



Witham's Voice

Produced quarterly by Witham Town Council

ISSUE 61 SUMMER 2017

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Meet the new Town Mayor

At the Town Council's Annual Meeting on Monday 15th May 2017, Councillor JoAnn Williams was elected as Town Mayor for this Civic Year.



Also elected as the Deputy Mayor for the Civic Year was Councillor Tom Pleasance. Councillor JoAnn Williams said "I am so honoured and excited to have been selected as the Witham Town Mayor for 2017-2018. It is a pleasure to work with such a dedicated group of Councillors and staff who spend their time trying to make Witham a better place in which to live and play."

"I was elected Councillor to represent the Witham North ward and have really enjoyed helping the people there. I hope I have also been able to help others in Witham and now have an even better opportunity to do so as Mayor. I have chosen two very different Mayor's Charities this year. The first is Little Havens Hospice. Little Havens Hospice cares for children and young people up to the age of 19, and their families, from Essex and the surrounding London Boroughs. They are the

only children's hospice that is based in Essex. They do amazing work and if you ever get a chance to tour their facilities, you will see exactly what I mean."

"My second charity is Witham Operatic Workshop or WOW. WOW! is an award-winning musical youth theatre group based right here in Witham. The talented and enthusiastic performers' ages range from 11 to 21 and are all from our local area. WOW! is the junior section of Witham Amateur Operatic Society (WAOS), a registered charity and has been performing a variety of challenging and outstanding musical theatre productions every year since 1996. WOW is especially important to me this year as youth engagement is going to be one of the main focuses of my term in office. We have some incredible young people in Witham and a group like WOW provides yet another channel for them to explore and grow their talents and interests."

"We need to engage with young people to find out what they really want and need and then work to help as much as possible. The Mayor's Youth Award is being reinstated this year and will allow us to highlight and reward special young people that are already doing amazing things. If we can find ways to further engage these young people, it is good for them, their families and friends, Witham and the wider community and this truly is my passion."

Witham Town Council
Town Hall
Newland Street
Witham
Essex
CM8 2FE
Tel: 01376 520 627
www.witham.gov.uk



Witham's Voice

Continued from front page...

Just a bit about me; I was born and raised in Miami, Florida but have lived in the UK for 17 years, 13 of those in Witham. I have been a British Citizen since 2008 and am so proud of that accomplishment. I love Witham and have made such good friends while living here. I am currently the President of the Witham & District Lioness Club (the pink ladies for those who know us in town) and am the Treasurer of the Lioness Club of East Anglia and enjoy all of the wonderful things we do to help others. I have also served on the Witham Carnival Committee and am Vice Chairman of the Christmas Events Group, which handles the Christmas lights and events for the Town Council. I live in Witham with my wonderful husband Rob, who has been a Witham Town Councillor since 2010. We have a 21 year old daughter, Sarah, who just graduated from the University of Bristol and is about to begin her career as a teacher. We have two little dogs who help make our home a happy one, Boo and Gabby. In my spare time, I am absolutely obsessed with playing World of Warcraft, the TV series Outlander and of course, working with the Lionesses.

I am very proud to be your new Mayor and hope I can represent the town well. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist you and I look forward to meeting lots of you at our many community events coming up such as Community Day, Carnival Day, the Puppet Festival and the Dickensian Christmas Market.

Councillor Mrs JoAnn Williams

A word from the Deputy Mayor

I was honoured to be elected Witham Deputy Town Mayor by my fellow Councillors and I am looking forward to the coming year to serve Witham and support Councillor JoAnn Williams our Town Mayor. My aim in the coming year, is to visit Witham's community organisations and learn more about them and the part they play in the community.

I am ex- military and now serve as the Secretary to the Witham Branch Royal British Legion which I have done so for the last four years. I was instrumental in forming the Youth Section of which I am also Secretary.

I joined the Witham Lions Club three years ago and now hold the position of Treasurer helping to organise fundraising and we have distributed many thousands of pounds to the local community. Needless to say, I am proud to serve and be a member of these charitable organisations and what they do.

Within the Council Chambers I attend my statutory committee meetings along with the town's WW1 Commemorative, Christmas Events and the Improving Health Care Facilities in Witham Groups.

When I have spare time, I do a little painting in water colours, modelmaking, a bit of gardening and walking my dog, Lisa. Along with Councillor JoAnn Williams I am proud to serve as your Deputy Town Mayor for 2017-18.

