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MINUTES

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Monday, 7th August 2023**

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

Present: Councillors

S.	Ager	(Town Mayor)
L.	Barlow	(Deputy Town Mayor)
E.	Adelaja	
P.	Barlow	
J.C.	Coleman	
J.M.	Coleman	
B.	Fleet	
L.	Headley	
P.	Heath	
T.	Hewitt	
R.	Playle	
R.	Ramage	
A.	Sloma	
E.	Williams	
N.	Smith	(Town Clerk)
G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

63. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin and Taylor.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and approved.

64. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Town Council held 10th July 2023 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

65. INTERESTS

No interests were declared at the time but later in the Meeting at Minute 73(b) – Environment Committee Report, Councillor Fleet declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Witham Tree Group.

66. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the press or public present.

67. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES

It was agreed to formally appoint Councillor Hewitt to the vacancies on the Policy and Resources, Planning and Transport and Open Spaces Management Committees.

RESOLVED That Councillor Hewitt be appointed to the Policy and Resources, Planning and Transport and Open Spaces Management Committees for the rest of the Civic Year 2023/2024.

68. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

Members explained that they had been berated about the apparent uncoordinated roadworks in the town and asked if Essex County Councillors could disseminate information about planned works. Members considered that it was a matter of urgency that the footpath outside Prezzo was repaired as more pedestrians had fallen recently resulting in injury and hospital treatment.

The decision to charge for the emptying of green waste bins was discussed and how this had been called in and the Cabinet's decision scrutinised.

69. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Town Mayor's engagements for the period 5th July to 2nd August 2023 were received.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

70. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

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

The Town Clerk spoke about the proposed metal detecting on the River Walk and explained that it was a condition that resultant finds would be reported so details could be shared on social media.

The Town Clerk reminded Members of the public consultation to be held on 18th August in relation to the Rivenhall Incinerator and urged them to attend.

Members commended staff on the wildlife watcher scheme that had been set up at the start of the summer holidays.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

71. REQUEST TO CHANGE DATES OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members were asked to consider a request to change the dates of Full Town Council and Planning and Transport Committee Meetings from Monday, 27th November to Tuesday, 28th November 2023 and Monday, 4th March to Tuesday, 5th March 2024 as they would clash with Braintree District Council's Cabinet Meetings.

RESOLVED That the change in dates of the Full Town Council and Planning and Transport Committee Meetings be agreed.

72. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Members were asked to review the membership of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and to appoint additional members.

It was agreed to increase the number of members on the steering group to allow for Councillors Headley and Martin to be part of the group.

RESOLVED That the membership of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group be increased to ten to allow Councillors Headley and Martin to be part of the group.

73. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- (a) **Planning and Transport Committee held 10th July and 24th July 2023**
Minutes 37 to 65 (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) **Environment Committee held 24th July 2023**
Minutes 1 to 17 (inclusive).

Councillor Fleet declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Witham Tree Group which had been discussed at the Environment Committee Meeting.

Councillor Ager, Chairman of the Environment Committee, gave a report of the Meeting.

RESOLVED That the report of the Environment Committee be received.

Councillor J.C. Coleman left the Council Chamber.

74. 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.

75. ASSET TRANSFER

A report was received.

Whilst this matter was discussed Councillor J.C. Coleman returned to the Council Chamber.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

Councillor Ramage left the Council Chamber.

76. CCTV TENDER

An update was received.

Whilst this matter was being discussed Councillor Ramage returned to the Council Chamber.

RESOLVED That the update be received and noted.

77. LAND TRANSFER

A report was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

78. FUNDING

A report was received.

The Town Clerk said that the Witham Festival had received a grant of £1,000 from Tesco and Braintree District Council was about to start work on the Changing Places toilet in the Town Hall.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

79. CITIZENS ADVICE

Details of the Citizens Advice Extraordinary General Meeting were received.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 8.38 p.m.

Councillor S. Ager
Town Mayor

NS/GK/9.8.2023