



TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE CIVIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Cllr M Sharman (Chairman)

Cllr C Franklin (Vice Chairman)

Cllr D Aitchison

Cllr N Barber

Cllr S Bennett

Cllr J Candy

Cllr A Folley

Cllr S Harkin

Cllr D Rowe

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **CIVIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE** to be held at the **Town Hall, Felixstowe** on **Wednesday 9 September 2026** at **7.30pm** for the transaction of the following business:

Public Attendance

Meetings of the Town Council and its Committees are open to the press and public who are welcome to attend. Members of the public are invited to make representations or put questions to the Committee during the public session.

There is a limit to the number of public attending in-person. If you wish to attend in person, please email townclerk@felixstowe.gov.uk to confirm capacity.

Members of the public are very welcome to join via Zoom using the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89465860989>

Alternatively, you may join via the meeting ID 894 6586 0989 or over the telephone by calling 0131 460 1196.

Our online meeting guidance can be found here:
<https://felixstowe.gov.uk/remote-meeting-guide>

Council has a duty to pay due regard to preventing crime and disorder and to conserve biodiversity in its decision-making and Members are reminded to consider the Council's commitment to climate action.



The Council kindly asks that anyone planning to attend the meeting in-person to consider car-sharing or low-carbon modes of transport to the Town Hall.

Ash Tadjrishi
Town Clerk
4 September 2026

A G E N D A

- 1. Public Question Time**
Up to 15 minutes is set aside to allow members of the public (up to three minutes each) to make representations or put questions to the Committee on any relevant matters.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest and to consider any requests for dispensations from Members on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable or non-registerable interest.
- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**
To confirm the Minutes of Civic & Community Committee meeting held on 10 June 2026 as a true record. **(Pages 3-7)**
- 5. Civic & Community Budget Report**
To receive the Civic & Community Budget report to 4 September 2026 and consider any actions deemed necessary. **(Page 8 & Appendix A)**
- 6. Budget Review Working Group recommendations**
To review and consider Council's Budget Working Group's recommendations. **(Pages 9-10)**
- 7. Annual Grants, Community Fund Projects & Partnerships**
To review and consider Annual Grants and Community Fund Projects in preparation for Committee's draft 2027/28 budget. **(Pages 11-12)**
- 8. Remembrance 2026**
To note arrangements for this year's Remembrance events. **(Page 13)**
- 9. Felixstowe in Flower**
To receive an update report on Felixstowe in Flower **(Pages 14-16)**
- 10. UK Town of Culture 2028 – Update and Legacy**
To consider the outcome and legacy of Felixstowe's Expression of Interest for UK Town of Culture 2028. **(Pages 17-18)**
- 11. Twinning**
To receive an update on Town Twinning activities. **(Page 19)**
- 12. Closure**
To close proceedings and confirm the date of the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 21 October 2026 at 7.30pm.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

MINUTES of a CIVIC & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING held at TOWN HALL, Felixstowe, on Wednesday 10 June 2026 at 7.30pm

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

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjirishi (Town Clerk)
Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)
Ms H Miles (Communications Officer)
Mrs S Faversham (Civic Events Officer) (*via Zoom*)

49. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.

50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr D Aitchison**, **Cllr N Barber**, and **Cllr A Folley**.

51. 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	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	#54	Other Registerable Interest (as a Trustee to Landguard Fort Trust and Felixstowe Society)
Cllr D Rowe	#54	Other Registerable Interest (as a Director of Level Two)

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.

52. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Civic & Community Committee meeting held on 8 April 2026 be confirmed as a true record.

53. CIVIC & COMMUNITY BUDGET REPORT

The Committee considered a summary and detailed report showing income and expenditure against the budget as at 31 May 2026.

It was RESOLVED that the Budget Report to 31 May 2026 be received and noted with no further action required at this time.

54. OCCASIONAL GRANTS ROUND 1 2026/27

Committee considered completed applications for funding received prior to the 31 May 2026 deadline for the first round of Occasional Grants, with the total funding requested in this first round amounting to £23,358.00.

