

Witham Town Council

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MINUTES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Meeting of: **Town Council**

Date: **Tuesday, 15th May 2018**

Present:

Councillors	Mrs	J.	Williams	(Retiring Town Mayor in the Chair)
		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	

Also in attendance:

Councillor	Mrs	S.	Wilson	(Braintree District Councillor)
		M.	Squire	(Town Clerk)
	Mrs	G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

And 2 members of the public.

The retiring Town Mayor Councillor Mrs JoAnn Williams thanked Members for the support they had given her to make the past year so wonderful. She also thanked the Town Clerk for his help.

1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

The retiring Town Mayor asked for nominations to serve as Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2018/2019.

Members agreed that Councillor Mrs J. Williams had blossomed forth as a distinguished Mayor and had been a credit to the town.

In nominating Councillor Tom Pleasance, Members recognised that he would serve as a distinguished public servant, enhance the role of Town Mayor and become a fine ambassador for the town.

RESOLVED That Councillor T.A. Pleasance be elected to serve as Town Mayor for the ensuing Civic Year.

The retiring Town Mayor then offered her congratulations to Councillor T.A. Pleasance and placed the Chain of Office around his neck.

Councillor T.A. Pleasance then took the Chair.

The Town Mayor congratulated Councillor Mrs J. Williams on her excellent year in office and her dedication. He 'took his hat off' to her achievements and said that he would endeavour to be a worthy successor. He presented Councillor Mrs J. Williams with her Former Mayor's Badge.

The Town Mayor said that he was proud to be elected and honoured to be in the presence of previous mayors and Council elders. He had been elected as a new Member of the Town Council in 2015 and had been impressed by the knowledge and dedication of its Members and is proud to be working alongside them. He considered that the community does not realise their dedication. He took the opportunity to pay tribute to the Town Clerk for his professionalism and the dedication of staff.

The Town Mayor revealed his 'Wish List' for his Year in Office. Firstly to serve to the best of his ability. Secondly, he had come to the conclusion that the enthusiasm of Members had led to a myriad of projects which had resulted in 'too many plates spinning'. It was important to concentrate on a more manageable, achievable number of projects. He would ask Committee Chairmen to bear this in mind when they review their Business Plans. He was looking forward to the coming year and friends had advised that he should be realistic and he would therefore 'be himself and enjoy the opportunities'.

2. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed by the Town Mayor.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P.R. Barlow.

3. **INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interests.

4. **TOWN MAYOR'S APPEAL 2017/2018**

Members were asked to authorise disposal of the Town Mayor's Appeal during her year of office, which amounted to £3,658.82 and would be distributed to her two nominated charities.

Members congratulated Councillor Mrs J. Williams on raising such a sum. She thanked everyone for their help and said that there would be a presentation evening on Monday, 20th June 2018 at 7 p.m. and all Members would be invited.

RESOLVED That approval be given to dispose of the proceeds of the Town Mayor's Appeal, totalling a sum of £3,658.82 and that it be divided equally between the two nominated charities for 2017/2018.

5. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR**

The Town Mayor requested nominations to appoint a Deputy Town Mayor to serve for the Civic Year 2018/2019.

RESOLVED That Councillor Mrs S.C. Lager be appointed as Deputy Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2018/2019.

The Town Mayor presented the Deputy Town Mayor's collaret to Councillor Mrs S.C. Lager and they both commented on looking forward to working together.

6. **PRESENTATIONS**

The Town Mayor then presented the Mayoral Consort's collaret to his wife.

7. **TOWN MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE**

Members were reminded that the Town Mayor's Allowance for the Civic Year 2018/2019 had been set at £1,500.

RESOLVED That an amount no greater than £1,500 allowed in the budget for the Town Mayor's Allowance for the Civic Year 2018/2019, be approved.

8. **LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

It was noted that Councillor M.C.M. Lager will continue as Leader of the Council.

RESOLVED That Councillor M.C.M. Lager would continue as Leader of the Council.

9. APPOINTMENTS

- (i) A rescission notice in respect of Town Council Minute 77 - Membership of Committees, had been signed by eight Members of the Town Council and was received.

It was explained that the decision to change Membership of the Planning Applications and Transport Sub-Committee down to twelve Members and not to include any Member of the District Council's Planning Committee, needed to be reconsidered. There were also new National Association of Local Council Guidelines to be considered.

RESOLVED That the rescission notice be received and the matter considered at a future Meeting.

- (ii) A list of nominations (en bloc) was received.

A number of changes to the list were agreed.

