Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE
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witham.gov.uk

AGENDA

Meeting of: **Community Committee**

Date: **Tuesday, 17th November 2026** Time: **7:30 p.m.**

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

Members are hereby summoned to attend the above Meeting to transact the following business. Members are respectfully reminded that each item on the Agenda should be carefully examined. If you have any interest, it must be duly declared.

To be present: Councillors

J.C.	Coleman	(Chair)	L.	Headley
P.	Heath	(Vice Chair)	R.	Playle
E.	Adelaja		J.	Robertson
L.	Barlow		A.	Sloma
B.	Fleet		E.	Williams

Nikki Smith
Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Committee held 24th August 2026 (previously circulated).

3. INTERESTS

To receive any declarations of interest that Members may wish to give notice of on matters pertaining to any item on this agenda.

4. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

An opportunity to enable members of the press and public present to comment.
Order Note: A maximum of 30 minutes is designated for public participation time with no individual speaker exceeding three minutes unless otherwise granted an extension by the Chairman under Standing Order 3(F) & 3(G).

5. ESSEX POLICE

An opportunity to receive any updates concerning local criminal matters and hear from any officers in attendance.

6. GUEST SPEAKER

An opportunity for the Committee to hear from the selected guest speaker ahead of question and answer session.

Note: The chosen speaker for this Meeting is Matt Witchalls

7. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

To receive a verbal report from the Clerk on matters arising.

8. COMMUNITY COMMITTEE INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET REPORT

To receive the Community Committee Income and Expenditure report for the period 1st April 2026 to 31st October 2026 attached at page 4.

9. 2027-2028 DRAFT BUDGET

An opportunity for Members to comment upon the proposed Community Committee Budget for 2027-2028, attached at page 5.

10. SATURDAY BUS SERVICE

To receive a verbal report from Councillor Headley about the 39 Stephensons' bus service.

11. CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS UPDATE

To receive an update on the celebrations planned for Christmas, attached at page 6.

12. DIGIGO UPDATE

To receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk on the new Broomfield Bus service.

13. SUMMER OF FOOTBALL REPORT

To receive the Summer of Football Safari report attached at page 8.

14. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APP

To receive an update on the Community Engagement App, attached at page 9.

15. SOCIAL MEDIA

To receive social media statistics attached at page 10.

16. WITHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE

To receive and approve the Collateral Warranties for sealing, previously circulated.

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

At this point, the Chair will move the following resolution: Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 S.1(2) and in accordance with Standing Order 3(d), the press and public should be excluded from the remainder of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

18. GERSHWIN PARK

To receive a report, attached at page 11.

19. MALDON ROAD PARK TOILETS

To receive a report, attached at page 12.

20. CCTV

To receive an update, attached at page 17.

Witham Town Council

Summary of Receipts and Payments

Cost Centre 2 (Between 01/04/2026 and 31/10/2026)