It was RESOLVED that the following Occasional Grants be awarded:

- i. £1,140 to the 1st Felixstowe Sea Scout Group towards safety and navigation equipment;**
- ii. £1,000 to Dora Brown towards Felixstowe Families Project;**
- iii. £599 to Friends of Fairfield & Colneis towards an outdoor play barn;**
- iv. £1,500 to Hamilton MAS towards their Port to Port Felixstowe project;**
- v. £2,500 to the Lions Club Felixstowe towards a replacement van; and,**
- vi. £1,500 to the Old Felixstowe Nursery towards a new climbing frame – Physical Development in Early Years.**

Pursuant to the Other Registerable Interest declared earlier in the meeting, Cllr M Sharman withdrew from the meeting at this point for the consideration of, and voting on, the following two applications. Cllr C Franklin (Vice-Chairman) took the Chair.

It was RESOLVED that the following Occasional Grants be awarded:

- vii. £1,000 to the Felixstowe Society towards Heritage Open Days 2026; and,**
- viii. £1,000 to Landguard Fort Trust towards the Fort Tea Room upgrade.**

Cllr Sharman returned to the meeting and resumed the Chair.

Pursuant to the Other Registerable Interest declared earlier in the meeting, Cllr D Rowe withdrew from the meeting at this point for the consideration of, and voting on, the following application.

It was RESOLVED that the following Occasional Grant be awarded:

- ix. £1,500 to Level Two towards biodiverse Community Gardens in Felixstowe.**

Cllr Rowe returned to the meeting at this point.

It was therefore RESOLVED that a total of £11,739.00 be awarded in Round 1 of the Occasional Grants for 2026/27, as detailed above, and approved for payment.

55. FELIXSTOWE IN FLOWER

The Civic Events Officer presented an update report on Felixstowe in Flower.

It was reported that the Felixstowe in Flower launch event, originally scheduled for Saturday 6 June, had been postponed due to adverse weather conditions. Members noted that the event had been provisionally rescheduled for either 27 June or 4 July, subject to the availability of participants, with 4 July currently identified as the most likely date.

During discussion, Members suggested that future launch events could be held between 11.00am and 1.00pm, rather than 10.00am and 12.00pm.

The Civic Events Officer further reported that discussions were ongoing to secure a new principal sponsor for Felixstowe in Flower from 2026 onwards. In addition, sponsorship opportunities for the trophies presented at the Felixstowe in Flower Awards Evening would be offered to local businesses and stakeholders at a cost of £20 per trophy. Sponsors would be invited to present the relevant award at the ceremony and receive acknowledgement in the event programme and the Town Council's seasonal magazine.

RESOLVED that the update report on Felixstowe in Flower be noted.

56. TOWN TWINNING

Committee noted the report on Town Twinning.

A Member raised the issue of civic gifts and suggested that, following the election of a new Wesel Bürgermeister, it would be an appropriate time to discuss whether the exchange of civic gifts could be standardised through formal salutations, such as a scroll, certificate, or letter. It was noted that the exchange of commemorative gifts could still take place on significant anniversaries or other special occasions.

It was RESOLVED that :

- i. the report on Twinning be noted; and,**
- ii. the Town Clerk liaise with Wesel and Salzwedel to confirm whether an exchange of formal salutations such as a scroll, certificate, or letter could replace the historic precedent of exchanging gifts.**

57. PUBLIC SPACE CCTV NETWORK UPGRADE

Committee considered an update report regarding the ongoing Public Space CCTV network upgrade. Members noted that infrastructure and installation works were scheduled to commence on site from Monday 15 June 2026.

RESOLVED that the CCTV update report be received and noted.

58. VISIT FELIXSTOWE BRAND

Committee received a report on the Visit Felixstowe and Love Felixstowe brands and associated marketing activity for the town. Members discussed the importance of the Visit Felixstowe brand to the town, particularly its established social media presence and its potential value as a destination marketing asset. It was noted that the associated social media channels had not been actively maintained since the cessation of the Felixstowe BID.

The Committee considered the principle of Felixstowe Town Council assuming a long-term stewardship and licensing role for the Visit Felixstowe brand, rather than undertaking the direct delivery of destination marketing activities. During discussion it was noted that the Town Council did not receive any income from business rates or resort assets, as East Suffolk Council does, and was therefore neither funded to, nor responsible, for delivering destination marketing for the town.

