



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

AGENDA

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Tuesday, 11th August 2026** Time: **7.30 p.m.**

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

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

To be present: Councillors -

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

Nikki Smith
Town Clerk
NS/JB/05.08.2026

1. APOLOGIES

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 15th June 2026 (previously circulated).

3. INTERESTS

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

4. QUESTIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

Order Note: A maximum of 30 minutes is designated for public participation time with no individual speaker exceeding three minutes unless otherwise granted an extension by the Chairman under Standing Order 3(F) & 3(G)

5. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

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

6. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

To receive details of the Town Mayor's engagements attended for period 18th May 2026 to 5th July 2026 and 6th July 2026 to 2nd August 2026 – attached at page 4.

7. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

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

8. YOUTH SERVICES

To receive a report attached at page 9.

9. ELECTION COSTS AND TERM

To receive a verbal report from the Town Mayor, Councillor Paul Heath .

10. MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

To receive a report attached at page 13.

11. ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

To receive a report attached at page 16.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

13. LAND TRANSFER

To receive a report attached at page 17.

14. WITHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE

To receive a report attached at page 18.

15. PUBLIC ART

To receive a report from the Town Clerk attached at page 23.

16. RIVER WALK LAND

To receive a report attached at page 25.

Agenda Item 6

**LIST OF MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN
18th May 2026 to 5th July 2026
Councillor Paul Heath**

Tuesday 19th May 2026

Attended the Alzheimer's Society Singing for the Brain at Chelmsford Cathedral as Guest of Honour.

Saturday 23rd May 2026

Attended Dementia Awareness Day at Witham Grove Centre.

Monday 25th May 2026

Attended Park View.

Thursday 28th May 2026

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

Friday 29th May 2026

Attended Park View ramble/dementia dawdle.

Monday 1st June 2026

Attended the RBL Veteran's Coffee morning.

Tuesday 2nd June 2026

Attended The Well, cooking for one event.

Thursday 4th June 2026

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

Saturday 6th June 2026

Attended Witham Wombles litter picking morning.

Thursday 11th June 2026

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

Friday 12th June 2026

Attended Freedom Leisure's Sporting Memories World Cup Event at Witham Leisure Centre

Sunday 14th June 2026

Attended Great Dunmow Town Council's Civic Service.

Thursday 18th June 2026

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

Friday 19th June 2026

Attended the Pop Up Sofa Day outside Prezzo.

Saturday 20th June 2026

Attended Witham Open Gardens event.

Tuesday 23rd June 2026

Attended Moorfield Court pizza lunch.

Wednesday 24th June 2026

Attended Witham BNI Networking Group Breakfast Meeting at Rivenhall Oaks Golf Club.

Saturday 27th June 2026

Attended the Golden Jubilee Anniversary of the Medieval Fayre.

Monday 29th June 2026

Attended meeting with the Mayor of Maldon to discuss a sponsored walk.

Thursday 2nd July 2026

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

Saturday 4th July 2026

Attended the Crowning of Witham Carnival Court at the Grove Centre.

Attended the Witham Music Festival at the River Walk.

LIST OF MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN
6th July 2026 to 2nd August 2026
Councillor Paul Heath

Thursday 9th July 2026

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

Sunday 12th July 2026

Attended Witham Catholic Church Summer Fair.

Tuesday 14th July 2026

Attended Zumba Class at Witham Football Club.

Attended the Craft Club at Witham Football Club.

Wednesday 15th July 2026

Attended Popcorn's 3rd Birthday Party at Parkside Youth Centre with the Deputy Mayor.

Thursday 16th July 2026

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

Saturday 17th July 2026

Attended pop up stall at the Water Safety event in Pattison Close.

Sunday 18th July 2026

Attended Sunday Cinema at The RBL – Paddington 2.

Thursday 23rd July 2026

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

Sunday 26th July 2026

Attended the High Sheriff's Fund Afternoon Tea at Hazel End Wood.

Tuesday 28th July 2026

Attended the Open Spaces Games at Maldon Road Park.

Thursday 30th July 2026

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

Saturday 1st August 2026

Attended Mill Lane Bowls Club for their Dementia UK Charity fun bowls day.

**LIST OF MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN
6th July 2026 to 2nd August 2026
Councillor Jack Coleman**

Saturday 11th July 2026

Attended Witham Carnival for judging of the floats, majorettes, bands and stalls in the park.