Agenda Item 8

Community

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position	
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend	
23	Information Centre Income/Stock	65,000.00	25,592.10	-39,407.90	55,000.00	21,952.09	33,047.91	-6,359.99	(-5%)
24	Street Entertainment Festival	1,500.00	85.00	-1,415.00	23,000.00	13,929.23	9,070.77	7,655.77	(31%)
25	Music Event	1,500.00	1,116.20	-383.80	10,000.00	8,479.93	1,520.07	1,136.27	(9%)
26	Dog Show	1,000.00	482.50	-517.50	2,500.00	1,410.73	1,089.27	571.77	(16%)
28	Teddy Bear's Picnic	50.00	30.00	-20.00	1,200.00	681.08	518.92	498.92	(39%)
29	Christmas Events & Tree	1,500.00	3,290.00	1,790.00	5,250.00	1,862.46	3,387.54	5,177.54	(76%)
30	Community Team Salaries, NI&LGPS				156,031.00	73,278.65	82,752.35	82,752.35	(53%)
32	Christmas Decorations				13,000.00		13,000.00	13,000.00	(100%)
33	Witham Summer Fayre		1,774.50	1,774.50	1,500.00	3,167.71	-1,667.71	106.79	(7%)
34	Information Centre & Administration				3,000.00	1,853.11	1,146.89	1,146.89	(38%)
35	Community Grant Aid				12,000.00	3,750.00	8,250.00	8,250.00	(68%)
36	Carnival Grant				8,000.00		8,000.00	8,000.00	(100%)
37	Professional Advice Support Fund				10,000.00	10,000.00			(0%)
38	CCTV				14,500.00	12,369.64	2,130.36	2,130.36	(14%)
39	Community Safety				1,500.00	137.04	1,362.96	1,362.96	(90%)
40	Special Constables Expenses				5,000.00	1,408.62	3,591.38	3,591.38	(71%)
41	Witham Open Garden				750.00	319.77	430.23	430.23	(57%)
42	Special Constable Recruitment				1,000.00	94.80	905.20	905.20	(90%)
43	Other Community Support				1,500.00	295.00	1,205.00	1,205.00	(80%)
46	Remembrance				1,000.00	280.50	719.50	719.50	(71%)
48	Halloween Event		200.00	200.00	2,700.00	776.33	1,923.67	2,123.67	(78%)
49	Silver Cinema				300.00	10.00	290.00	290.00	(96%)
53	Easter Quest				1,700.00	1,108.45	591.55	591.55	(34%)
54	New Events & Improvments				1,500.00	1,584.36	-84.36	-84.36	(-5%)
55	BDC Grant	10,000.00		-10,000.00				-10,000.00	(-100%)
	SUB TOTAL	**80,550.00**	**32,570.30**	**-47,979.70**	**331,931.00**	**158,749.50**	**173,181.50**	**125,201.80**	**(30%)**

Summary

NET TOTAL	**80,550.00**	**32,570.30**	**-47,979.70**	**331,931.00**	**158,749.50**	**173,181.50**	**125,201.80**
V.A.T.					7,115.96		
GROSS TOTAL		**32,570.30**			**165,865.46**		

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PROPOSED COMMUNITY COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR 2027/2028

	2026/2027		2027/2028
Community	**Current Budget**	**Proposed Budget**	**Difference**
Information Sales Income	65,000	55,000	-10,000
Witham Festival Income	1,500	1,500	0
Music Event	1,500	1,000	-500
Dog Show	1,000	[redacted]	-1,000
BDC Grant	10,000		-10,000
Summer Fayre	0	1,500	1,500
Teddy Bear's Picnic	50	50	0
Christmas Events	1,500	1,500	0
Total Income	**80,550**	**60,550**	**-20,000**
Community Team - Salaries & Employer N.I & LGPS Contrib	156,031	195,354	39,323
Town Clock	[redacted]	1,800	1,800
Christmas Decorations	13,000	13,000	0
Information Centre Stock	55,000	45,000	-10,000
Information Centre Advertisment & Administration	3,000	3,000	0
Community Grant Aid	12,000	12,000	0
Carnival Grant	8,000	8,000	0
Professional Advice Support Fund	10,000	10,000	0
CCTV	14,500	8,000	-6,500
Community Safety	1,500	1,500	0
Community Special Constables Expenses	5,000	5,000	0
Community Special Constable Recruitment	1,000	1,000	0
Youth Club	[redacted]	15,000	15,000
Youth Engagement		3,000	3,000
Community Engagement App		500	500
Community Garden		1,000	1,000
Other Community Support	1,500	1,500	0
Witham Open Garden	750	750	0
Witham Summer Fayre	1,500	5,000	3,500
Witham Dog Show	2,500	[redacted]	-2,500
Witham Street Entertainment Festival	23,000	23,000	0
Teddy Bear's Picnic	1,200	1,200	0
Remembrance	1,000	1,000	0
Halloween Event	2,700	2,850	150
Music Event	10,000	10,000	0
Christmas Events & Tree	5,250	6,500	1,250
Easter Quest	1,700	2,500	800
New Events & Events Improvement	1,500	1,500	0
Silver Cinema	300	300	0
Overhead Expenditure	**331,931**	**379,254**	**47,323**