Members noted that the Lions Club had agreed in principle to maintain the digital brand and associated assets, such as the 20 Visit Felixstowe gazebos, for the community in the short-term, whilst a long term solution was being considered. Committee agreed that the Town Council should support the Lions' short-term stewardship of the brands and noted that the cost of ongoing content and promotional activities were estimated to be around £500 per month. Committee agreed that it would match-fund this, to £1,500 for six-months, with ESC, from the Community Fund Earmarked Reserve. The Seasonal Events Budget would be retained in case an event emerged in place of the anticipated loss of the Christmas Ice Rink which had been a BID-led event until its dissolution.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the report and the changing governance of the Visit Felixstowe and Love Felixstowe brands be noted;**
- ii. Felixstowe Town Council should, in principle, be open to taking a long-term oversight and licensing management role rather than undertaking direct operational delivery of destination marketing;**
- iii. a grant of £1,500 from the Community Fund Earmarked Reserve be approved for payment to the Lions Club of Felixstowe to support the interim caretaker arrangement, subject to East Suffolk Council confirming match-funding; and**

- iv. the Town Clerk be authorised to finalise the terms of this interim agreement and continue negotiations with ESC regarding any long-term, licensed tender framework arrangement.

59. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.20pm. It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 9 September 2026 at 7.30pm.

AGENDA ITEM 5: CIVIC & COMMUNITY BUDGET REPORT

Committee is to regularly receive reports on the Civic & Community element of Council's budget. A summary of the position to 4 September 2026 is provided below with a detailed report at **Appendix A**.

1 April - 4 September 2026 (2026 - 2027)

Felixstowe Town Council Summary of Receipts and Payments Summary - Civic & Community

Cost Centre	Receipts				Payments			
	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	% Received	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	% Spent
301 Civic & Community	0.00	0.00	0.00	N/A	30,802.00	15,556.55	15,245	50.50%
302 Grants	0.00			N/A	59,545.00	33,284.00	26,261	55.90%
303 Felixstowe in Flower	7,500.00	1,808.38	5,692	24.11%	9,250.00	7,467.42	1,783	80.73%
304 Communication	7,500.00	980.00	6,520	13.07%	21,310.00	4,964.00	16,346	23.29%
305 Community Projects & Partne	0.00			N/A	11,000.00	11,000.00	0	100.00%
NET TOTAL	15,000.00	2,788.38	12,211.62	18.59%	131,907.00	72,271.97	59,635.03	54.79%

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Committee is requested to consider the budget report to 4 September 2026 and decide any action it deems necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 6: BUDGET REVIEW WORKING GROUP **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council's Budget Review Working Group was established by the Finance & Governance Committee to provide detailed oversight, research and recommendations in relation to:

- the Council's budget;
- Council expenditure; and
- Council income.

The Working Group's primary purpose is to identify opportunities for efficiency and potential savings and thereby support informed decision-making by the Finance & Governance Committee.

The Working Group has no decision-making powers, and its recommendations are referred to the appropriate Committee for consideration.

At its meeting on 18 May 2026, the Working Group considered a number of matters falling within the remit of the Civic & Community Committee and made the following recommendations:

Mayoral & Civic Budgets

The Town Council's civic traditions remain highly respected, cost-effective, and provide a platform for civic pride as well as high charitable value to the town.

Context: The Mayor's Allowance of £3,000 is efficient, legally non-apportionable, and avoids complex VAT implications. Civic events, Remembrance, and Civic Awards consistently operate below their fixed operational ceilings, demonstrating great budget discipline. Administrative costs associated with civic functions are also kept under review, including the in-house application of lettering to the Mayoral Board.

Recommendation C&C 1: Maintain the Mayoral Allowance at £3,000 for the 2027–28 financial year.

Town Twinning & Youth Forum

Town twinning continues to provide opportunities for international civic and community links, while the Youth Forum provides an opportunity for young people to participate in local democratic decision-making and community activity.

Context: The Working Group considered that the Youth Forum should retain its existing modest budget. It also considered that there may be opportunities for the benefits of town twinning to be promoted more widely within the community.

Recommendation C&C 2: Encourage the Twinning Associations to explore innovative ways of increasing public awareness of the Council's town twinning arrangements and opportunities for wider community participation.

Grants & Community Support

The Council has historically provided financial support to local voluntary and community organisations through its Annual Grants and Occasional Grants schemes.

