



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

## AGENDA

### WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023** 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)
L.	Barlow	(Deputy Town Mayor)
E.	Adelaja	
P.	Barlow	
J.C.	Coleman	
J.M.	Coleman	
B.	Fleet	
L.	Headley	
P.	Heath	
J.	Martin	
R.	Playle	
R.	Ramage	
A.	Sloma	
B.	Taylor	
E.	Williams	

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

#### **2. MINUTES**

To receive the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of Town Council held 15<sup>th</sup> May 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 16<sup>th</sup> May to 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 attached at page 5 .

**7. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

To receive the Town Clerk's report on matters arising attached at page 6 .

**8. MEETING SCHEDULE 2023 – 2024**

To agree a revised Schedule of Meeting for 2023 – 2024 following the publication of Braintree District Council's Meeting Schedule attached at page 7.

**9. YEAR END INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2022/2023**

To receive and note the Internal Audit Report for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 attached at page 9.

**10. WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2022/2023**

To receive the Draft Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023 for adoption attached at page 15.

**11. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) – SECTION 1 GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

To receive and approve the Town Council's Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 attached at page 24 .

**12. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) – SECTION 2 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

To receive and approve the Town Council's Accounting Statements 2022/2023 attached at page 25 .

**13. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(a) **Planning and Transport Committee held 2<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

Minutes 301 to 311 and 1 to

To receive a report of the Meetings.

(b) **Community Committee held 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

Minutes 1 to

To receive a report of the Meeting.

**14. CO-OPTION POLICY**

To receive, review and adopt a Co-option Policy, attached at page27 .

**15. FULL TOWN COUNCIL ETIQUETTE**

To receive a motion regarding etiquette at Full Town Council meetings, attached at page 34 .

**15. A12 WIDENING**

To formally approve the loss of land at Whetmead Nature Reserve to National Highways for the widening of the A12.

**16. 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.

**17. COMMITTEE REPORT – CONTINUED**

**Community Committee held 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

Minutes

**18. WITHAM TOWN PARK TOILETS**

To receive a report on Witham Town Park toilets.

**19. FUNDING REPORT**

To receive a report.

**20. LAND TRANSFER UPDATE**

To receive a report.



Nikki Smith  
Town Clerk  
N.S/G.K/05.06.2023

ITEM NO: 6

## LIST OF MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN 16<sup>th</sup> MAY TO 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE

### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2023, 295 (Witham and Rivenhall) Squadron Dining in Night**

Attended the 295 (Witham and Rivenhall) RAFA Squadron Dining in Night at Rivenhall Golf Club.

### **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023, Witham Industrial Watch Ltd**

Attended the WIW Members Meeting at Tiptree Patisserie.

[Back to agenda](#)



ITEM NO: 7

**Officer Report: [Town Clerk's Report](#)**

**The following matters are for members to note:**

Line Markings  
Line markings have been installed on the River Walk. A few enhancements are being arranged to finalise the work. (Ebenezer end needs completing and some adjustment is required by River View bridge due to cyclists using the bridge)

Whetmead Steps  
Whetmead steps have been installed as the first part of the Section 106 project and approved noticeboard has been ordered. Further information will come to a later meeting (probably Environment Committee in July)

Witham In Bloom  
'Witham in Bloom' flowers have been installed on the high street.

**Advice:**

To receive and note.

**[Back to agenda](#)**

Schedule of Meetings for Civic Year 2023 - 2024

ITEM NO: 8

FULL COUNCIL & STANDING COMMITTEES

	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
TOWN COUNCIL	AM Mon 15th	Mon 12th	Mon 10th	Mon 7th	Tues 5th	Mon 2nd Mon 30th	Mon 27th		Mon 8th	Mon 5th	Mon 4th	Tues 2nd Mon 29th	AM Mon 13th
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE			Mon 24th			Mon 16th			Mon 22nd			Mon 15th	
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE	Tues 30th			Mon 21st			Mon 13th			Tues 20th			
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE		Mon 26th			Mon 18th			Tue 12th			Tues 19th		
PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE  <i>(Commences 6:30pm)</i>	Tues 30th	Mon 12th Mon 26th	Mon 10th Mon 24th	Mon 7th Mon 21st	Tues 5th Mon 18th	Mon 2nd Mon 16th Mon 30th	Mon 13th Mon 27th	Tue 12th Mon 18th	Mon 8th Mon 22nd	Mon 5th Tues 20th	Mon 4th Tues 19th	Tues 2nd Mon 15th Mon 29th	Mon 13th
STAFFING & ACCOMMODATION SUB-COMMITTEE  <i>(Commences 7:30pm)</i>		Mon 5th			Mon 25th				Mon 15th			Mon 22nd	

To note revised dates to Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023, Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February and Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

### Schedule of Meetings for Civic Year 2023/2024

#### SUB-COMMITTEES & SCRUTINY FUNCTIONS

	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
ESTIMATES								Mon 18 <sup>th</sup>					
OPEN SPACES MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE <i>(Commences 2:00pm)</i>	Tues 30 <sup>th</sup>				Tues 5 <sup>th</sup>			Tues 5 <sup>th</sup>			Tues 5 <sup>th</sup>		
FINANCE SCRUTINY PANEL <i>(Commences 10:00am)</i>					Thurs 7 <sup>th</sup>						Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup>		

