



# Witham's Voice



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## Meet the new Town Mayor.



*Mrs Jenny Pleasance & Town Mayor, Councillor Tom Pleasance*

On Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018, Councillor Tom Pleasance was elected as the new Town Mayor for the forthcoming Civic Year, and final year of the Council before elections are held in 2019. Tom had been the Deputy Mayor for the past year. Councillor Mrs Clare Lager was also elected as the new Deputy Town Mayor.

In accepting the Office, Tom congratulated Councillor Mrs JoAnn Williams on both her excellent year in office and dedication. He 'took his hat off' to her achievements and said that he would endeavour to be a worthy successor.

Tom stated that he was proud to be appointed as the new Mayor and honoured to be in the presence of previous mayors and Council elders. He had been elected as a new Member of the Town Council in 2015 and had been impressed by the knowledge and dedication of its Members and is proud to be working alongside them. He considered that the community does not realise their dedication.



*Councillor Pleasance tips his hat to the outgoing mayor.*

Tom revealed his 'Wish List' for his Year in Office putting forward his commitment to serve to the best of his ability. He recognised the growing challenges faced by the Town Council and local community stating it was important to keep focused on the aims and objectives set out by Members. He was looking forward to the coming year and friends had advised that he should be realistic and he would therefore 'be himself and enjoy the opportunities'. Tom also announced his two charities, which are the 295 Witham and Rivenhall Squadron Air Training Corps Mini Bus Fund, and J's Hospice for Teenage Care.

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# Witham's Voice

## Witham Town Council Annual Report 2017/18

Councillor Mrs JoAnn Williams, Town Mayor of Witham, said it was an amazing honour to represent the town and she had learnt so much. She thanked first the staff for their help and advice, particularly thanking her secretary, Mrs Dee Halliday for keeping her diary up-to-date and assisting with charity events. She thanked her fellow Members for their support and guidance.

She said that there were too many highlights to mention. She referred to her two charities Witham Operatic Workshop and Little Havens Hospice and the fund raising events which had been held including a very successful Bridge Drive organised by Clare Lager and the recent Highland Dinner Dance. In total £3,658 was raised over the year to be divided between the two charities.

She said that with the lack of visible policing and increasing anti-social behaviour, she had organised a public meeting the previous evening to address some of these issues with the police. She spoke of the need to work together to make Witham a better place to live and work.

She thanked everyone she had met during her year in Office and wished the new Mayor every success.

### Attendance 2017/18

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.

Clr. P.R Barlow	22/46	Clr Mrs S.C Lager	25/40
Clr J.C Bayford	22/46	Clr Mrs J.M Money	40/54
Clr J.R Pullen	18/20*	Clr T.A Pleasance	41/55
Clr J.C Goodman	50/55	Clr R.P Ramage	34/46
Clr P. Horner	46/52	Clr W.J Rose	37/48
Clr Mrs J.A Kempf	14/46	Clr P.M Ryland	15/34
Clr Mrs A. Kilmartin	50/52	Clr. Mrs J. Williams	44/55
Clr M.C.M Lager	51/56	Clr R. Williams	45/49

*\*Clr J.R Pullen was elected to the Town Council in December 2017.*

### INCOME

How the Town Council was funded:

<b>LOCAL COUNCIL TAX:</b>	<b>£455,232</b>
<b>LOCALISM FUND:</b>	<b>£33,162</b>
<b>COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION</b>	
<b>SURPLUS FUND:</b>	<b>£8,083</b>
<b>INTEREST:</b>	<b>£1,091</b>
<b>DONATIONS FOR</b>	
<b>MAYORS APPEAL:</b>	<b>£4,682</b>
<b>HALL HIRE:</b>	<b>£6,602</b>
<b>INFORMATION CENTRE</b>	
<b>SALES:</b>	<b>£62,884</b>
<b>CAR PARK LICENCE:</b>	<b>£8,792</b>
<b>DICKENSIAN MARKET:</b>	<b>£290</b>
<b>COMMUNITY DAY:</b>	<b>£746</b>
<b>WW1 EVENTS:</b>	<b>£225</b>
<b>TREE DONATIONS:</b>	<b>£2,300</b>
<b>PUPPET FESTIVAL:</b>	<b>£4,955</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£589,229</b>

## Community Committee Annual Report from Councillor Rob Williams, Chairman.



Councillor Rob Williams explained that the committee has been actively engaged in a number of issues that affect the future of the town. One key issue is community safety and a task and finish group has been set up to deliver solutions to the lack of policing in the town. The Town Mayor's initiative brought together over 110 residents to question the local police commander. The CCTV system, which is monitored 24/7, has been upgraded to provide high definition pictures and has the facility for police officers to monitor from their mobile phones. The second initiative is to actively encourage the recruitment of Special Police Constables for the Witham area. Finally the Town Council will be encouraging the setting up of active Residents' Associations which has proved to reduce crime. Another important issue is the Town Council's fight to get better medical facilities for the residents of Witham. The GP facilities are already over-stretched and the new housing developments will exacerbate the situation. The Town Council has been influential in building support from GPs, the NHS and Braintree District Council. There is a clear desire to create a new GP facility to deliver more cohesive healthcare for residents with less reliance on facilities outside the town.