Wednesday 15th July 2026

Attended Popcorn's 3rd Birthday at Parkside Youth Centre with the Mayor.

[Back to Agenda](#)

Officer Report: Youth Services

Background

The Community Committee's remit includes matters concerning youth engagement and opportunities, together with oversight of local services and community provision.

Essex Youth Service states that it supports volunteers and organisations to run youth clubs, sessions and community activities in Essex and offers training and ongoing support, including training for volunteers and nationally recognised qualifications.

It has been proposed that Essex Youth Services would run the club for the first year, provide a structured programme for that year, and train local volunteers so that they are properly prepared and qualified before the service is handed over at the end of the first year.

The proposed programme could include themed activities such as cooking sessions and, subject to partnership interest and feasibility, the Council could also explore whether a teen health clinic model similar to that supported by other councils such as Daventry Town Council may be possible in future.

<https://www.daventrytowncouncil.gov.uk/teen-clinic-daventry>

Proposed delivery model

The current proposal is for a weekly youth club operating for 46 weeks of the year, including some provision during school holidays.

Each weekly session would be 3 hours in total, comprising 30 minutes set-up, a 2-hour open session for young people, and 30 minutes close-down. The staffing model would involve the lead worker and a Youth Support Worker delivering the session, with additional time allocated each week for planning, preparation and administration.

Benefits of a youth club for Witham

Witham experiences issues of antisocial behaviour and has areas of deprivation where young people may have limited access to safe, affordable things to do outside school hours. A professionally supported youth club at the new Community Centre would offer a warm, supervised space for teenagers to spend time, take part in constructive activities and build relationships with trusted adults.

Research into youth provision and youth clubs suggests that regular participation is associated with reductions in crime and antisocial behaviour, improved school engagement, better health and wellbeing, and stronger feelings of community connection, particularly for young people in more deprived neighbourhoods. Studies have found that access to youth clubs is linked to lower offending, less truancy and substance misuse, and better long-term education and employment outcomes, while closures of youth clubs have been associated with increased youth crime and worse exam results, especially for young people from lower-income backgrounds.

For Witham, the proposed youth club could therefore:

- Provide a positive alternative to street-based activity in the evenings, helping to reduce opportunities for antisocial behaviour in the immediate area.
- Offer targeted support and mentoring to young people who may be more vulnerable due to local deprivation, helping to build confidence, social skills and resilience.
- Improve young people's sense of belonging and connection to the town by involving them in regular, structured activities, such as cooking sessions and projects linked to health and wellbeing.

These benefits align with the Council's wider aims around community safety, youth engagement and improving life chances for young people, and provide a rationale for considering investment in a one-year pilot.

Alternative delivery model: direct youth worker appointment

Members may instead wish to consider whether the Council should employ a youth worker directly rather than rely solely on an external provider. A youth worker can set, organise and run community programmes for young people, assess local needs, deliver activities, develop trusted relationships, challenge inappropriate behaviour, support outreach work, work with families and partner agencies, maintain records, and prepare reports.

A directly employed youth worker could deliver the same core youth club sessions, but could also widen the offer by:

- running detached or outreach youth work.
- developing holiday activities and one-off projects.
- supporting young people one-to-one or in small groups.
- liaising with schools, families, health partners and police.
- helping to recruit, train and support volunteers.
- assisting with grants, budgets and service development.

The advantage of this model is greater direct control and flexibility over the service. The main disadvantage is that it would create a permanent employment commitment, together with recruitment, supervision, payroll, pension, holiday cover and management responsibilities.

Published salary information suggests that youth support workers commonly start at around £22,000 to £30,000 per year, while qualified youth workers are often around £25,000 to £42,000 depending on experience and responsibility.

If the Council wished to explore this route, it would need to add employer on-costs, training, supervision and any overtime or cover costs. This would therefore be a more expensive option than the current first-year external proposal.

Financial implications

The indicative first-year staffing quotation provided is as follows:

Item	Basis	Annual Cost
DYW session delivery	46 weeks at £90 per 3-hour session	£4,140
DYW planning and preparation	46 weeks at £60 for 2 hours	£2,760
DYW administration	46 weeks at £30 for 1 hour	£1,380
DYW supervision	12 monthly sessions at £30	£360
YSW session delivery	46 weeks at £60 per 3-hour session	£2,760
Subtotal	Direct staffing cost	£11,400
On-costs	20% ongoing costs	£2,280
Total staffing	First-year estimated cost	£13,680

Based on 46 delivery weeks, this is equivalent to approximately £297.39 per week.