[Back to agenda](#)



# HEELIS & LODGE

## Local Council Services • Internal Audit

### **Year End Internal Audit Report for Witham Town Council – 2022/2023**

The following Internal Audit was carried out on the adequacy of systems of control and should be read in conjunction with the Interim Internal Audit report dated 18 October 2022. The following recommendations/comments have been made:

Income: £824,529    Expenditure: £787,845    Reserves: £578,643

#### AGAR Completion:

Section One: [Yes – To be signed](#)

Section Two: [Yes – To be signed](#)

Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/2023: [Yes](#)

Certificate of Exemption: [No](#)

#### **Financial regulations**

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Tenders

Appropriate payment controls including acting within the legal framework with reference to council minutes

Identifying VAT payments and reclamation

Cheque books, paying in books and other relevant documents

Standing Orders in place: [Yes](#)

Reviewed: [26/9/2022 \(Ref: 94\)](#)

Financial Regulations in place: [Yes](#)

Reviewed: [16/5/2022 \(Ref: 18\)](#)

VAT reclaimed during the year: [Yes](#)    Registered: [No](#)

[£9,674.88](#)    [January – March 2023](#)

[£8,686.03](#)    [October – December 2022](#)

[£12,574.11](#)    [July – September 2022](#)

[£10,216.11](#)    [April – June 2022](#)

*[There were no tenders during the year that exceeded the £25,000 Public Contract Regulations threshold.](#)*

*[The Council adopted the Dignity at Work policy on 26/9/2022 \(Ref: 101\).](#)*

*[The Council adopted the Members/Officers Relations policy on 26/9/2022 \(Ref: 102\).](#)*

*[The Council adopted the Civility and Respect Pledge on 26/9/2022 \(Ref: 103\).](#)*

Contact details : 1 Hembling Terrace, Mill Lane, Suffolk, IP13 0PP

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Email: [heather@heelis.eu](mailto:heather@heelis.eu)

Heather Heelis Dip HE Local Policy FILCM

Lynne Lodge Dip HE Local Policy

*The following policies were reviewed at a meeting held on 6/3/2022:*

- *Equality*
- *Freedom of Information*
- *Press and Media*
- *Public Complaints Procedure*
- *Training*
- *Members' Allowance*
- *CCTV*

*The following policies were reviewed at a meeting held on 5/12/2022:*

- *Body Worn Camera*
- *Lone Work*
- *Social Media*
- *Public Complaints Procedure*
- *Public Artefact Donation Scheme*
- *Public CCTV*

## **Risk Assessment**

Appropriate procedures in place for the activities of the council  
Compliance with Data Protection regulations

Risk Assessment document in place: **Yes**

### ***Data Protection***

*The General Data Protection Regulations have changed and the new Regulations came into force on 25 May 2018. It is likely that this will affect the way in which the Council handles its data. Due to the financial risk associated with the General Data Protection Regulations, the Council have included this in their Financial Risk Assessment.*

*Insurance was in place for the year of audit. The Risk Assessment was reviewed at a meeting held on 5/12/2022 (Ref: 34). The Financial Risk Assessment was reviewed and approved at a meeting held on 3/10/2022 (Ref: 20).*

*The Council have effective internal financial controls in place. The Clerk provides financial reports to council meetings. Councillors are provided with information to enable them to make informed decisions.*

*Bank signatories were reviewed at a meeting held on 23/1/2023 (Ref: 168).*

Fidelity Cover: **£894,000**

*The level of Fidelity cover has been increased in line with the recommendation from the Interim Audit and now falls within the recommended guidelines of year end balances plus 50% of the precept.*

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**Transparency**

Under the **Transparency code for smaller authorities**, smaller councils with income/expenditure under £25,000 should publish on their website from 1 April 2015:

Smaller Council: **No**

Website: <https://www.witham.gov.uk/>

Under the requirements of the **Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 13(2b)** council are required to display AGAR's for the five years 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 on their website.

*The Council have met the publication requirements.*

**Budgetary controls**  
supporting documents

Verifying the budgetary process with reference to council minutes and

Precept: £797,941 (2023-2024)

Date: 23/1/2023 (Ref: 170)

Precept: £704,406 (2022-2023)

Date: 17/1/2022 (Ref: 180)

*Effective budgetary procedures are in place. The precept was agreed in full council and the precept decision and amount has been clearly minuted. The Clerk ensures the council are aware of responsibilities, commitments, forward planning and the need for adequate reserves. Budget papers are prepared to ensure councillors have sufficient information to make informed decisions. Budgets are monitored during the year.*

**Income controls**

Precept and other income, including credit control mechanisms

*All were found to be in order. Income controls were checked and a sample of income received and banked cross referenced with the Cash Book and bank statements.*

**Petty Cash**

Associated books and established system in place

*A satisfactory petty cash system is in place with supporting paperwork. A sample of receipts were examined from November 2022 to March 2023 and cross referenced with vouchers and the cash book.*

**Payroll controls**

PAYE and NIC in place where necessary.

