



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

AGENDA

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Monday, 9th March 2026** Time: **7.30 p.m.**

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

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 -

P.	Heath	(Town Mayor)	L.	Headley
J.C.	Coleman	(Deputy Town Mayor)	J.	Martin
E.	Adelaja		R.	Playle
L.	Barlow		R.	Ramage
P.	Barlow		J.	Robertson
J.M.	Coleman		A.	Sloma
B.	Fleet		B.	Taylor
J.	Goodman		E.	Williams

Nikki Smith
Town Clerk

NS/GK/4.3.2026

1. **APOLOGIES**

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

2. **MINUTES**

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 9th February 2026 (previously circulated).

3. INTERESTS

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

4. QUESTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members of the press and public will be invited to address the Meeting.

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 COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

To receive reports from Essex County and Braintree District Update on matters relating to Witham.

6. TACKLING SPEEDING/20s PLENTY

To receive an update from the Chairman of the Planning and Transport Committee.

7. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

To receive details of the Town Mayor's engagements attended for period 3rd February to 2nd March 2026 attached at page 4.

8. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

To receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk.

9. REVIEW OF POLICIES

To receive and approve the following policies for renewal –

- (a) General Privacy Notice attached at page 6.
- (b) Public CCTV Policy attached at page 13.
- (c) Registration of Gifts Policy attached at page 19.
- (d) Anonymous Communications Policy attached at page 22.

To receive the following policy for adoption -

- (e) Risk Management Policy attached at page 25.

10. COMMUNITY COMMITTEE BUDGET

To receive a report concerning the Community Committee budget attached at page 30.

11. 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.

12. LAND TRANSFER

To receive a report attached at page 32.

13. MALTINGS LANE COMMUNITY CENTRE

To receive a report attached at page 33.

14. BLACKWATER LANE REPORT

To receive a report attached at page 38.



**LIST OF MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN
3rd February 2026 to 2nd March 2026
Councillor Paul Heath**

Tuesday 3rd February 2026

Attended meeting with Revd. Dr Jonathan Pritchard to discuss Civic Service.

Thursday 5th February 2026

Attended the Chatty Café in the Heritage Room at the Town Hall, engaging with the public.

Thursday 12th February 2026

Attended the Chatty Café in the Heritage Room at the Town Hall, engaging with the public.

Saturday 14th February 2026

Attended the Stamp Fair and Exhibition at The Labour Hall.

Attended the PDSA Volunteer Day promotion.

Sunday 15th February 2026

Attended Sunday Cinema at The RBL – High Noon.

Wednesday 18th February 2026

Engaging with the public at the pop-up stall in the Grove Centre with the Town Clerk re: Witham Street Festival.



Thursday 19th February 2026

Attended the Chatty Café in the Heritage Room at the Town Hall, engaging with the public.
Engaged with Essex Fire and the public in the Heritage Room at the Town Hall.

Saturday 21st February 2026

Engaging with the public at the pop-up stall in the Grove Centre with the Town Clerk re: Witham Street Festival.

Tuesday 24th February 2026

Attended NHS Teams Meeting with the Town Clerk.

Thursday 26th February 2026

Attended the Chatty Café in the Heritage Room at the Town Hall, engaging with the public.

Saturday 28th February 2026

Attended Witham Carnival Court Selection evening at the Public Hall.

Sunday 1st March 2026

Attended Witham Wombles Spring Clean at Whetmead.
Attended Essex County Council Civic Service at Chelmsford Cathedral.

Monday 2nd March 2026

Attended the Veterans Coffee Morning at the RBL.
Meeting with Revd. Dr Jonathan Pritchard to discuss Civic Service

[Back to Agenda](#)

Witham Town Council: General Privacy Notice

Policy Overview

This document explains how Witham Town Council handles and processes data, what we use data for and your rights concerning your personal data. The following is proposed to be added - **It applies to all the personal data we process in carrying out our functions as a local authority, including data collected in person, by post, email, telephone, online via our website (witham.gov.uk) and through our public CCTV systems.** End of addition.

What do we mean by 'Personal Data'?

'Personal Data' is any information about a living individual which allows them to be identified from that data, for example through a name, photograph or email address. Identification can be through direct use of the data or by combining it with other information. The processing of personal data is governed by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) **the Data Protection Act 2018** and supporting legislation such as the Human Rights Act **1998**.

Who are we?

This privacy notice is provided to you by Witham Town Council, a statutory local authority which is a registered data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office.

The following to be added -

Our contact details are:

- **Witham Town Council, Town Hall, 61 Newland Street, Witham, Essex, CM8 2FE**
- **Telephone: 01376 520627 (check and amend if needed)**
- **Email: infocentre@witham.gov.uk**

Data Protection Officer (DPO):

The Council's Data Protection Officer is the Town Clerk. You can contact the DPO at the postal and email addresses above if you have any questions about how we use your personal data.

End of addition

What other Data Controllers do we work with?

Witham Town Council also works with other data controllers, including:

- **Principal Authorities (District & County Councils)**
- **Government Departments**
- **Affiliations & Professional Bodies**
- **Not for Profit Entities**
- **Contractors**
- **Community Groups**
- **Credit Referencing Agencies.**

There may be instances where we need to share your personal data with such bodies so that they can carry out their responsibilities to the Council. In certain instances, the Council may be a joint data-

controller with other organisations, and you may exercise any of your rights with any data controller who is handling your personal data. A description of what personal data Witham Town Council processes and for what purposes is set out within this Privacy Notice.

What does Witham Town Council process?

The Council will process some or all of the following personal data where necessary to perform its general tasks:

- **Names, titles and aliases.**
- **Photographs**
- **Contact details (email/phones)**
- The following is to be added - **CCTV images and associated metadata (such as location, date and time of recording)** End of addition.
- **Where relevant services are provided by the Council, or where you provide them to us, we may process information such as gender, age, marital status, nationality, education/work history, academic/professional qualifications, hobbies, family composition and dependents.**
- **Where goods and services are paid for, bank details and transaction histories.**
- **The data we process may include sensitive personal data.**

How we use sensitive personal data.

