



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

Meeting of: **Environment Committee**

Date: **Monday, 10th October 2022**

Place: **Town Hall, 61 Newland Street, Witham.**

Present: Councillors

J.	Goodman	(Vice Chairman)
P.	Heath	
C.	Lager	
M.	Lager	
H.	Andrews	(Deputy Town Clerk)
C.	Strachan	(Assistant RFO)

14. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atwill, Bayford, Hicks, Kilmartin, Rajeev, Jay and Weeks.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and accepted.

15. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Environment Committee held 18th July 2022 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

16. INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

17. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no member of the press or public present.

18. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's Report on matters arising was received. The Clerk added that at the recent EALC conference the Highways Devolution Pilot had been discussed and it was noted that Cllr Playle had recently had a meeting with Cllr Lee Scott regarding the scheme. It was suggested that potentially a bilateral agreement could be reached with regards to continuing Highways Devolution work in Witham and a face to face meeting could be arranged to discuss this.

RESOLVED That the Report be received and noted.

RESOLVED That Councillor Goodman in liaison with the Deputy Town Clerk write to Cllr Lee Scott with regards to reaching bilateral agreement with Essex County Council and arranging a future meeting to discuss the continuation of the scheme.

19. OPEN SPACES MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Open Spaces Management Sub-Committee Meeting held 6th September 2022 were received.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Open Spaces Management Sub-Committee be received.

20. TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION STEERING GROUP

The Minutes of the Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group Meeting held 9th August 2022 were received.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the town centre maps were collected by Braintree District Council and there was currently no further update on the town centre project.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group Meeting be received.

21. CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP

The Minutes of the Climate Change Working Group Meeting held 8th August 2022 were received.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Climate Change Working Group meeting held be received.

22. WITHAM TREE GROUP

The Minutes from the Tree Group Meetings held 19th July and 20th September 2022 were received.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Witham Tree Group Meetings be received.

23. COMMITTEE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BUDGET REPORT

The income and expenditure report for the period 1st April to 31st August 2022 was received.

Members discussed projected figures showing an overspend at year-end. It was noted that the waste disposal will be over budget but enquiries were currently being made regarding this.

RESOLVED That the income and expenditure report be received.

24. 2023-2024 DRAFT CORPORATE STRATEGY AND BUDGET

Members were asked to comment upon the proposed Environment Corporate Strategy and Budget for 2023-2024. Each objective was discussed and agreed for inclusion in the 2023-2024 Corporate Strategy.

Members commented on the quality of the floral displays in the town and would like to see recognition for these and future reinstating of Witham in Bloom. The Open Spaces Management Plan should be amended to ‘Plans’ and these will be overseen by the Open Spaces Management Sub-Committee with the Closed Churchyard Plan as first priority.

It was noted that the Path & Cycleway objective would be a long-term programme and a report is due to go to Full Town Council on the project. Members were advised that a recent survey of the bridges on the River Walk had been carried out by Essex County Council with estimated costs of minimal repairs totalling £5k.

James Cooke Wood was discussed and it was noted that improvement priorities would need to be agreed with suggestions of improved signage and car park..

RESOLVED That the Draft Corporate Strategy and Budget be received and noted.

25. OPEN SPACES ACTION PLAN

The Open Spaces Action Plan was received and reviewed by Members. Suggested amendments and new entries were highlighted on the provided plan. It was noted that a lot of the entries had been on the Plan for a long time which may now be out of date. It was suggested that amendments should be made to replace Greenfields Community Housing with Eastlight Community Homes, the entry for Gimsons should be removed and queries should be raised regarding the validity of the Mill Lane Square entry, the land adjoining Whetmead entry should be queried and ownership details to be changed from Braintree District Council to Witham Town Council on the River Walk and Cut Throat Lane Allotment entries.

It was noted that the provision of allotments is required in Witham West and was suggested that the land between Teign Drive and Blunts Hall Road may be suitable.

RESOLVED That the Open Spaces Action Plan be received, suggested new entries submitted and amendments and queries taken up with Braintree District Council.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.10 p.m.

Councillor J Goodman
Vice Chairman

CS/HA/10.10.2022