

Witham Town Council

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MINUTES

Meeting of: **Town Council**

Date: **Monday, 5th March 2018**

Present:	Councillors	Mrs	J.	Williams	(Town Mayor)
			P.R.	Barlow	
			J.C.	Bayford	
			J.C.	Goodman	
			P.	Horner	
		Mrs.	J.A.	Kempf	
		Mrs	A.	Kilmartin	
			M.C. M	Lager	
		Mrs	S.C.	Lager	
		Mrs	J.M.	Money	
			T. A.	Pleasance	
			J.R.	Pullen	
			R.P.	Ramage	
			W.J.	Rose	
			R.	Williams	
			M.	Squire	(Town Clerk)
			J	Sheehy	(Deputy Clerk)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P.M Ryland.

75. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 15th and 23rd January 2018 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

76. INTERESTS

Councillors J.C. Goodman, P.R Barlow and W.J Rose declared a non-pecuniary interest item 5 as a Member of Braintree District Council's Licencing Committee. Councillors R. Williams & Mrs J.A Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 80 "Guithavon Valley & Mill Lane" as residents on the former road.

77. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the press or public present.

78. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk gave thanks to the Town Mayor and staff for a successful charity event at the Witham Public Hall, Saturday 3rd March 2018 raising a considerable sum to be confirmed in due course.

Members were also notified of a meeting of the A120 Economic Forum originally postponed which was now rescheduled to take place on Wednesday 21st March 2:30-4:00pm at County Hall, Chelmsford.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

79. GUIDE DOGS/TRAINTREE GUIDE DOGS IN LICENSED TAXIS

Councillor A. Kilmartin raised concerns over discrimination in Witham relating to the use of guide dogs in licenced taxi vehicles, following a recent complaint from a local resident who claimed she was refused entry to a taxi at Witham Station as she was a guide dog user. It was suggested that additional training should be carried out by Braintree District Council to combat potential discrimination cases via its licensing powers.

It was noted that as the Town Council holds no powers in relation to licensing, and that any action to be taken would have to be taken by Braintree District Council. It was suggested that there were legal blackspots in relation to the use of guide dogs as a registered blind person compared with accompanying a guide dog in a taxi cab without requiring the assistance of the dog. It was further noted that medical exemption of carrying animals was possible through the licencing authority and this could have potentially been a reason why. It was considered there was little the Town Council could do at this point in time with limited powers on licensing matters.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

80. GUITHAVON VALLEY AND MILL LANE, WITHAM.

Correspondence was received concerning proposed highways works to Guithavon Valley and Mill Lane, including the planned 'doming' of two miniature roundabouts which had been opposed by Witham Town Council in previous debates. Members reaffirmed their opposition to the proposed doming of the roundabouts and it was proposed to make further correspondence raising objections to the roundabout portion of the overall proposal. It was also noted that the recommendation 'Upgrade the signage on all approaches to the mini

roundabouts ‘ had no evaluation or detail. Local residents were also able to respond as they felt appropriate.

RESOLVED That a letter of opposition be sent to Essex County Highways requesting the withdrawal of the roundabout portion of the proposals.

81. DRAFT TOWN PLAN

Members received the Draft Town Plan, a future planning document detailing the Town Council’s aims for development in Witham. The Town Clerk appraised members of the historical development of the plan up to the point of the final draft. It was noted that a series of revisions made through the scrutiny process had led to some delay to the final publication of the Town Plan. The Town Clerk appealed to Members to forward their comments and amendments on the plan, on significant changes or recommendations only as it had been revised many times. It was noted that the Town Plan, once adopted, would likely be reviewed on an annual basis as a continued working strategy. It was suggested that the Draft Town Plan be ratified by the next Policy & Resources committee having taken Member’s comments beforehand.

Members were also mindful of changes in Government housing policy and the potential for the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to Braintree District in the future, already in use in other parts of the UK, and the need for the Town Plan to be adaptive to any such changes in the planning system. It was noted that the Town Plan would not carry any material weight on the allocation of development sites in the Local Plan and instead seeks to address non-land use issues, and that the Town Plan differs from a “Neighbourhood Plan” which, once adopted, becomes a supplementary planning document with material weight when determining applications.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

RESOLVED That Member’s comments on the Draft Town Plan be submitted to the Town Clerk for the next Policy & Resources Committee on 16th April 2018.

82. TOWN MAYOR’S ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Town Mayor’s Engagements were received. On an administrative point, it was suggested that only events attended up to the point of the Town Council agenda being issued should be included on the list, with any events falling after the date of issue to roll onto the next list of Mayor’s Engagements.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

83. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) **Community Committee Meeting held 6th February 2018**

Minutes 56 – 69 (inclusive).

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

RESOLVED That the Report be received and noted.

(b) **Environment Committee Meeting held 22nd January 2018**

Minutes 66 – 80 (inclusive)

Councillor J.C. Goodman, Chairman of the Environment Committee, gave his Report en bloc. A query was raised regarding the use of the term “Incinerator” in relation to the proposed Rivenhall Integrated Waste Management Facility, and it was suggested that a further update regarding this item be sought for future discussion.

RESOLVED That Report be received.

(c) **Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 20th February 2018**

Minutes 62 – 69 (inclusive).

Councillor R. Williams, Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, gave his Report en bloc.

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.

84. COMMITTEE REPORTS (Continued)

(a) **Community Committee Meeting held 6th February 2018**

Minutes 70 and 71.

Councillor R. Williams continued his Report en bloc.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Community Committee be received.

(b) **Environment Committee Meeting held 22nd January 2018**

Minutes 81 - 83 (inclusive)

Councillor J.C Goodman continued his Report en bloc.

It was noted at Minute 81 – Flag Pole Project, Memorial Gardens that to mark the 100th centenary of the end of World War I it was proposed to erect a redundant flag pole in the

Memorial Gardens. The District Council has agreed in principle to the proposal and would grant a licence to occupy.

The cost of securing the flag pole into the ground is £2,823.60 and the Royal British Legion would like the Town Council to take ownership of the flag pole and to assist in seeking funding.

It was suggested that Witham's District Council Members could pool their Community Grant funding to raise this sum.

RESOLVED That the Witham's District Council Members be asked to pool their Community Grant funding to raise the £2,823.60 to secure the flag pole into the ground.

Following a discussion about ownership of the War Memorial Gardens, the Deputy Town Clerk advised that legally the Town Council should own. It was agreed that this matter should be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee in due course.

RESOLVED To proceed with the flag pole project and to ensure that it would be covered by the Town Council insurance.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Environment Committee be received.

(c) **Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 20th February 2018**

Minutes 70-75 (inclusive).

Councillor R. Williams continued his Report en bloc.

At Minute 70 – Town Hall Boiler Replacement

RESOLVED to appoint Assured Heating Essex Ltd as the new contractor. A quote was accepted at £11,614.22 and additional £272.00 for ancillary works and replacement hot water cylinder.

At Minute 71 – Replacement Computer / Town Hall Server

RESOLVED to proceed with the report's recommendations to purchase a new stand-alone PC system at £533.31.

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

85. CONTRACTUAL MATTERS

A verbal report was received from the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

68. STAFFING MATTERS

A report was received from the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

69. PUBLIC DOMAIN

It was agreed that Minute 81 of Environment Committee “Flag Pole Project, Memorial Gardens”, Minutes 70 and 71 of Policy & Resources Committee “Town Hall Boiler Replacement” and “Replacement Computer/Town Hall Server” could be moved into the public domain.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 9.04 p.m.

Councillor Mrs J. Williams
Town Mayor

MS/JS/06.03.2018