We may process sensitive personal data in order to comply with legal requirements and obligations to third parties.

Sensitive Personal Data is defined under the General Data Protection Regulation as a special data category which requires a higher level of protection with all such data justified. The Town Council may only utilise and process such data on legitimate grounds, such as:

- **Limited circumstances with your written consent.**
- **Where we must carry out our legal obligations.**
- **Where it is required in the public interest.**

Less commonly, we may process this type of personal data where it is needed in relation to legal claims or where it is needed to protect your interests, or somebody else's interests and you are not capable of giving your consent, or where you have already made the information public.

The following is to be added - **We apply additional safeguards to special category data, including access controls and stricter retention periods where appropriate.** End of addition.

Consent for processing sensitive personal data.

In limited circumstances, we may approach you for your written consent to allow us to process certain sensitive personal data. If we do so, we will provide you with full details of the personal data that we would like and the reason we need it so that you can carefully consider whether you wish to consent.

The following is to be added - **Where we rely on consent as our lawful basis, you have the right to withdraw that consent at any time (see section 15). Withdrawing consent will not affect the lawfulness of any processing carried out before you withdraw it.** End of addition.

General Compliance

The Council has taken all necessary steps to ensure compliance with data protection legislation. Witham Town Council ensures that all data held is:

- Used lawfully, fairly and in a transparent way.
- Collected only for valid purposes that we have clearly explained to you and not used in any way that is incompatible with those purposes.
- Relevant to the purposes that we have told you about and limited to only those purposes.
- Accurate and kept up to date.
- Kept only as long as necessary for the purpose we have told you about.
- Kept and destroyed securely including ensuring that appropriate technical and security measures are in place to protect your personal data to protect personal data from loss, misuse, authorized access and disclosure.

The following is to be added - **We are committed to meeting our transparency and information obligations under Articles 12–14 UK GDPR, which are a particular regulatory focus for data protection authorities in 2026.** End of addition.

The Council may use your personal data for some or all of the following purposes:

- To deliver public services including to understand your needs and provide services that you request and to understand what we can do for you, informing you of any other relevant services.
- To confirm your identity in order to provide some services.
- To contact you through approved channels.
- To help us evaluate our performance as a local authority.
- To prevent and detect fraud and corruption in the use of public funds, and where necessary, law enforcement functions.
- To enable us to discharge our statutory functions as a local authority.
- To carry out appropriate safe-guarding policies.
- To promote the interests of the Council.
- To maintain the Council's accounts and records.
- To seek your views, opinions and comments.
- To notify you of relevant changes to our facilities, Council membership and elections.
- To send you communications that you have requested or may be of interest to you.
- To process relevant financial transactions including grants and payments for goods and services and services supplied to the Council.
- To allow for the statistical analysis of Council services for future planning and provision.

Data Processing for CCTV Systems

The Town Council may also process data concerning our CCTV systems for the prevention and prosecution of crime. The management of the Town Council's CCTV is defined across the Council's data retention policies.

Cameras are not live monitored, only pre-recorded footage is viewed by council officers (The following to be added) ~~except in specific circumstances where real-time monitoring is necessary and proportionate to respond to an incident or law enforcement request.~~

CCTV Cameras and recorded footage may be viewed by authorised officers, Essex Police and other law enforcement agencies, in accordance with our CCTV Policy and data-sharing agreements. Recorded footage may be shared with other local authorities.

Warning signs are displayed at access routes to CCTV-covered areas, to provide clear notice that CCTV is in operation and to explain who operates the system.

We will only retain CCTV recordings for as long as is necessary for the purposes described above, in line with our Retention Policy, unless a longer retention period is required for legal proceedings or law-enforcement purposes. End of addition.

The Legal Basis for Processing Personal Data

The Council is a statutory public authority and holds both discretionary powers to perform tasks and statutory duties that it must complete. The vast majority of data processed (the following to be deleted) ~~by the Town Council is processed in accordance with the Council's statutory duties. We may process personal data where it is necessary for contractual obligations to you, such as hiring or using a Council run facility. Where additional consent is required, consent will be sought prior to the data being used.~~ (end of deletion and the following to be added) **is on the following legal basis-**

- **Public task (Article 6(1)(e))** – where processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Council (for example, exercising statutory functions, managing public spaces, running consultations, operating CCTV for public safety).
- **Legal obligation (Article 6(1)(c))** – where we must process your data to comply with a legal obligation (for example, record-keeping duties, health and safety, responding to information requests).
- **Contract (Article 6(1)(b))** – where processing is necessary for a contract with you, such as hiring or using a Council-run facility.
- **Legitimate interests (Article 6(1)(f))** – in limited cases, for example for website security or some types of non-statutory communication, provided these interests are not overridden by your rights and freedoms. Where we rely on legitimate interests we will explain what those interests are.
- **Consent (Article 6(1)(a))** – where you have given clear consent for us to process your personal data for a specific purpose. We will always tell you when we are relying on consent and how you can withdraw it.

For special category data, we rely on additional conditions in Article 9 UK GDPR and Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018, including substantial public interest, employment and social protection law, and explicit consent where appropriate. End of addition.

Sharing your personal data

This section provides information about the third parties with whom the council may share your personal data. These third parties have an obligation to put in place appropriate security measures

and will be responsible to you directly for the manner in which they process and protect your personal data. It is likely that we must share personal data with:

- **Approved data controllers and contracted agents, such as Information Centre partners.**
- **Our agents, suppliers and contractors where contractors provide services on our behalf such as newsletter distribution.**
- The following deletion ~~On occasion, with other local authorities or not for profit bodies with which we are carrying out joint ventures, such as partnership working with other Councils.~~ End of deletion.
- The following to be added - **Other local authorities or not-for-profit bodies with which we are carrying out joint ventures or partnership working (for example, Braintree District Council)**
- **Law enforcement and other public authorities such as the Police, where necessary and lawful, particularly in relation to CCTV footage and fraud prevention**

We do not sell your personal data to third parties. We will only share your data where we have a lawful basis to do so, and where possible we will share the minimum amount of data necessary. End of addition.

