Witham Town Council: Crime and Disorder Policy

Witham Town Council has created this policy as it has a duty to consider the impact of its functions and decisions on crime and disorder in its area, under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Town Council is also under a duty to consider the safety of the general public at large and recognises the need for positive action.

A crime and disorder impact assessment must be included in all committee and council reports and key decisions, detailing how potential actions may affect local crime and disorder.

Engagement

As part of that process the Town Council will fully engage with the all-applicable bodies to:

- Reduce and detect crime.
- Reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime and re-assure people.
- Strengthen community involvement under Section 5(2) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (the right of town and parish councils to be consulted).

Partnership Working

In exercising those functions, the Town Council shall act in co-operation with the following persons and bodies, namely:

- The local authorities, Braintree District Council and Essex County Council.
- Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- The probation service or health authority.
- Maintaining visible policing through Community Special Constables and Street Warden.
- Every person or body prescribed by order of the Secretary of State under this subsection.

Regular updates of partnership activity and outcomes will be reported to the Town Council and, where appropriate, the public.

In discharging its duties, the Town Council:

- Extends a permanent invitation to Essex Police to attend monthly Council meetings where questions can be asked and addressed.
- The Town Council CCTV cameras are available to be controlled by Essex Police and footage can be provided when requested.
- Prioritises the quick removal of graffiti, litter and drug paraphernalia from public open spaces within its control (namely James Cooke Wood, the Closed Churchyard, Whetmead Nature Reserve and the River Walk)
- Publishes relevant information on its website, social media, and newsletter when possible.
- Promotes a culture of “Eyes and Ears” to increase collection of intelligence working with community organisations and local resident associations.
- Will continue the funding, promotion and recruitment of Community Special Constables in partnership with Essex Police.
- Will make a budgetary commitment to support Community Safety

The Council will maintain an audit trail for all significant decisions, minuting how crime and disorder responsibilities under Section 17 were considered. Expert advice will be sought on specialist crime issues where needed.

Outcomes:
The Town Council aspires to achieving the following outcomes through proactive promotion of this policy:

- Reduced fear of crime & anti-social behaviour with a particular emphasis on older and more vulnerable people and in areas after dark.
- Reducing the overall number of crime and anti-social behaviour incidents.
- A prompt response to all incidents.
- Enhanced ability of Police to target their resources.
- Restoring visible community policing through community special constable presence.

The Town Council will represent the views of its community and ensure that local crime reduction strategies represent those views.

As an integral part of this policy the Town Council will continually review the ways in which it carries out its various functions and duties to ensure the reduction of crime and disorder in Witham.

Adopted: Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held 26.06.2023

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To be reviewed: September 2028

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