Context: The Occasional Grants budget was recently increased from £25,000 to £35,000, with the additional £10,000 being supported through the Community Fund Earmarked Reserve. The availability of this reserve provides additional flexibility in the short term, but is an unsustainable long-term strategy as the ER route will not be available after the 2027–28 cycle.

Recommendation C&C 3:

Consider grant provision for 2027/28 in the context of the Council's overall financial position, recognising that reliance on Earmarked Reserves to support recurring grant expenditure is not a sustainable long-term approach.

Felixstowe in Flower

Felixstowe in Flower remains an important and well-established Town Council initiative. However, sponsorship of floral displays has become increasingly difficult to secure, while some display locations require significant staff time, water and vehicle resources.

Context: Seafront displays suffer from high maintenance demands and harsh coastal exposure. Rationalising these seafront displays and shifting resources to high-impact town centre retail spaces will create a more attractive proposition for corporate sponsors.

Recommendation C&C 4: *Review and improve sponsorship opportunities for Felixstowe in Flower (including utilising "In support of..." branding) to move the scheme closer to a cost-neutral position.*

Communication: Town Magazine

The printed Town Magazine remains an important means of communicating with residents, particularly those who may not regularly access digital channels.

Context: Printing and distribution costs continue to be a consideration. A move to digital-only communication could disadvantage residents who do not regularly use digital services. A reduction in publication frequency may therefore provide a balance between maintaining the physical connection with 11,000 local households and managing costs.

Recommendation C&C 5: *Reduce the publication and distribution frequency of the town magazine from quarterly (four times a year) to biannually (twice a year).*

The Committee is requested to consider the recommendations of the Budget Review Working Group and decide on any actions it deems necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ANNUAL GRANTS, COMMUNITY PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS

Each year, the Council provides ongoing financial support to a number of local organisations and community initiatives.

Organisations currently receiving an Annual Grant have been invited to confirm their funding requirements for the forthcoming financial year, 2027/28, to enable the Committee to consider appropriate provisions as part of the budget-setting process.

Members will be provided with the completed applications submitted for consideration prior to the meeting.

For reference, the funding allocated to each organisation in the current financial year is shown alongside the amount requested for 2027/28, as set out in the respective application forms.

Annual Grants:

	2026/27 Allocation	2027/28 Application
Art on the Prom	£3,000*	£6,000
Citizens Advice	£3,000	£3,000
FACTS	£2,500	£2,500
Fairtrade Forum	£45	£45
Felixstowe Book Festival	£2,000	£3,000
Felixstowe Carnival	£7,000	£10,000
Felixstowe Council for Sport and Recreation	£ 300	£ 300
Felixstowe Lifeboat (previously Felixstowe Coast Patrol)	£2,000	£2,000
Landguard Fort	£1,000	£1,000
Royal British Legion	£ 300	£ 300
Salzwedel Twinning Association	£ 200	£ 200
Wesel Twinning Association	£ 200	£ 500
WAMFest (Felixstowe)	£3,000	£3,000
Music in Felixstowe was invited to apply this year (<i>Min. #165v 2025/26 refers</i>)		£2,000
Total	£24,545	£33,845

** £3,000 Annual Grant allocated to Art on the Prom was not released in 2026/27 as the event did not take place.*

Community Projects & Partnerships

The following projects and partnerships have previously been supported through the Council's Community Projects & Partnerships provision:

Project / Partnership

Level Two Youth Project	£10,000
The Harbour Ferry Services Partnership (previously known as Harwich Harbour Ferry Services)	£1,000
Total	£11,000

Christmas Lights

In 2024/25, the Council increased its contribution towards the Felixstowe Christmas Lights, delivered by the Lions, to £8,000.

For the 2027/28 financial year, the Lions have again requested a contribution of £8,000.

This provision is considered separately from the Annual Grants listed above.

Harbour Ferry Services

The partnership agreement for Harbour Ferry Services, previously known as Harwich Harbour Ferry Services (HHFS), is currently renewed annually.

In order to review the financial position of the service from all partners' perspectives at an early stage, a meeting of the partners normally takes place during October or November.