10. Data Retention

We will keep some records permanently if we are legally required to do so. We may keep other records for an extended period of time on legitimate public interest grounds. The following to be added - **In all cases, we will only retain personal data for as long as it is needed for the purposes for which it was collected, or to meet legal, accounting or reporting requirements.** End of addition. A full schedule of document retention periods is detailed in our Data Retention Policy.

11. Your Rights Concerning Personal Data

You have statutory rights concerning the use and management of your personal data. When exercising your rights and in order to process any request made by you, we may need to verify your identity for your security. In such cases we will need you to supply the Council with proof of your identity before exercising your rights.

- I. The following to be deleted - ~~The right to access your personal data held by the Council~~ End of deletion. The following to be added - **Right of Access** End of addition (**Subject Access Request**)

At any point you can contact the Council to request a copy of any of your personal data held by us, as well as why this information is being held, and where the information was obtained from. Requests will be responded to within a 30-day window.

There are no fees or charges for making a Subject Access Request. Excessive requests which are manifestly unfounded or malicious may be subject to administration fees or refusal.

- II. The following to be deleted - ~~The right to correct and update the personal data we hold on you.~~ End of deletion. The following is added - **Right to rectification** End of addition.

If the data we hold on you is out of date, incomplete or incorrect, you can inform us and your data will be updated.

- III. The following to be deleted - ~~The right to have your personal data erased.~~ The following to be added - **Right to erasure** End of addition

If you feel that the Council should no longer be using your personal data or that we are unlawfully using your personal data, you can request that we erase the personal data we hold. The following to be deleted - ~~When we receive such requests, we will confirm whether your data has been deleted, or the reasons as to why it cannot be deleted.~~ End of deletion. The following to be added - **We will confirm whether your data has been deleted or explain the reasons why it cannot be deleted (for example, because we must retain it by law or because it is needed for a public task).** End of addition.

The following to be deleted - ~~You should note that a request to erase your personal data may impact on the services provided to you by the Council, and you may be required to supply your personal data again if you wish to use Council services.~~

- IV. ~~The right to object to the processing of your personal data or to restrict it to certain purposes only.~~ End of deletion. The following to be added - **Right to restrict processing** End of addition

You have the right to request that we stop processing your personal data or ask us to restrict processing. Upon receiving the request, we will contact you and let you know if we are able to comply or if other legal obligations prevent us from ceasing the processing of data.

The following to be added - **Right to object**

You have the right to object to processing of your personal data where we are relying on public task or legitimate interests as our lawful basis, including any profiling based on those grounds, and to direct marketing. We will explicitly draw this right to your attention whenever we collect your data for such purposes. End of addition

V. The right to data portability.

You have the right to request that we transfer some of your data to another controller. We will comply with your request where it is feasible to do so, within one month of receiving your request.

- VI. **The right to withdraw your consent** the following to be deleted ~~to the processing at any time for any processing of data to which consent was obtained.~~ End of deletion

The following to be added - **You can withdraw your consent at any time for any processing of data for which consent was obtained.** End of addition. You can withdraw your consent easily by telephone, email or by post (see contact details below)

VII. The right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

You may contact the Information Commissioners Office on 0303 123 1113 or at the Commissioner's Office Address:

**ICO
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF**

Witham Town Council | 61 Newland Street | Witham | Essex | CM8 2FE



Further information is available at ico.org.uk

Further Processing

If we wish to use your personal data for a new purpose not covered by this Privacy Notice, then we will provide you with a new notice explaining this new use prior to commencing the processing and setting out the relevant purposes and (delete the following) ~~processing conditions~~ End of deletion and the following to be added - **legal basis**. End of addition. Where necessary, we will seek your prior consent to the new processing.

Contacting us about this policy.

This policy is overseen and enforced by the Town Council's Data Protection Officer. If you have questions concerning Data Protection, please contact the Data Protection Officer:

Nikki Smith, Town Clerk

Town Hall

61 Newland Street

Witham

Essex

CM8 2FE

Email:

townclerk@witham.gov.uk

m.gov.uk

Adopted at Minute 58(g). of Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 29.2.2022

Reviewed: Full Town Council March 2026

Review Date: March 2027

WTC16 – General Privacy Notice

[Back to Agenda](#)

Witham Town Council: Public CCTV Policy



Policy Overview

This Policy is to control the management, operation, use and confidentiality of the CCTV systems at the locations listed at the end of this document. Its sets out to comply with best practice in the CCTV Code of Practice, Charter for a democratic use of video-surveillance and other relevant guidance.

The following is to be added - **This Policy should be read alongside the Council's General Privacy Notice, Data Protection Policy and Data & Document Retention Policy, which together explain how the Council processes personal data and uphold data protection rights.** End of addition.

Introduction

This Policy is to control the management, operation, use and confidentiality of the CCTV systems at the locations listed at the end of this document.

This policy will be subject to annual review by the Town Council to ensure that it continues to reflect the public interest and that it and the systems meet all legislative requirements, principally:

- a) Data Protection Act 2018
- b) Human Rights Act 1998,
- c) Regulation of Investigatory Powers Acts 2000
- d) UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- e) The following to be added - **Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (including the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice and its 12 guiding principles)** End of addition.

The Council also wishes to adopt best practice and protocols set out in national guidance, including:

- a) the CCTV Code of Practice,
- b) Charter for a democratic use of video-surveillance
- c) The following to be added - **any guidance issued by the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner relevant to local authorities** End of addition.

