



Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE
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 witham.gov.uk

MINUTES

Meeting of: **Community Committee**

Date: **Monday, 10th February 2020**

| | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|--------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Present: | Councillors | R.P. | Ramage | (Chairman) |
| | | K.L. | Atwill | |
| | | J.C. | Goodman | |
| | | S.E. | Hicks | |
| | Miss | C. | Jay | |
| | | M.C.M. | Lager | |
| | Mrs | S.C. | Lager | |
| | | T.A. | Pleasance | |
| | Miss | M.L. | Weeks | |
| | | R. | Williams | (arrived at 8.45 p.m.) |
| Also in attendance: | Cllrs | Mrs | S. | Ager |
| | | | P.R. | Barlow |
| | | Mrs | A. | Kilmartin |
| Essex Police | PS | J | Mirrington-French | (Town Team) |
| | PS | S. | Jesse | (Community Special) |
| Essex Army Cadets | Com. SI | J | Loughran | |
| | SI | T. | Benson | |
| | | J. | Sheehy | (Town Clerk) |
| | Mrs | G | Kennedy | (Committee Clerk) |
| | Miss | N. | Smith | (Assistant RFO) |
| | Miss | L. | Brimson | (Events Co-ordinator) |

80. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J.C. Bayford who had a previous engagement, Councillor C.S. Livermore who was unwell and Councillor R Williams who would be late as he was working.

81. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Committee held 25th November 2019 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

82. INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

83. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the press or present.

84. ESSEX POLICE

The Chairman welcomed PS Simon Jesse and PS Jenna Mirrington-French to the Meeting.

PS Jesse gave an update on the work of the Community Specials. He said that they had focused on high visibility policing on both the estates and in the town centre. Intelligence regarding the supply of drugs had resulted in a reduction of vehicles being used for anti-social behaviour and drugs. Those involved had their details taken and advice was given. There had been a number of hoax 999 calls from the Grove Centre requiring attendance. Speed cameras had been operating in Spa Road and Cypress Road and this would continue in good weather and light evenings. The Specials continue to support community events and enjoy engaging with the public.

PS Mirrington-French explained that she had taken over the two Town Teams of Braintree and Witham and would like in the future to give a presentation to the Town Council.

Members then had the opportunity to ask questions and share information with the Police.

The Chairman thanked PS Jesse and PS Mirrington-French for attending the Meeting.

85. COMMUNITY SAFETY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Minutes from the Community Safety Task and Finish Group Meeting held 20th January 2020 were received.

RESOLVED That the Minutes be received and noted.

86. ESSEX ARMY CADETS

The Chairman welcomed Detachment Commander SI Jack Loughran and SI Thomas Benson from the Essex Army Cadet Force to the Meeting.

Commander SI Loughran explained that he had taken over in Witham in January and wished the cadets to be part of the community.

SI Benson explained that there were 39,000 cadets nationally and they wished to expand their small group. One of their cadets just fell short of being in the top 100 at the shooting competition in Bisley. They had taken part in the Tri-Service Falklands Competition coming first in several categories. He reiterated the desire to be part of the community.

In answer to questions from Members, it was explained that there are twenty cadets registered with ten attending regularly. The cadets are aged 12 to 18 years and are taught basic skills, given adventure training and can participate in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme alongside army certificates and also BTech qualifications. It was hoped to increase the number of regular cadets to 20 before August 2020 by promoting through the Academies. Army Cadets teach young people to have self-respect and respect for others. They would be well turned out young people with high values. The Army Cadets would be taking part in the Community Day and were

asked to participate in the VE Day 75 celebrations. They explained that work to smarten up their building had begun.

Information was given about the grant scheme which supported voluntary groups and organisations. The Town Mayor added that funds would also be available through her charity.

The Chairman thanked Commander SI Loughran and SI Benson for their report.

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

87. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's Report on matters arising was received.

The Town Clerk explained that it would seem that Essex County Council had taken over the Town Council's bus shelters without consultation. He explained that the replacement bus shelters had been part of the Local Highways Panel process and an update would be sought.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

88. COMMUNITY BUDGET

The Community Committee Budget was received.

RESOLVED That the Budget be received and noted.

89. VE DAY 75 TASK AND FINISH GROUP

(a) Minutes

The Minutes from the VE Day 75 Task and Finish Group Meeting held on 4th February 2020 were not yet available.

RESOLVED That the information be received.

(b) Membership

Members were informed that Councillor Miss C. Jay wished to resign from the VE Day 75 Task and Finish Group. The suggestion was made that a replacement would be unnecessary unless a Members wished to volunteer.