Under the current agreement, total partner contributions of £31,000 are apportioned as follows:

- Essex County Council: £12,500
- Suffolk County Council: £12,500
- Tendring District Council £1,500
- East Suffolk Council: £1,500
- Babergh District Council: £1,000
- Felixstowe Town Council: £1,000
- Harwich Town Council: £1,000

The annual contributions support the refurbishment and running costs of the service.

Essex County Council manages the agreement on behalf of the partnership, including advising Harbour Ferry Services on marketing and monitoring the performance of the service in discussion with the partners.

The partnership is also working with Freeport East in considering future plans for the ferry service.

Committee is requested to consider the Annual Grant applications and Community Projects & Partnerships provisions for 2027/28 and make recommendations for inclusion in the Committee's draft budget, taking account of the Council's overall financial position and other competing budget priorities.

AGENDA ITEM 8: REMEMBRANCE 2026

The arrangements for the 2026 Remembrance programme have been confirmed as follows.

Saturday 24 October 2026 - Launch of the 2026 Poppy Appeal

The launch will take place at the Triangle and will include a parade.

Thursday 5 November 2026 - Felixstowe Festival of Remembrance Concert

The concert will take place at 7.30pm at St John's Church, Orwell Road, and is being organised by the Felixstowe Branch of the Royal British Legion.

Sunday 8 November 2026 – Remembrance Sunday

The Civic Remembrance arrangements will be:

- **9.45am:** Civic Remembrance Service at St John's Church, Orwell Road;
- **10.45am:** Civic Act of Remembrance at Felixstowe War Memorial, Undercliff Road West; and
- **12 noon:** Remembrance Service at the War Graves, Felixstowe Cemetery.

Wednesday 11 November 2026 – Armistice Day

The Town Council will mark Armistice Day with the annual civic observance from 10.45am.

Schools will be invited to attend and participate in the Armistice Day arrangements. Schools will be encouraged to read poems and bring their own tributes, which may be placed following the 11.00am silence.

Committee is requested to note the arrangements for the 2026 Remembrance programme and consider any further action it deems necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 9: FELIXSTOWE IN FLOWER

Committee is requested to consider an operational update on the Felixstowe in Flower scheme and to review proposed strategic changes to the location, format, and infrastructure of floral displays for the 2027 season.

Felixstowe in Flower continued its established provision of hanging baskets, troughs, and displays across the town and seafront in 2026. However, operational review following the 2026 season highlights significant challenges regarding sponsorship income, water consumption, staff resources, and roadside maintenance safety.

Officers have undertaken a review of display locations to determine how Council resources can be deployed most effectively to maximise visual impact and commercial engagement while reducing operational demands.

Purpose of the Strategic Review

The proposed approach is intended to provide a focused, sustainable, and modern framework for Felixstowe in Flower for 2027 and beyond.

It does not represent a reduction in the Town Council's commitment to the scheme. Rather, it seeks to concentrate resources on areas where the scheme delivers the greatest civic and commercial benefit, addressing operational inefficiencies associated with dispersed displays.

The proposal therefore establishes strategic adjustments across three main areas:

- Display Location Consolidation;
- Infrastructure Modernisation; and,
- Resource Efficiency and Safety.

Existing Display Locations & Operational Assessment

A review of performance and resource allocation across the 2026 season identifies distinct operational profiles across the three primary display zones:

1. Walton

- Sponsorship: Zero (£0) sponsorship secured for 2026, with historically low business uptake.
- Resource Demand: Requires approximately 500 litres of water and over 3 staff hours weekly (involving two officers).
- Operational Risk: Represents significant health and safety concerns due to heavy traffic, narrow footways, and a lack of safe vehicle pull-in areas, leading to road obstructions during watering operations.

2. Seafront

- Sponsorship: Zero (£0) sponsorship secured for 2026, with limited historical interest.

- Resource Demand: Requires approximately 1,200 litres of water and over 3 staff hours weekly (involving two officers).
- Visual Impact: Plant displays offer minimal relative visual impact as they are largely overshadowed by the prominent natural coastal backdrop.

3. Town Centre (Hamilton Road)

- Sponsorship: Strongest area of commercial engagement, attracting the highest sponsorship uptake and positive public feedback.
- Resource Demand: Requires approximately 2,000+ litres of water and around 6 staff hours weekly.
- Operational Issue: Maintenance is heavily impacted by 16 decaying, wooden whisky barrels which dry out rapidly and demand frequent irrigation.