Councillor Tom Pleasance

WITHAM PUPPET FESTIVAL

Saturday 16th September 2017

Witham Town Centre

10:30am - 4:00pm

R.N.L.I CREAM TEA

On Friday 30th June, Cream Teas will be sold in the Witham Town Hall Function Room between 10:00am and 2:00pm at a cost of £4.00 each. All profits will go to the work of the R.N.L.I lifeboats.

AN ARTIST'S WORLD

An exhibition of paintings and drawings by Witham Artist, Martine Norman.

**Witham Town Hall Function Room, 61 Newland Street,
CM8 2FE**

Between 10th-12th August 2017.

10th - 2:00pm until 8:00pm

11th - 10:00am until 4:00pm

12th - 10:00am until 2:00pm

GOING BANANAS HOLIDAY CLUB

Witham URC

A free bible based holiday club for children at primary school including competitions, games, stories craft and music. Afternoon activities include cooking, sports and a bouncy castle. Spaces are limited so book now!

01376 520 400

info@2withamboys-brigade.org.uk

Witham Town Council Annual Report 2016/17

Outgoing Mayor Councillor P. Horner said that he has had an interesting year. He spoke of the highlights of his term of office including the civic services and Sheriff's Award evening at Hylands House. He was pleased to report that an Air Cadet had been appointed as a Town Mayor's cadet and spoke of the involvement with the Air Cadets at both the Battle of Britain Service and Remembrance Day. There had been a Drumhead Service in the Park on 1st July 2016 to commemorate the first day of the Battle of the Somme and he thanked the Air Cadets for providing a Guard of Honour at his recent Civic Service, there had been over two hundred guests including the Lord Lieutenant of Essex and Priti Patel, MP.

The Town Mayor commended the number of talented people he had met during the year and those involved in the many organisations in the town and the support they give the Town Council at such events as the Community Day and Dickensian Event. He was pleased to represent Witham at the Re-Unification Ceremony in October 2016 in Aßlar, Germany.

He said that his two charities for the year had been Chelmsford and District Cardiac Support Group and Action for Family Carers – Youth Section. He thanked the Witham Lionesses for their help at fund raising events and in particular thanked Councillor Mrs Clare Lager for organising a Bridge afternoon raising £931.

He was pleased to report that the Town Council had been awarded a silver salver as the best Town and Parish Council in Essex in 2016. He thanked his fellow Councillors, particularly JoAnn Williams, his deputy, for their help and support throughout the year. He expressed his appreciation for the work of the Town Clerk and his staff, especially the Town Mayor's secretary, Mrs Dee Halliday.

In closing Councillor P. Horner said he considered it a privilege to have served as Mayor and wished everyone well for the future.

Attendance 2016/17

Members of the Council may attend every Meeting of the Town Council and serve on one or more Committees, which manage Council business. The first figure is the actual number of meetings a Councillor attended, the second figure is the number they could have attended.

Cllr. P.R Barlow	20/46	Cllr Mrs S.C Lager	25/40
Cllr J.C Bayford	20/27	Cllr Mrs J.M Money	51/54
Cllr L.D Campbell	29/46	Cllr T.A Pleasance	45/52
Cllr J.C Goodman	50/56	Cllr R.P Ramage	36/47
Cllr P. Horner	50/56	Cllr W.J Rose	42/48
Cllr Mrs J.A Kempf	18/46	Cllr P.M Ryland	23/34
Cllr Mrs A. Kilmartin	45/52	Cllr. Mrs J. Williams	46/56
Cllr M.C.M Lager	49/56	Cllr R. Williams	42/50

INCOME

How the Town Council is funded:

LOCAL COUNCIL TAX: £422,556

LOCALISM FUND: £49,743

COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION

SURPLUS FUND: £4,795

INTEREST: £2,855

DONATIONS FOR

MAYORS APPEAL: £7,225

HALL HIRE: £6,301

INFORMATION CENTRE

SALES: £88,122

CAR PARK LICENCE: £9,266

DICKENSIAN MARKET: £410

COMMUNITY DAY: £423

TREE DONATIONS: £600

WITHAM IN BLOOM: £2,585

PUPPET FESTIVAL: £5,196

TOTAL: £600,077

Witham's Voice



Community Committee Annual Report from Councillor Rob Williams, Chairman.

