MINUTES of a **CIVIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING** held at **TOWN HALL, Felixstowe,** on **Wednesday 9 September 2026** at **7.30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr M Sharman (Chairman)
Cllr C Franklin (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr N Barber
Cllr S Bennett
Cllr J Candy
Cllr A Folley
Cllr S Harkin
Cllr D Rowe

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
Mrs S Faversham (Civic Events Officer)

158. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.

159. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr D Aitchison**.

160. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Other Registerable Interests were noted. Where a specific item on the agenda was directly related to any Members' declared interest, their participation was restricted in accordance with the Code of Conduct:

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bennett Cllr J Candy Cllr A Folley	All	Other Registerable Interest (as Members of East Suffolk Council)
Cllr S Harkin	All	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as an employee of East Suffolk Council)
Cllr M Sharman	#164	Other Registerable Interest (as a Trustee to Landguard Fort and Trustee to Felixstowe Council for Sports and Recreation)
Cllr D Rowe	#164	Other Registerable Interest (as Treasurer to the Carnival Association and Director of Level Two)
Cllr N Barber	#164	Other Registerable Interest (Member of Felixstowe-Wesel Association)
Cllr A Folley	#164	Other Registerable Interest (Member of Felixstowe-Wesel Association)
Cllr S Harkin	#164	Other Registerable Interest (Member of Music in Felixstowe)

Members were advised that, should any matters arise in the meeting that directly relate to any of their interests, they should make appropriate declarations at that time.

161. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Civic & Community Committee meeting held on 10 June 2026 be confirmed as a true record.

162. CIVIC & COMMUNITY BUDGET REPORT

The Committee considered the income and expenditure reports for the Civic & Community budget to 4 September 2026.

Members welcomed the completion of the Chairman's Board commemorating former Felixstowe Urban District Council chairmen. The Board had been produced in-house to a high standard, and the Committee recorded its thanks to the Grounds and Maintenance Manager for undertaking the work, which had achieved a considerable cost saving.

The Town Clerk highlighted the underspend arising from the cancellation of Art on the Prom, with approximately £3,000 of annual grant provision remaining unspent. Remembrance expenditure was also expected to be below budget, with traffic barriers no longer considered necessary. No further CCTV expenditure was anticipated at this stage.

Members noted the continuing difficulties in securing sponsorship for both Felixstowe in Flower and the Town Magazine.

It was RESOLVED that the Budget Report to 4 September 2026 be received and noted with no further action required at this time.

163. BUDGET REVIEW WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Budget Review Working Group arising from its meeting on 18 May 2026, relating to the Mayoral Allowance, town twinning, grants, Felixstowe in Flower and the Town Magazine.

The Committee supported the recommendation to maintain the Mayoral Allowance at £3,000 for 2027-28 and encouraged the Twinning Associations to explore opportunities to raise awareness of the town twinning arrangements and promote wider community participation.

In considering the future provision for Occasional Grants, Members recognised the need to reduce reliance on Earmarked Reserves to support recurring expenditure. However, they wished to retain the greatest possible level of grant funding for local organisations. The Town Clerk was asked to prepare the draft budget on the basis of a minimum provision of £30,000 for Occasional Grants,

with the aim of retaining the existing £35,000 provision if the Council's overall financial position permitted.

The Committee supported the recommendation to review and improve sponsorship opportunities for Felixstowe in Flower, noting that the associated proposals were also being considered under the following agenda item.

Members also supported reducing the frequency of the printed Town Magazine from quarterly to twice yearly, while maintaining a physical publication for residents who may not routinely access digital communications. It was proposed that printed editions be issued in summer and winter, supported by digital editions in spring and autumn, or alternative bulletins. The format and arrangements for these additional communications would be considered further.

It was RESOLVED that:

i. **the Mayoral Allowance be maintained at £3,000 for 2027–28;**

ii. **the Twinning Associations be encouraged to promote wider awareness of and participation in the town twinning arrangements;**

iii. **the Town Clerk prepare the draft budget with a minimum provision of £30,000 for Occasional Grants, seeking to retain the existing £35,000 provision if the Council's overall financial position permits;**

iv. **sponsorship opportunities for Felixstowe in Flower be reviewed and improved; and,**

v. **the frequency of the printed Town Magazine be reduced to twice yearly, with digital communications or alternative bulletins to be considered for the intervening seasons.**

164. ANNUAL GRANTS, COMMUNITY FUND PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS

Members having declared interests in the items under consideration withdrew from the Chamber before discussion and voting, as recorded under Minute #160.

The Committee considered applications for Annual Grants and Community Fund Projects for inclusion in the recommendations for the 2027–28 budget.

In respect of Art on the Prom, Members noted that the event had been cancelled in 2026 and that the grant awarded for the previous year had not been taken up. It was agreed that the organisers should be advised to submit an Occasional Grant application for a future event closer to the time, once they were confident that it would proceed.