In addition to staffing, Essex Youth Services has provided indicative equipment costings for items that would remain with the group beyond the initial 46 weeks and support the wider youth offer at the Community Centre

Item	Annual/One off basis	Cost
Fold-up pool table	One-off	£370
Xbox console, games and additional controllers	One-off	£730
Oculus Meta Quest 2	One-off	£350
Nintendo Switch, games and additional controllers	One-off	£600
Sports equipment (football, cones, basketballs, pop-up nets, table tennis table and bats)	One-off	£2,000
Food supplies and cooking equipment for 46 sessions (@ £25 per week plus equipment)	46 weeks	£1,500
Arts/crafts and wellbeing tools (mental health, sexual health, employability etc.) for 46 sessions	46 weeks	£1,500
Mobile TV and stand	One-off	£450
Total equipment and materials		£7,500

These resources would support a variety of activities including sports, games, cooking and educational programmes (for example using consoles for cooking skills and learning about different countries and cultures).

The Council currently has no approved budget provision for this project. It has been noted, however, that general reserves at the end of the last financial year stood at £572,569. Councils must keep in reserve

between 3 and 12 months of expenditure (normally around £100,000 a month) which means the proposed first-year cost would amount to a relatively small proportion of general reserves.

Wider use of the equipment and facility

The proposed equipment is not intended to be for the exclusive use of a single youth club session. Once purchased, it could be used to support:

- Other youth clubs and sessions delivered by the council.
- Holiday programmes and one-off youth projects at the Community Centre.
- Any future health-related youth provision delivered in partnership with external agencies, for example a teen health clinic model if pursued with appropriate health partners.

This shared-use approach would help to maximise the value of the Council's investment and ensure that equipment contributes to a broader range of youth-focused activities over time.

Considerations

The proposal offers a way to begin youth provision in a managed way, with Essex Youth Services providing professional start-up support, programme structure and volunteer development during the first year.

This approach may reduce risk for the Council at the outset because the service would not depend immediately on recruiting and sustaining a fully trained volunteer base from day one. It would also allow time to test demand, define the target age range, develop safeguarding arrangements, and assess the longer-term revenue implications before deciding whether to continue, expand or modify the offer.

Advice: That Members consider whether they wish to support the establishment of a youth club at the new Community Centre through Essex Youth Services for an initial one-year period, noting the indicative staffing cost of £13,680, equipment and materials estimate of £7,500 and the opportunity to use the first year to build a trained volunteer base for longer-term community delivery.

NS/03.08.2026

[Back to Agenda](#)

Meeting and Date	E. Adelaja	L. Barlow	P. Barlow	J.C. Coleman	J.M. Coleman	B. Fleet	J. Goodman	L. Headley	P. Heath	J. Martin	R. Playle	R. Ramage	J. Robertson	A. Sloma	B. Taylor	E. Williams
Planning 18.05.2026	✓		✓		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	A		A
Full Town Council 18.05.2026	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	a
Planning 01.06.2026	✓		✓		X			✓			✓	✓	✓			✓
Community 01.06.2026	✓	A		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	A		✓
Open Spaces 03.06.2026					X	A	✓		✓			✓				
Planning 15.06.2026	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓			✓
Full Town Council 15.06.2026	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Planning 29.06.2026	✓		✓		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓			A
Policy & Resources 29.06.2026		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	A	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Planning 14.07.2026	✓		✓		✓			✓			A	X	✓			X
Full Town Council 14.07.2026 - Cancelled																
Staffing 22.07.2026		✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓					
Planning 27.07.2026	✓		✓		A			✓			✓	X	✓			X
Environment 27.07.2026 - Inquorate				X	A	A	✓	✓		A			✓	X	A	X
Planning 11.08.2026																
Full Town Council 11.08.2026																
Planning 24.08.2026																
Community 24.08.2026																
Open Spaces 02.09.2026																
Planning 07.09.2026																
Full Town Council 07.09.2026																

✓ - indicates attendance, A – Apologies, X – Absent, * – Leave of Absence. Grey cell indicates that the Councillor is not a Member of that Committee.