The Community Committee during 2016/17 has been actively engaged in a number of issues that affect the future of the town. The two major issues that have attracted the majority of the headlines are policing of the town, and health facilities. Both of these issues are major concerns for the citizens of Witham.

In the matter of policing, we have made representation to the Police and Crime Commissioner and the community policing teams for improved visual policing about the town. Regrettably, resource and budget commitments mean that there is little likelihood of a short-term improvement. The Community Committee has therefore set up a Community Safety Task and Finish Group. They will be tasked with working to improve the Town's CCTV capability, to encourage the recruitment of Special Constables for the Witham area and the setting up of Residents' Associations throughout the town. These actions will help combat the perception of increasing crime about the town. We are steadfast in our resolve to help combat crime, and specifically the low-level and anti-social behaviour issues that the Police treat as a lower priority issue.

The health facilities issue remains a long-term concern. The GP facilities around Witham are already over-stretched at most locations, and additional housing will only exacerbate the problems. Our fight to provide facilities that will match the need of the town continues, primarily driven through the Healthcare Working Group, a sub-committee of the Community Committee. This group has been influential in building support from our GPs, the NHS for mid Essex, and Braintree District Council. The results have been a successful drive to establish a new pharmacy on the Maltings estate (which is now in jeopardy through the supplier facing funding issues), and the capability of delivering a new purpose built GP facility in the town to enable more patients to be seen, with greater healthcare delivered locally. We see this as a tremendous boon to the town, and are supporting the drive wholeheartedly.

The delivery of a further successful Puppet Festival by Witham Town Council has again encouraged a number of visitors to our town from far afield, all praising the event. The success of this festival, provided free to the town by the Town Council has led the ability to provide further events, specifically enabling our first ever Community Day event. Held in June last year, this free public event has helped in pulling the town together for a family day out in some glorious Witham sunshine. The success of the first event has ensured its continuation for the foreseeable future.

While talking of outside events, it would be remiss of me not to mention the sterling work provided by the Christmas Events Group in ensuring that the town has not just a Christmas Tree, but also a fantastic set of Christmas lights. The turning on of the illuminations and the Dickensian Event are all delivered through their organisation. They provide an exceptional voluntary service to the town.

Speaking of volunteers - The Community Committee approved grants totaling almost £30,000 to enable a number of local charities and support organisations to improve their services/facilities. The following were this year's recipients:

Citizens Advice (which receives 1/3 of the total grant money), **HomeStart**, **Boys' Brigade**, **Witham Carnival Association**, **Mill Lane Bowls Club**, **Witham Air Training Corps**, **RBL youth section**, and **Revitalise**.

Outside of the Grants, it is worth noting a service funded exclusively by Witham Town Council for the local good: the Information Centre, which continues to provide an excellent service for both residents and visitors alike.

Community Committee - How we spent our budget

Town Clock:	£0	Community Support:	£9,186
Bus Shelters:	£0	Community Day:	£1,614
Christmas Decorations	£6,877	Puppet Festival	£24,786
Community Grants:	£18,776	WW1 Commemorations:	£600
Citizens Advice:	£10,000	Christmas Dickensian Event:	£191
Community Support/ Youth:	£3,079	Admin/Central Services:	£87,152
Information Centre Sales:	£80,247		
Information Centre:	£32,026	TOTAL:	£274,516

Environment Committee Annual Report from Councillor John Goodman, Chairman.



Since I addressed the Annual Town Assembly last year, one significant change has taken place in that most matters relating to transport and highways issues have been transferred to the Planning Applications Sub-Committee. This has allowed the Environment Committee greater time in concentrating on the wider issues which fall within its remit.

The newly named and revised Planning Applications and Transport Sub-Committee continues to report through the Environment Committee so it can be noted that the Environment Committee continues to maintain a strong interest in highways matters.

One such issue was brought to our notice last year when the children at Templars Academy in Crossing Road lost their Crossing Patrol Officer and although Essex County Council (ECC) continues to seek a replacement, the staff and pupils sought assistance from the Town Council for the installation of a pedestrian crossing outside the school. A small group of children, together with staff, made an impassioned plea at a meeting of the Environment Committee and, as a result, a request for such a crossing was supported by the Town Council. The request is currently with the Local Highways Panel. I am delighted to report that the situation regarding the parking in Guithavon Valley has been much improved with the installation of additional restrictions and although as a Town Council we have always advocated that we have no desire to see the town full of yellow lines, there are occasions when these measures are necessary.