This policy aims to ensure that the Council's CCTV installations:

- a) are correctly and efficiently installed and operated.
- b) The Town Council accepts the principles of the UK GDPR and the Data Protection 2018 Act based on the Data Protection Principles as follows:

The following to be added - **Data Protection Principles**

This Policy aims to ensure that the Council's CCTV installations:

- a) are correctly and efficiently installed, maintained and operated;
- b) are used in a way that is necessary and proportionate to achieve clearly defined and legitimate purposes;
- c) are supported by appropriate governance, accountability and documentation, including a record of processing activities and data protection impact assessments where required.

The Town Council accepts and applies the data protection principles set out in the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, Personal data captured by CCTV will be: End of addition.

- The following to be deleted - ~~data must be fairly and lawfully~~(End of deletion) processed (the following to be added) - **lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner** End of addition.
- processed for limited purposes and not in any manner incompatible with those purposes;
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- not kept for longer than is necessary;
- processed in accordance with individuals' rights;
- Secure;
- not transferred to countries with inadequate protection;
- To add the following **supported by appropriate policies, procedures and staff training to promote good practice.** End of addition.
- To delete the following ~~subject to guidance on good practice;~~
- ~~Examples of how to implement the standards and good practice.~~ End of deletion.

The following to be added - **CCTV** (end of deletion) data will not be used for personal gain or interest (to add the following) **or for any purpose that is incompatible with the purposes set out in the Policy or the Council's General Privacy Notice.** End of addition.

Statement of Purpose

The public CCTV network is used for the following purposes:

- to reduce the fear of crime, so they can enter and leave without fear of intimidation by individuals or groups;
- to reduce the vandalism of property and to prevent, deter and detect crime and disorder;
- to assist the police, the Town Council and other Law Enforcement Agencies with identification, detection, apprehension and prosecution of offenders by
- examining and using retrievable evidence relating to crime, public order or contravention of bye-laws;
- To deter potential offenders by publicly displaying the existence of CCTV, having cameras clearly sited that are not hidden and signs on display.
- To assist all "emergency services" to carry out their lawful duties.
- To add the following - **to support the Council's management and protection of its assets and to enhance public safety in areas under its control, where this is necessary and proportionate.**

CCTV will only be used where there is a legitimate aim and an identified pressing need, and the level of surveillance will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains justified and proportionate in light of privacy considerations End of addition.

Locational Information

- All administration and footage processing takes place at the Town Hall, 61 Newland Street.
- Full details of all camera locations can be obtained by written request addressed to the Town Clerk.

System Management

The CCTV operating system will be administered and managed by the Town Clerk, in accordance with the principles and objectives expressed in this policy document.

The following to be added - **The Town Council is the 'controller' of personal data captured by its CCTV systems for the purposes of UK data protection law, and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the UK GDPR and DPA 2018.**

The Town Clerk acts as the responsible owner of the CCTV systems and is accountable for their day-to-day management, including authorising access, disclosures and any directed or covert surveillance in accordance with applicable law.

Officers who operate, maintain or access CCTV equipment or images will only do so where authorised, trained and subject to appropriate confidentiality obligations.

System Operating and Control End of addition

Cameras are not live monitored, only pre-recorded footage is viewed by council officers (the following to be added) **except in specific circumstances where real-time monitoring is necessary and proportionate to respond to an incident or law enforcement request.** End of addition.

Essex Police officers may monitor cameras at the Council Offices or on a hand-held device provided by the Town Council for policing purposes, subject to an (the following to be added) **appropriate data sharing agreement, information security controls and compliance with police internal CCTV policies.** End of addition.

The CCTV system will be operated 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year (the following to be added) **subject to technical availability.** End of addition.

Warning signs, as required by the Code of Practice of the Information Commissioner, will be placed at all access routes to areas covered by the Council's CCTV cameras

System Control, (the following to be added) **Access and Security** (End of addition)

On a weekly basis, the Clerk (the following to be added) **or delegated officer** (End of addition) will check and confirm:

- a) the cameras are functional; and
- b) the equipment is properly recording
- c) Maintain a record to confirm inspection.

Access to the CCTV System will be strictly limited to the Town Clerk and nominated staff delegates, and other authorised persons, such as Police Officers.

Unauthorised persons are not permitted to view live or pre-recorded footage. Access to footage is strictly controlled and limited to those with a legitimate need to view it.

The CCTV control room at the Council Offices shall be kept locked at all times when not in use. (The following to be added) **All PC or tablets with CCTV access shall be password protected and kept locked when not in use.** (End of addition)

Unless an immediate response to events is required, cameras may not be re-directed at an individual, their property or a specific group of individuals, without an authorisation being obtained from Clerk for Directed Surveillance to take place, as set out in the Regulation of Investigatory Power Act 2000.

If covert surveillance is planned or has taken place, copies of the written authorisation, including any review or cancellation, must be returned to the Clerk.

Materials or knowledge secured via CCTV will not be used for any commercial purpose. Recorded data will only be used for the stated purposes outlined in this policy.

Recorded data will only be released to the media for use in the investigation of a specific crime and with the written authority of the police. Recorded data will never be released to the media for purposes of entertainment.

The following to be added - All CCTV equipment and recordings will be protected by appropriate technical and organisational measures, including user access controls, secure storage, and encryption where appropriate, logging of access and regular review of system security. (End of addition).

Retention and disposal of Data

All matters of retention are set out in the Council's Data & Document Retention Policy available online.

The following to be added - CCTV footage will be retained only for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes set out in this Policy, normally for a defined and documented retention period, unless a longer retention period is required where footage has been downloaded or preserved for a specific incident, investigation, legal claim or statutory requirement.

At the end of the retention period, footage will be securely deleted or overwritten so that it cannot be reconstructed or recovered, in line with the Council's retention and disposal procedures. (End of addition)

Dealing with official requests: use of CCTV in relation to criminal investigations

CCTV recorded images may be viewed by the Police for the prevention and detection of crime, authorised officers and members of Witham Town Council for supervisory purposes, discipline reasons or authorised demonstration and training.