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Witham town council

ITEM NO: 11

Officer Report: **Christmas Celebrations Update**

Christmas Celebrations Update

Braintree District Council has confirmed that it will award Witham Town Council £30,000 in grant funding towards its Christmas celebrations.

Witham Town Council was asked to submit proposals outlining how the funding would be spent within the current financial year. The following allocations were submitted:

Activity	Allocation
Festive lighting, November 2026–January 2027	£13,000
Purchase of a Christmas tree	£1,000
Christmas Lights Switch-On and Market, 21 November 2026	£11,750
Contribution towards the hire of a portable skating rink	£4,250
Total	£30,000

In accordance with the grant agreement, Braintree District Council's support will be acknowledged in all social media posts and press releases relating to these activities.

Ice Skating Rink

The ice skating rink is a new event for Witham and will be held in the sports hall at Witham Community Centre from 19th to 22nd December 2026, between 10am and 7pm each day.

A total of 960 skating places will be available at £2.50 per person. An accessible skating chair will be available free of charge for visitors who require it.

Although Council events are normally free for residents, a small admission charge will apply to encourage attendance and reduce the number of places booked but not used.

The response on social media has been very positive, with the announcement post receiving 13,000 views.

Santa's Grotto

The proposed Children's Christmas Party at the United Reformed Church has been replaced with individually bookable visits to Santa's Grotto at the Town Hall on the following dates:

- Saturday 21 November 2026
- Monday 30 November 2026
- Saturday 5 December 2026
- Monday 7 December 2026
- Tuesday 15 December 2026

- Wednesday 23 December 2026

Christmas High Street Trail

The Council will also launch *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas High Street Trail* in mid-December. Funded by Indaver, the trail will use window stickers instead of the Correx boards used for the Summer of Football trail.

Impact Assessment
The Town Council has a statutory duty to consider the effects of its decisions on biodiversity, and crime and disorder in the area.

(a) Biodiversity – The activities are primarily taking place within existing buildings and town-centre locations, with no direct disturbance to habitats anticipated. Consideration should be given to minimising light spill from festive lighting onto trees and other potential wildlife habitats, and limiting operating hours where practicable. Event waste should be appropriately managed to prevent litter entering surrounding habitats.

(b) Crime and disorder – The events will attract additional visitors to the town centre. Event risk assessments should address the potential for antisocial behaviour, theft and damage to equipment, with proportionate arrangements for stewarding, supervision, secure storage and reporting incidents. Liaison with the police and relevant partners should take place where appropriate.

Advice:
To receive and note.

