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MINUTES

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Monday, 24th October 2022**

Place: **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Newland Street, Witham, CM8 2FE**

Present:	Councillors	J.	Bayford	(Town Mayor)
		J.	Goodman	(Deputy Town Mayor)
		S.	Ager	
		P.	Heath	
		S.	Hicks	
		A.	Kilmartin	
		C.	Lager	
		M.	Lager	
		S.	Rajeev	
		J.	Williams	
		R.	Williams	
Essex County Councillor		R.	Playle	(Witham Northern)
		N.	Smith	(Town Clerk)
		H.	Andrews	(Deputy Town Clerk)
		G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)
		S.	Smith	(PA to the Council)

And one member of the public.

108. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atwill, Barlow, Jay, Pleasance and Weeks.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and approved.

109. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Town Council held 26th September 2022 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

110. INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

111. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No comment was made by the member of public present.

112. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

Essex County Councillor Ross Playle, Witham Northern, explained that the pot hole on The Grove had been repaired as part of the Councillors' Pot Hole Scheme and the repairs to Chipping Hill Bridge were on schedule. The pavement outside Prezzo, where a number of pedestrians had tripped, was due to be repaired but investigation had revealed that slabs had been lifted by tree roots, so he would continue to pursue until the matter was resolved. He had hoped to meet the cabinet member to discuss the Highways Devolution Scheme but this had been cancelled. He re-iterated that Essex County Council had £50m to help those suffering financial hardship through a number of schemes.

Members asked whether a traffic survey of HGVs routes could be carried out whilst Chipping Hill bridge was closed and he suggested that contact should be made with Councillor Louis. Members were informed that the Chairman of Planning and Transport Committee and the Deputy Town Clerk would shortly be meeting with the Cabinet Member for Highways.

Councillor Kilmartin said that she had used all her district council grant money for good causes in Witham.

Councillor Hicks said that work to redevelop the area by the flats in Dorothy Sayers Drive had commenced and the feature wall had been retained. The wall by Morrisons was currently being opened up to allow pedestrians access.

RESOLVED That the reports be received and noted.

The Town Mayor thanked Councillors Playle, Kilmartin and Hicks for their reports.

113. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

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

She explained that a risk assessment had been carried out prior to the opening of the Function Room on a Monday as a 'warm room' serving hot drinks and soup. This would be a Member-led initiative with volunteers being sought.

RESOLVED That the report be received and information noted.

114. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) **Planning and Transport Committee held 26th September and 10th October 2022**

Minutes 96 – 127 inclusive

Councillor Goodman as Chairman of the Planning and Transport Committee gave his report en bloc.

Minute 106 – Chipping Hill Bridge

A recommendation was received that professional photographs be taken of the WW1 graffiti on the coping stones.

RESOLVED That a professional photographer be employed to take pictures of the coping stones on Chipping Hill bridge.

RESOLVED That the Report of the Planning and Transport Committee be received.

(b) **Policy and Resources Committee held 3rd October 2022**

Minutes 13 - 22 inclusive

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

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

(c) **Environment Committee held 10th October 2022**

Minutes 14 - 25 inclusive

Councillor Goodman explained that he had still to agree the draft Minutes.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

115. INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Town Council's Interim Internal Audit Report for the financial year 2022/2023 was received.

Comment was made about the level of fidelity cover and the Town Clerk explained that this had now been increased as recommended at a cost of £200 per annum.

RESOLVED That the Interim Internal Audit Report be received and the information noted.

116. STAFFING REPORT

A Staffing Report was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and information noted.

117. CORRESPONDENCE FROM AßLAR

Correspondence from Christian Schwarz, the Bürgermeister of Aßlar was received. A letter of thanks for the Town Mayor's letter of congratulations to Waldbröl was tabled.

It was noted that Christian would be in Witham over the Easter holidays and it was agreed that consideration should be given to holding a small reception.

The Town Clerk said that the Community Committee would be discussing a civic reception and this could coincide with Christian's visit.

RESOLVED That the correspondence be received and the matter of a civic reception considered by the Community Committee.

118. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting for the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A (S5) of the Local Government Act 1972.

119. COMMITTEE REPORT – CONTINUED

Policy and Resources Committee held 3rd October 2022

Minutes 24 -25 inclusive

Councillor M. Lager, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, continued his report en bloc.

RESOLVED That the report of the Policy and Resources Committee be received and noted.

120. LAND REPORT

The Land Transfer report was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

121. FUNDING REPORT

The Funding report was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 8.30 p.m.

Councillor J. Bayford
Town Mayor

NS/GK/27.10.2022