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MINUTES

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Monday, 11th April 2022**

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

Present: Councillors:

A.	Kilmartin	(Town Mayor)
J.	Bayford	(Deputy Town Mayor)
S.	Ager	
P.	Barlow	
J.	Goodman	
T.	Pleasance	
S.	Rajeev	
M.	Weeks	
R.	Williams	

Braintree District Councillors:

P.	Horner	(West Ward)
W.	Rose	(West Ward)
S.	Wilson	(Central Ward)
N.	Smith	(Town Clerk)
G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

218. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Atwill who was travelling abroad, Councillor Jay, Councillor Livermore, Councillor C. Lager and Councillor M. Lager who were unwell, Councillor J. Williams who had a previous engagement and Councillor Hicks who was working.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and accepted.

219. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Town Council held 14th March 2022 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

220. **INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

221. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no member of the press or public present.

222. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

Braintree District Councillor Rose gave a report. Councillor Rose explained that Braintree District Council car parks had received an accreditation for being areas of low crime. Green Bank recycling statistics were given for recycled textiles and food/drink cans and cartons plus small electrical items. He said that as part of climate change strategy free tree whips and bulbs had been given to the community groups to plant. A tree to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee had also been planted in the town park. Town Centre improvements had been agreed and the procurement process progressing. The District Council had exceeded its target of 250 affordable homes in the district this past year. Councillor Rose reminded the Town Council that each Member of the District Council had funds of £1,000 to award as grants. He spoke of economic development and business support grants towards shop front improvements with more grants to follow.

The Town Mayor explained that she, Councillor Hicks and Councillor Weeks had given a joint grant to the Witham Royal British Legion for a new carpet bowls mat.

Essex County Councillor Ross Playle had given his apologies as he was on holiday. His report was read out which included Cypress Road being closed from 14th to 18th April for resurfacing, that the Local Highways Panel had met and he had asked for a delivery update on the Crossing Road crossing. He said that the latest data showed 706 asylum requests from Ukrainians and 482 sponsors in the County.

Essex County Councillor Derrick Louis had also sent his apologies as he was on holiday. His report had been tabled. Members welcomed the information that the A12 overbridge near Lynfields would be repaired although no timeframe had yet been given but the traffic lights would be re-phased.

Members asked that Councillor Louis be contacted about redundant bus shelters from Gershwin Boulevard being used on the Lodge Farm estate and that Councillor Playle be asked if residents had been informed about the possible re-routing of bus service 90 when Cypress Road is closed.

RESOLVED That the reports be received and noted.

223. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Town Mayor's engagements attended for period 15th March to 11th April 2022 were received.

The Town Mayor said that the recent Civic Service had gone well and thanked those who had attended.

RESOLVED That the engagements be received and information noted.

224. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

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

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

225. GRANT AID REQUEST – CITIZENS ADVICE

A grant aid request from the Citizens Advice was received.

Members fully supported the request.

RESOLVED That a grant of £10,000 be given to the Citizens Advice Bureau for general and money advice service to support residents in Witham.

226. A12 – WIDENING

A report was received.

The Town Clerk explained that she had recently been advised that the land which it was hoped was to be given to the Town Council in compensation for the land lost at Whetmead when the A12 was widened was no longer feasible. A possible new parcel of land had now been identified which was approximately 8,000m².

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

227. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) **Planning and Transport Committee held 14th and 29th March 2022**
Minutes 244 to 267 (inclusive)

Councillor Goodman, Chairman of the Planning and Transport Committee, gave a report en bloc of the Meetings.

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

(b) **Policy and Resources Committee held 29th March 2022**
Minutes 51 to 63 (inclusive)

Councillor R. Williams, Vice Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, gave a report en bloc of the Meeting.

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

228. 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.

229. LAND TRANSFER

A report was received.

River Walk Land at ASDA

The Town Clerk explained that the District Council had now decided that they wished to retain ownership of the land at ASDA and would only let the Town Council have it on a lease arrangement despite previous discussions.

The point was put that the river course in that location had a tendency to block and cause potential for flooding on the Humber Road estate. After further discussion, it was decided not to pursue this matter, as there would be no advantage to Witham Town Council maintaining the land whilst the freehold was kept by Braintree District Council.

RESOLVED That the Town Council would no longer pursue obtaining the freehold of the land adjacent to ASDA and the offer of a lease be declined.

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 A. Kilmartin
Town Mayor

NS/GK/19.4.2022