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Minutes

Meeting of: **Town Council**

Date: **Tuesday, 1st September 2020**

Time: **7.00 p.m.**

Present:	Councillors	Mrs S.C.	Lager	(Town Mayor)
		Mrs S.	Ager	
		K.L.	Atwill	(arrived at 7.04 p.m.)
		P.R.	Barlow	
		J.C.	Bayford	
		J.C.	Goodman	
		S.E.	Hicks	(arrived at 7.12 p.m.)
	Miss C.	C.	Jay	
	Mrs A.	A.	Kilmartin	
		M.C.M.	Lager	
		C.S.	Livermore	
	Miss M.L.	M.L.	Weeks	
		R.	Williams	
Braintree District Councillor	Mrs S.	S.	Wilson	(Witham South)
		J.	Sheehy	(Town Clerk)
	Miss N.	N.	Smith	(Deputy Town Clerk)
	Mrs H.	H.	Andrews	(Assistant Proper Officer)
	Miss L.	L.	Brimson	(Events Officer)
	Mrs G.	G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

And one member of the public.

162. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T.A. Pleasance who had a previous engagement.

Apologies were also received from Essex County Councillors J. Abbott and D. Louis.

163. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 3rd August 2020 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

164. INTERESTS

Councillors M.C.M. Lager and Mrs S.C. Lager declared non-pecuniary interests in Minute 168 – Delegated Decisions, as there were a number of planning matters relating to Chipping Hill and they knew the applicants.

Councillor K.L. Atwill arrived at the Meeting.

165. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No comment was made by the member of public present.

166. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

A tabled report was received from Councillor D. Louis.

Members spoke about the traffic lights on the bridge over the A12 and thanked Councillor D. Louis for his assistance in this matter as well as the opportunity to input into the pothole repair scheme.

Councillor Mrs S. Wilson, Braintree District Council, explained that each Member of the District Council had £1,300 as Community Grants and asked if the Town Council was aware of the BDC grant scheme.

Councillor S.E. Hicks arrived at the Meeting.

167. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk explained that an outstanding wayleave request by BT Openreach had now been closed as the service was no longer required.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

168. DELEGATED DECISIONS

Councillors M.C.M. Lager and Mrs S.C. Lager had declared interests.

The delegated decisions for the period 3rd to 17th August 2020 were received.

The Leader of the Council said that the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees would be meeting to discuss Budgets and Business Plans, to include priorities, delivery and appropriate finances required.

RESOLVED That the delegated decisions for the period 3rd to 17th August 2020 be received and noted.

169. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Government’s White Paper on Planning for the Future was received.

Members considered that this would be a radical shift and it was important for the Town Council to comment. A faster, shorter approach was mooted with all land being zoned for growth, renewal or protection. It was therefore imperative to get the zoning right. It was considered that the move to a national levy, as opposed to Section 106, would not be a problem whereas at present the District Council would hold back 5% as an admin fee on Community Infrastructure Levy.. Members considered how the Gimsons’ site had originally been allocated for 40 houses but now 85 were to be developed, the only option would have been to make it protected under the new scheme.

The suggestion was made that a separate meeting to discuss the White Paper should be arranged with expert planning guidance provided.

RESOLVED That a separate Zoom meeting be arranged to discuss the White Paper with guidance provided by a planning officer.

170. MAKING COUNTIES COUNT

‘Making Counties Count’ report was received.

The Town Clerk suggested that consultation could be dealt with in the same way as the planning paper. Members thought that briefing papers would assist them in their deliberations.

It was considered that this matter would be fast moving with Essex split into three unitary councils and that it was important to ensure that devolved powers are obtained from the beginning.

RESOLVED That a separate Zoom meeting be arranged to discuss ‘Making Counties Count’ and a guest speaker be sought to assist with the deliberations.

171. ESTIMATES SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted the resignation of Councillor Mrs S.C. Lager from the Estimates Sub-Committee and confirmed the appointment of Councillor Mrs S. Ager in her place.

RESOLVED That the resignation of Councillor Mrs S.C. Lager from the Estimates Sub-Committee be noted and the appointment of Councillor Mrs S. Ager as a Member of the Estimates Sub-Committee be confirmed.

172. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

A recommendation was received from the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee to approve the draft Financial Regulations.

The suggestion was made to include the need for signatories to initial invoices and to specify how often the regulations should be reviewed. It was pointed out the regulations would be reviewed at the Annual General Meeting but from time to time it might prove necessary to change them during the year.

RESOLVED That the draft Financial Regulations be received and adopted.

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 4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

173. LEGAL MATTERS

A verbal report was received from the Town Clerk regarding the transfer of the freehold of the River Walk to the Town Council in line with the provisions of the lease.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

174. PUBLIC DOMAIN

Members agreed that apart from a sentence explaining that the Town Council was negotiating the transfer of the River Walk, nothing discussed in Private Session should be moved into the Public Domain.

RESOLVED That with the exception of a sentence regarding the transfer of the freehold of the River Walk to the Town Council in line with the provisions of the lease, nothing discussed in Private Session should be moved into the Public Domain.

The Town Mayor thanked all members of staff for their continued working during the coronavirus pandemic.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 8.20p.m.

Town Mayor
JS/GK/3.9.2020