It was RESOLVED that the organisers of Art on the Prom be advised to submit an Occasional Grant application for a future event closer to the

time, once they were confident that the event would proceed, and that the following provision be recommended for the 2027–28 budget:

i. As Annual Grants:

Art on the Prom	**£0**
Citizen's Advice	**£3,000**
FACTS	**£2,500**
Fairtrade Forum	**£45**
Felixstowe Book Festival	**£3,000**
Felixstowe Carnival	**£10,000**
Felixstowe Council for Sport and Recreation	**£300**
Felixstowe Lifeboat (formerly Coast Patrol)	**£2,000**
Landguard Fort Trust	**£1,000**
Royal British Legion	**£300**
Music in Felixstowe	**£2,000**
Salzwedel Twinning Association	**£200**
WAMFest	**£3,000**
Wesel Twinning Assoc.	**£350**
Total	**£27,695**

ii. Community Fund Projects:

Level Two	**£10,000**
Harwich Harbour Ferry Services Partnership	**£1,000**
Total	**£11,000**

iii. £8,000 be included in the recommendations for the 2027–28 budget towards the provision of the 2027 Christmas lights; and,

iv. all recipients be required to display Felixstowe Town Council promotional material acknowledging the Council's support, clearly identifying where it is the principal sponsor, and to consider environmental impacts, including the use of single-use plastics, when organising events.

165. REMEMBRANCE

Committee noted the arrangements for the 2026 Remembrance programme:

- **Saturday 24 October:** Launch of the Poppy Appeal at the Triangle, including a parade.
- **Thursday 5 November:** Felixstowe Festival of Remembrance Concert, organised by the Felixstowe Branch of the Royal British Legion, at 7.30pm at St John's Church, Orwell Road.

- **Sunday 8 November (Remembrance Sunday):** Civic Remembrance Service at St John's Church at 9.45am; Civic Act of Remembrance at Felixstowe War Memorial, Undercliff Road West, at 10.45am; and Remembrance Service at the War Graves, Felixstowe Cemetery, at noon.
- **Wednesday 11 November (Armistice Day):** Annual civic observance commencing at 10.45am.

Schools would be invited to participate in the Armistice Day arrangements, including reading poems and bringing tributes to be placed following the 11.00am silence.

It was RESOLVED that the arrangements for the 2026 Remembrance programme be noted.

166. FELIXSTOWE IN FLOWER

The Committee received an operational update on Felixstowe in Flower and considered the proposed strategic review of floral displays for the 2027 season.

Members noted the challenges arising from limited sponsorship, high water consumption, staff time and the safety risks associated with roadside maintenance. The review identified opportunities to concentrate resources on Hamilton Road, where sponsorship and public engagement had been strongest, while reducing the operational demands of displays in Walton and along the seafront.

The proposals included discontinuing hanging baskets in Walton and along the seafront, retaining the existing Hamilton Road hanging baskets, and investigating the replacement of 16 ageing wooden whisky barrels with 17 self-watering barrier planters. The proposed changes were intended to improve resource efficiency, reduce watering requirements and provide a more attractive proposition for potential sponsors.

The Committee also noted that the Felixstowe in Flower Awards Ceremony was scheduled for 15 October 2026.

It was RESOLVED that:

i. the update on the 2026 Felixstowe in Flower scheme and the forthcoming Awards Ceremony be noted;

ii. the strategic consolidation of the scheme for 2027, focusing floral displays on the town centre, particularly Hamilton Road, be approved in principle;

iii. the removal of hanging basket displays from Walton and the seafront for the 2027 season be approved in principle; and,

iv. **officers be authorised to investigate options and obtain formal quotations for replacing the 16 wooden whisky barrels with 17 self-watering barrier planters, with a further report on capital costs to be submitted to Committee if required.**

At this point, 9.25pm, Members agreed to extend the meeting, which was approaching two hours in duration.

167. UK TOWN OF CULTURE 2028 – UPDATE AND LEGACY

The Committee considered the outcome of Felixstowe's Expression of Interest for UK Town of Culture 2028 and the opportunities to build on the work undertaken through the bid.

Members noted that, although Felixstowe had not been shortlisted, the process had brought together local organisations, artists, businesses, community groups and residents to explore the town's cultural identity and ambitions. The research, stakeholder engagement and partnerships developed through the submission were recognised as valuable resources for future cultural development.

The Committee welcomed the continued work with the Felixstowe Place Board towards establishing a sub-group to develop a culture-led vision for the town. Members considered it important that the work undertaken through the bid should inform this wider initiative and support future partnership working and funding opportunities.

The Committee welcomed the positive continuation of this work and expressed the hope that the East Suffolk Council Cultural Officer could also support the initiative.

It was RESOLVED to note the outcome of the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition, recognise the value of the collaborative work undertaken in preparing the Expression of Interest, and support the continued use of that work to inform the development of a culture-led vision for Felixstowe through the Felixstowe Place Board and its proposed sub-group, with officer support accommodated within existing resources and work programmes.

168. TOWN TWINNING

The Committee received an update on recent and forthcoming town twinning activities.

Members noted the July 2026 visit to Felixstowe by a delegation from Salzwedel and representatives of the Wesel Fire Service and associated youth representatives, which coincided with the Felixstowe Carnival. The delegation included the Wesel Carnival Prince and Princess, a marching band and members of the Wesel Fire Service, who participated in the carnival parade.

An official invitation had been received for a Town Council delegation to attend the Hanseatic Festival in Wesel from 23-25 October 2026. Further itinerary details would be circulated when available, and any proposed civic delegation would be considered in accordance with the Council's Twinning Policy and approved budget. An invitation for a civic visit to Salzwedel around mid-December 2026 was also anticipated.

The Committee also noted the ongoing consultation with the Wesel and Salzwedel twinning partners regarding the possible modernisation of civic gift exchanges. The proposal would place greater emphasis on written salutations, such as commemorative scrolls, certificates or letters, reserving traditional physical gifts primarily for significant anniversaries or milestones. The partners' views were awaited, and any proposed change would be brought back for consideration in accordance with the Twinning Policy.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Twinning report be noted.

169. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.40pm. The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 21 October 2026 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____ Chairman: _____