



Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE
01376 520627
witham.gov.uk

AGENDA

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Monday 8th January 2024** 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:

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

Nikki Smith
Town Clerk
NS/GK/2.1.2024

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of Town Council held 28th November 2023 (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 COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

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

6. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

To receive details of the Town Mayor's engagements attended for period 22nd November 2023 – 2nd January 2024 attached at page 4.

7. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

To receive the Town Clerk's report on matters arising.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) **Planning and Transport Committee held 12th December 2023**

Minutes 151 to 173.

To receive a report of the Meeting.

(b) **Policy and Resources Committee held 12th December 2023**

Minutes 26 to 39.

To receive a report of the Meeting.

9. INVITATION TO JÚTERBURG

To receive an invitation to attend Júterburg on 27th and 28th April 2024 to celebrate 850 years of its municipal law attached at page 5.

10. PHOTOCOPYING OF AGENDAS

To receive a motion from Councillor Heath attached at page 6.

11. PRECEPT 2024 – 2025

To receive the Minutes of the Estimates Sub-Committee Meeting held 18th December 2023 attached at page 7 and the following recommendations –

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for Admin & Central Services for 2024/2025 be accepted.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for the Community Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the amended budget for the Environment Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for the Policy and Resources Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for the Planning and Transport Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached reserve balances for 2024/2025 be accepted.

RECOMMENDATION TO TOWN COUNCIL That the Precept for 2024/2025 of £942,473.57 be approved with a net increase in the Band D Property of £13.60 to £103.24.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

TO RESOLVE 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.

13. FUNDING REPORT

To receive the Funding Report attached at page 17.

14. LAND TRANSFER UPDATE

To receive the Land Transfer Update attached at page 18.



LIST OF MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN NOVEMBER 22ND 2023 TO JANUARY 2ND 2024

Friday 1st December 2023, Witham Industrial Watch Ltd

Attended the members meeting run by Witham Industrial Watch Ltd, held at Tiptree Patisserie.

Monday 11th December 2023, Mayor's Cadet Awarding Ceremony

Attended an award ceremony announcing the selection of the Mayor's Cadet at Maltings Academy.

Tuesday 12th December 2023, Witham Town Luncheon Club

Attend the Witham Town Luncheon Club Christmas dinner.

Tuesday 12th December 2023, Braintree District Council Carol Service

Attended the Chairman of Braintree District Council's Carol Service.

Friday 15th December 2023, Foodbank

Delivered Christmas Hampers to the Witham Foodbank.

Thursday 21st December 2023

Presented Crafty Bear Café with a hamper to celebrate winning the Witham Christmas Window Display competition.

ENGAGEMENTS ATTENDED BY THE DEPUTY MAYOR

Friday 15th December 2023, Witham Boy's Brigade Christmas Dinner

Attended the Witham Boy's Brigade Christmas dinner and awarded the Jack Petchey Award.

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Agenda Item 9

Dear Mrs Ager,

For many years, the town of Jüterbog has maintained good relations with Waldbröl's twin town Witham. Next year, Jüterbog will be celebrating 850 years of its municipal law. This is a wonderful opportunity to revitalise our contact. We cordially invite you to the opening weekend from the 27th of April to the 28th of April 2024.

Please inform us whether you are attending the opening weekend and when you plan to arrive and depart. We would be happy to reserve a room for you.

Best regards,

Arne Raue

Bürgermeister der Stadt Jüterbog

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ITEM NO: 10

Councillor: Paul Heath

Ward: South

Title: Photocopying of Agendas

Motion: In an attempt to cut back on paper and copying costs, as well as being more environmentally friendly, it is proposed that those Members of the Council, with the exception of the Chairman of that particular meeting, who seek a paper copy of an Agenda be charged 10p per side.

Supporting Information: A small number of Members wish to receive paper copies of Agendas rather than use their tablet or laptop. The most recent Policy and Resources Agenda ran to 94 pages and if that Member then gives apologies as they are unable to attend the Meeting the photocopying is then wasted.

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MINUTES

Meeting of: **Estimates Sub-Committee**

Date: **Monday 18th December 2023**

Present: Councillors P. Barlow (Chairman)
E. Adelaja
S. Ager
L. Barlow
P. Heath

Also in attendance: Councillor J.C. Coleman
N. Smith (Town Clerk)
H. Andrews (Deputy Town Clerk)

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received. Cllr B Fleet was absent.

2. **INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There was no member of the press or public present.