He was extremely proud that the Town Council organises three major events annually, free of charge to the public. The Puppet Festival has proved to be increasingly successful with visitors from far afield increasing the footfall in the town and subsequent up-turn in takings for the local traders. In November the Dickensian event is held marking the start of Christmas in the town when the decorative lights are turned on and tree lit. The newest venture is the Community Day held in the town park when volunteer organisations can be show cased. Support is also given to local charities by means of grants and detailed those benefiting including the Citizens Advice, Carnival Association and the Boys' Brigade. He promoted the Information Centre which provides an excellent service for residents and visitors alike and welcomed Kim Lumb as the new face of the Centre.

### Community Committee - How we spent our budget

Town Clock:	£462	Community Support:	£10,549
Litter Bins:	£47	Community Day:	£1,893
CCTV:	£54,360	Puppet Festival	£24,047
Christmas Decorations	£5,368	WW1 Commemorations:	£820
Community Grants:	£7,458	Christmas Dickensian Event:	£800
Citizens Advice:	£10,000	Admin/Central Services:	£108,700
Community Support/ Youth:	£1,495		
Information Centre Sales:	£58,058	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£316,299</b>
Information Centre:	£32,242		

# Witham's Voice



## Environment Committee Annual Report from Councillor John Goodman, Chairman.

Councillor Goodman explained that a number of issues have been on-going for a number of years. One such issue is the Integrated Waste Management Facility on the former Rivenhall Airfield which remains a concern for the Town Council as possible air pollution or visual impact will affect residents. He referred to the assistance being given by Priti Patel MP who fully supports the rejection of the proposed development.

Parking issues in the town continue to be monitored and the County Council and North Essex Parking Partnership are lobbied to bring a satisfactory resolution to these problems. HGVs transiting through the town continue to be of concern and the problem is exacerbated by poor HGV signage. This problem was raised with the County Council several years ago and despite numerous attempts it is still to be rectified; although recent meetings have given hope that the matter will be properly investigated and resolved.

Highways England has held several consultations on the proposed widening of the A12 yet still no decision has been taken with regard the preferred option. The Town Council remains concerned over the possible impact on Whetmead Nature Reserve. The preferred route for the proposed new A120, the responsibility of the County Council, has likewise still to be decided. The Planning Applications & Transport Sub-Committee, which reports to the Environment Committee, meets on a fortnightly basis to review planning applications which

range from Tree Preservation Orders, individual properties to whole scale housing development. The Town Council is only a consultee but Members will attend the District Council's Planning Committee to make personal representations on applications which we consider should be refused.

The south of Witham, in particular, has evidence of the new housing developments. We continue to monitor the impact of these developments on infrastructure with particular attention to health facilities, schools and transport.

On a disappointing note the Listening Bench provided and funded by the Essex Record Office was wantonly vandalised and has had to be removed from the Town Park. A safer position for the repaired bench is currently being considered.

The Town Council is proud of the River Walk, Whetmead, James Cooke Wood and the Closed Churchyard, which offers such pleasure and tranquillity, and is testament to the tireless efforts of the Open Spaces Team. He mentioned too the volunteers who are the Tree Group and work closely with the Town Council. He referred to the floral displays in the town centre which are now the sole responsibility of the Council.

He thanked his fellow Councillors and staff for their support and assistance and gave the assurance that the Environment Committee would continue to address those areas of concern.

### Environment Committee - How we spent our budget

Pensions:	£22,410	Open Spaces:	£65,864
Manual Equipment:	£12,003	Town Park Lavatories:	£7,376
Footpath Lighting:	£6,241	Witham In Bloom Displays:	£11,264
Period Garden:	£1,225		
Trees:	£2,332		
Memorial Trees:	£1,315	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£238,717</b>
Admin/Central Services:	£108,700		

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



Councillor Lager explained that the Committee supports the delivery of the Town Council's Business Plan, had been received. He was pleased that clean internal and external audits

finances and staff. The staff are a vital resource and he welcomed Kim Lumb, the new Customer Services Manager in the Information Centre, and Jamie Brownlow, part of the Open Spaces Team, to the Town Council. He said as an employer the Town Council has a duty of care, so the Open Spaces Team now wear body cameras. In the past year major repairs have been necessary to the Town Hall and recently a new boiler has been installed. A major change in legislation is the new General Data Protection Regulations which needs the Town Council to be transparent in what information it keeps. The website has recently been improved but something more radical might be required. The Town Council continues to produce its quarterly Voice newsletter and recently acquired Foundation Status as part of the Local Council Award Scheme. Boundary realignment should also take into account residential development and are now in the final stage of a Government Review. He

