



Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE  
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## MINUTES

### WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

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

Present: Councillors:

L.	Barlow	(Deputy Town Mayor in the Chair)
E.	Adelaja	
P.	Barlow	
J.M.	Coleman	
B.	Fleet	
L.	Headley	
P.	Heath	
T.	Hewitt	
J.	Martin	
R.	Playle	(arrived 7.56 p.m.)
R.	Ramage	
A.	Sloma	
H.	Andrews	(Deputy Town Clerk)
G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

#### **80. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ager, J.C. Coleman, Taylor and Williams; and Councillor Playle who would be late.

**RESOLVED** That the apologies be received and approved.

#### **81. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Meeting of Town Council held 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

#### **82. INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interests.

**83. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There was no member of the press or public present.

**84. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE**

It was noted that Braintree District Council would be introducing a charge on green bins from March 2024 and residents were advised to pay before November 2023 to get a discount.

The Deputy Town Mayor referred to an email received earlier in the day from Essex County Councillor Louis relating to a new pothole scheme.

It was agreed that this item would continue when Councillor Playle arrived at the meeting.

**85. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

It was noted that the Town Mayor had not attended any engagements for period 3<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

**RESOLVED** That the information be received and noted.

**86. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that volunteers were required for the Council Stall at the Street Festival on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023. It was also noted that work had been undertaken by Essex County Council to remedy the pavement issues outside Prezzo where so many pedestrians had fallen over and been injured.

The Deputy Town Mayor said that she had a five minute interview with BBC Radio Essex about the Street Festival.

**RESOLVED** That the information be received and noted.

**87. ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY ORCHARDS**

The following recommendations were received from the Community Committee –

That Allotments and Community Orchards should come under the remit of the Environment Committee.

Members agreed that it made sense to have both the Allotments and Community Orchards under the auspices of the Environment Committee.

**RESOLVED** That Allotments and Community Orchards would come under the remit of the Environment Committee.

**88. SECTION 106 STEERING GROUP**

Members were asked to review the membership of the Section 106 Steering Group and to appoint an additional member.

Members were reminded that Section 106 monies were awarded during the planning process to deliver improved facilities. It was explained that such projects would be considered by the Town Council before approval so all Members would have an opportunity to comment at that time.

**RESOLVED** That membership of the Section 106 Steering Group be increased to nine and Councillors Ager and Headley be appointed to serve for the civic year 2023/2024.

**89. COUNCILLOR SURGERIES**

It was agreed that as Councillor Taylor had been delayed, the item would be considered either when he arrived at the meeting or at the next Town Council meeting.

**90. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Proposals for amendments to the current Financial Regulations were received.

Members agreed that it would be useful to add waivers to the regulations with regard to the tender process.

**RESOLVED** That the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations be agreed.

**91. FINANCE SCRUTINY PANEL**

Members were asked to consider the membership of the Finance Scrutiny Panel and to appoint an alternative member.

Councillor Adelaja explained that he wished to stay part of the panel and would be able to attend given sufficient notice. He said that he would be available on Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023 for the panel meeting.

**RESOLVED** That there be no change in membership of the Finance Scrutiny Panel at this time.

**92. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- (a) **Planning and Transport Committee held 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023**  
Minutes 66 to 87 (inclusive)

Councillor P. Barlow, Chairman of the Planning and Transport Committee, gave a report of the Meetings.

**RESOLVED** That the report of the Planning and Transport Committee be received.

- (b) **Community Committee held 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023**  
Minutes 22 to 37 (inclusive)

Councillor L. Barlow, Chairman of the Community Committee, gave a report of the Meeting.

Minute 27 – Essex Police

Members commented that the District Commander was asked about Tru-Cam and he tasked an officer to procure one for Braintree, Halstead and Witham districts.

**RESOLVED** That the report be received.

**93. 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 (S3) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**94. COMMITTEE REPORT – CONTINUED**

**Community Committee held 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023**

Minutes 38 to 40 (inclusive)

Councillor L. Barlow continued her report.

**RESOLVED** That the report of the Community Committee be received.

**95. LAND TRANSFER**

A report was received.

**RESOLVED** That the report be received and noted.

Councillor Playle arrived at the Meeting.

**Minute 84 - Essex County and Braintree District Council Update (continued)**

Essex County Councillor Playle spoke about the issues of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in schools and explained that Essex County Council had surveyed and identified 54 schools in Essex, 15 in the control of the council, which had a problem. 14 of the schools would be open next week and one would be closed longer. No school in Witham was affected. He added that the safety of children was paramount.

He too mentioned the pothole scheme but explained that because of the utility work being undertaken in his ward some of the potholes had still to be repaired. He too mentioned the pavement outside Prezzo and said that Braintree District Council would be doing work as part of the regeneration scheme.

In answer to a question he said that he was aware of the poor state of Forest Road but there was only a very limited opportunity to get full resurfacing of roads. £17.5m extra had been allocated to the repair of roads with 12 addition crews employed so improvements were now noticeable. He added that he had been informed that the autumn cutback of verges and hedges in Witham would take place in mid-October.

Members spoke about the problems with the footpath in Hatfield Road between Witham Lodge and Allectus Way which was an insufficient width for pedestrians with buggies or wheelchair users. The Deputy Town Mayor asked Members to complain to Essex County Council and Councillor Playle undertook to provide the criteria for footpaths.

**96. FUNDING**

A 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 L. Barlow  
Deputy Town Mayor

HA/GK/7.9.2023