4. **COMMITTEE BUDGETS**

(a) Summary Sheet

The proposed summary sheet showing each Committee budget line was received by Members. The Tax Base of £9,128.85 had recently been received from Braintree District Council so current figures were provided in the proposed summary for the 2024/2025 year.

(b) Admin & Central Services

The recommended Administration and Central Services Budget for 2024/2025 was received. Members discussed budget lines and agreed the proposals for the new year.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for Admin & Central Services for 2024/2025 be accepted.

(c) Community Committee

The recommended Community Committee Budget for 2024/2025 was received.

Members discussed the cost of the Town Council events and how successful they were. It was noted that the CCTV budget had increased due to the recent installation of more cameras throughout the town as part of the Safer Streets scheme.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for the Community Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

(d) Environment Committee

The recommended Environment Committee Budget for 2024/2025 was received.

It was noted that the Litter Bin budget line could be reduced as it had not yet been utilised in the current year and was suggested to reduce it to £1,000.

Members also discussed the high charges for the Town Park toilets which was currently under review. It was agreed to reduce this budget to £12,000

Member also agreed to reduce the proposed budget line for James Cooke Wood back to £2,000 as it would be difficult to facilitate an anniversary event.

RESOLVED That the Litter Bin budget line be reduced to £1,000, the Town Park toilet block line be reduced to £12,000, and the James Cooke Wood budget line be reduced to £2,000.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the amended budget for the Environment Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

(e) Policy & Resources Committee

The recommended Policy and Resources Committee Budget for 2024/2025 was received.

The Town Clerk confirmed the introduction of a new budget line for the agreed Member's Grant Scheme for the new year.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for the Policy and Resources Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

(f) Planning & Transport Committee

The recommended Planning and Transport Committee Budget for 2024/2025 along with the Committee Business Plan was received.

Members noted that at the Planning & Transport Committee meeting of 12th December 2023 it was resolved that speeding issues should be tackled by purchasing a speed indicator device, explore the purchase of a Tru-Cam and promote speed awareness initiatives. A new budget line has therefore been included to make provisions for this.

Cllr J.C. Coleman arrived at 8.36pm.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached budget for the Planning and Transport Committee for 2024/2025 be accepted.

5. **RESERVE BALANCES**

The proposed Earmarked Reserves were received and each reserve heading was discussed. Members agreed with the proposals for the 2024/2025 year.

RECOMMENDED TO TOWN COUNCIL That the attached reserve balances for 2024/2025 be accepted.

6. **PRECEPT**

The Precept Calculations for 2024/2025 were received.

Members considered making different adjustments to budget lines to review the final precept figure. The proposed budget finally agreed as a recommendation to FTC should enable the Council to fulfil the proposed business plans it had resolved to pursue in 2024/25.

RECOMMENDATION TO TOWN COUNCIL That the Precept for 2024/2025 of £942,473.57 be approved with a net increase in the Band D Property of £13.60 to £103.24.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.27pm

Councillor Phil Barlow
Chairman

HA/NS/19.12.2023

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SUMMARY AUTOMATIC PRECEPT CALCULATION

Designed by Witham Town Council for transparent Local Government Budgeting

2024/2025

	INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
CENTRAL SERVICES*	£	18,500.00	£	406,046.00
ENVIRONMENT	£	1,650.00	£	260,013.00
COMMUNITY	£	80,050.00	£	265,255.00
POLICY & RESOURCES	£	14,000.00	£	46,625.00
PLANNING & TRANSPORT	£	-	£	14,000.00
TOTALS:	£	114,200.00	£	991,939.00

**For accounting purposes, Central Service costs are split across committees 40/40/20 respectively excluding planning committee.*

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Total Anticipated Operational Expenditure: £ 991,939.00
 Less Anticipated Operational Income: -£ 114,200.00
Balanced (Net) Operational Expenditure: £ 877,739.00

Confirmed Revenue Support & Central Government Funding £ -
Total Other Revenue: £0

Net allocations to Earmarked Reserves (EMRs): £ 64,734.57

Net operational expenditure less other revenue/EMRs: £ 942,473.57

2023/2024 Precept levied: £ 797,141.00

PROPOSED 2023/2024 PRECEPT: (BALANCING FIGURE) £ 942,473.57

Proposed Difference: £ 145,332.57

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2022/2023 TAX BASE

8892.42

2023/2024 TAX BASE

9128.85

2022/2023 BAND D:

£89.64

2023/2024 BAND D:

