

Witham Town Council

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MINUTES

Meeting of: **Town Council**

Date: **Monday, 30th October 2017**

Present:	Councillors	Mrs	J. P.R. J.C. J.C. P. Mrs A. Mrs S.C. Mrs J.M. T. A. R.P. W.J. P.M. R.	Williams Barlow Bayford Goodman Horner Kilmartin Lager Lager Money Pleasance Ramage Rose Ryland Williams	(Town Mayor)
	Braintree District Council	Cllr Mrs	S. M. Mrs G.	Wilson Squire Kennedy	(Witham Central) (Town Clerk) (Committee Clerk)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs J.A. Kempf.

43. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Town Council held 4th and 28th September 2017 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

44. INTERESTS

Councillors P.R. Barlow, J.C. Goodman, P. Horner, Mrs A Kilmartin, Mrs J.M. Money, R.P. Ramage and W.J. Rose declared non-pecuniary interests in Minute 53 – Contractural Matters, as they are Members of Braintree District Council.

Later in the Meeting at Minute 46 – Town Clerk’s Report, Councillor P.R. Barlow declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of the Community Governance Review Committee.

Later Councillor P.M. Ryland declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 53 – Contractural Matters, as he knows one of the parties involved.

45. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Councillor Mrs S. Wilson said that a new CEO for the Citizens Advice has been appointed and will take up post at the beginning of December.

The Town Mayor thanked Councillor Mrs Wilson for the information.

46. TOWN CLERK’S REPORT

The Town Clerk explained that a letter had been received from Braintree District Council regarding the Community Governance Review. All the representations are now available on line and will be reviewed by the Community Governance Review Committee who will make formal draft recommendations upon which further public consultation will be invited.

Councillor P.R. Barlow declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of the District Council’s Community Governance Review Committee.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

47. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR L.D. CAMPBELL

The resignation of Lorne Campbell was officially received and it was noted that his appointment as a Special Police Constable precluded him from continuing as a Town Councillor.

Members agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent to Lorne thanking him for his contribution as a Town Councillor.

Members were disappointed that Lorne had not been told he could no longer be a Town Councillor before he began training as a Special Police Constable.

It was noted that a bye election has been called.

RESOLVED That a letter of thanks be sent to Lorne Campbell.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

48. TOWN MAYOR'S INITIATIVE

The Town Mayor explained that she had not yet met with her fellow councillors but had started a collection of photographs of street furniture that needed to be repaired or replaced. She urged Members to send their photographs to the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

49. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Town Mayor's engagements were received.

Members commented on the excellent idea to talk to students about holding public office and the democratic election system. The Town Mayor said that she had received great feedback from her talk at the Maltings Academy and had offered to repeat the talk at the Rickstones Academy.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

50. LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

The Town Clerk explained that the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) has now informed him that Witham Town Council has successfully achieved the Foundation Award. The 'Foundation' logo will shortly appear on all Town Council correspondence. He explained that he would now work towards achieving further 'Quality' and 'Gold' status.

Members congratulated the Town Clerk and staff for achieving the Foundation status.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

51. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) **Community Committee Meeting held 2nd October 2017**

Minutes 31 – 40 (inclusive).

Councillor R. Williams, Chairman of the Community Committee gave his report en bloc.

Minute 40 – Christmas Events Group

The Town Clerk said that he had received from Members a quotation for a new PA system and it was agreed that this could be taken to the next Environment Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED That the Report be received.

(b) **Environment Committee Meeting held 18th September 2017**

Minutes 30 – 40 (inclusive) and 43.

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

Minute 43 – Whetmead Boundary

A Member reported that at a recent meeting the Highways Authority had given the assurance that the Whetmead boundary is within its remit and they would look again at the request to fence off.¹

At the recent River Walk meeting, it was reported that the original warning signs had been vandalised and replacement ones will be concreted in.

RESOLVED That the information be received.

RESOLVED That the Report be received.

(c) **Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 16th October 2017**

Minutes 28 – 42 (inclusive).

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

Minute 35 – Financial Management

Councillor M.C.M. Lager explained the reasoning why it is important to diversify investment funds and that a policy will be taken to the next appropriate Meeting.

Minute 37 – Budget and Business Plans Process

Councillor M.C.M. Lager explained that Committees would be considering their business plans and budgets which would be discussed by the Estimates Sub-Committee in due course.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Policy and Resources Committee 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.

¹ This is contrary to existing guidance received to date from the Highways Authority and will need to be investigated further.

52. STAFFING MATTERS

A report was received.

Members were concerned that if the Town Council is unable to get assistance from the police how do members of the public manage?

It was agreed that a letter should be sent to Priti Patel, MP, explaining the lack of assistance by the police.

RESOLVED That a letter be sent to Priti Patel, MP, explaining that the Town Council considers it their responsibility to the residents of Witham, to pursue the lack of police assistance and to seek her help in taking the under-funding and under-resourcing of police forward.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

53. CONTRACTUAL MATTERS

Councillors P.R. Barlow, J.C. Goodman, P. Horner, Mrs A Kilmartin, Mrs J.M. Money, R.P. Ramage and W.J. Rose had declared non-pecuniary interests.

Later Councillor P.M. Ryland declared a non-pecuniary interest as he knows one of the parties involved.

A report was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

Whilst the above matter was being discussed Councillor J. Bayford left the Meeting.

54. COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

(a) **Community Committee held 2nd October 2017**

Minute 41.

Councillor R. Williams continued his report.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Community Committee be received.

(b) **Environment Committee held 18th September 2017**

Minutes 42, 44 and 45.

Councillor J.C. Goodman continued his Report en bloc.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Environment Committee be received.

55. PUBLIC DOMAIN

It was agreed that a precis of Minute 52 – Staffing Matters and the resolution be moved into the Public Domain.

RESOLVED That a precis of Minute 52 – Staffing Matters and the resolution be moved into the Public Domain.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.06 p.m.

Councillors Mrs J. Williams
Town Mayor

MS/GK/1.11.2017