RESOLVED That Members be appointed to the following Committees and Sub-Committees as per the received list of nominations

(a) COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Councillors	P.R.	Barlow	
	J.C.	Bayford	
	J.C.	Goodman	
Mrs	J.A.	Kempf	
	M.C.M.	Lager	(ex-officio)
Mrs	S.C.	Lager	(ex-officio)
Mrs	J.M.	Money	
	T.A.	Plesance	(ex-officio)
	J.R.	Pullen	(Vice Chairman)
	W.J.	Rose	
Mrs	J.	Williams	
	R.	Williams	(Chairman)
			(9 + 3 ex-officio)

(b) ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Councillors	P.R.	Barlow	
	J.C.	Bayford	
	J.C.	Goodman	(Chairman)
	P.	Horner	
Mrs	A.	Kilmartin	
	M.C.M.	Lager	(ex-officio)
Mrs	S.C.	Lager	(ex-officio)
Mrs	J.M.	Money	
	T.A.	Plesance	(ex-officio)
	J.R.	Pullen	
	R.P.	Ramage	

Mrs J. Williams (Vice Chairman)
(9 + 3 ex-officio)

PLANNING APPLICATIONS & TRANSPORT SUB-COM

Councillors P.R. Barlow
J.C. Bayford
J.C. Goodman
P. Horner
Mrs J.A. Kempf
Mrs A. Kilmartin (Chairman)
M.C.M. Lager (ex-officio)
Mrs S.C. Lager (ex-officio)
Mrs J.M. Money
T.A. Pleasance (ex-officio)
J.R. Pullen (Vice Chairman)
R.P. Ramage
W.J. Rose
P.M. Ryland
Mrs J. Williams
R. Williams
(13 + 3 ex-officio)

(c) POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Councillors J.C. Goodman
P. Horner
Mrs J.A. Kempf
Mrs A. Kilmartin
M.C.M. Lager (Chairman & ex-officio)
Mrs S.C. Lager (ex-officio)
Mrs J.M. Money
T.A. Pleasance (ex-officio)
R.P. Ramage
W.J. Rose
Mrs J. Williams
R. Williams (Vice Chairman)
(9 + 3 ex-officio)

STAFFING & ACCOMMODATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillors J.C. Goodman
M.C.M. Lager (Chairman & ex-officio)
Mrs S.C. Lager (ex-officio)
Mrs J.M. Money
T.A. Pleasance (ex-officio)
W.J. Rose
R. Williams (Vice Chairman)
(4 + 3 ex-officio)

ESTIMATES SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillors	J.C.	Goodman	
	M.C.M.	Lager	(Chairman & ex-officio)
Mrs	S.C.	Lager	(ex-officio)
	T.A.	Plesance	(ex-officio)
	R.	Williams	
			(2 + 3 ex-officio)

(d) **WORKING/TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

Community Safety

Councillors	J.C.	Bayford	(Vice Chairman)
	J.C.	Goodman	
	M.C.M.	Lager	
	W.J.	Rose	
	T.A.	Plesance	
Mrs	J.	Williams	(Chairman)

Improving Healthcare Facilities

Councillors	P.R.	Barlow	(Chairman)
	J.C.	Goodman	
Mrs	A.	Kilmartin	
	M.C.M.	Lager	
Mrs	J.M.	Money	
	R.P.	Ramage	
	W.J.	Rose	
Mrs	S.	Wilson	(BDC Councillor)

Maltings Lane Section 106

Councillors	M.C.M.	Lager	(Chairman)
Mrs	J.M.	Money	
	G.	Maclure	(BDC Councillor)
	J.R.	Pullen	

Open Spaces

Councillors	J.C.	Bayford	
	T.A.	Plesance	
	J.R.	Pullen	
	W.J.	Rose	
Co-opted	A.	Bennett	
Co-opted	J.	Palombi	

Revenue Generation/Cost Savings

Councillors	M.C.M.	Lager
Mrs	S.C.	Lager
	T.A.	Pleasance
	J.R.	Pullen
	W.J.	Rose
Mrs	J.	Williams

Young People

Councillors	J.C.	Bayford
Mrs	J.A.	Kempf
Mrs	A.	Kilmartin
Mrs	J.	Williams

World War 1 Centenary Commemorations

Councillors	J.C.	Goodman	(Chairman)
Mrs	J.M.	Money	
	T.A.	Pleasance	
	W.J.	Rose	

Financial Controls Review

Councillors	P.R.	Barlow
	J.C.	Goodman
	W.J.	Rose

Members were reminded to review the Council's financial procedures and practices, including the annual financial review as at 31st March 2018 with a particular attention to:-

- (a) Internal control arrangements
- (b) Effectiveness of the internal audit
- (c) Risk management; with cross reference to the appropriate wording from the 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide (England) March 2014'.

