinary meeting of the Cabinet was on 17 February 2023.

At that meeting, and in accordance with the Council's approved scheme, Caroline Saye, as lead petitioner, would be invited to address the Cabinet, explain the petition and outline the action that the petitioners would like the Council to take. Members would then discuss the petition and decide what action, if any, should be taken. Cabinet's decision would be confirmed in writing to Ms Saye and the decision would be published on the Council's website via the Minutes of that meeting.

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that the receipt of the Petition and the contents of the report be noted.

**70. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE - A.2 - PETITION TO COUNCIL: RE-
INSTATEMENT OF TOILETS ON MIDDLE PROMENADE BELOW CONNAUGHT
GARDENS EAST, CLACTON-ON-SEA**

In accordance with the Council's approved scheme for dealing with petitions, the Chief Executive formally reported the receipt of an e-petition submitted by Colin Underwood, as lead petitioner, on 18 November 2022. The petition had been signed by 41 persons and stated:-

"We the undersigned petition the council to re-instate public toilets in the vicinity of the demolished toilets on the middle promenade below Connaught Gardens East".

In accordance with the Council's approved scheme for dealing with petitions, this matter would now be investigated and a report would be prepared and presented to the Cabinet on the basis that it contained between 30 and 500 signatures and related to a matter that was an Executive function under the law.

Members were aware that the next practicable ordinary meeting of the Cabinet was on 17 February 2022.

At that meeting, and in accordance with the Council's approved scheme, Colin Underwood, as lead petitioner, would be invited to address the Cabinet, explain the petition and outline the action that the petitioners would like the Council to take. Members would then discuss the petition and decide what action, if any, should be taken. Cabinet's decision would be confirmed in writing to Mr. Underwood and the decision would be published on the Council's website via the Minutes of that meeting.

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that the receipt of the Petition and the contents of the report be noted.

71. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.1

No Questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10.1 had been submitted by members of the public for this meeting.

**72. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - A.3 - EXECUTIVE DECISION(S)
TAKEN AS A MATTER OF URGENCY**

In accordance with the requirements of Rule 16.2 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules and Rule 18(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Council

received a report from the Leader of the Council which notified Members of any recent Executive Decision(s) taken in the circumstances set out in Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules and/or Rule 18(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and/or Rule 6(b) of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

Acceptance of the allocation of £1.18m from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund

It was reported that, in December 2022, the Corporate Director (Economy & Place), in view of the urgency of the issue concerned, and in accordance with Rule 18(i) of the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules, had sought and subsequently obtained the Chairman of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consent, that his decision relating to the acceptance of the Council's allocation of money from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, should be exempted from the call-in procedure.

The Corporate Director's decision had been as follows:-

"To accept the allocation of £1.18m plus resourcing allocation from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), as applied for in July 2022."

It had been felt that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would have seriously prejudiced the Council's and the public's interest for the following reason:-

"The Government notified TDC Officers of the application's success and gave a deadline of Friday 16th December 2022 to sign and return a MoU and associated documents to accept the allocation. A Cabinet report on the subject, including the projects proposed, is on the agenda for Cabinet's meeting on the 16th December in order to gain approval to commence spend of the Year 1 allocation (which must be spent by 31 March 2023).

An exemption from call-in is sought due to the overlapping deadline, which would otherwise mean Tendring District Council would not be able to receive the allocation through the UKSPF."

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE and:-

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

73. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE and:-

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following Committees, as circulated, be received and noted:-

- (a) Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny of Tuesday 15 November 2022;
- (b) Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny of Tuesday 22 November 2022; and
- (c) Audit of Thursday 15 December 2022.

74. MOTIONS TO COUNCIL

No motions on notice, pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12, had been submitted by members of the Council for this meeting.

75. JOINT REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER AND THE CABINET - A.4 - ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

In accordance with the provisions of Article 15.02 (a) and (c) of the Council's Constitution, full Council was requested to approve the recommended changes to the Constitution put forward by the Monitoring Officer and the Cabinet in their joint report following a review undertaken by the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder through a Working Party constituted for that purpose.

Members were aware that, on 16 December 2022, Cabinet had considered a report of the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder, which had requested it to approve the recommended changes to the Constitution for referral onto Full Council.

It was reported that the main proposals covered a number of miscellaneous amendments to the Council Procedure Rules, Articles of the Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Property Dealing Procedure, the Procurement Procedure Rules, the Financial Procedure Rules and Delegated Powers in order to ensure the Council's Constitution remained effective, efficient and consistent at an operational level.

Members were aware that a summary of the proposed changes compared to the existing Parts of the Constitution was provided under each heading in the background section of the joint report and in each case, the content had been revised to provide greater clarity, ensure effectiveness and efficient up to date working practices for both Members and Officers and also to ensure it was in accordance with legislation, where necessary.