A record will be maintained of the release of Data and a register will be available for this purpose.

If footage is not released via DAMS then a completed Request Access form will be required before CCTV can be processed. If the footage is not being processed through DAMS or a council's internal system then it should only be shared via a memory stick.

Requests by the Police can only be actioned under section (the following to be deleted) 29 of (end of deletion) the (the following to be added) applicable provisions of the (end of addition) Data Protection Act 1998. (the following to be added) 2018 and UK GDPR that allow disclosures for the prevention or detection of crime or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders, subject to appropriate checks and documentation. (End of addition)

As the Controller, Witham Town Council, allows the processing of personal data on our behalf by Essex Police (Processor) for policing purposes in accordance with a data sharing agreement and other councils such as Braintree District Council.

As the Controller, we will allow access to any Essex Police officer to access our public CCTV system for policing purposes as long as it is being used in line with Essex Police internal policy and controls regarding CCTV and in compliance with data protection laws.

Should footage be required as evidence, a copy may be released to the Police under the procedures described in this Policy and shall be treated in accordance with all aspects of this policy.

The Council retains the right to refuse permission for the Police to pass to any other person the footage or any part of the information contained therein.

Applications received from outside bodies (e.g., solicitors or insurance companies) to view or release disks or memory sticks will be referred to the Clerk. In these circumstances, disks/memory sticks will normally be released where satisfactory documentary evidence is produced showing that they are required for legal proceedings, or in response to a Court Order. A fee can be charged in such circumstances and this fee shall not exceed £25.00.

Complaints

Any complaint concerning CCTV or the application of this policy should be made under the Council's adopted Complaints Procedure, available online.

The following to be added - **Individuals may also raise concerns about the Council's handling of their personal data with the Town Clerk or Data Protection Officer (if appointed). If they remain dissatisfied, they have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Contact details are available in the Council's General Privacy Notice and on the ICO website.** (End of addition).

Access by the Data Subject

The UK GDPR Data Protection Act 2018 provides Data Subjects (individuals to whom "personal data" relate) ~~(the following to be deleted) with a right to access data held about themselves, including that obtained by CCTV.~~ (End of deletion) **(the following to be added) with rights in relation to their personal data, including the right of access, rectification, erasure, restriction, objection and data portability, subject to certain conditions and exemptions.** (End of additions)

All such requests should be made in writing to the Town Clerk. Before making a request, you should read the Council's Privacy Notice which is available online, and provides further information with respect to such requests.

The Council will respond to Subject Access Requests within one month of receipt, ~~(the following to be added)~~ **or within any extended time limit permitted by the UK GDPR where requests are complex,** (end of addition) in accordance with data protection law. as required by the UK GDPR.

The following to be added - **In some cases, it may not be possible to provide copies of CCTV images where doing so would involve disclosing personal data about other identifiable individuals who cannot reasonably be anonymised, or where an exemption applies (for example, where disclosure would prejudice crime prevention or detection). In such cases the Council will explain, as far as possible, the reasons for its decision.**

Privacy, impact assessments and reviews (End of addition)

The Council will consider the impact of CCTV on individuals' privacy and will undertake data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) before introducing new CCTV systems, significantly changing existing systems or using new surveillance technologies, in line with ICO guidance.

CCTV locations, coverage and technical settings (such as zoom and audio capability) will be configured to minimise unnecessary intrusion into private spaces or areas where people have a higher expectation of privacy, unless there is a clear and lawful justification.

The Council will regularly review the necessity and proportionality of its CCTV use, including the purposes, locations, signage, retention periods, access controls and data sharing arrangements, to ensure ongoing compliance with data protection and surveillance guidance.

The following to be added - **Training and awareness**

Staff and members with responsibilities under this Policy will receive appropriate training on CCTV operation, data protection, information security and handling of requests and complaints, with refresher training as required.

The Council will promote awareness of this Policy and related privacy information so that staff, members and the public understand why and how CCTV is used.

Policy management

This Policy is owned by the Policy & Resources Committee and will be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner if required by changes in law, guidance or the Council's operations.

Any substantive changes to this Policy will be approved by the Council and the latest version will be published on the Council's website or made available upon request. (End of addition)

The Council will regularly review and update its CCTV signage to ensure it meets the requirements of the UK GDPR and ICO guidance.

POLICY NO: WTC/043

ADOPTED: P&R 5.12.2022

REVIEWED: 9th March 2026

REVIEW DATE: March 2027

[Back to Agenda](#)

Witham Town Council: Registration of Gifts & Hospitality Policy

Policy Overview

This policy explains the protocol in which officers of the Town Council shall register any gifts or hospitality offered. The following to be added - **Its purpose is to protect officers and the Council from any suggestion of improper influence, bribery or conflict of interest, and to promote openness, integrity and accountability in line with the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles).**

This policy applies to all employees of Witham Town Council, including permanent, temporary, casual and agency staff, and to any other individuals working for the Council under a contract for services. (End of addition).

Guidance on Declaring Gifts and Hospitality

All officers at Witham Town Council must register any gifts, favours, rewards or hospitality offered or given to them over the value of £25. A form for registering gifts and hospitality is attached to this policy and can also be downloaded from the shared files. Once completed the form should be given to the Town Clerk who will make a decision on whether the gift or hospitality can be accepted.

The following to be added - **Officers are also encouraged, as good practice, to record any offer which may present a perception risk, even if the estimated value is £25 or less, particularly where: the offer comes from a current or potential contractor, supplier, applicant, licensee or other party with whom the Council has, or may have, a regulatory or financial relationship; or multiple low-value offers are made by the same source over time (End of addition)**

Offers of gifts or hospitality must be treated with caution whenever any suggestion of improper influence could arise. To prevent any improper behaviour or suggestion of improper behaviour arising, employees must take great care when a gift or hospitality is offered. Under no circumstances should you accept gifts or hospitality which are extravagant nor those given by the same client or individual on a frequent basis.

