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MINUTES

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Tuesday, 25th November 2025**

Place: **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Newland Street, Witham, CM8 2FE**

Present: Councillors:

P.	Heath	(Town Mayor)
E.	Adelaja	
P.	Barlow	
J.	Goodman	
L.	Headley	
J.	Martin	
R.	Playle	
R.	Ramage	
J.	Robertson	
H.	Andrews	(Deputy Town Clerk)
G.	Kennedy	(Committee Clerk)

130. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Barlow, Fleet, Taylor and Williams. Councillors J.C. Coleman, J.M. Coleman and Sloma were absent. Councillor Playle said that he would need to leave the Meeting early as he had another meeting to attend.

RESOLVED That the apologies be received and approved.

131. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Town Council held 28th October 2025 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

132. INTERESTS

Councillor Goodman declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 142 – Maltings Lane Community Centre, as he knew a supplier.

Councillor Robertson declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 142 – Maltings Lane Community Centre, as his employer was sub-contracted to supply equipment for groundworks.

133. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no member of the press or public present.

134. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

Essex County Councillor Playle spoke about devolution and the government consultation. Four models had been put forward and a decision would be taken in early January 2026. There had been a lot of opposition to the North Essex Parking Partnership proposals and it was understood there would be a meeting in January to discuss the scheme to introduce paid parking in Newland Street. He had also raised the problem with traffic light sequencing at The Grove/Newland Street. He gave warning that Cadent would be carrying out work in Guithavon Street/Guithavon Valley from 5th to 25th January 2026.

Members were informed that there had been 895 signatures against the NEPP proposals and it was understood that the Leader of Braintree District Council was against the scheme.

Braintree District Councillor Heath explained that he had been told that the Town Council could apply to the District Council for a £30,000 grant towards street lights and festivities. It was understood that £180,000 had been spent in Braintree town itself and Members were dismayed at the difference.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

135. TACKLING SPEEDING/20s PLENTY

Members noted that Essex County Council had now awarded the licence for the speed indicator device for Hatfield Road. The equipment was now in the office and preparations were being made for it to be installed. Liaison with police would take place for other potential sites to be identified.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

136. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Town Mayor's engagements attended for period 22nd October to 18th November 2025 were received.

The Town Mayor said that he had attended Lift Maltings Academy to give a leadership speech and had discussed how ideas from the school council could be brought to the Town Council.

RESOLVED That the details be received and noted.

137. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report on matters arising was received and those Members who had helped on Saturday at the Christmas Market were thanked, likewise staff who were out in the inclement weather.

The impact on staff morale with regard to lack of engagement by Members was noted.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

138. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

(a) It was agreed to appoint Councillor Goodman to Committees and Working Groups.

RESOLVED That Councillor Playle retire from the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED That Councillor Goodman be elected to serve as a Member of the Environment and Policy and Resources Committees, Open Spaces Management Sub-Committee, Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and Improving Healthcare Facilities Working Group for the ensuing Civic Year.

(b) It was agreed to appoint Councillor Heath onto the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

RESOLVED That Councillor Heath be elected to serve as a Member of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for the ensuing Civic Year.

It was agreed to bring forward the item on Public Art into the Public Domain.

139. PUBLIC ART

A report was received regarding the total of £119,814.81 that was required to be spent on Public Art. It was proposed that the money should be used on ‘functional’ art and a creative playground installed adjacent to the Maltings Lane Community Centre. To commission a suitable artist would take considerable officer time and there was a funding commitment deadline of March 2026. The other option would be to appoint a Public Art Consultant who would manage the whole project and allow the March deadline to be met even if the design and construction stages continued past this date.

Members agreed that a Public Art Consultant should be appointed to report back to the Section 106 Working Group and then to Town Council.

RESOLVED That a Public Art Consultant be appointed to develop and deliver a creative playground project.

140. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED That 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.

141. LAND TRANSFER

A report was received.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

142. MALTINGS LANE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Councillors Goodman and Robertson had declared interests.

A report was received.

Whilst this matter was discussed Councillor Playle left the Meeting.

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

There being no further business the Town Mayor closed the Meeting at 8.14 p.m.

Councillor P. Heath
Town Mayor

HA/GK/26.11.2025

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