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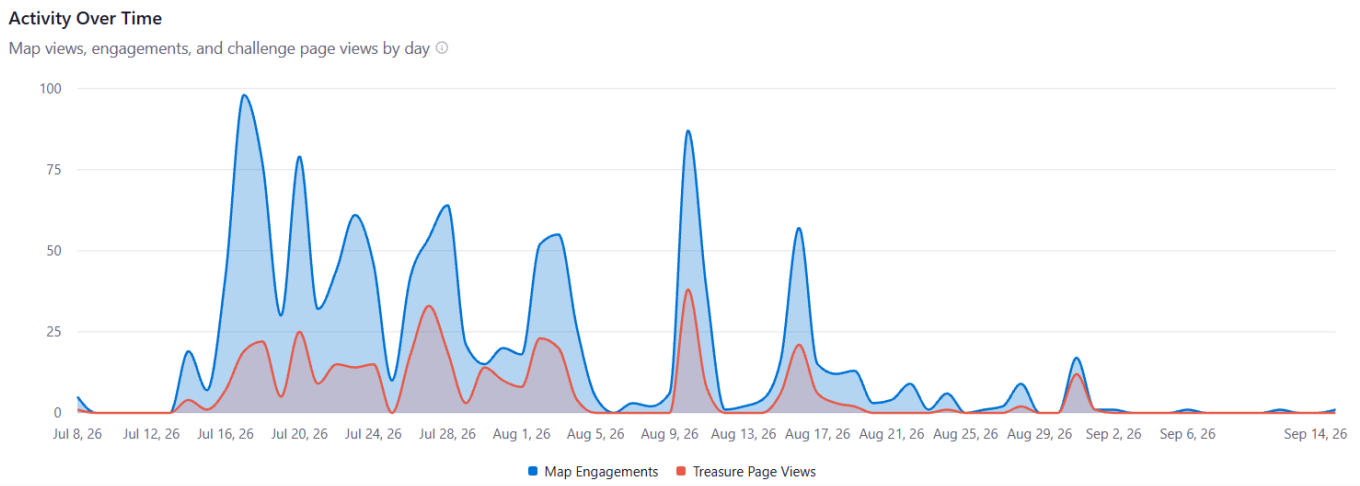
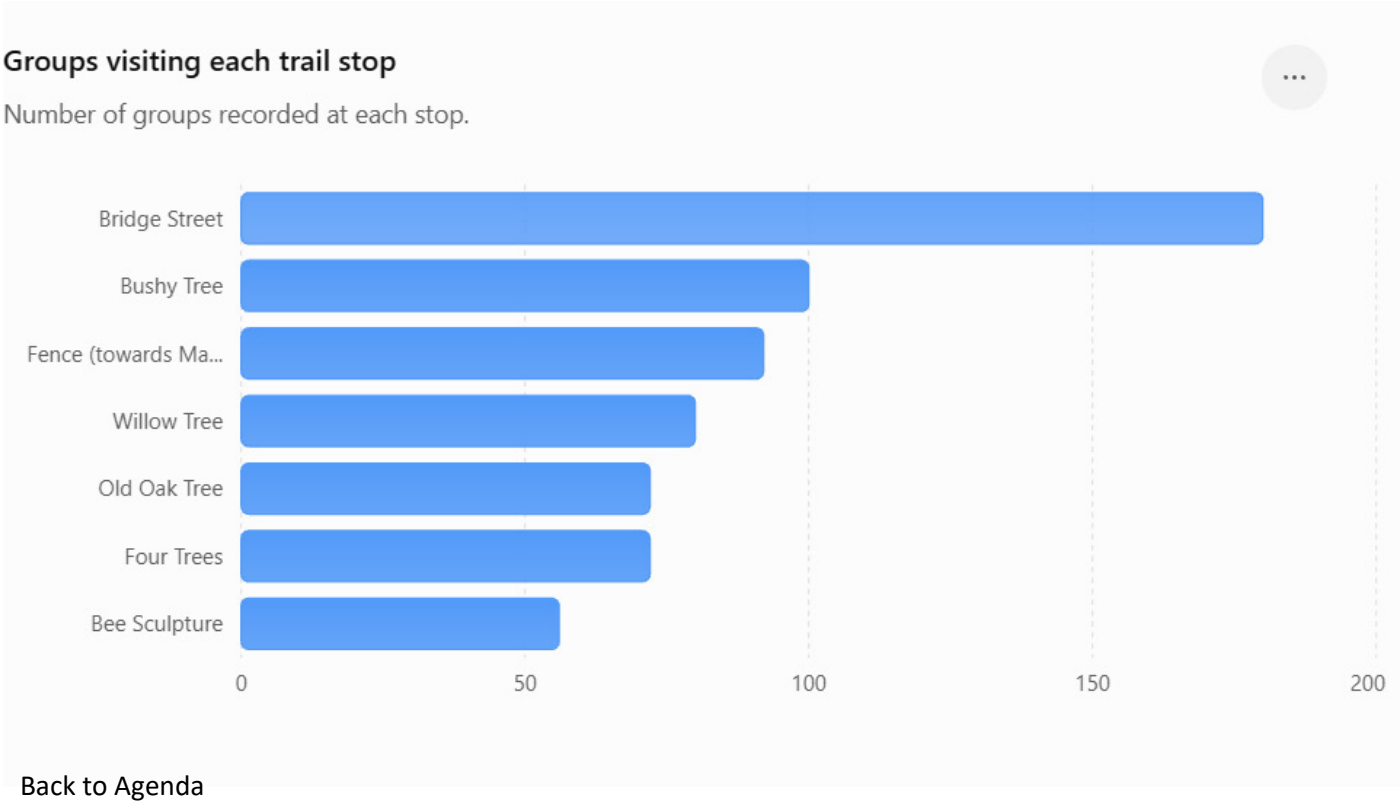
Witham Summer of Football Trail