Councillors Turner, Stock OBE and Baker addressed the Council during the debate on this matter.

Having considered the outcome of the annual review of the Constitution and the Cabinet's recommendations arising therefrom, and in order to enable those recommendations to be approved and adopted:-

It was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the Council's Constitution be amended to reflect the proposed changes as set out in Appendices A to M attached hereto this report and that those changes come into immediate effect;
- (b) Council notes and endorses the Monitoring Officer's firmly reiterated advice that Members using the "Approval of the previous Minutes" item on agendas as a way of raising matters from that previous meeting, whether loosely connected or not, is not acceptable as such actions did not comply with the need to give the requisite public notice of matters that would be discussed at a committee etc. meeting i.e. it breached local government law;

- (c) Council further notes and endorses the proposed change to Article 7.08 (Cabinet Procedure Rule 1.5), as set out in Appendix N; and
- (d) Council additionally notes that:-
 - (i) the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, Lawyers in Local Government and the Association of Democratic Services Officers are proposing to issue guidance in the area of “call-ins” of Executive decisions and so it is likely that this Council will need to look further at this in 2023 (and particularly its implications for Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 17 and 18) once that guidance is issued;
 - (ii) the practice guides prepared by the Head of Democratic Services & Elections to assist members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and support officers to develop appropriate approaches to individual enquiries would be reviewed in Autumn 2023;
 - (iii) the Council’s Procurement Strategy and the Procurement Procedure Rules will need to be reviewed once the Procurement Bill (HL) currently at Report Stage in the House of Lords is enacted and come into effect; and
 - (iv) the review of the Council’s procedure for Planning Committee Site Visits as set out in the Members’ Planning Code and Protocol (in Part 6 of the Constitution) is still ongoing although at this current time no constitutional changes have been highlighted as being necessary.

76. REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL BY AN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

No reports from an overview and scrutiny committee had been submitted for Council’s consideration and determination at this meeting.

77. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND ELECTIONS - A.5 - REVIEW OF THE SCHEME OF MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES BY THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (IRP)

Council considered the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and had regard to the Panel’s recommendations therein in determining the uplift to be applied to the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in the scheme for 2022/23 and in approving the Scheme of Allowances for Members for 2023/24 (and until 2027/28).

Members were aware that the Council’s Independent Remuneration Panel had been meeting over the past few months as it considered the separate, but related, elements of the Scheme of Allowances for Members of the Council. Those elements were, firstly, what uplift should be applied to the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for Councillors in 2022/23 following the pay award for Council staff approved in late 2022. The second element was the entire Scheme of Members’ Allowances that should be put in place for 2023/24 (and for the period to 2027/28 with an index link). In concluding the Panel’s work, it had produced a report, which was set out as the Appendix to item A.5 of the Report of the Head of Democratic Services and Elections. It was a legal requirement that the Council could only make (changes to) its Scheme of Members’ Allowances after receiving a report from its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE and seconded by Councillor M E Stephenson that –

- (a) *the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (set out in the Appendix to this report), following that Panel's review of the appropriate uplift to be applied to Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in the scheme for 2022/23 and the Scheme of Allowances for Councillors for 2023/24 (and until 2027/28) be welcomed and duly noted;*
- (b) *that the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel set out on pages 10-13 of the Appendix be agreed in full;*
- (c) *that Members appointed to the role of Chairman of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Joint Committee and the role of being appointed by the Council as a Director of a Company, be categorised as level A allowance and Members of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Joint Committee be categorised as level C allowance, understanding the additional responsibilities and obligations that places, in accordance with the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on pages 11 and 12 of the appendix;*
- (d) *that, having determined uplift to be applied to Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in the scheme for 2022/23 and the Scheme of Allowances for Councillors for 2023/24 (and until 2027/28), authority be given to update Part 7 of the Council's Constitution accordingly; and*
- (e) *that the Chief Executive be authorised, in exceptional circumstances, to designate as approved duties such events for travel claim purposes where attendance by (a) Councillor(s) would be in the interests of the Council and the event otherwise has not been so designated.*

Councillor Stock's reasons for moving an amendment to the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel were as follows:-

"In order to address the very examples identified by the IRP in their report for allocating allowances to special responsibility where no allowance is currently provided for (as those responsibilities were new after the 2020 review by the IRP). The Tendring/Colchester Border Garden Community Joint Committee only had its first meeting 11 months ago and decision to authorise the Council to join the Freeport East Company as a founding Member (and to have a Director of the Company) is only three months old. As such, there was limited evidence for the IRP to consider in 2022/23 about those responsibilities and the IRP has provided the Council with the mechanism to allocate such allowances in these circumstances."