Compliance with Inland Revenue procedures

Records relating to contracts of employment

PAYE System in place: **Yes**

Employer's Reference: **245/WW723**

P60s issued: **Yes**

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*The Council continue to operate RTI in accordance with HMRC regulations. Payroll is outsourced. All supporting paperwork is in place and P60s have been produced as part of the year end process. Eligible employees have joined the nominated pension scheme. A number of audit trails were examined during the period November 2022 to March 2023 and all was found to be in order.*

**Asset control**

Inspection of asset register and checks on existence of assets  
Cross checking on insurance cover

*A separate asset register is in place. Values are recorded at cost value/insurance value. The total value of assets are recorded at £1,151,845.85. The figure in the asset register corresponds with the figure in Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR.*

**Bank Reconciliation**

Regularly completed and cash books reconcile with bank statements

*All were in order. Bank Reconciliations are carried out regularly. The bank statements reconciled with the end of year accounts and bank reconciliations for all accounts.*

*Bank Balances at 31 March were confirmed as:*

<i>Lloyds Business</i>	<i>xxxx2286</i>	<i>£17,877.03</i>
<i>Lloyds Deposit</i>	<i>WITHAMCOUN</i>	<i>£299,722.42</i>
<i>Unity Trust</i>	<i>xxxx4430</i>	<i>£248,465.96</i>
<i>Petty Cash</i>		<i>£105,76</i>

*It is noted that a Unity Trust Deposit account is being opened.*

**Reserves**

General Reserves are reasonable for the activities of the Council  
Earmarked Reserves are identified

*The Council have adequate general reserves (£305,724) and have identified earmarked reserves (£286,432) in their year end accounts.*

**Year-end procedures**

Appropriate accounting procedures are used and can be followed through from working papers to final documents  
Verifying sample payments and income  
Checking creditors and debtors where appropriate.

*End of year accounts are prepared on an Income & Expenditure basis. Creditors and Debtors are identified within the year end accounts. The Balance Sheet and Trial Balance were all in order.*

**Sole Trustee**

The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee

*The Council is not a sole trustee.*

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**Internal Audit  
Procedures**

*The 2022-2023 Interim Internal Audit report was considered by the Council at a meeting held on 24/10/2022 (Ref: 115). It is noted that Fidelity Cover has been increased following the recommendation to review.*

**External Audit**

*The External Auditor's report was considered at a meeting held on 26/9/2022 (Ref: 95).*

*There were no matters arising from the External Audit.*

**Additional Comments/Recommendations**

- There are no additional comments/recommendations to make in relation to this audit.
- I would like to record my appreciation to the Clerk to the Council for her assistance during the course of the audit work and the quality of documentation presented for the audit.



**Heather Heelis  
Heelis & Lodge**  
30 May 2023

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## Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
WITHAM.GOV.UK

During the financial year ended 31 March 2023, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2022/23 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2021/22, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2021/22 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2022-23 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2021-22 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2021/22 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
<b>O. (For local councils only)</b> Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

18/10/2022 30/05/2023

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

H. HEELIS (HEELIS & LODGE)

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date 30/05/2023.