We have also taken up the issue of HGV routing and signage throughout the town with ECC and this is especially relevant given the fact that there are weight restrictions on certain roads within Witham. There is a particular problem in that, due to the proximity of the A12, HGV's transit through the town but I am pleased that the Town Council is supported in its concerns by our two County Councillors.

The Committee has discussed recent consultations held by Highways England regarding the proposed widening of the A12 between Chelmsford and Marks Tey and a number of Witham Town Councillors attended one of these consultations. The Town Council ensured that it became a consultee stakeholder in the ongoing considerations of Highways England. While improvements to the A12 are undoubtedly overdue and necessary, we do have some concerns with regard to the land which will be required to widen the A12 as this will impact directly upon the Council owned Whetmead Nature Reserve. Witham Town Council has put forward its preferred option from the four offered but I must stress that this was purely our preference and it remains to be seen as to which option will subsequently be decided upon by Highways England.

Town Councillors also visited the consultation on the part of Essex County Council for the proposed new A120 road from Braintree to the A12 as it was felt that this new road is long overdue and would have a direct impact upon Witham in alleviating the heavy traffic on the current B1018 from Witham to Braintree. Once again, Witham Town Council has indicated its preferred option from the five put forward by Essex County Council.

Witham Town Council continues to monitor closely the new housing developments which are due to be constructed over the next few years within the town especially as we maintain strong concerns over the lack of new infrastructure given that Witham still awaits developments in improved health facilities, additional schooling and transport links, not to mention some respite in the town's overcrowded and gridlocked roads at certain times of the day. You may rest assured, once again this year, the Environment Committee will continue to address matters of which are brought to its attention and will endeavour to bring such matters to a satisfactory resolution in liaison, if and where necessary, with appropriate agencies.

Environment Committee - How we spent our budget

Pensions:	£22,555	CCTV	£14,065
Manual Equipment:	£21,725	Open Spaces:	£65,030
Footpath Lighting:	£7,181	River Walk Projects:	£596
Period Garden:	£2,132	Town Park Lavatories:	£7,788
Trees:	£328	Witham In Bloom Displays:	£12,490
Admin/Central Services:	£87,152		
		TOTAL:	£241,042

Witham's Voice



Policy & Resources Committee Annual Report From Councillor Michael Lager, Chairman.

The Committee has continued to monitor the Council's income and expenditure, administration, property and staffing. Clean internal and external audits have again been achieved. Work continues to remain a Quality Council, and the Essex Association of Local Councils named this council as best local council in Essex in 2016.

Setting a budget for 2017/18 was particularly difficult in the face of ongoing cuts in the District Council's Localism Grant. A rise in the precept was essential to reduce the likely deficit and future rises appear unavoidable. Witham's Band D levy of £56.70 is however exceeded in 15 of the other 55 parishes (against 17 last year), suggesting that we are not alone. Reserves are held for contingencies and to even out spending on items such as elections, major repairs and major pieces of equipment. Two by-elections following the resignations of Corinne Thompson and Chris Bailey saw new councillors Lorne Campbell and Jack Bayford elected, in Jack Bayford's case by a single vote. We thank Corinne and Chris for their hard work on behalf of residents and wish them well. We have welcomed Lorne and Jack who are both rapidly making their mark.

Witham's Voice is published quarterly and delivered to every household. The website has been improved and work is currently in hand to modernise it further. There lies ahead potential for using social media technology to make it even easier for our residents to keep in touch with their town council. We are planning to install a screen in the Information Centre to provide visitors with messages on keeping well and safe, and concerning the town and services available here. The Parking Working Group researched the issues around provision, regulation, enforcement and pricing, particularly in the face of inconsiderate car parking by some commuters. Working with residents' groups, the Council lobbied the North Essex Parking Partnership and action quickly resulted in dealing with the Guithavon Valley hotspot. The Working Group produced an excellent report, passed to Braintree District Council for use with their own parking review.