The following advice of the Monitoring Officer had been circulated to Members prior to the commencement of the meeting:-

"The Scheme of Allowances for Councillors for 2023/24 (and until 2027/28) recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), if adopted by Full Council, introduces a new categorisation table for Special Responsibilities to allow the Council to respond to new and amended responsibilities over the lifetime of the Scheme. Within their recommendations they have specifically stated that this could include the roles of the Chairman and/or Members of the Tendring Colchester Borders

Garden Community Joint Committee and the role of being appointed by the Council as a Director of a Company, understanding the additional responsibilities and obligations that places.

The additional wording suggested through the amendment, does not depart from the Scheme recommended by the IRP but allows Full Council to categorise these roles now, at the same time as adopting the Scheme. If adopted, this will ensure that Members appointed, post elections, to all relevant existing positions, will receive the identified Special Responsibility Allowances for their roles.”

The following advice of the Section 151 Officer had been circulated to Members prior to the commencement of the meeting:-

“The financial implications to categorise the roles, suggested by the Independent Remuneration Panel, at the level proposed would increase the Members’ Allowances by £12,144, should Tendring District Council retain the Chairmanship of the TCBGC Joint Committee for 2023/24, if not the amount would be reduced to £9,072. As indicated in the covering report for the Review of the Scheme of Allowances for Councillors, following the decision of Council, the overall budget for Members’ Allowances will be incorporated into the Council’s budget for 2023/24.”

Councillors I J Henderson and Baker addressed the meeting on the subject matter of Councillor Stock’s motion.

Councillor I J Henderson opined that the procedure for determining a Councillor’s request to receive a third or subsequent Special Responsibility Allowance should be altered. The procedure as currently proposed by the IRP was:-

“...However, if they make the specific case and lodge this with the Council’s Chief Executive (who may seek the views of the Independent Remuneration Panel) that/those further Allowances may be paid with the approval of the Chief Executive.”

Councillor Henderson felt that this placed an undue, and potentially politically controversial, burden on the Chief Executive and he therefore suggested the following alternative:-

“...However, if they make the specific case and lodge this with the Council’s Chief Executive (who will then seek the views of the Independent Remuneration Panel) that/those further Allowances may be paid with the approval of the Full Council, who will have had regard to the views of the IRP in making its decision.”

Councillor Stock OBE and Councillor M E Stephenson both concurred with Councillor Henderson’s suggestion and agreed to incorporate it within the original motion pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.6(b) (Alteration of Motion).

Councillor Stock’s motion, as now amended, on being put to the vote was declared **CARRIED**.

78. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.2

Subject to the required notice being given, Members of the Council could ask questions of the Chairman of the Council, the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holders or Chairmen of Committees.

One question on notice had been submitted by a Member for this meeting as set out hereunder.

Councillor Mick Barry asked Councillor Alex Porter, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism:

“As part of his submission to the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their budget scrutiny meeting on 11th January 2023 the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism said in a written answer to a question from Cllr Barry: ‘You will be aware that the Council has already taken the difficult decision to no longer invest in joint use facilities, owned by an external organisation. A decision on how to allocate respective budgets for these facilities has yet to be taken.’

Members will be aware that funding for the joint use sports centre facilities at Brightlingsea and Harwich was withdrawn following a Cabinet decision in December 2021. The rationale for this decision was to make a straightforward cost saving, in respect of both revenue spending and capital investment.

Since the withdrawal of TDC funding 13 months ago the Sigma Trust have invested well over £1million into the sports facilities at Brightlingsea, and after a period of closure the centre started to provide limited public access again from September 2022.

Can Councillor Porter confirm whether there are any plans to allocate the £60,000 estimated savings from Brightlingsea Sports Centre to provide funding for future sports development in the town as part of the new District Sports Strategy?

Finally can he also confirm when the strategy will be delivered for consultation to reassure residents that the needs of Brightlingsea will be fully considered and addressed within this strategy?”

The Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder replied as follows:-

“Thank you Councillor Barry for your question and for your update to Full Council on the community use of the Sigma Trust sports facilities in Brightlingsea.

It is excellent news that the Sigma Trust have invested so heavily in their own facilities and continue to provide public access, which is what they said they would do when the joint agreements came to an end.

When the Sports Strategy comes forward in the summer, it will consider the needs of the whole District, including Brightlingsea.

As part of our support of the Sigma Trust facilities in Brightlingsea and Harwich, from last July we allocated £25,000 to support the setup of sports groups.

I am also pleased to let you know that a further new grant scheme to support increasing levels of physical activity in the District is due to be brought forward shortly. This is being funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and will be eligible to local clubs

and organisations around the District. Once further information is available, we will be updating Members and the local community.”

Councillor Barry then asked a question of clarification to which Councillor Porter responded.

79. URGENT MATTERS FOR DEBATE

No urgent matters had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 3(xv), 11.3(b) and/or 13(p) for this meeting.

The Meeting was declared closed at 8.28 pm

Chairman