Headline Figures

Approx Total Players: **700** (175 Registered Groups)	100% Completion: **32%**	Participation Rate: (scanned more than half the stops) **89.7%**	Dwell Time (in App): (focussed in app, not total playing time) **24 mins**
Avg Total Footsteps: **3.5 million**	Calories Burned: **140,000**		

Activity Calendar





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Witham town council

ITEM NO: 14

Officer Report: The Community Engagement App

Issue:
We have been working on a new community engagement app for Witham Town Council with a company called Aubergine.

The app will be free to use and for community engagement rather than governance requirements, which will remain on the website. A major advantage of using an app is that we can use push notifications to reach users who agree to receive them.

The app will include the following:
A community noticeboard
A list of community clubs
WTC news
FAQ's
A 'report it' page
Information on the Broomfield Bus link
A page for Witham Community Centre
The River Walk Sculpture trail
Witham Town Trail

WTC events will be added in the new year.

The app has been submitted to The App Store and The Play Store for approval.

Advice: To receive and note.

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Witham town council

ITEM NO: 15

Officer Report: Social Media Report – 1st August 26 – 31st October 26

Issue:

The most popular posts on social media in the last 3 months have been:
Facebook: #WildlifeWednesday (Green Woodpecker) – 144 likes
Instagram: #WildlifeWednesday (Torch across Duckpond) – 95 likes

The posts that reached the most people through the algorithms of social media:
Facebook: WTC's Community Centre launch – 37.5k, #WildlifeWednesday (Torch across Duckpond) – 20.4k
Instagram: #WildlifeWednesday (Torch across Duckpond) – 1.5K

Traffic on our social media pages:
Facebook
Visits to our profile: 16.8 (higher than last quarter)
Views of our content: 971k (marginally lower than last quarter)
New followers: 305 (Up from 261 last quarter)
Total Followers: 5,894 (Up from 5,246 last quarter)
People reached: 241.1k (Up from 113.7k last quarter)

Instagram
Visits to our profile: 105 (Down from 316 last quarter)
Views of our content: 1.1k (Down from 25.5k last quarter)
New followers:17 (Down from 55 last quarter)
Total Followers: 1087 (Up from 1017 last quarter)
People reached: 4.9k (Down from 6k last quarter)

We post daily Monday to Friday, promoting WTC events and any other WTC initiatives. On Wednesday's we post or share something wildlife related to promote the River Walk, Whetmead or James Cooke Wood, which has been very popular. Thursdays we post items relevant to the weekend, e.g. Sunday Cinema and on the first of each month we post the upcoming meetings for that month. We also share anything that is relevant to the community, such as information from Essex Police
With the opening of the Witham Town Community Centre we are now promoting new events as well as our Town Centre events which will generate good traffic for our various social media platforms in informing the community. We are now able to share content across more local groups which increases our footprint.

Advice:
To receive & note

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