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

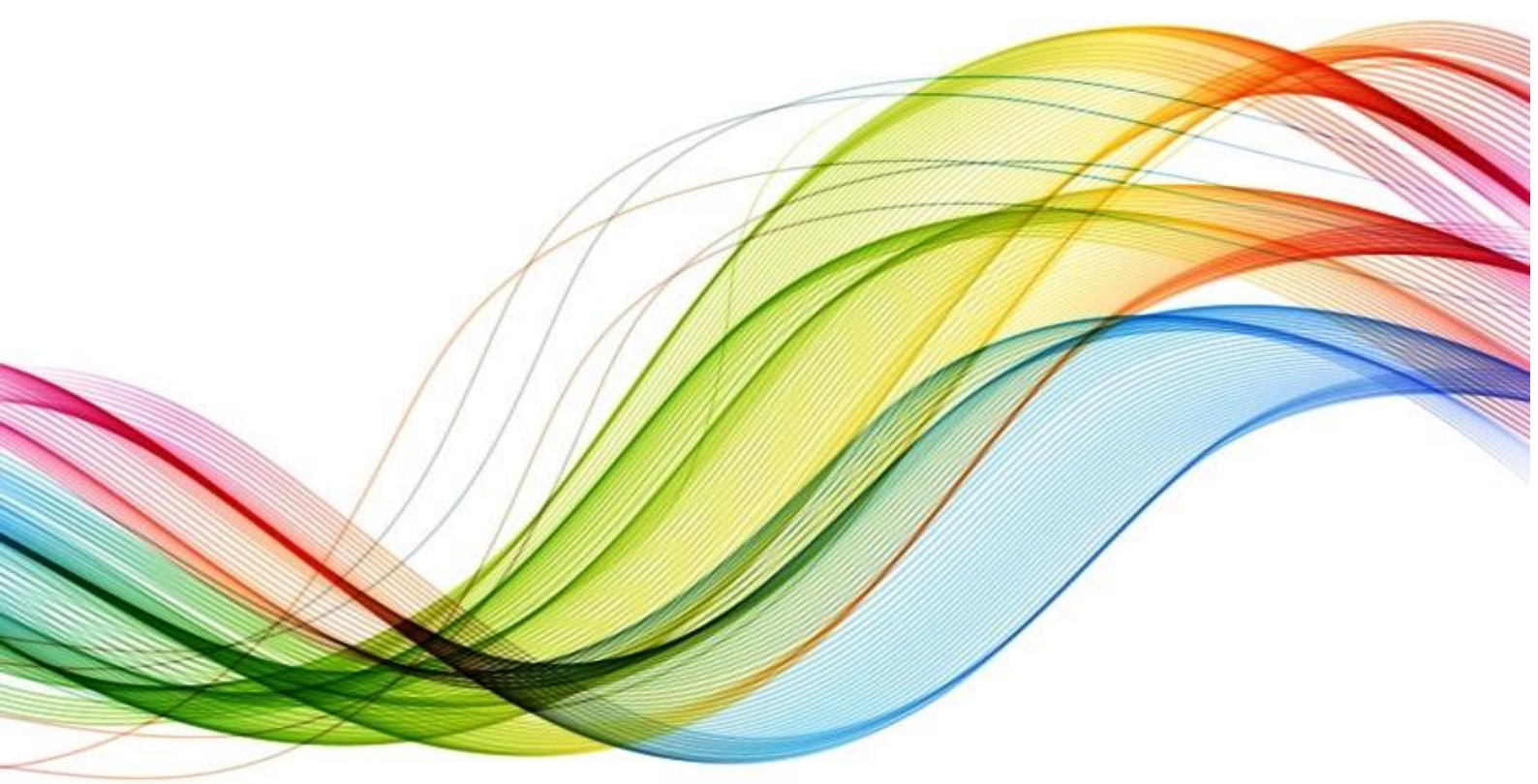




**Witham**  
town council

# Annual Accounts

## Financial Year 2022/2023



# Supporting Statement of Responsibilities

Witham Town Council is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and ensure that it appoints a Responsible Financial Officer with direct accountability for its overall administrative functions in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (S151). In addition to this, Members and Officers of the Council are under a duty to:

- Ensure that value for money is obtained for all business transactions.
- Ensure that public money is under appropriate safeguarding measures.
- Ensure that an appropriate system of internal control is in force and monitored for effectiveness.

In preparing these accounts in conjunction with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, the Council confirms that it has adhered to the Accounts & Audit Regulations and:

- Put in place effective arrangements for financial management.
- Maintained an adequate system of internal control.
- Took all reasonable steps to assure that there were no matters of actual or potential noncompliance with laws, regulations or proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.
- Provided proper opportunity in the year for the exercise of electors rights in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations.
- Carried out an assessment of risks faced by the authority.
- Took all appropriate steps to action any matters raised on audit reports.
- Considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions occurring either during or after the year end have a financial impact on the authority and where appropriate, included them in the accounting statements.



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Nikki Smith

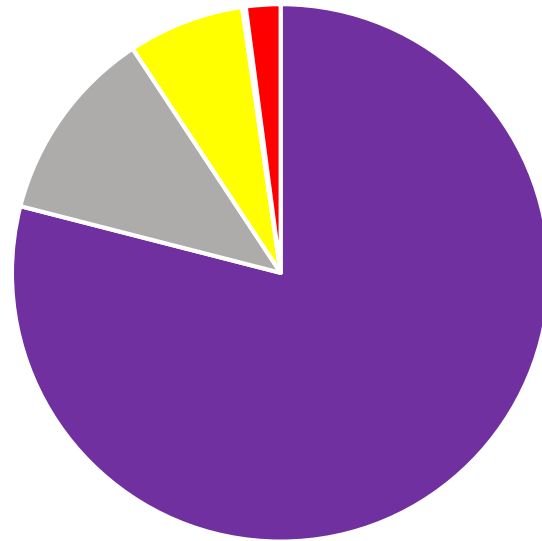
Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer



# Contents

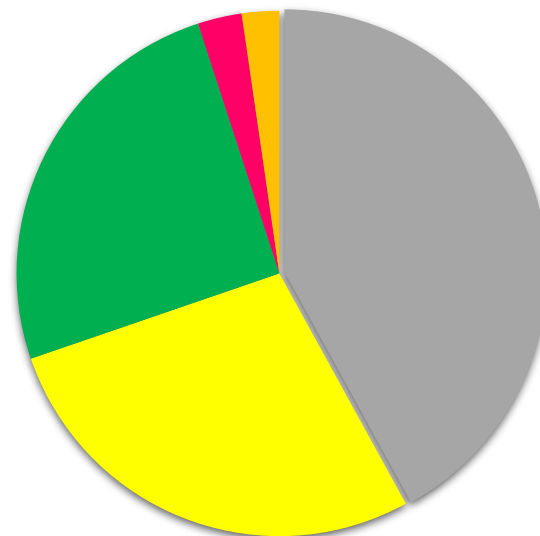
1. Balance Sheet
2. Cash & Reserves Reconciliation
3. Reserves Reconciliation
4. Total Income & Expenditure Charts
5. Total Income & Expenditure Report

