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MINUTES

Meeting of: Environment Committee
Date: Monday, 20th March 2017

Present: Councillors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>J.C. Goodman</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
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<td>P.R. Barlow</td>
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<tr>
<td>L.D. Campbell</td>
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<td>P. Horner</td>
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<td>Mrs A. Kilmartin</td>
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<td>Mrs S.C. Lager</td>
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<td>Mrs J.M. Money</td>
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<td>T. A. Pleasance</td>
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<td>R.P. Ramage</td>
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<td>Mrs J. Williams</td>
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Also in attendance: Cllrs

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<td>W.J. Rose</td>
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<td>R. Williams</td>
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Essex County Council

Cllr J. Abbott (Witham Northern)

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<tr>
<td>J. Sheehy</td>
<td>(Deputy Town Clerk)</td>
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<td>Mrs G. Kennedy</td>
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APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J.C. Bayford.

83. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held 23rd January 2017 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
84. **INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

85. **QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

County Councillor James Abbott, in attendance as a member of the public, referred to Minute 87 – Planning Applications & Transport Sub-Committee, and the presentation made by children from Templars School in relation to a pedestrian controlled crossing. He advised that the Local Highways Panel budget has been halved and the cost to install such a crossing often runs into a six-figure sum. Councillor Abbott stated that he would ascertain whether there is scope to use Section 106 monies and would keep the Town Council informed of future developments.

Councillor Abbott referred to Minute 90 – Rivenhall Integrated Waste Management, and explained that he had been that day to the consultation event held at Silver End and asked plenty of questions in relation to the site. He told the Environment Committee that he was very concerned about the visual impact of the proposed 55m height stack and reported that as yet he had no further information about water extraction from the river.

He spoke about Minute 92 – Braintree Road Crossing and that Essex County Council is considering using Section 106 monies to create a new section of road akin to a slip road, at Bellfields, North Ward to by-pass the existing Morrisons’ roundabout.

In relation to Minute 93 – Mulberry Gardens Footpath, he explained that this is a long-standing issue and he considers that the footpath needs complete reinstatement. He would be meeting the Cabinet Member to discuss this issue. Councillor Abbott added that the County Council does not apply criteria consistently and that he would also be mentioning the footpath in Collingwood Road at the County Council.

Councillor Abbott stated he was pleased that the lines in Guithavon Valley and Mill Lane had been painted and commented that there was still a short section to paint where currently commuters keep moving temporary cones to park and receive parking penalties as a result. He added that the next stage to the works Guithavon Valley and Mill Lane improvement works is to provide a tactile road crossing.

The Chairman thanked Councillor J. Abbott for his comments. He explained to Members that Councillor J. Abbott had given him a copy application for the extraction of water from the river to the Integrated Waste Facility and that would be available in the office if Members wished to read.

86. **CLERK’S REPORT**

The Clerk’s Report on matters arising was received.

Members spoke about the siting of a ‘Talking Bench’ proposed by the Essex Records Office. It was considered important to have the bench in the town centre but that it needed to be positioned away from traffic noise or local residents, as well as in a sunny position. After further discussion it was agreed that the matter should be considered at the next committee meeting and that Mr Palombi of the Witham Countryside Society be informed of the Essex Records Office reply.
The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that a new Town Council works vehicle was due to be delivered later in the week.

RESOLVED That the Report be received and information noted.

87. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS & TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Applications & Transport Sub-Committee held 23rd January, 6th and 20th February; and 6th March 2017 were received.

RESOLVED That the Minutes be received and noted.

88. **OPEN SPACES PROJECTS STEERING GROUP**

The Notes from the Steering Group Meeting held 22nd February 2017 were received.

RESOLVED That the Notes be received.

89. **SECTION 106 TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The final report and recommendations from the Section 106 Task and Finish Group, in relation to Maltings Lane, were tabled.

The Task and Finish Group were commended for their positive contribution. The purpose had been to take stock of the developer’s obligation and delivery arrangements. Areas to highlight were the sum of £690,000 which was index linked increasing the total sum value to £832,000 deposited by the developer along with land for the community building. The group had learned from officers at Braintree District Council that additional Section 106 contributions from other developments could be used as there was scope for insufficient funding to provide a community facilities and that furthermore, a survey of people’s needs would be required to provide evidence of demand. It was thought by the group that a project manager could be put in charge of overall delivery. The daily management of any facilities would need to be considered as District Council policy states that the Council will only appoint third parties to run such facilities.

In receipt of the final report, Members thought that a meeting with Braintree District Council to discuss the relevant recommendations should be held and that Councillors L.D. Campbell, J.C. Goodman and M.C.M. Lager would take part.  

RESOLVED That a letter be sent to Mr Jon Hayden, Corporate Director at Braintree District Council, to arrange a meeting to discuss the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.

The comment was made that provision of any public art work contributions should be devolved to the Town Council and this point should be pursued. It was thought and

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1 Subsequently it was realised that Councillor Mrs J.M. Money should take part in the meeting and that District Councillor Gavin Maclure should also be asked to take part, and that a Member of the Town Council would invite him to attend.
recommended that the Task and Finish Group continues to function in its current format with a view to replacing the Maltings Lane Forum presided over by Braintree District Council.

Members discussed the history behind the loss of the church group which had been prepared to run the centre.

Members were reminded that if the financial contributions made are not used by Braintree District Council within ten years of their receipt, then they are returned to the developer.