The following to be added - **As a guiding principle, officers should not accept any gift or hospitality which could reasonably be perceived as placing them under any obligation, influencing their decisions or compromising their impartiality. When in doubt, officers should politely decline and seek advice from the Town Clerk before accepting. (End of addition)**

Any employee accepting/offering money for doing or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity shall be subject to immediate dismissal. The following to be added - **Such conduct may also constitute a criminal offence under bribery or corruption legislation and may be reported to the relevant authorities.**

Transparency and the register

All declared offers (whether accepted or declined) above the £25 threshold must be recorded in the Council's Gifts & Hospitality Register, which will be maintained by the Town Clerk (or nominated officer). The register will be reviewed periodically by senior management and may be reported to the Policy & Resources Committee as appropriate.

Entries in the register should clearly state the name and organisation of the donor, description of the gift or hospitality, estimated value, date of offer/receipt, whether accepted or declined, and the reason for the decision. (End of addition)

Special Dispensation

Employees should only accept/give offers of gifts or hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent Witham Town Council in the community and must comply with the provisions below:

- Employees shall be allowed to receive books, diaries, pens, pencils, and similar articles that would have also been sent to a large number of other companies, such as a promotional calendar at Christmas.
- Working lunches are permissible provided that the employee has the approval of the Town Clerk.
- Employees may receive gifts on behalf of Witham Town Council from visiting dignitaries but must then declare these using the Officers' Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality form. The decision as to whether the employee can personally retain the gift will be made by the Town Clerk.
- Any such other matters as the Town Clerk may approve from time to time.

Employees must still register the receipt/offer of any gift or hospitality above a value of £25 even if it is included in the list above. Employees are personally responsible for their actions in connection with any offer of a gift, favour, reward or hospitality and the completion of the register does not relieve them of the responsibility to justify their acceptance of such an offer.

Breaches of this duty will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

The following to be added - **In particular, officers must not:**

- accept gifts or hospitality where the Council is in, or may be perceived to be in, a contractual, regulatory, enforcement or decision-making relationship with the provider and acceptance could reasonably be seen as influencing the outcome;
- solicit gifts, hospitality or other benefits for themselves or others;
- accept repeated or lavish hospitality from the same source;
- accept gifts or hospitality in a personal capacity that are clearly connected with their official duties and which could not reasonably have been offered if they were not a Council officer.

Refusal of gifts and hospitality

Where an offer of a gift or hospitality is refused, the officer should still complete the declaration form and indicate that it was declined. This helps demonstrate transparency and protects both the officer and the Council from any allegation of impropriety.

Publication and access

As good practice, the Council may publish summary information from the Gifts & Hospitality Register (for example, on its website) to promote openness and public confidence, subject to data protection requirements. (End of addition)

Agreed at Minute 58(e) of Policy & Resources Meeting held 29.3.2022

Reviewed: 9th March 2026

Review Date: March 2028

POLICY NO: WTC/004 - POLICY & RESOURCES

Witham Town Council | 61 Newland Street | Witham | Essex | CM8 2FE



Officers Declaration of Gifts or Hospitality

Staff Name	
Date	
Particulars of how Offer or Receipt of Gift or Hospitality Arose	
View of Town Clerk	
Approval <i>Give/Denied</i>	
Staff Signature and Date	
Town Clerk: Signature and Date	

[Back to Agenda](#)

Witham Town Council: Anonymous Communications

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Whistleblowing Policy

Guidance on Receiving Anonymous Communications

The following is proposed to be deleted -

~~From time to time, the Town Council will receive an anonymous communication. This can be in the form of a letter, email or phone call and can make accusations against Councillors, Staff or members of the general public.~~

~~The Town Council has taken the decision that as a rule all anonymous communications will be ignored; however, they do recognise that there will be occasions when making an accusation could result in fear of retribution. Under these circumstances the Town Clerk will make a judgement as to the validity of the comments made and take any appropriate action they see fit which could include referring the communication to the next Town Council Meeting or to another agency such as the Police.~~

~~End of deletion~~

New policy-

Guidance on Receiving Anonymous Communications

From time to time, the Town Council will receive an anonymous communication. This can be in the form of a letter, email or phone call and can make accusations against Councillors, Staff or members of the general public.

Purpose and principles

The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council will handle anonymous communications in a fair, consistent and proportionate way, recognising both the importance of encouraging people to raise concerns and the practical limitations of anonymous reports.

The Council aims to:

- (a) take reasonable steps to assess all anonymous communications that allege wrongdoing or risk,
- (b) protect individuals from unfair treatment where their identity is known,
- (c) ensure that any investigation is conducted in line with UK law and Council procedures

General approach to anonymous communications

The Town Council has taken the decision that anonymous communications which simply express opinion, abuse or do not contain enough information to understand or investigate the issue will not normally be taken forward. However, anonymous communications that raise concerns about possible wrongdoing, risk to individuals, or other matters that could be relevant under the Council's Whistleblowing Policy or safeguarding, standards, or health and safety procedures will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

However, they do recognise that there will be occasions when making an accusation could result in fear of retribution. Under these circumstances the Town Clerk will make a judgement as to the validity of the comments made and take any appropriate action they see fit which could include referring the communication to the next Town Council Meeting or to another agency such as the Police.

Assessment of anonymous communications

When an anonymous communication is received, the Town Clerk (or another appropriate senior officer where necessary) will consider, so far as reasonably practicable:

- the seriousness of the issues raised;
- the credibility and clarity of the information provided;
- whether the matter appears to fall within the scope of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy, Code of Conduct, safeguarding duties, health and safety obligations, financial procedures or other statutory responsibilities;
- the likelihood of being able to investigate or verify the concerns from other sources without knowing the identity of the person raising them;
- fairness to any individual named or identifiable in the communication.