Operational Overhead & Transit Downtime

Watering operations rely on the Council's tractor bowser. Refilling the bowser at Felixstowe Golf Club results in approximately one hour of non-productive staff travel and downtime per visit.

Under current arrangements, general displays require 4 refill visits per week, plus 1 additional visit to water Town Centre planter trees and the War Memorial (consuming a further ~1,000 litres weekly).

The dispersed geographical footprint increases vehicle mileage, fuel costs, and staff time spent in transit.

Proposed Changes for 2027

To address these operational constraints, Officers propose refocusing the scheme around the Town Centre for the 2027 season:

1. Discontinuation of Outlying Displays.

It is proposed to discontinue hanging basket displays in Walton and along the Seafront for 2027. This removes 1,700 litres of weekly water demand, eliminates over 6 weekly staff hours of high-risk roadside watering, and reduces vehicle movements.

2. Infrastructure Modernisation on Hamilton Road

It is proposed to retain all existing hanging baskets along Hamilton Road while phasing out the 16 wooden whisky barrels at the close of the 2026 season. These will be replaced with 17 modern self-watering barrier planters, matching existing contemporary street furniture in the town centre.

3. Self-Watering Efficiency

The proposed barrier planters feature internal water reservoirs and are expected to reduce watering requirements to approximately 1–2 visits per week. This protects plant quality, prevents over/under-watering, and delivers a uniform aesthetic along the primary retail corridor.

Legal & Policy Context

The Council manages floral displays and civic pride initiatives under the General Power of Competence pursuant to Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

Health and safety considerations regarding roadside maintenance operations are governed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, requiring the Council to manage operational risks to staff and highway users so far as is reasonably practicable.

Financial Implications

No principal sponsor was secured for 2026, and overall sponsorship revenue was lower than in previous years. Concentrating displays in the high-footfall Town Centre provides a more attractive commercial package to rebuild sponsorship income for 2027.

The procurement and installation of 17 self-watering barrier planters represents a capital expenditure requirement. Detailed quotations will be obtained in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and reported to Committee prior to procurement.

It is expected that operational cost efficiencies will be generated through reduced water consumption, fuel usage and vehicle wear, although these have not yet been quantified.

Governance & Resource Implications

Consolidating the scheme removes routine maintenance from hazardous traffic locations, directly addressing operational risk assessments and improving staff safety.

Refocusing grounds staff hours away from transit and repetitive irrigation enables team capacity to be redirected toward wider grounds maintenance priorities across the Council's service areas.

Committee is recommended to:

- i. note the update on the 2026 Felixstowe in Flower scheme and the upcoming Awards Ceremony on 15 October 2026;**
- ii. approve in principle the strategic consolidation of the scheme for 2027, focusing floral displays on the Town Centre (Hamilton Road);**
- iii. approve in principle the proposed removal of hanging basket displays from Walton and the Seafront for the 2027 season; and,**
- iv. authorise Officers to investigate options and obtain formal quotations for replacing 16 wooden whisky barrels with 17 self-watering barrier planters, with a further report on capital costs to be submitted to Committee if required.**

AGENDA ITEM 10: UK TOWN OF CULTURE 2028 – UPDATE AND LEGACY

Committee is requested to consider the outcome of Felixstowe's Expression of Interest (EOI) for UK Town of Culture 2028 and how the work undertaken through the bid continues to support the development of a culture-led vision for the town.

Felixstowe submitted an EOI to become UK Town of Culture in 2028 following a collaborative process involving the Town Council, local organisations, artists, businesses, community groups, and residents.

The bid presented Felixstowe under the theme *"Where the World Arrives"*, highlighting the town's coastal identity, heritage, cultural activity, and community spirit, with the ambition to build on the creative and cultural activity already taking place across the town.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has now announced the shortlist for UK Town of Culture 2028. Felixstowe was not selected to progress to the next stage of the competition, and no other Suffolk town submitting an EOI made the shortlist.

While the outcome is disappointing, the process provided a significant opportunity to bring together organisations, individuals, and community interests around a shared discussion about Felixstowe's cultural identity and future.