He then spoke of the need to raise Council Tax to £61.70 at Band D to prevent a potential financial deficit. BDC is expected by the Government to pass on a proportion of the grant they receive in relation to tax relief but has failed to do so. He said that the District Council is

nearing introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy where 15% is passed on to local councils but this would rise to 25% if a Neighbourhood Plan exists. Following extensive consultation the Town Plan has been updated and covers the period from 2017 – 2037. The Plan will be reviewed and up-dated annually. He stated that we need to work with the District Council in exploring with us the local management of public open spaces and other services, the County Council is keener to devolve some services. A feasibility study will be carried out by the Town Council.

In conclusion he thanked his colleagues for their positive approach and support.

### Policy & Resources - How we spent our budget

Mayors Gift Fund Allowance:	£100	Civic Receptions:	£600
Christmas Expenses:	£1,828	Town Plan:	£300
Mayor's Appeal:	£4,320	Admin/Services	£54,350
The Voice Newsletter:	£8,512		
Members Allowances:	£0		
Town Mayor's Allowance:	£2,500		
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£72,510</b>

# Witham's Information Centre



*Kim Lumb, Information Centre Manager*

A warm welcome from Kim Lumb, your new Information Centre Manager who has joined the team at Witham Town Council promising to breathe new life into the services we offer!

There's all sorts going on at the Centre with new offers, products and services coming in all the time. Whilst other Information Centres across Essex have closed, the Witham Information Centre continues to be a popular, well-loved service in the Town, and is committed to providing local residents the very best.

The Information Centre regularly hosts exhibitions of local artists, photographers and community groups. Drop in today to see just how much is on offer in your local town!

**Where can you find us?** – As part of Witham Town Council, we are located on the ground floor of The Town Hall in Newland Street

**Our Opening Hours** – We are open from Monday – Thursday 0900 – 1630 and Friday from 0930 – 1600 (not including bank holidays)

**How you can contact us** – Please come in and browse when you are next in the town, but should you wish to contact us in the meantime our details are:

Phone – 01376 520674

E-mail – [tic@witham.gov.uk](mailto:tic@witham.gov.uk)

You may also wish to visit our Witham Town Council / Information Centre website, which can be found at [www.witham.gov.uk](http://www.witham.gov.uk)



*All your local favourites are up for grabs!*

## Discounts on local attractions!



At Witham Information Centre, you can purchase discounted Adventure Island tickets (which are exchanged for wristbands) which remain valid all the way until December 2018!

If you're looking for a fun family day out then we strongly recommend Adventure Island!

Drop in to enquire today!

## But what else is on offer?

If you're looking for something a little more on the wild side, we also supply Colchester Zoo tickets and discounted tickets for Adventure Island Sealife and Adventure Island golf! *(Please note that once purchased, all tickets for our discounted local attractions are non-refundable)*



Other general services available for use include:

- Box office facilities for Witham Public Hall
- Tickets for local events and charity groups
- National Express Ticketing
- Bus Ticketing & Timetables
- Theatre Tokens
- Wilkins Jams, Marmalade & Preserves for sale
- Coach Trips - Witham Depart & Return
- Fax & Photocopy Service
- Brochures for a wide range of UK holiday destinations
- Recycling sacks and dog waste bags
- Function Room & Council Chamber bookings for a wide range of events at highly competitive rates!



*le Tour de Witham*  
29<sup>th</sup> July 2018 12PM - 3PM  
Witham Town Park

**GET ON YER BIKE!**

**An Event by Witham BB**

Witham's Biggest Cycling Event Celebrates it's 5th year!  
The Event Has Something for Everyone:  
Family 5 Mile Led Ride / 25 Miler / 50 Miler  
Register At GK's Witham, or @ [www.WithamBB.org.uk](http://www.WithamBB.org.uk)  
Email: [Events@2withamboys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:Events@2withamboys-brigade.org.uk) Tel: 01376 520400

## 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](http://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:** 9th July, 3rd September, 29th October

**Environment:** 24th July, 17th September

**Community:** 6th August, 1st October

**Policy & Resources:** 25th June, 20th August, 15th October

**Planning & Transport:** 25th June, 9th & 24th July, 6th & 20th August, 3rd & 17th September, 1st, 15th & 29th October.

## Useful Contacts

All numbers are 01376 code unless shown otherwise.



### TOWN HALL

Tel: 520 627  
[townclerk@witham.gov.uk](mailto: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

**John Pullen:** 44 Avenue Road, CM8 2DP. Tel: 500 109

#### 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