Having considered these factors, the Town Clerk (or other appropriate officer) will decide whether any further action is justified and what form that action should take. This may include logging the concern, carrying out preliminary enquiries, initiating a formal investigation under an existing procedure (for example, whistleblowing, grievance, disciplinary, safeguarding or complaints procedures), or deciding that no further action is appropriate.

Relationship with the Whistleblowing Policy

Where an anonymous communication appears to meet, or may meet, the criteria for a whistleblowing concern under the Council's Whistleblowing Policy or the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA), it will be handled in line with that Policy as far as possible. Anonymous whistleblowing disclosures will be recorded and considered, but the Council may be limited in its ability to investigate or provide feedback where the whistleblower cannot be contacted.

Individuals are encouraged, wherever they feel able, to raise concerns openly or confidentially under the Whistleblowing Policy so that the Council can offer appropriate protections and maintain contact with them. The Council will respect a request for confidentiality unless it is required by law to reveal the whistleblower's identity (for example, to a court or regulator).

Data protection and record-keeping

Any information contained in an anonymous communication will be handled in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. The Council will keep a proportionate record of anonymous communications that are assessed as raising substantive concerns, together with the outcome of any assessment or action taken. Records will be stored securely and retained only for as long as necessary for the purpose for which they were collected and in line with the Council's retention schedule.

Where an anonymous communication includes personal data about any individual, the Council will ensure that any use or sharing of that information is lawful, necessary and proportionate, and will take into account the rights of the individuals concerned.

Fairness and protection from victimisation

The Council will take reasonable steps to ensure that any person who, having identified themselves, raises concerns in good faith is not subjected to victimisation or detrimental treatment as a result, in line with the Whistleblowing Policy and employment law.

Anonymous communications will not be used as the sole basis for disciplinary action against an individual unless there is sufficient corroborating evidence obtained from other sources.

Approved at Minute 57. Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 29.3.2022
Reviewed: Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held 9th March 2026
To be Reviewed: March 2029

[Back to Agenda](#)

Witham Town Council : Risk Management Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Risk Register, Statement of Internal Control, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other relevant Council policies and procedures

Overview

Risk is inherent in all Council activities and is defined, for the purposes of this policy, as the possibility of injury, loss or damage, or an inability to meet the Council's objectives or provide its services as a result of an action or event.

Risk management is an essential part of the Council's governance framework and supports the efficient, effective and compliant use of public resources. The Council has a statutory duty under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to ensure a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the management of risk.

This policy is designed to set out the framework through which risks are identified, assessed, managed and reviewed, and how this links to the Council's Risk Register and decision-making processes.

Categories of Risk

The main categories of risk considered by the Council include:

- Strategic risk – long-term adverse impacts from poor decision-making or poor implementation, including damage to reputation, loss of public confidence or, in extreme cases, government intervention.
- Compliance risk – failure to comply with legislation, statutory guidance, Council policies or procedures, or failure to maintain sufficient documentation to demonstrate compliance.
- Financial risk – fraud, corruption, waste, inadequate records, excess demand for services, bad debts, insufficient precept, or failure to secure value for money, leading to financial loss or impact on reserves and service delivery.
- Operational risk – failure to deliver services effectively, malfunctioning equipment, hazards to service users, the public or staff, and damage to property, leading to disruption and potential claims.
- Reputational risk – adverse publicity, social media criticism or stakeholder dissatisfaction that may undermine confidence in the Council and its services.
- Information and data risk – loss, misuse or unauthorised disclosure of information, including non-compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

This list is not exhaustive and new or emerging risks may be identified and added to the Risk Register at any time.

Aims of the Policy

This Policy aims to:

- Embed a consistent and proportionate approach to risk management across all Council activities.
- Ensure that significant risks to the achievement of the Council's objectives are identified, assessed and recorded in the Risk Register.
- Ensure that appropriate controls and mitigating actions are put in place, monitored and reviewed.
- Support informed decision-making by providing elected members with clear information about key risks and their potential impact.
- Assist the Council to meet its statutory duties and support the completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in particular the assertions relating to internal control and risk management.

Risk Management Framework

The Council maintains a Risk Register covering Financial, Council Management, Assets, Events and other key areas of activity. The Register sets out, for each risk:

- A description of the risk and the subject area.
- The officer or member responsible.
- The management and controls in place.
- The review frequency and any further action required.
- The residual impact and likelihood scores once controls are applied.

The Risk Assessment process involves:

- Identifying risk – considering what could go wrong in relation to services, projects, assets, events, information and statutory obligations, using experience, guidance, data and consultation with staff, contractors and partners.
- Evaluating risk – assessing impact and likelihood on a scale of 1–10, where 1 is low and 10 is high, and assigning a residual score once existing controls are taken into account. Areas where impact is above 5 are treated as medium or high risk, particularly where likelihood is also above 5.
- Addressing risk – deciding on appropriate controls or actions, which may include introducing or strengthening procedures, training, inspections, insurance, authorisation levels, segregation of duties or, where necessary, ceasing an activity.
- Reviewing risk – updating the Risk Register in line with the review frequencies recorded and when there are changes in activities, legislation, projects or assets.

Dynamic risk assessments may be used for events and activities where circumstances change on the day, and any significant changes or learning points should be reflected in the Risk Register and relevant procedures after the event.

Insurance

The Council maintains insurance cover that reflects the risks identified through the Risk Register and risk assessment processes. Core areas of cover include:

- Material damage to specified items and buildings
- Business interruption
- Loss of money
- Public Liability
- Employer's Liability
- Hirer's Liability
- Fraud
- Legal expenses
- Vehicles
- Cyber and data risks where appropriate.