£103.24

NET Increase in Band D Property: £13.60

Proposed weekly Band D Property charge (over 52 weeks): £1.99

PROPOSED CENTRAL SERVICES BUDGET FOR 2024/2025

	2023/2024		2024/2025	
	Current Budget	Forecast Inc/Exp	Proposed Budget	Difference
Sundry Receipts	500	100000	500	0
Hall Hire	12500	20000	18000	5500
Total Income	12500	120000	18500	5500
Admin - Salaries & Employer N.I Contributions	278216	278216	298826	20610
Travel Expenses	600	500	500	-100 <i>Decreased due to less member training</i>
Town Hall	35000	35000	35000	0
Gas	7000	7000	10000	3000 <i>Contract due to expire in September 2024</i>
Electricity	5700	5700	6700	1000 <i>Fixed for 2 years from Oct 2023</i>
Photocopying	3000	3000	3000	0
Postage	500	400	500	0
Stationery	1500	1500	1500	0
Office Equipment	4000	4000	3500	-500
Telephones	1800	1870	2000	200 <i>Inflationary increase</i>
Insurance	11150	11150	12500	1350
Sundry Expenses	1500	1500	1500	0
Audit & Legal	10000	10000	10000	0
Affiliation Fees	5000	5000	5000	0
Members -Conferencing/Training	4000	1500	2000	-2000
Staff -Conferencing/Training	6500	6500	6500	0
Payroll Charges	900	1100	1200	300 <i>Increase as members allowance paid through payroll & inflation</i>
Petty Cash	700	700	700	0
IT	4000	4000	4600	600 <i>Increase in accounting package charges</i>
Charges	500	500	520	20
Overhead Expenditure	381566	379136	406046	24480

PROPOSED COMMUNITY COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR 2024/2025

Community	2023/2024		2024/2025	
	Current Budget	Forecast Inc/Exp	Proposed Budget	Difference
Information Sales Income	75000	75000	75000	0
Witham Festival Income	1500	6120	1500	0
Coronation Event	500	1628		-500
Music Event			1500	1500 <i>Projected income from bar/food stalls</i>
Dog Show			500	500 <i>Projected income from bar/food stalls</i>
Teddy Bear's Picnic			50	50
Christmas Events	750	2715	1500	750 <i>Projected income from bar/food stalls</i>
		1100	0	0
Total Income	77750	86563	80050	2300
Community Team - Salaries & Employer N.I & LGPS Contributions	82886	72300	87505	4619
Town Clock	1500	1500	1500	0
Christmas Decorations	10600	10600	10600	0 <i>Contract expires Jan 2025</i>
Information Centre Stock	65000	65000	65000	0
Information Centre Advertisement & Administration	3250	3000	3000	-250
Community Grant Aid	15000	15000	15000	0
Citizens Advice	10000	10000	10000	0
CCTV	10000	10000	13000	3000 <i>Possible increase in maintenance/cameras& electricity</i>
Community Safety	1500	1500	1500	0
Community Special Constables Expenses	5000	5000	5000	0
Community Special Constable Recruitment	1000	600	1000	0
Other Community Support	1500	1500	1500	0
Witham Summer Events	23000	27000	25500	2500 <i>Witham Festival, Teddy Bears Picnic & Dog Show</i>
Remembrance	1200	700	1000	-200
D-Day Event			2500	2500
Twinning			2000	2000
Halloween Event	2000	2000	2200	200
Civic Event	2500	2062		-2500
Music Event			10000	10000
Christmas Events & Tree	3200	3200	4000	800
Coronation Event	10000	9350	0	-10000 <i>Replaced by music event</i>
Easter Quest	1650	1313	1650	0
New Events & Events Improvement	1500	1500	1500	0
Silver Cinema	300	300	300	0
Overhead Expenditure	252586	243425	265255	12669

PROPOSED ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR 2024/2025

Environment	2023/2024		2024/2025	
	Current Budget	Forecast Inc/Exp	Proposed Budget	Difference
Dog & Bench Sponsorship Scheme	1650	2560	1650	
Total Income	1650	4650	1650	0
Operations - Salaries & Employer N.I & LGPS	177454	177454	190313	12859
Equipment Supplies & Maintenance	8000	8000	8400	400 <i>Increase in cost of equipment</i>
Dog & Bench Schemes	1200	2112	1200	0
Lighting Maintenance & Utility	4000	4000	6000	2000 <i>Contract expires Sept 2024</i>
Tree Planting	2000	2000	3000	1000 <i>Increase to fund community orchard scheme &500 increase tree group</i>
RW Project Management	10000	0	0	-10000 <i>Being dealt with through S106</i>
Tree Maintenance	5000	5000	5000	0
Toilet Block - Town Park	10500	12500	12000	1500 <i>Increased maintenance costs</i>
Dog Bin Maintenance	600	600	600	0
Litter Bins	3000	3000	1000	-2000 <i>Reduced to one bin</i>
Open Spaces General	2500	2500	2500	0
River Walk Signage	3000	3000	2000	-1000 <i>Replaced some with Safer Streets Funding</i>
James Cooke Wood	2000	2000	2000	0 <i>Event hard to facilitate</i>
River Walk	3000	3000	3000	0
Whetmead LNR	2000	4611	2000	0
Witham in Bloom	12700	14000	14000	1300 <i>Increase in testing costs</i>
Fleet	6000	6000	6000	0
Waste Disposal	1200	1200	1000	-200
Overhead Expenditure	254154	250977	260013	5859

