

Witham Town Council

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MINUTES

Meeting of: **Town Council**

Date: **Monday, 4th July 2016**

Present: Councillors

	P.	Horner	(Town Mayor)
	C.J.	Bailey	
	P.R.	Barlow	
	L.D.	Campbell	
	J.C.	Goodman	
Mrs.	J.A.	Kempf	
Mrs	A.	Kilmartin	
	M.C. M	Lager	
Mrs	S.C.	Lager	
Mrs	J.M.	Money	
	T. A.	Pleasance	
	W.J.	Rose	
Mrs	J.	Williams	
	M.	Squire	(Town Clerk)
Mrs	G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

And one member of the public.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R.P. Ramage, P.M. Ryland and R. Williams; and Councillor Mrs A. Kilmartin who would be leaving the Meeting early.

22. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Town Council held 26th April and 16th May 2016 be confirmed as true records and signed by the Town Mayor.

23. INTERESTS

Councillors C.J. Bailey, J.C. Goodman, P. Horner, Mrs A. Kilmartin, Mrs J.M. Money and W.J. Rose all declared non-pecuniary interests in Minute 26 – Recycling Sacks, as Members of Braintree District Council.

Councillor W.J. Rose declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 28 – Membership of Committees, as the item referred to him.

24. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No comment was made by the member of the public present.

25. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's Report on matters arising was received.

The Town Clerk explained that following the lack of coverage of the Community Day in the Witham and Braintree Times a letter of complaint had been sent by the Town Mayor to the newspaper. The following week there had been a two page spread. The lack of media coverage will be pursued vigorously.

The Town Clerk said that he had received an email from the Leader of the Council concerning key strategic issues in relation to the Local Plan and proposals regarding Planning Applications Meetings. Both these issues would be taken to the next Environment Committee Meeting.

Members agreed that a sum of £30 could be used from the Town Mayor's Gift Fund for a gift token for the ecology graduate from Bournemouth University who has been undertaking a work placement focussing on the Nature Reserve.

Members spoke about the Appointment of Committees which was discussed at the AGM and the suggestion that pre-Meeting consultation should take place so that details of membership could appear in the Agenda and agreed en bloc. It was hoped that following advice from the Town Clerk and re-writing of Standing Orders this new system could be in place for the next AGM.

RESOLVED That the Report be received and noted.

Councillor Mrs A. Kilmartin then left the Meeting.

26. RECYCLING SACKS

Councillors C.J. Bailey, J.C. Goodman, P. Horner, Mrs A. Kilmartin, Mrs J.M. Money and W.J. Rose had all declared interests.

A report and a response from Braintree District Council regarding the distribution and use of recycling sacks were received.

Members commented that they had now received their supply of recycling sacks from Braintree District Council along with a card advising of the appropriate use of the sacks.

The comment was made as to how the District Council knew that 19% of Witham's recycling sacks are used incorrectly as compared to Braintree's 4%. The matter had been raised with the Cabinet Member at the District Council but hard facts were not forthcoming. Members knew that Witham residents had been in the forefront of recycling and levels had been very high.

RESOLVED That the report be received and information noted.

27. STANDING ORDERS

The proposed amendments to Standing Orders to reflect the new legislation in relation to procurement - the awarding of contracts, had been proposed and seconded at the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 21st June 2016.

RESOLVED That Standing Order 64(a) and 64(g) be amended to reflect the changes in legislation.

28. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Councillor W.J. Rose had declared an interest.

A report regarding Membership of Committees was received.

Councillor W.J. Rose explained that because of his commitments at Braintree District Council, he could no longer attend Environment Committee Meetings and had asked to become a Member of the Community Committee instead. Councillor L.D. Campbell had kindly agreed to swap Committees with him.

RESOLVED That the report be received and it be agreed that Councillor W.J. Rose steps down from the Environment Committee and Councillor L.D. Campbell takes his place; and that Councillor L.D. Campbell steps down from the Community Committee so that Councillor W.J. Rose may take his place.

29. CONFIRMATION OF GOOD WORKING PRACTICES

A report was received regarding requirements for achieving Foundation Status for the Local Council Awards Scheme.