### Total Income



- Precept
- Admin
- Community
- Environment
- Policy and Resources

### Total Expenditure



- Admin
- Community
- Environment
- Policy & Resources
- EMR

# Balance Sheet

31st March 2022

31st March 2023

	<b>Current Assets</b>		
2,969	Debtors	1,469	
9,608	VAT Control Account	9,683	
5,016	Prepayments	8,928	
9,745	Stock	11,718	
13,713	Lloyds Bank Account	17,877	
2	Petty Cash	106	
159,421	Unity Trust Account	248,466	
371,762	95 Day Notice	299,722	
<u>572,235</u>		<u>597,969</u>	
	<b>572,235 Total Assets</b>		<b>597,969</b>
	<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
18,824	Creditors	5,522	
0	Accruals	5,640	
1,529	Mayors Appeal	685	
9,924	Receipts in Advance	7,480	
<u>30,277</u>		<u>19,326</u>	
	<b>541,959 Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>		<b>578,643</b>
	<b>Represented By</b>		
301,699	General Reserves	292,210	
567	EMR- Community Day	0	
0	EMR- Streetlighting Sinking Fu	2,000	
41,400	EMR - Riverwalk Cycleways	60,000	
2,172	EMR - Puppet Festival	0	
20,000	EMR - Community Safety /CCTV	20,000	
36,834	EMR - Highways Devolution	27,773	
20,000	EMR - Land Improvement	40,000	
20,000	EMR - Equipment Replacement	30,000	
20,000	EMR - Street Furniture Renew	20,000	
11,225	EMR - Major Repairs & Renewals	4,370	
25,000	EMR - Winter Wonderland	0	
20,000	EMR - J C Wood Imp Plan	50,000	
20,000	EMR - Whetmead Imp Plan	12,150	
62	EMR - Election Expenses	3,744	
3,000	EMR - Members Allowance	0	
0	Allotment Control Account	11,440	
0	Events Control Account	4,956	
<u>541,959</u>		<u>578,643</u>	

# Cash & Reserves Reconciliation

		<u>Account Description</u>	<u>Balance</u>
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>			
1	31/03/2023	Lloyds Current Account	17,877.03
5	31/03/2023	Petty Cash	105.76
6	31/03/2023	Unity Trust Bank Account	248,465.96
7	31/03/2023	95 Day Notice	299,722.42
			<b>566,171.17</b>
<u>Other Cash &amp; Bank Balances</u>			
		Cashbook Suspense	0.00
			<b>0.00</b>
			<b>566,171.17</b>
<u>Receipts not on Bank Statement</u>			
0	31/03/2023	All Receipts Cleared	0.00
			<b>0.00</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>			
<u>All Cash &amp; Bank Accounts</u>			
1		Lloyds Bank Account	17,877.03
5		Petty Cash	105.76
6		Unity Trust Account	248,465.96
7		95 Day Notice	299,722.42
		Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
		<b>Total Cash &amp; Bank Balances</b>	<b>566,171.17</b>

# Reserves Reconciliation

<u>Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Last Year £</u>	<u>This Year £</u>
	<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>541,958.74</b>	<b>578,642.63</b>
100	Debtors	2,969.14	1,468.95
105	VAT Control Account	9,608.45	9,682.88
110	Prepayments	5,015.54	8,927.53
120	Stock	9,744.63	11,718.27
	<b>Less Total Debtors</b>	<b>27,337.76</b>	<b>31,797.63</b>
500	Creditors	18,823.66	5,521.61
510	Accruals	0.00	5,640.00
540	Mayors Appeal	1,528.94	684.71
560	Receipts in Advance	9,924.00	7,479.85
	<b>Plus Total Creditors</b>	<b>30,276.60</b>	<b>19,326.17</b>
	<b>Equals Total Cash and Bank Accounts</b>	<b>544,897.58</b>	<b>566,171.17</b>
200	Lloyds Bank Account	13,712.69	17,877.03
240	Petty Cash	1.61	105.76
250	Unity Trust Account	159,420.95	248,465.96
260	95 Day Notice	371,762.33	299,722.42
	<b>Total Cash and Bank Accounts</b>	<b>544,897.58</b>	<b>566,171.17</b>