Legacy of the Bid

The development of the EOI involved research, stakeholder engagement, discussions with local organisations, and the identification of cultural assets, opportunities, and ambitions across the town.

The process established and strengthened relationships between the Town Council and a range of organisations and individuals involved in Felixstowe's cultural life.

The work undertaken should not be regarded as solely associated with the Town of Culture competition. The information gathered and the ideas developed provide a useful evidence base for future cultural development, partnership working, and potential funding opportunities.

A key benefit of the process was the opportunity to consider culture in its broader sense - not simply as a programme of events, but as a means of supporting community participation, local identity, economic activity, wellbeing, and the overall attractiveness of Felixstowe as a place to live, work, and visit.

Felixstowe Place Board Alignment

One of the priorities identified by the Felixstowe Place Board is the development of a clear, culture-led vision for the town.

In recognition of the work already undertaken through the UK Town of Culture process, the Town Council's Communications Officer has been supporting Place Board members in preparing for the establishment of a Place Board sub-group to take this work forward.

The Town of Culture EOI, together with the background research, stakeholder engagement, and other material developed during the process, provides a substantial starting point for this work.

The intention is that the knowledge, ideas, and relationships developed through the bid are retained and used to inform the wider development of Felixstowe's cultural vision, rather than being lost following the conclusion of the competition.

Future Opportunities

Although Felixstowe will not benefit from the funding and profile associated with being shortlisted for UK Town of Culture 2028, the work undertaken provides a platform from which further opportunities can be developed.

In particular, the evidence base and stakeholder network may assist the town in:

- developing a clear and shared cultural vision;
- identifying and developing future cultural projects;
- strengthening collaboration between cultural organisations and other local partners;
- identifying potential external funding opportunities; and,
- demonstrating the breadth and potential of Felixstowe's cultural offer to future partners and funders.

The Place Board sub-group has the opportunity to consider these matters in greater detail and determine how the work undertaken through the Town of Culture process can best contribute to the town's longer-term cultural ambitions. However, subject to Committee's approval, support provided by the Communications Officer to the Place Board sub-group can be continued and accommodated within existing officer resources and work programmes.

Committee is recommended to:

- i. note the outcome of the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition;**
- ii. recognise the collaborative work undertaken in preparing the Expression of Interest submission, including the value of the partnerships and evidence base developed through the process; and,**
- iii. support the continued use of the work undertaken to inform the development of a culture-led vision for Felixstowe through the Felixstowe Place Board and its proposed sub-group.**

AGENDA ITEM 11: TOWN TWINNING

Visit from Wesel and Salzwedel

In July 2026, Felixstowe welcomed a visiting delegation from Salzwedel and members of the Wesel Fire Service and associated youth representatives. The visit was coordinated by the twinning associations and took place to coincide with the Felixstowe Carnival.

The delegation included the Wesel Carnival Prince and Princess, a marching band and representatives of the Wesel Fire Service, who participated in the carnival parade.

Civic Visits to Wesel and Salzwedel

An official invitation has been received for a Town Council delegation to visit Wesel for the Hanseatic Festival 2026, scheduled to take place from 23–25 October 2026.

Further itinerary details will be shared with Members once received. Any proposed civic delegation will be considered in accordance with the Council's Twinning Policy and approved budget.

An official invitation is also anticipated for a civic visit to Salzwedel around mid-December 2026. Further details will be provided to Members when available.

Review of Civic Gift Exchanges

As part of a recent review of the Council's Town Twinning and civic exchange arrangements, consideration was given to the Council's historic practice of exchanging commemorative gifts during official visits.

The Committee considered whether routine gift exchanges could be modernised and formalised through written salutations, such as commemorative scrolls, certificates or letters, with traditional physical gifts being reserved primarily for major anniversaries or particularly significant milestones.

Wesel and Salzwedel have been approached for their views on this proposed approach and the Council is currently awaiting responses.

The Committee will be updated when responses are received and any proposed changes to the Council's approach will be considered in accordance with its Twinning Policy.

Civic visits, delegations and receptions are undertaken in accordance with the Council's Twinning Policy and the relevant budget provision.

Committee is requested to note the Town Twinning update, including the forthcoming invitations to Wesel and Salzwedel and the ongoing consultation regarding civic gift exchanges.