Residents in the Maltings estate have long missed out on facilities promised when moving in and due under the Section 106 planning agreement. Here a working group has worked with the local planning authority in Braintree to bring clarity on what is legally due and urge progress. The estate now has a popular food store in Aldi, a pub/restaurant next door, the expanded primary school and nursery provision, and the sports provision is nearing completion. But a community building and local shops, and local employment remain undelivered, although Braintree District Council hold the land and money for the community facilities. The Working Group has recommended that Braintree appoint a project manager to cover not only the formal planning aspects but to ensure delivery of a self-sufficient additional community within Witham. In this we have worked closely with colleague Councillor members of the District Council.

This last year saw an outbreak of robberies, attempted and actual, burglaries and anti-social behaviour in the context of sharply reduced police presence and willingness to take counter-measures. The Town Council heard from the police commissioner, Roger Hirst, about his priorities and particularly his intention to double the number of special constables. We have concluded that we need to make countering crime and anti-social behaviour our key priority for 2017/18. Special Constables are proper police officers with full powers, but are volunteers from the local community and work locally. We intend to encourage people to come forward and help us keep our town safe. A working group will coordinate this work, which will include spreading awareness and knowledge about preventing crimes.

In conclusion, we have made progress on many fronts, although in some areas this has been slower than we hoped. I thank our staff, our Members and those residents giving their time to help us make this one of the best places in Essex to work in, visit and live in.

Policy & Resources - How we spent our budget

Mayors Gift Fund Allowance:	£100
Christmas Expenses:	£1,610
Mayor's Appeal:	£10,400
Newsletter:	£8,161
Members Allowances:	£0
Town Mayor's Allowance:	£0
Admin/Central Services:	£43,576
TOTAL:	£63,847



Commemorating The Great War: Witham 1917 Dance Extravaganza takes place Friday 21st July.

Featuring the Jeff Short Combo, Witham Town Council is delighted to be transporting the town to 1917 in a live music and dancing event taking place at the Witham Public Hall, Collingwood Road. This exciting evening conceived by the World War One Centenary Commemorations Working Group is taking place as part of the Council's continued remembrance of the Great War, with proceeds going towards a new, permanent memorial in 2018 to mark one hundred years after the end of the conflict.

With doors opening at 6:30pm, guests will be enticed to join the dance floor with Deputy Mayor Tom Pleasance and Master of Ceremonies, John Goodman to the masterful tunes of the Jeff Short four piece combo in a two hour live music event, with a light supper and dessert served during the interval. In addition, a raffle will be held with tickets on sale at the door and during the evening for guests to take a gamble with winning a prize and the cash bar will be open to guests courtesy of the Witham Public Hall.

Tickets and programmes are now on sale at Witham Town Hall, 61 Newland Street, CM8 2FE at a cost of £10.00 per adult and £5.00 per child (16 and under). Support your local community in the commemoration of the Great War by attending Witham 1917: Out Of The Line.

RUNNING ORDER

6:30pm - Doors Open
7:00pm - First Dance
8:00pm - Interval & Supper
8:15pm - Raffle Prize Draw
8:30pm - Second Half
9:30pm - Finish

To purchase your ticket, visit the Tourist Information Centre at the Town Hall, 61 Newland Street, CM8 2FE or telephone 01376 502674.



Jeff Short Band In Action



The Carnival Queen & Court

Witham Carnival 2017

The Witham Carnival is on Saturday 8th July and starts at the Witham Rugby Club with the judging of entrances at 12.00 noon the procession starts at 1:30pm. The Town Mayor will be in attendance and showing her support.

We also have a variety of arena acts and stalls in Maldon Road Park along with a fun fair. In the arena we will have performances from The KL Aerial Fitness, Witham Big & Little Sing, 295 (Witham & Rivenhall) Squadron ATC and Rascals Theatre School starting at approximately from 3.30pm. Please get in contact with Carly on 07769 152330 or chaperone@withamcarnival.org.uk if you can help us in anyway or would like to join our committee.