# Total Income & Expenditure Report

31st March 2022

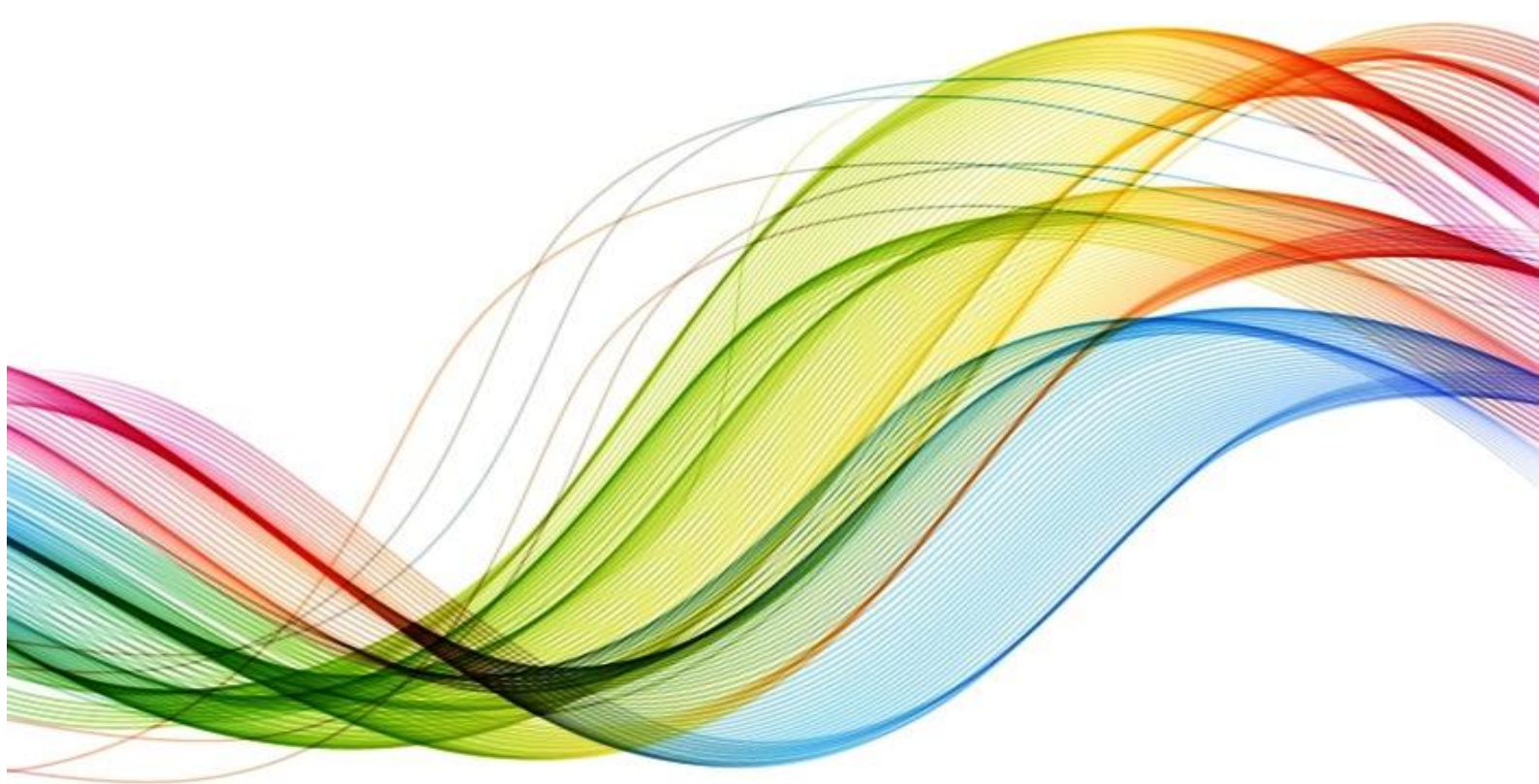
31st March 2023

675,494	<b>Income Summary</b>	
<b>675,494</b>	Precept	704,406
	Sub Total	<b>704,406</b>
	<b>Operating Income</b>	
100,213	Administration	39,526
59,830	Community	67,637
1,810	Environment	4,650
17,780	Policy & Resources	3,243
8,698	Precept	0
0	EMR Movement	5,067
<b>863,825</b>	Total Income	<b>824,529</b>
	<b>Running Costs</b>	
307,980	Administration	311,382
0	Planning & Transport	9,362
203,339	Community	214,153
185,123	Environment	212,895
19,874	Policy & Resources	21,011
16,853	EMR Movement	19,042
<b>733,170</b>	Total Expenditure	<b>787,845</b>
	<b>General Fund Analysis</b>	
253,277	Opening Balance	301,699
863,825	Plus : Income for Year	824,529
1,117,102		1,126,228
733,170	Less : Expenditure for Year	787,845
383,932		338,383
82,233	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves	46,173
<b>301,699</b>	<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>292,210</b>

## **Witham Town Council Annual Accounts 2022/2023**

Copies of this document are available online and can be obtained from the Town Hall by request by emailing [assistantrfo@witham.gov.uk](mailto:assistantrfo@witham.gov.uk)

For all queries concerning accounting statements, please email [townclerk@witham.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@witham.gov.uk)





## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

ITEM NO: 11

We acknowledge as the members of:

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

**\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

**Back to agenda**



WITCHAM TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	411,304	541,959	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	675,494	704,406	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	188,331	120,123	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	407,402	441,400	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	325,768	346,445	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	541,959	578,643	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	544,898	566,171	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	1,139,671	1,151,846	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings			The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			X	The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

**Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval**

Date

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

## Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2022/23

(Except for the matters reported below)\* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (\*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify/do not certify\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date



## Witham Town Council: Co-option Policy

### Introduction

This policy outlines the procedure for filling casual vacancies on the council through co-option, in accordance with Section 87(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

### Casual Vacancies

A casual vacancy occurs when a councillor resigns, passes away, becomes disqualified, or is otherwise unable to fulfil their duties.

The council will promptly declare the casual vacancy and initiate the process of filling the position.