Insurance arrangements are reviewed at least annually and quotations are obtained periodically to ensure that cover remains adequate and provides value for money. Insurance schedules are cross-checked against the Risk Register to confirm that relevant insurable risks are included

Roles and Responsibilities

Councillors

Councillors provide strategic leadership for risk management and ensure that risk is considered in decision-making. Responsibilities include:

- Approving this Risk Management Policy and reviewing it at least annually.
- Considering key risks and mitigating actions in reports on major projects and decisions.
- Reviewing financial risks and related entries in the Risk Register at least every six months.
- Reviewing and approving the full Risk Register annually.
- Taking risk into account when setting the budget and medium-term financial plans.
- Confirming through the AGAR that an assessment of risks has been carried out and that appropriate measures are in place to manage those risks.

Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

The Town Clerk and RFO have lead responsibility for co-ordinating risk management activity and ensuring day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations affecting the Council.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintaining and updating the Risk Register, including adding new risks and closing or amending existing risks as controls change.

- Ensuring that appropriate policies, procedures, financial regulations and internal controls are in place and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Ensuring that officers and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities for managing and reporting risk.
- Ensuring that significant risks and control issues are reported to the relevant committee and to Full Council as necessary.

Officers and Volunteers

All officers and volunteers are expected to carry out their duties in line with Council policies and procedures and to contribute to the effective management of risk. This includes:

- Following risk assessments, safe systems of work, and relevant guidance.
- Maintaining an awareness of the risks associated with their roles and reporting concerns or emerging risks to their line manager.
- Participating in training and development where required to manage risks effectively.

Contractors

Contractors engaged by the Council are required to:

- Provide appropriate risk assessments and method statements for their work.
- Hold and provide evidence of adequate insurance cover.
- Comply with relevant health and safety requirements and any site-specific controls identified by the Council.

Internal and External Audit

The Internal Auditor provides independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control environment, including its risk management arrangements. The External Auditor provides a further level of assurance through the review of the AGAR and related financial and governance information.

Review of Effectiveness

The Council is responsible for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and risk management, in line with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and sector guidance. This review takes into account:

- The Risk Register and the number and nature of significant issues identified during the year.
- Reports and minutes from the Financial Scrutiny Panel, committees and Full Council.
- Reports from the Town Clerk/RFO on risk and internal control matters.
- Internal Audit reports.
- External Audit reports and recommendations.

The outcomes of the annual review, including any required improvements to controls, are reported to Full Council prior to approval of the Annual Governance Statement.

Policy adopted: 9th March 2026

Policy Reviewed: November 2027

[Back to Agenda](#)

Officer Report: Year End Underspends and Proposals for Use of Funds

At the end of each financial year, the Community Committee reviews any underspends within its budget with a view to allocating remaining funds to support community priorities in line with Council objectives.

For 2025/26, the following budget lines have underspends:

- Community Safety – £1,000
- Other Community Support – £1,500
- CCTV – £5,000

It is proposed that the underspend of £5,000 from the CCTV budget is transferred to the CCTV Earmarked Reserve (EMR), to support the planned upgrade of the Council's CCTV system, recently agreed in principle.

Officers have had initial discussions with the United Reformed Church about delivering two free children's Christmas parties in December 2026 for Witham residents. One party would run from 11:00–13:00 for children aged 3–5, and the second from 14:00–16:00 for children aged 6–10. Each event would include a light lunch and a gift from Father Christmas. The venue can accommodate up to 100 children per party and parents or carers would be able to stay. The indicative total cost for these events is £1,800.

The parties will provide up to 200 local children with a fun, inclusive Christmas celebration at no cost, easing financial and emotional pressures on families. For some children, this may be their only opportunity to see Father Christmas. In previous years, parents have reported that free Santa visits at the Town Hall were the only way their children could have this experience.

By using a community hub venue, families will also be made aware of other local support such as the baby bank, subsidised meals and Holdfast Credit Union. This has the potential to deliver longer-term benefits around financial resilience, food security and access to advice.

To facilitate these initiatives, it is recommended that the combined underspend of £2,500 from the Community Safety and Other Community Support budget lines is transferred to the Events Control Account (EMR).

As the Mayor has not held a Civic Reception this year and the Mayor's Christmas lunch was delivered in a different format, there is an underspend in the Policy and Resources Committee budget. For 2025/26, the following budget lines have underspends:

- Civic Receptions – £1,000
- Christmas Expenses – £2,000

It is proposed that this underspend is used to work with a local football club to provide free summer holiday football sessions for teenagers at Witham Community Centre, subject to suitable arrangements and safeguarding measures being agreed. In addition, it is proposed that another suitable teenage entertainment activity is identified and delivered during the summer period.

It is also suggested that an opening event is held at the Witham Community Centre once completed, which could be facilitated from this underspend.

To fund these initiatives, it is recommended that the combined underspend of £3,000 from the Civic Receptions and Christmas Expenses budget lines is transferred to the Events Control Account (EMR).

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 proposals relate to the reallocation of existing underspends to community events and youth activities. The activities will primarily take place within existing built or hard-standing environments (United Reformed Church and Witham Community Centre) and are not expected to have a negative impact on local habitats or species. Any outdoor football sessions will take place on established recreational land and will be managed to avoid damage to green infrastructure. The overall impact on biodiversity is assessed as neutral.

(b) Crime and disorder

The proposals are expected to have a positive impact on community cohesion and on the prevention of crime and disorder. Free, structured activities for children and teenagers during key periods can reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour by providing safe, supervised alternatives. The use of community hubs and partnership working with local organisations (including a football club) supports positive relationships, resilience and informal early-intervention opportunities. The overall impact on crime and disorder is assessed as positive.

Advice: That council resolve:

1. That £5,000 of underspend from the CCTV budget be transferred to the CCTV EMR to support the forthcoming CCTV upgrade.
2. That £2,500 of underspend from the Community Safety and Other Community Support budgets be transferred to the Events EMR to fund two free children's Christmas parties in December 2026
3. That £3,000 of underspend from the Civic Receptions and Christmas Expenses budgets be transferred to the Events EMR to fund free summer holiday football sessions for teenagers at Witham Community Centre, an additional teenage entertainment initiative and an opening event for the Witham Community Centre.