RESOLVED That Councillor Miss C. Jay's resignation from the VE Day 75 Task and Finish Group be noted.

(c) Report

Councillor J.C. Goodman, Chairman of the VE Day 75 Task and Finish Group Meeting, explained that the celebrations would take place over the three days of the Bank Holiday weekend. Staff could not be expected to work so was looking for assistance from Members and other organisations such as the Army Cadets. The Town Council celebrations would be centred in the park on the Friday and arrangements were well in hand.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

90. SOCIAL ISOLATION TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Minutes of the Social Isolation Task and Finish Group Meeting held 17th January 2020 were received and Members noted that a meeting with all groups tackling social isolation would be held on 27th February 2020.

Councillor Mrs S. Ager, Chairman of the Group, said that the first meeting had been productive and it had been agreed to hold a fact finding meeting with other groups tackling social isolation.

RESOLVED That the Minutes be received and information noted.

Councillor Mrs S. Ager then left the Meeting.

91. EVENTS REVIEW TASK AND FINISH GROUP

(a) Minutes

The Minutes of the Events Review Task and Finish Group Meeting held 22nd January 2020 were received.

The Town Clerk explained that the Task and Finish Group had been formed to consider existing events and formulate new ones, then would close.

RESOLVED That the Minutes be received and noted.

(b) Christmas Events

A report and recommendations were received.

The Town Clerk explained that if Members agreed the recommendations, staff would deal with the details of the events.

RESOLVED That the report be received and recommendations agreed.

(c) Halloween

A report was received.

It was considered that one night of events would be held and if successful other evenings could be added in the future.

RESOLVED That the report be received and recommendations agreed.

Councillor R. Williams arrived at the Meeting.

(d) Dog Show

Proposals to hold an annual dog show were received.

Councillor Miss C Jay promoted this event and explained that she had already identified a potential sponsor.

RESOLVED That the proposals be received and recommendations agreed.

92. GAY PRIDE

A request was received from Councillor Miss C Jay to participate in LGBT Pride this June.

Councillor Miss C. Jay sought support for this event and referred to Fern House Surgery's recent success as being the first to gain a Gold Award for its programme with LGBT patients.

Members were generally in agreement as part of community cohesion but it would be necessary to remove the rainbow flag for Armed Forces Day and the Queen's birthday as is required under the Civic Buildings protocol.

RESOLVED That the suggestions to be involved in LGBT Pride this June be agreed.

93. RAMP AT THE TOWN HALL

A request was received from Councillor Miss C. Jay for a ramp to be installed at the front of the Town Hall to allow disabled access.

The Town Clerk advised that the building was disability compliant as access can be gained by the ramp at the back of the building. He suggested that pre-application advice be sought from the Planning Department, Braintree District Council.

RESOLVED That the request be received and pre-application advice for a ramp at the front of the Town Hall be sought from the Planning Department.

94. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Community Reports from Town Council representatives on outside bodies were received.

The Town Clerk advised that with the refurbishment of the Information Centre the Heritage boards, with sound insulation, would be utilised in the Function Room which should solve the acoustic issues.

The CA report was read out by Councillor Mrs S.C. Lager as difficulty in downloading the document had been experienced. She said that from 1st April to 31st December 2019, 408 Witham residents had been assisted on 1,212 issues. The top four issues being benefits, debt, family and relationships, and housing. CA also operated as a distributor of Foodbank vouchers.

RESOLVED That the Community Reports be received and noted.

95. INFORMATION CENTRE

Details of Information Centre statistics for November and December 2019 were received.

The Town Clerk advised that this would be the last time these figures would be in the Public Domain as they are commercially sensitive. Members were pleased to note the increased footfall and increasing margins achieved by proactive management.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

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 (Section 3) of the Local Government Act 1972.

96. IMPROVING HEALTHCARE IN WITHAM TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Minutes of the Improving Healthcare in Witham Task and Finish Group Meeting held on 16th January 2020 were received.

In view of the time, the Chairman moved to suspend Standing Orders.

RESOLVED That Standing Order 3(x) be suspended to allow business to be completed.

Whilst this matter was being discussed, Councillor T.A. Pleasance left the Meeting.

RESOLVED That the Minutes be received and noted.

97. CCTV

A verbal report concerning the monitoring of CCTV was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

98. INFORMATION CENTRE

An update on the refurbishment of the Information Centre was received.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

99. PUBLIC DOMAIN

Members agreed that no item discussed in Private Session should be moved into the Public Domain.

RESOLVED That no item discussed in Private Session should be moved into the Public Domain.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 10.22 p.m.

Councillor _____
Chairman

JS/NS/GK/13.2.2020