

	Full Council
Date	18 May 2026
Agenda Item	7d

To reconsider the use of the franking machine

HTC has used a franking machine since at least 2010 and possibly before. Costs related to the machine are quarterly rent, ink, and postage costs. The rent paid each year to Pitney Bowes who supply the franking machine is £259 per year. The cost of postage for 2025/26 was £369.47. Ink, if we need it, costs £77, but we have not bought any in the past year, and have a lot of stock which was sent without it being requested, and which we should return.

The number of letters posted by HTC is reducing every year. Many local letters/invitations are now delivered by hand, and most of our business is deliberately carried on through email in order to reduce costs, particularly now that most invoices are produced as email attachments. As more and more of our services are digitized, the need for postal services will decrease. This trend is likely to continue, and the need for sending large numbers of communications by post will also keep decreasing.

It is therefore suggested that HTC might dispense with the franking machine, and use stamps for the few letters it has. However, on enquiry with Pitney Bowes who lease the machine to us, they have revealed that we would need to pay 14 more payments of £54 until the end of the lease in 2029, whether we use the machine or not. They have stated that there is no way of extricating ourselves from this contract.

Recommendation: that HTC should attempt to exit the lease on the franking machine, without excessive payments.



Sarah Greateorex Town Clerk