Meeting and Date	E. Adelaja	L. Barlow	P. Barlow	J.C. Coleman	J.M. Coleman	B. Fleet	J. Goodman	L. Headley	P. Heath	J. Martin	R. Playle	R. Ramage	J. Robertson	A. Sloma	B. Taylor	E. Williams
Financial Scrutiny Panel 17.09.2026																
Planning 21.09.2026																
Policy & Resources 21.09.2026																
Planning 05.10.2026																
Full Town Council 05.10.2026																
Planning 19.10.2026																
Environment 19.10.2026																
Planning 03.11.2026																
Full Town Council 03.11.2026																
Staffing Committee 09.11.2026																
Planning 17.11.2026																
Community 17.11.2026																
Planning 30.11.2026																
Full Town Council 30.11.2026																
Open Spaces 02.12.2026																
Policy & Resources 07.12.2026																
Planning 15.12.2026																
Estimates 15.12.2025																
Planning 11.01.2027																
Full Town Council 11.01.2027																
Planning 25.01.2027																

✓ - indicates attendance, A – Apologies, X – Absent, * – Leave of Absence. Grey cell indicates that the Councillor is not a Member of that Committee.

Meeting and Date	E. Adelaja	L. Barlow	P. Barlow	J.C. Coleman	J.M. Coleman	B. Fleet	J. Goodman	L. Headley	P. Heath	J. Martin	R. Playle	R. Ramage	J. Robertson	A. Sloma	B. Taylor	E. Williams
Environment 25.01.2027																
Planning 08.02.2027																
Full Town Council 08.02.2027																
Planning 22.02.2027																
Community 22.02.2027																
Open Spaces 03.03.2027																
Planning 09.03.2027																
Full Town Council 09.03.2027																
Financial Scrutiny Panel 18.03.2027																
Planning 23.03.2027																
Policy & Resources 23.03.2027																
Planning 05.04.2027																
Full Town Council 05.04.2027																
Planning 19.04.2027																
Environment 19.04.2027																
Planning 04.05.2027																
Full Town Council 04.05.2027																
Full Town Council 17.05.2027																
Percentage Attendance	100%	80%	100%	75%	60%	57%	100%	100%	100%	40%	90%	80%	100%	0%	75%	40%

[Back to Agenda](#)

✓ - indicates attendance, A – Apologies, X – Absent, * – Leave of Absence. Grey cell indicates that the Councillor is not a Member of that Committee.



ITEM NO: 11

Officer Report: Review of Environment Committee

Background

The Scheme of Delegation provides that the Environment Committee consists of 10 members appointed in accordance with political proportionality and is responsible for matters directly affecting the local environment, including green and open spaces and certain shared infrastructure interests with the Planning & Transport Committee.

The Committee's remit includes the Council's managed assets such as the River Walk, Whetmead Nature Reserve, Closed Churchyard and James Cooke Wood, together with allotments, bins, floral displays, public conveniences, street lighting, fleet and equipment, trees, litter and open spaces policy.

The Open Spaces Management Sub-Committee, which consists of 6 members, already oversees day-to-day management of Council open spaces, creation and review of management plans, wider projects, public representations, and oversight of officer decisions and maintenance programmes. It reports to the Environment Committee as a sub-committee.

Current position

Recent experience suggests that the present committee structure may not be operating as intended. One recent meeting was cancelled due to lack of business, and the most recent meeting was inquorate, with only 3 of the 10 appointed members present.

Where meetings cannot proceed, the Committee is unable to consider and determine matters that sit within its delegated remit, which risks delay to routine oversight and decision-making across a wide range of environmental functions.

Issues for Members to consider

Members are asked to consider whether the Environment Committee remains the best forum for this area of work. If Members wish the Committee to continue in its current form, this will require a clear recommitment to attendance and participation. Committee places carry a responsibility to attend meetings regularly so that the business delegated by Council can be discharged effectively.

Option 1: Continue in current form

Members may wish to retain the Environment Committee unchanged. If so, Members should confirm that there is sufficient commitment to attendance to ensure meetings are quorate and that the Committee can continue to fulfil its delegated role effectively.

Option 2: Discontinue the Committee

Members may conclude that the Environment Committee is no longer the most effective use of member time and that its functions should instead be redistributed.

Advice:

That Members reflect on whether the present pattern of attendance indicates that member priorities lie elsewhere and whether the current structure continues to represent the best use of council resources and meeting time.

NS/03.08.2026