

Witham Town Council

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MINUTES

Meeting of: **Town Council**

Date: **Monday, 3rd September 2018**

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------|--------|-----------|--------------|
| Present: | Councillors | T. A. | Pleasance | (Town Mayor) |
| | | J.C. | Bayford | |
| | | P. | Horner | |
| | Mrs | A. | Kilmartin | |
| | | M.C. M | Lager | |
| | Mrs | S.C. | Lager | |
| | Mrs | J.M. | Money | |
| | | J.R. | Pullen | |
| | | R.P. | Ramage | |
| | | W.J. | Rose | |
| | | P.M. | Ryland | |
| | Mrs | J. | Williams | |
| | | R. | Williams | |

13. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.R. Barlow, J.C. Goodman and Mrs J.A. Kempf who had previous engagements. Councillor Mrs A. Kilmartin said that she would need to leave the Meeting early as she had another meeting to attend.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 9th July 2018 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

15. INTERESTS

Councillors P. Horner, Mrs J.M. Money, R.P. Ramage and W.J. Rose declared non-pecuniary interests in Minutes 19 – Regeneration of Witham and 24 – Community Governance Review 2018.

16. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No member of the press or public were at the Meeting.

17. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk explained that there had been another incursion by travellers onto the River Walk. Originally they were by Guithavon Valley and then they moved to Armond Road. He explained that the matter was reported to Braintree District Council and the correct procedures have been followed. The Travellers' Unit of Essex County Council have now attended and given 24 hours' notice to move.

RESOLVED That the Town Clerk's report be received and information noted.

18. BUSINESS PLAN

The Leader of the Council explained that each Committee has a short list of priorities. The Town Council will focus on the overall development of the business plans, taking into account the Town Plan and linking into the budget process. He stressed the importance of being an advocate for residents' concerns.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

19. REGENERATION OF WITHAM

Councillors P. Horner, Mrs J.M. Money, R.P. Ramage and W.J. Rose had declared interests.

Councillor P.M. Ryland asked the Town Council to consider contacting Braintree District Council in relation to the regeneration of Witham.

He explained that he had read a big headline in the local newspaper that there is a multi-million pound plan to regenerate Braintree. He said that when it was Witham Urban District Council there had been a 50/50 split between the two towns, each being treated equally. He wished to know the District Council's plans for the regeneration of Witham. There are lots of new housing developments in the town and three new restaurants opened recently in the town centre. He added that the Tuesday market would soon be re-instated.

Members gave their support remembering the GVA report commissioned by the District Council but insurmountable problems have resulted in the plan not being implemented.

Members commented that residents in Witham pay an extra £70 precept each year for Witham whereas the residents of Braintree which is un-parished do not.

Councillor Mrs A. Kilmartin left the Meeting at this point.

It was suggested that Braintree District Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, should be invited to the next Meeting to discuss plans to regenerate Witham.

Members said that the new homes bonus is not being invested in Witham and the District Council had not introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy so the Town Council was justified in complaining.

It was agreed to write to Braintree District Council and to invite Councillor Cunningham to a Meeting.

RESOLVED That a letter be written to the Chief Executive of Braintree District Council requesting the programme of regeneration for Witham and that the District Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Development be invited to the next Town Council Meeting on 29th October 2018.

Councillor P.M. Ryland then left the Meeting.

20. OPEN SPACES & NATURE RESERVES MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The Terms of Reference for the Open Spaces & Nature Reserves Management Sub-Committee were received.

It was suggested that a simplified title of Open Spaces Management Sub-Committee would be preferable. Tidying up numbering should be undertaken. Point 12 should include 'future responsibilities' and policy would be better endorsed by the Town Council. Point 21 – the sub-committee should make budget bids through the Environment Committee and there should be an annual report of activities and outcomes.

RESOLVED That the amended Terms of Reference be agreed.

21. TESCO BAGS OF HELP SCHEME

A report on the Tesco Bags of Help Scheme was received.

Members considered this a good opportunity for funding and that ASDA, which operates a similar scheme should also be approached.

In addition to raising funds for the Puppet Festival, Community Day and Dementia Film shows, it was suggested that Community Safety including the recruitment of Special Constables, would be an ideal suggestion.

RESOLVED That the report be received and Tesco asked in the first instance for funding towards Community Safety and ASDA asked for funding towards the Puppet Festival.