Witham's River Walk and Nature Reserves Management Working Group

Co-opted	B.	Fleet	(Vice Chairman)
Councillors	J.C.	Goodman	
	P.	Horner	
Mrs	S.C.	Lager	
	T.A.	Pleasance	
Mrs	J.	Williams	(Chairman)

It was noted that the Witham's River Walk and Nature Reserves Management Working Group would need to be reconstituted

(e) **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

- Braintree Association of Local Councils -
Councillors P. Horner (Executive Member)
R.P. Ramage
- Chamber of Commerce
Councillor R.P. Ramage
- Children's Centre Advisory Board -
Mr A. Bennett
- Christmas Events Group -
Councillor J.C. Goodman
- Citizens Advice -
Councillor Mrs J. Williams
- Essex Association of Local Councils -
Councillors P. Horner
R.P. Ramage
- Witham Carnival Association -
Councillor Mrs J.M. Money
- Passenger Transport Panel -
Councillor J.C. Goodman
- Town Luncheon Club -
Councillor Mrs A. Kilmartin
- Witham in Bloom (Lead Member) -
Councillor Mrs A. Kilmartin
- Tree Wardens -
Witham Tree Group will continue to nominate

(f) **OTHER APPOINTMENTS**

Witham Town Council Authorised Bank Signatories

Councillors	P.R.	Barlow
	J.C.	Goodman
	P.	Horner
	M.C.M.	Lager
Mrs	J.M.	Money
	W.J.	Rose
	P.M.	Ryland

The Town Clerk reminded Members that if their Interests have changed new register of interests forms would need to be completed.

10. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Financial Regulations were received and approved.

RESOLVED That the Financial Regulations be received and approved.

11. ANNUAL RETURNS

(a) Annual Return

- (i) The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) for the Year Ended 31st March 2018 was received and approved.

The Town Clerk explained that the Accounts had received a clean audit from the Internal Auditor and that this report would be taken to the next Policy and Resources Committee Meeting.

RESOLVED That the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) for the Year Ended 31st March 2018 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor.

- (ii) The Annual Return (Section 2) for the Year Ended 31st March 2018 was received.

The Town Clerk explained that this Statutory Return is sent to the External Auditor.

RESOLVED That the Annual Return (Section 2) for the Year Ended 31st March 2018 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor.

(b) Annual Accounts

The Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2018 were received.

The Town Clerk drew Members' attention to the downward trend of Information Centre Sales. There would be a Revenue Generation/Cost Savings Meeting to create a strategic plan to revamp the centre.

He explained that Central Services/Administration costs had been high with the repairs to the Town Hall, a new boiler and the ensuing increased electricity costs, although there had been a corresponding reduction in the costs for gas. This had also contributed to a reduced level of General Reserves together with greater amount of funds allocated to Earmarked Reserves.

RESOLVED That the Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March be approved and signed by the Town Mayor.

12. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held 24th April 2018 were received.

Members were disappointed that few members of the public turn up to the Annual Town Meeting but it was pointed out that if there are problems, then people would attend.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held 24th April 2018 be received.

13. STANDING ORDERS

Amended Standing Orders were received.

It was agreed that in view of the rescission notice at Minute 9(i), revisions to Standing Orders would not be done piecemeal.

RESOLVED That the revisions to Standing Orders be completed in due course.

14. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

Members agreed to continue to use the General Power of Competence in the forthcoming Civic Year.

RESOLVED That Members duly reaffirmed eligibility criteria and agreed to use the General Power of Competence in the forthcoming Civic Year.

15. TOWN PLAN

It was noted that the Town Plan which has recently been adopted will, in the future, be reviewed annually at the Annual General Meeting.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

16. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk explained that another incident had occurred on the River Walk involving possible damage to a Commemorative Tree.

He explained that the ever-increasing volume of work and multitude of projects generated by the Town Council is making it very difficult for the staff to cope with and complete the number of initiatives. This matter will be referred to the Staffing and Accommodation Sub-Committee to resolve.

He was pleased to announce that two new Special Constables recruited under the joint Town Council/Essex Police scheme will shortly begin patrolling. Members were proud that this initiative to help fund training, uniform and expenses would assist in combating crime and

anti-social behaviour and was down to the Town Council's foresight. It was understood that there are another four potential Special Constables for Witham.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

17. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)

A draft Privacy Notice was received.

The Town Clerk explained that whilst there is no obligation to appoint a Data Protection Officer it is likely that the Town Council will. The Privacy Notice will be put on the website and the General Data Policy would refer to other policies such as archiving, CCTV, IT, councillors responsibilities, etc. These policies can be amended from time to time.

Members thought the Privacy Notice was excellent and should be adopted for use.

RESOLVED That the Privacy Notice be adopted.

The Town Mayor explained that before closing the Meeting he wished to announce his two charities, which are the 295 Witham and Rivenhall Squadron Air Training Corps – Mini Bus Fund, and J's Hospice for Teenage Care.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 8.35 p.m.

Councillor T.A. Pleasance
Town Mayor

MS/GK/25.5.2018