Members were informed that the following are in place:-

- a) A Risk Management Scheme
- b) A register of assets
- c) Contracts for all members of staff
- d) Disciplinary and grievance procedures

- e) A policy for training new staff and councillors
- f) A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year
- g) A clerk who has achieved 12CPD points in the last year

The Town Clerk advised that the guidelines had now changed and it is no longer possible to go straight from Foundation to Gold level.

RESOLVED That it be confirmed that the above policies and schemes are in place.

30. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Town Mayor's Engagements were received.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

31. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Community Committee Meetings held 16th May and 6th June 2016

Minutes 1 – 19 (inclusive).

In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Community Committee, Councillor M.C.M. Lager, as Leader of the Council, gave the Report of the Community Committee en bloc.

Minute 8 – Live Well

It was pointed out that in the Minutes Councillor Mrs J. Beavis was apparently quoted as saying that £28m was to be spent on health facilities yet in the Press Release it said this money would be spent on town centres, businesses and roads as well.¹ A new display screen in the Information Centre was planned which would give advice on keeping healthy.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Community Committee be received.

(b) Environment Committee Meetings held 16th and 23rd May 2016

Minutes 1 – 20 (inclusive).

Councillor J.C. Goodman, Chairman of the Environment Committee, gave his Report en bloc.

¹ The notes from the Meeting have been checked and the Minutes are correct but an explanatory footnote will be added.

Minute 10 – Witham’s River Walk and Nature Reserves Management Working Group

The Town Clerk confirmed that he had spoken to Mr Partridge at Braintree District Council who had confirmed that following the public consultation it had been agreed to keep litter and dog waste separately.

Members were also informed that in place of two dog wardens in the district, there will now be four street protection officers with a wider remit.

Minute 13(a) – Highway Issues – Local Highways Panel

Confirmation was given that Councillor Roger Walters, Chairman of the Local Highways Panel, had replied to the Town Council’s complaints and the response would be taken to the Environment Committee Meeting on Monday 18th July 2016.

Minute 20 – Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders

It was confirmed that the Deputy Town Clerk had submitted an application to the North Essex Parking Partnership for further parking restrictions.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Environment Committee be received.

(c) Policy and Resources Committee Meetings held 16th May and 21st June 2016

Minutes 1 – 14 (inclusive) and 16.

Councillor M.C.M. Lager, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, gave his Report en bloc.

Minute 9(c) – Schedule of Payments

It was commented that it is not good practice for staff to have to use their own money to purchase items on behalf of the Town Council and the Town Clerk was asked to investigate a Debit or Corporate card and prepare a report for the next Meeting.

Minute 10(b) – Procurement – Awarding of Contracts – Financial Regulations

The Recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee ‘That the proposed Financial Regulations be agreed and duly amended’ was received.

RESOLVED That the proposed Financial Regulations to reflect the changes in legislation be agreed and duly amended.

Minute 12 – Members’ Attendance at Meetings

Members explained that those Members, who are also District Councillors, cannot always come to Town Council Meetings as they can clash with District Council Meetings and this badly reflects on the percentages that are shown.

The Town Clerk said that he issues summons to attend Meetings and apologies are accepted for a reasonable excuse.

Members were informed that the Town Council Meeting schedule is drawn up taking into account District Council Meetings. The Leader of the District Council had issued instructions to staff to ensure that additional Meetings do not clash with Town and Parish Meetings.

The suggestion that an asterisk appear next to 'dual-hatted' Councillors with an explanation that they represent the town on Braintree District Council was considered to be a good solution.

RESOLVED That an asterisk be inserted next to the names of those who are both Town and District Councillors, with an explanation to that effect.

RESOLVED That the Report be received.

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.

32. COMMITTEE REPORTS (CONT'D)

Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 21st June 2016

Minutes 15 and 17 – 19 (inclusive).

Councillor M.C.M. Lager continued his Report en bloc.

Minute 18 – Staffing and Accommodation Sub-Committee

A verbal report was received from the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED That the report be received.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Policy and Resources Committee be received.

33. PUBLIC DOMAIN

It was agreed that no item discussed in Private Session should be moved into the Public Domain.

RESOLVED That no item discussed in Private Session be moved into the Public Domain.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 4.7.2016. Cont'd.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 8.15 p.m.

Councillor P. Horner
Town Mayor

GK/6.7.2016