22. DEMENTIA FILM SHOW

Councillor Mrs S.C. Lager explained that funding is required to assist with the inaugural Dementia Film Show which will be on 7th October 2018, Silver Sunday, at the Library which is very apt as the building was originally a cinema. She said that this would be a free event but limited to 50 people. She asked that the Town Council supports in four ways –

- The use of the Town Council logo on posters and flyers,
- Funding the hire of the film in the region of £180 - £200,
- 'Ticketing' through the Information Centre, free from commission,
- To borrow china from the Town Hall for the tea.

Members considered this an admirable scheme to support and agreed to the above although the St John Ambulance Brigade had china to donate.

Councillor Mrs S.C. Lager said that it was hoped that stills or short films could be obtained of Witham when the library was used to be a cinema. She said that three Members would be required to staff the event and asked for donations of cake.

RESOLVED That the Town Council supports the Dementia Film shows, gives permission for its logo to be used on publicity material and will fund the hire of a film at a maximum cost of £200; and the Information Centre can be used for 'ticketing' free from commission.

23. REQUEST FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT – EBENEZER CLOSE

A report and a request from children of Ebenezer Close for play equipment were received.

The Town Clerk explained that play equipment is provided and maintained by the District Council.

Members discussed how best to take this matter forward and the suggestion was made that any equipment could be funded through Section 106 monies but it would be necessary to consult residents as to whether they would be happy for a play area and how many children would use it.

RESOLVED That the letters be received and residents of Ebenezer Close and the surrounding roads be canvased regarding a play area being installed.

24. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2018

Councillors P. Horner, Mrs J.M. Money, R.P. Ramage and W.J. Rose had declared interests.

A letter from Braintree District Council was received and Members were asked to note that

- No changes be made to Witham Town Council Ward names
- That the Witham Boundary be extended to include the development site at Wood End Farm, Witham together with the buildings of Wood End Farm
- That the Witham boundary be extended to include only the development site to the North of Forest Road/Rivenhall
- Extension of the Witham Parish boundary to include Eastways Industrial Estate bounded by the Northern perimeter of Burghey Brook Poultry Farm.

Members expressed concern that the New Rickstones Academy is still in the Parish of Rivenhall and if Parliamentary boundary changes take place this could be a different constituency. The Bellways development in Rickstones Road should also be in the Parish

of Witham rather than Rivenhall as the residents would look to the town for amenities whilst paying their rates to Rivenhall Parish Council.

RESOLVED That the letter be received and a letter sent to the Boundary Commission explaining that the Town Council is not in support of the limited changes in the boundary with Rivenhall and that both the New Rickstones Academy and new developments which are effectively in Witham should not be part of the Parish of Rivenhall.

25. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Town Mayor's Engagements were received.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

26. WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL'S DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE

The Town Clerk requested that a verbal update on matters arising at District level which affect Witham should be made on a regular basis at future Town Council meetings.

The Town Clerk stressed that this could be a verbal report and District Council Members give the report on a rota basis so it would not be onerous.

RESOLVED That District Council Members give a verbal report at future Town Council Meetings of decisions taken which affect Witham.

27. COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Minutes 18 – 33 (inclusive).

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

RESOLVED That the Report be received.

(b) **Environment Committee Meeting held 24th July 2018**

Minutes 13 – 32 (inclusive).

Councillor Mrs J. Williams, Vice Chairman, gave the Report of the Environment Committee, en bloc.

RESOLVED That the Report be received.

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

Minutes 16 – 28 (inclusive).

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

He drew Members' attention to the funding implications regarding LED street lighting, tree surgery and riparian duties.

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.

28. COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

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

Minutes 35 and 36.

Councillor R. Williams continued his Report.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Community Committee be received.

(b) **Environment Committee Meeting held 24th July 2018**

Minutes 33 to 35 (inclusive).

Councillor Mrs J. Williams continued her Report.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Environment Committee be received.

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

Minutes 29 and 30.

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

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

29. CONTRACTUAL AND OTHER STAFFING MATTERS

The Town Clerk gave a report.

In view of the time it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders.

Councillor Mrs A. Kilmartin returned to the Meeting.

RESOLVED That to allow business to continue, Standing Order 4(a) be suspended.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

30. PUBLIC DOMAIN

Members agreed that nothing discussed in Private Session should be moved into the Public Domain.

RESOLVED That nothing discussed in Private Session should be moved into the Public Domain.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 10.00 p.m.

Councillor T.A. Pleasance
Town Mayor

MS/GK/7.9.2018