PROPOSED POLICY & RESOURCES BUDGET FOR 2024/2025

Policy & Resources	2023/2024		2024/2025	
	Current Budget	Forecast Inc/Exp	Proposed Budget	Difference
				0
Interest Received	5000	11318	14000	9000 <i>Increase due to improved interest rates</i>
Total Income	5000	11318	14000	9000
Civic Receptions	2300	2000	2500	200
Instructions & Reports	8000	8000	8000	0
Christmas Expenses	2700	2700	3000	300
Mayor's Allowance	2000	2200	2000	0
Member's Grant Scheme	████████████████████	████████████████████	8000	8000
Civic Gesture	500	500	500	0
Surveys & Consultations	1000	1000	1000	0
Newsletter & Publications	12500	12000	13125	625 <i>Increase due to possible increase in delivery costs</i>
Members Allowance	8000	7000	7000	-1000 <i>Mayor & co-opted cannot claim</i>
Communications & Exhibitions	1500	1500	1500	0
Overhead Expenditure	38500	36900	46625	8125

PROPOSED PLANNING & TRANSPORT BUDGET FOR 2024/2025					
	2023/2024		2024/2025		
	Current Budget	Forecast Inc/Exp	Proposed Budget	Difference	
<i>No income line</i>	0				
Neighbourhood Plan	2000	0	2000	0	
Speed Reduction			12000	12000	
Overhead Expenditure		0	14000	12000	

Proposed Earmarked Reserves 2024/2025 including event balances and grants held.*(See bottom of sheet for summary balances with & without precept calculation. Must be used in conjunction with BGTS sheet)*

Reserve Type	Reserve Heading	Current Reserve Level (22/09/2023)	Anticipated Closing Balance 31st March 2024	Proposed allocations/revocations (precept calculation)	Proposed Opening Balance 1st April 2024	Notes
EMR	Street Lighting Sinking Fund	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 6,000.00	Increase in anticipation of replacement lamp posts
EMR	Riverwalk Cycleways	£ 45,442.00	£ 45,442.00	-£ 5,442.00	£ 40,000.00	
EMR	Community Safety /CCTV	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 20,000.00	£ 30,000.00	Increase in anticipation of possible PCSO
EMR	Tree Maintenance	£ 4,000.00	£ -	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	
EMR	Equipment Replacement	£ 30,000.00	£ 20,000.00	-£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	
EMR	Neighbourhood Plan	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 6,000.00	Less grant funding available
EMR	Major Repairs & Renewals	£ 15,000.00	£ 8,010.00	£ 6,990.00	£ 15,000.00	Restore to standard balance
EMR	Acquisitions	£ -	£ -	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00	Start to build up reserve for proposed acquisitions
EMR	Election Expenses	£ 15,000.00	£ 2,813.43	£ 4,186.57	£ 7,000.00	Increase each year in preparation for elections
EMR	Town Hall Development	£ -	£ -	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00	New EMR
EMR	Land Improvement	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00	£ -	£ 40,000.00	
EMR	JC Wood Improvement Plan	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ -	£ 10,000.00	
Control	Events- Control Account	£ 6,655.00	£ 4,891.00		£ 6,000.00	Control account for events
Control	Allotment Control Account	£ 10,903.00	£ 10,903.00		£ 10,903.00	Control account for allotment charges only
BALANCE	Safer Streets	£ 93,089.67	£ 78,000.00		£ 78,000.00	Ring Fenced Grant
BALANCE	Highways Devolution	£ 27,772.00	£ 27,772.00	£ -	£ 27,772.00	Ring Fenced Grant

TOTAL PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS/REVOCATIONS (PRECEPT REQUIREMENT)	£ 64,734.57
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GENERAL RESERVE SUPPLEMENT:

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