**RESOLVED** That the Recommendations from the Task and Finish Group be received and noted.

90. **RIVENHALL INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT**

A report and information from the Environment Agency regarding the proposed new application for an Environmental Permit at the above facility was received.

Members agreed that, if possible, any Member of the Town Council could attend the consultation event to be held in Coggeshall on Friday, 31st March 2017 and it was important to respond to the consultation as the proposed stack would make a visual impact.

**RESOLVED** That the Town Council should object to the increased chimney stack height and the impact that it would have on residents but that the matter would be referred to the next Planning Applications and Transport Sub-Committee Meeting on 3rd April 2017.

91. **CHURCH STREET SPEED RESTRICTIONS**

A report was received regarding speed restrictions in Church Street.

Following a traffic survey undertaken in 2016, Councillor P.R. Barlow had asked that this matter be discussed again as residents were still raising concerns about vehicles speeding. He said that the speed survey undertaken in 2016 had not detailed the actual speed of those vehicles exceeding the limit and requested that Essex County Council be asked to provide these details.

Members agreed with the suggestion but were mindful that there is a problem enforcing speed limits and bus companies are loathe to agree to speed tables or bumps. It was suggested that residents might wish to undertake speed checks.

Members discussed in general terms other areas where motorists speed and the question of enforcement.

**RESOLVED** That the report be received and Essex County Council asked to provide full details of the survey to include actual speeds of those vehicles breaking the speed limit.
92. **BRAINTREE ROAD CROSSING**

A report was received regarding the pedestrian crossing in Braintree Road.

Councillor P.R. Barlow had asked that this matter be discussed as he considered the crossing to be dangerous. Other Members, who used the crossing frequently, disagreed but considered the proposal to install a feeder lane to avoid Morrisons’ roundabout was ludicrous.

It was thought that the way to proceed would be to request a traffic survey to seek evidence as to how busy the road has become since the crossing was installed. Members asked that the pedestrian crossing in Maldon Road should also be considered following reports that this too is dangerous.

**RESOLVED** That the report be received and traffic surveys requested for both Braintree Road and Maldon Road pedestrian crossings.

93. **MULBERRY GARDENS FOOTPATHS**

A report was received regarding the poor state of the footpath at Mulberry Gardens.

Councillor P.R. Barlow had asked that this matter be discussed. It was thought that the footpath had been installed when the estate was built forty years ago. There is evidence of patched repairs but residents using mobility scooters are finding the footpath increasingly difficult to use. He wished to know the criteria for footpath repairs and if the County Council had carried out an inspection.

**RESOLVED** That criteria for footpath repairs be sought from Essex County Council, particularly in relation to its use by mobility scooters.

94. **LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL**

An extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Highways Panel held 19th January 2017 were received.

It was understood that despite the size of the mini roundabouts located in Mill Lane & Guithavon Valley, they would still be domed. It was noted that if the doming of the roundabouts was not successful that the work would be reverted. Members were disappointed to learn that the Local Highways Panel budget had been halved.

**RESOLVED** That the extract be received and a further letter be sent re-iterating the Town Council’s objections to the roundabouts being domed.

95. **FIELDS IN TRUST – CENTENARY FIELDS**

A report concerning the Memorial Gardens and Town Park being awarded Centenary Field status was received.
The Chairman reported that he had written to District Councillor Wendy Schmitt in his capacity as Chairman of the World War I Centenary Commissions Working Group, asking that they be kept informed of the arrangements.

**RESOLVED** That the report be received and noted.

**EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

96. **CHURCH STREET/CHIPPING HILL**

A verbal report was received from the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the land outside The Forge.

**RESOLVED** That the information be received.

97. **REINSTATEMENT OF DUCK POND EMBANKMENTS**

Quotations for the reinstatement of the embankments at the Duck Pond were received.

Members considered the quotations and agreed that R. Chisnall of Colchester’s quotation to include the construction of embankment with vertical sleepers bound with steel banding at a cost of £7,200 plus VAT should be accepted.

**RESOLVED** That the quotation of £7,200 plus VAT from R. Chisnall of Colchester be accepted as best value.

Councillor P.R. Barlow left the Meeting.

98. **WHETMEAD BOUNDARY**

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal report regarding the boundary of Whetmead Nature Reserve following an incident with a dog walker.

He had sought advice from the National Association of Local Councils when a dog was let off its lead in Whetmead and ran onto the A12. The Town Council would not be liable but there is a duty of care to ensure that people are aware of the boundary with the A12. It would be impractical to install a fence or hedgerow and advice had been received that signage, explaining that the A12 is close by and the Town Council does not accept any liability beyond this point, should be erected at regular intervals.

**RESOLVED** That signage be erected at Whetmead at regular intervals close to the A12 boundary, explaining that the road is close by and the Town Council does not accept any liability beyond this point.
99. **PUBLIC DOMAIN**

Members agreed that Minutes 97 - Reinstatement of Duck Pond Embankment, and 98 – Whetmead Boundary, discussed in Private Session, could be moved into the Public Domain.

**RESOLVED** That Minutes 97 - Reinstatement of Duck Pond Embankment, and 98 – Whetmead Boundary, discussed in Private Session, be moved into the Public Domain.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.30 p.m.

Councillor J.C. Goodman
Chairman

JS/GK/29.3.2017