### Notice of Vacancy

Witham Town Council will notify the Braintree District Council returning officer of a casual vacancy, who will assist in the preparation of the statutory public notice of vacancies. The notice will be:

- Advertised as soon as practicable after a vacancy occurs;
- Displayed in some conspicuous place or places within the area of Witham Town Council. This includes as a minimum the WTC Notice Board, but may include any convenient and conspicuous location suitable for affixing such a notice;

### Election Called by 10 or More Electors in Town

In the event that following the advertisement of casual vacancies an election (properly referred to as a “by-election”) is called for by 10 or more electors from the town, no co-options can take place. The remaining councillors will continue until a by-election for the vacancies can be staged. It should be stressed that if a by-election is called it is ONLY for the vacancies arising from resignations etc., and NOT the entire council; the non-vacant councillor position holders continue in office until the next scheduled full election.

### Co-Option in the event of no election being required.

Witham Town Council are required to fill the casual vacancy as soon as practicable after the elapse of the 14 working day (excluding public holidays) notice period, in the event that no by-election is required. Co-Option will normally be conducted at the next planned Town Council meeting, but an Extraordinary Meeting may be called if considered expedient. Co-Opted councillors remain in office alongside originally elected Councillors until the next scheduled full election, whereupon all seats are vacated and re-competed.

### Eligibility of Co-Option Candidates

The eligibility for candidates is identical to that for a candidate in a full election or by-election, as being that on the day of co-option, they must:

- Be over 18;
- Be a United Kingdom, Commonwealth, Republic of Ireland, or European Union Citizen;
- Must Meet One of the following:
  - On the Witham electoral roll, or;
  - An occupier of land or premises in Witham for at least the whole of 12 months preceding the date of co-option, or;
  - Has a principal or only place of work in Witham for at least the whole of 12 months preceding the date of co-option, or;

- A resident of Witham, or within a 3-mile radius of the boundary, for at least the whole of 12 months preceding the date of co-option.
- **Must not** meet any one of the following:
  - They are employed by the town council.
  - They are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order.
  - They have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (including a suspended sentence), without the option of a fine,
  - During the five years before the day of their application.
  - Is otherwise disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 for corrupt or illegal practices.

### Co-option

Although the process for co-option is not prescribed in law it is important that all applicants be treated alike so that the arrangements are seen as open and fair. The co-option process adopted by Witham Town Council is as follows:

1. The Town Council will advertise the vacancy (or vacancies) on the Town Council Noticeboards, on the website and social media.
2. The notices will include:
  - A contact point so that people considering putting their names forward for co-option can obtain more information on the role of a town councillor;
  - A description of the co-option process;
  - The closing date for all expressions of interest;
  - The date on which the Town Council intends to make a decision.

It is permissible for Town Councillors (or any parishioner) to approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their names forward for co-option. Candidates expressing an interest will be sent an "Information Pack" containing:

- An 'Application for Co-option' form (see Appendix 2) which has on page 1 a declaration of eligibility, and on page 2 space to provide in no more than 200 words a narrative from the candidate explaining why they wish to be a Councillor, and what they consider they can contribute. It may be helpful for the applicant to reference the person specification at Appendix 1.
- A current copy of the WTC adopted Code of Conduct for councillors, by which councillors will be required to comply and may be subject to investigation by Braintree District Council if a breach is alleged

When an application is received, the Town Clerk will review the application and check that the individual meets the qualification requirements.

The short submissions on the reverse of the application form will be circulated to Town Councillors before the meeting at which the decision will be made. CVs and other covering letters are not acceptable.

Applicants will be informed of the date of the meeting at which the Town Council will make its decision on the co-option. Applicants may be invited to a meeting before this date to introduce themselves and to provide Councillors with a short (2-minute) pitch, and the opportunity for

Councillors to ask questions of them-, or the Town Council can decide to rely on the written submissions alone.

### **Co-option meeting**

Notice of the intention to co-opt should be included in the agenda for the meeting of the Town Council beneath a dedicated heading. If a routine Council meeting, co-option will occur early in the agenda so that new councillors on making a Declaration of Acceptance of Office can join the council and participate with immediate effect.

There is no requirement for co-option Candidates to attend the meeting in person if personal circumstances preclude this.

If applicants are not invited to speak or attend in person at the co-option meeting they are welcome to, but are not required to, attend as members of the public. In such circumstances normal Witham Town Council Public Participation rules apply with regard to speaking.

There are no special reasons which justify excluding the public during a council meeting when it is making decisions about a matter of public interest such as co-option.

### **Co-option Voting Process**

Co-option is a decision of the Council, and should be determined by a majority vote. The person co-opted must receive a majority of the votes of those Councillors present and voting at the meeting where the co-option takes place. So, where there are more applicants than actual vacancies, this rule means that a person must get over 50% of the votes.

All councillors must vote for a co-option candidate, there can be no abstention by a councillor present.

### **After the Vote**

Successfully co-opted applicants become Councillors in their own right, with immediate effect having signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office, and are no different from any other member. If a co-opted member has completed and submitted the declaration form to the Chairman immediately, that member may if they wish join, and should be encouraged to do so, the Council in voting for subsequent Co-Option candidates.