QUEEN- Lauren Stevens,
PRINCESS- Emma Hopegood
PRINCESS- Ruby Martin
PRINCE- Leo Rumbelow
ROSEBUD QUEEN- Angelica Hackett
HONORARY PRINCESS- Ella Barden

VOLUNTEER WITH ESSEX POLICE

IT'S AN EXTRA SPECIAL JOB

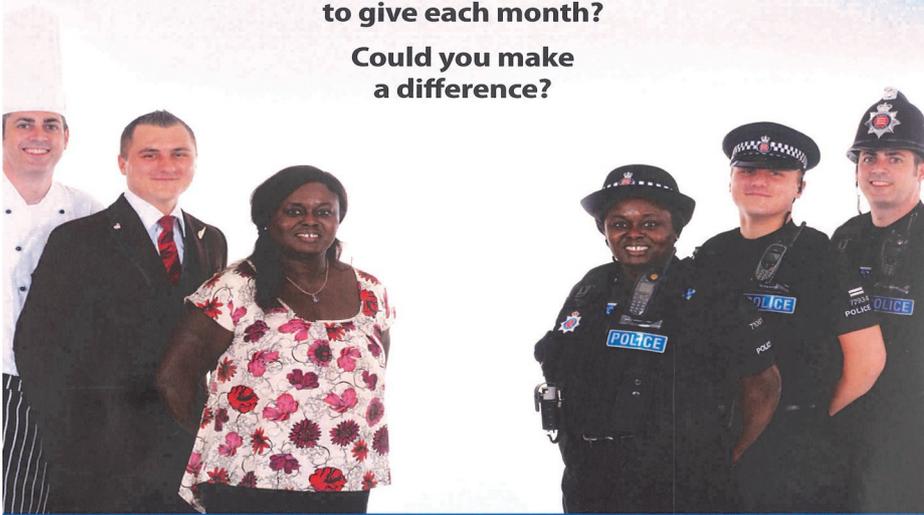


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Useful Contacts



All numbers are 01376 code unless shown otherwise.

TOWN HALL

Tel: 520 627
townclerk@witham.gov.uk

INFORMATION CENTRE

Tel: 502 674

YOUR COUNCILLORS

CENTRAL WARD

Michael Lager: 45 Chipping Hill, Witham, CM8 2JT. Tel: 513 747

Robert Williams: 25 Guithavon Valley, Witham, CM8 1HF. Tel: 510 845

WEST WARD

John Goodman: 2 Chippingdell, Witham, CM8 2JX. Tel: 516 918

Patrick Horner: 6 Powers Hall End, Witham, CM8 2HE. Tel: 501 857

Thomas Pleasance: 5 Helford Court, Witham, CM8 1TL. Tel: 501 597

Bill Rose: 110 Humber Road, Witham, CM8 1TU. Tel: 07553 082 384

SOUTH WARD

Angela Kilmartin: Flat 3, Icen House, Newland Street, Witham, CM8 2FS. Tel: 502 872

Janet Money: 11 Carraways, CM8 1XW. Tel: 515 990

Jacqueline Kempf: 29 Guithavon Valley, CM8 1HF. Tel: 501 608

Lorne Campbell 18 Millbridge Road CM8 1HB. Tel: 07847 810 062

NORTH WARD

Philip Barlow: Rivendell, Chalks Road, CM8 2BT. Tel: 514 033

Jack Bayford: 12 Court 2, Bronte Road, CM8 2QQ. Tel: 07860 748 151

Paul Ryland: 6 Old Parsonage Court, CM8 1XP. Tel: 512 042

JoAnn Williams: 25 Guithavon Valley, CM8 1HF. Tel: 510 845

HATFIELD WARD

Clare Lager 45 Chipping Hill, CM8 2JT. Tel: 513 747

Ron Ramage: 9 Graces Close, CM8 1QH. Tel: 515 295

It's your council...

Witham Town Council Offices are open Monday - Thursday 9:00AM-5:00PM and Friday 9:30AM-4:00PM.

Closed Weekends and Bank Holidays.

Meetings of your Town Council are open for you to attend. There is usually an opportunity to speak before the beginning of each meeting to raise your concerns to the Council.

Full details are displayed at www.witham.gov.uk

Agendas are on display on the noticeboard in Newland Street.

Meetings usually begin at 7:30PM and planning applications & transport sub-committee meetings at 6:30PM.

Meetings are held in the Council Chamber in the Town Hall, Newland Street, Witham, Essex, CM8 2FE.

The Information Centre in the Town Hall is open from 9:00AM-4:30PM Monday - Thursday and Friday 9:30AM - 4:00PM. Closed Weekends and Bank Holidays.

MEETINGS:

Town Council: 10th July, 4th September, 30th October

Environment: 25th July, 18th September

Community: 7th August, 2nd October

Policy & Resources: 26th June, 21st August, 16th October

Planning & Transport: 26th June, 10th, 25th July, 7th 21st August, 4th 18th September, 2nd, 16th 30th October