### **Term of Office**

Co-Opted Councillor's term of office runs until the next elections for the Town Council. They are not temporary appointments, and other than consideration for the broader Council's eligibility for the General Power of Competence are not in any way subordinate or inferior to an elected member.

### **Withdrawal of Candidacy**

A candidate may withdraw at any time up to the submission of acceptance of office.

### **Consideration of candidates for co-option formerly unreturned in an election**

Although there is no legal obligation upon Witham Town Council to consider a candidate for co-option more favourably if they have previously stood for election and were not returned, in the circumstance that such a candidate presents for co-option the Town Council may consider the indication of community support shown in an election in their favour when considering candidates, however, such consideration should not be disadvantageous to a candidate.

### Unsuccessful Co-Option candidates

Where a candidate for co-option is unsuccessful in fulfilling a member vacancy, consideration should be given to their suitability to support the council in another formal role. This may include non-Councillor Membership of committees or subcommittees, either with or without voting rights dependent on role. This may suit candidates who cannot commit fully to the time expected of a Councillor, or if they have particular specialist interests or skills. Eligibility for Non-Councillor Members is identical to that for elected or co-opted members, and they must agree to the WTC adopted Code of Conduct. Candidates may optionally indicate their willingness to fill these roles so on their application form.

### Challenge and Appeal

Any person (not just candidates) may challenge the process applied in a co-option meeting by means of the adopted WTC Complaint procedure. However, once a Declaration of Acceptance of Office is made, the candidate becomes a councillor and that cannot be reversed unless the Candidate is subsequently found to have been ineligible. Prior to the Declaration of Office being made, any person present may request a recount or clarification of the vote if it is unclear that a majority has been achieved or it is thought that a vote has not been cast. The only resolution available following an upheld complaint is a review and amendment of policy to prevent a recurrence of the inequity. There is no right of appeal by either unsuccessful candidates or the public.

## WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### Appendix 1 – Town Councillor Person Specification

Competency	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge & Experience	<p>Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.</p> <p>Proven experience of working with voluntary and or local community groups.</p>	<p>Experience of committee work.</p> <p>Experience of working with or for a public body such as a local authority.</p> <p>Knowledge of the powers and duties of a Town Council (training is available).</p> <p>Awareness of the boundaries of responsibility for District and County Councils.</p> <p>An interest or experience in one or more of the functional areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Policy (National Planning Policy Framework; District &amp; local Plans).</li> <li>• Provision of recreational facilities;</li> <li>• Passenger transport;</li> <li>• Finance &amp; Risk Management;</li> <li>• Community engagement &amp; Corporate communications;</li> <li>• Human Resources management;</li> <li>• Environment &amp; Conservation;</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Skills, Aptitude & Abilities	<p>Good communication and Interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Ability and willingness to represent the Council and the local community.</p> <p>Ability and willingness to undertake training.</p> <p>Desire to maintain and improve the quality of life for local residents.</p> <p>Desire to maintain and improve the local environment and services.</p> <p>Ability to analyse problems objectively, and arrive at evidence based decisions.</p>	<p>Computer literate.</p> <p>Presentation/public speaking Skills</p> <p>Willingness to be accountable for decisions to full council and the general public.</p> <p>Chairing skills, or experience of management &amp; leadership.</p>
Circumstances	<p>Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the Council and also its partners, such as the local authority or other local bodies, in the evening and at weekends.</p> <p>Equipped and able to communicate via e-mail.</p> <p>Not employed by the Council in any capacity.</p>	<p>.</p>

## WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Appendix 2 – Candidate application form

APPLICATION FOR CO-OPTION TO WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I [ \_\_\_\_\_ (full name)] of

[ \_\_\_\_\_ (1)]

hereby apply for co-option to Witham Town Council.

I declare that on the date of application shown at (2) below:

- I am at least 18 years old.
- I am a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- I meet at least one of the following four qualifications (tick as appropriate):
  - I am registered as a local government elector for the parish of Witham in respect of the qualifying address shown at (1) above, or;
  - I have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the town during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) Show description of land or other premises below, or;
  - My main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of this application (shown at (2) below) has been in the town, or;
  - Show address of place of work and, where appropriate, name of employer, or;
  - Have lived in the town or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) Show address in full if different from address shown at (1) above.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 78A of the Local Government Act 2000 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ (3)



## WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Please explain in no more than 200 words in total why you want to be a Councillor for Witham, and what you think you can contribute:

(Optional) If unsuccessful in selection for one of the available Councillor (member) vacancies, would you consider serving the Council in another capacity, such as a non-Councillor voting member of a Committee?



**Witham**  
town council

ITEM NO: 15

Susan Ager Councillor:

**West**

Ward:

Item 15 Full Town Council Etiquette

Title:

Motion: I propose that the Full Town Council Etiquette of standing when speaking should be suspended for the duration of this Mayor's term of office.

**Supporting Information:** At present Town Council Etiquette for Full Town Council Meetings says that Councillors should stand when speaking to the Chair, although exemptions are available on medical grounds. I would like to propose that this etiquette should be relaxed for the present Mayor's term of office. Councillors would be no longer expected to stand when speaking to the Mayor

The reasoning for this is that it would no longer highlight those unable to stand thus encouraging equality amongst all members.

**Back to agenda**