



Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE
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AGENDA

Meeting of: **Community Committee**

Date: **Monday, 10th November 2025** Time: **7:30 p.m.**

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

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

J.C.	Coleman	(Chairman)	J.	Martin
P.	Heath	(Vice Chairman)	R.	Playle
E.	Adelaja		R.	Ramage
L.	Barlow		J.	Robertson
L.	Headley		E.	Williams

Nikki Smith
Town Clerk
NS/GK/5.11.2025

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Committee held 19th August 2025 (previously circulated).

3. INTERESTS

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

4. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

An opportunity to enable members of the press and public present to comment.

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. GUEST SPEAKER

An opportunity for the Committee to hear from the selected guest speaker ahead of question and answer session.

Note: The chosen speaker for this Meeting is Paul Wiseman, Witham Town Council's Street Warden.

6. ESSEX POLICE

An opportunity to receive any updates concerning local criminal matters and hear from any officers in attendance.

7. POLICE RESPONSE TO HALLOWEEN

To receive a report attached at page 4.

8. GRANT APPLICATIONS

(a) **Popcorn**

To receive a grant application from Popcorn attached at page 5.

(b) **Allstars Majorettes**

To receive a grant application from Allstars Majorettes (to follow)

(c) **Mill Lane Bowls Club**

To receive the project review report from the Mill Lane Bowls Club attached at page 6.

9. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

To receive a verbal report from the Clerk.

10. COMMUNITY COMMITTEE INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND BUDGET REPORT

To receive the Community Committee Income and Expenditure report for the period up to 30th September 2025 attached at page 7.

11. EVENTS UPDATE

To receive an events update attached at page 8.

12. SOCIAL MEDIA

To receive social media statistics attached at page 9.

13. COMMUNITY COMMITTEE BUDGET 2026/2027

To receive and approve the proposed Community Committee Budget for 2026/2027 attached at page 10.

14. 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.

15. INFORMATION CENTRE

To receive a report from the Information Centre Manager attached at page 11.

16. IMPROVING HEALTHCARE FACILITIES IN WITHAM WORKING GROUP

To receive the Minutes of the Improving Healthcare Facilities in Witham Working Group held 9th September 2025 attached at page 14.



ITEM NO: 7

Officer Report: Essex Police Response to Halloween in Witham

During the Halloween period, Essex Police implemented a dispersal order in Witham and increased police visibility, supported by partners such as Essex Fire & Rescue Service and Essex Youth Service. This year's policing included enhanced powers for stop and search, which are not frequently exercised in Witham.

Over two days, officers conducted 29 stop searches and approximately 100 stop and accounts, resulting in three arrests for possession of knives—an issue not previously perceived as significant in the area. Additional seizures included fireworks, cannabis, alcohol, water bombs, and eggs. Six dispersal notices were issued, and parental contacts were made where necessary.

Compared to last year's relatively low visible police presence, the increased activity appears to have contributed to a safer environment, with most residents celebrating responsibly. However, the discovery of three weapons by officers during a short period raises concerns about the potential rise in knife crime.

An Essex Police Post

Three arrests following Dispersal Order in Witham

While policing the dispersal order in Witham in Halloween night, officers carried out two separate stop searches, each resulting in the recovery of a knife.

In the first incident, a 15 year old boy was arrested on suspicion of possessing an offensive weapon.

In the second, a 23 year old man was arrested under the same suspicion.

Both individuals were taken into custody and interviewed. These incidents are not linked, and no one was injured. Enquiries remain on-going.

Separately, on Saturday evening, a third individual - a 16 year old boy - was arrested and has since been charged with possession of a knife. He is due to appear at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court later this month.

That's three more knives off our streets.

If you have any information about knives or other weapons in our community please visit the links in the comments to report it anonymously.

Advice: Members are invited to reflect on the police response to this year's Halloween in comparison to last year's, particularly the impact of enhanced stop and search powers and greater visible policing in Witham.

It is further recommended that members consider formally asking the District Commander how Essex Police plans to maintain and improve the safety of Witham residents moving forward. This is an important matter for community safety given that knife crime had not previously been identified as an issue in the area.

DETAILS OF GRANT FUNDING SCHEME APPLICATION FORM

Name of organisation: Popcorn Community Limited

Activities of organisation: Popcorn restores a sense of belonging and hope for socially isolated young adults in Witham

How many committee members? 7

How many paid staff? 2

Registered bank account? Yes

Yearly income: £45,000

Project title: Popcorn programmes & meetups

How will you ensure sustainability? Reliance on staff, participants, venues and funding.

Total amount requested: £5,000

How much have you raised for the project? £50,000 seed funding from Eastlight Community Homes and £21,000 from grant funders.

Full details of the grant application are available

Project Review Report

Name of organisation - Witham Mill Lane Bowls Club

Position in organisation - Greenkeeper

Project Details

Project title – Clubhouse maintenance

Project Location – Witham Mill Lane Bowls Club

Actual start and finish date – 1st April to 30th August 2025

What was the total cost of project – £3,631 plus paint and painting the clubhouse

Breakdown of how grant was spent – The grant was spent on new fascia, soffit, gutters, new posts on both sides of the front door of the clubhouse and removing waste. The total came to more than originally anticipated and the difference between the grant and the total cost was covered by the club.

If there were any discrepancies between how the grant was spent and what was on the application form, please explain why – Not really

Do you believe the project to be a success? If so how was this success measured? The project was a great success. The clubhouse looks so much better than before and is now also safer than it was.

How many people benefited from this project both directly and indirectly? Directly more than 300. Indirectly, a lot more as the clubhouse looks so much more attractive than it was before.

What lessons do you feel were learnt during this process? Not much as the work was straight forward.

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Summary of Receipts and Payments

Cost Centre 2 (Between 01/04/2025 and 30/09/2025)

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Community

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
23	Information Sales Income	65,000.00	24,520.77	-40,479.23				-40,479.23 (-62%)
24	Witham Festival Income	1,500.00	1,390.00	-110.00				-110.00 (-7%)
25	Music Event	1,500.00	1,337.70	-162.30				-162.30 (-10%)
26	Dog Show	1,000.00	485.05	-514.95				-514.95 (-51%)
27	Witham Pride	500.00		-500.00				-500.00 (-100%)
28	Teddy Bear's Picnic	50.00	50.00					(0%)
29	Christmas Events	1,500.00	1,190.00	-310.00				-310.00 (-20%)
30	Community Team - Salaries, NI & LGPS				84,728.00	34,169.82	50,558.18	50,558.18 (59%)
31	Town Clock				1,500.00	1,633.00	-133.00	-133.00 (-8%)
32	Christmas Decorations				13,000.00		13,000.00	13,000.00 (100%)
33	Information Centre Stock				55,000.00	17,323.44	37,676.56	37,676.56 (68%)
34	Information Centre & Administration				3,000.00	823.78	2,176.22	2,176.22 (72%)
35	Community Grant Aid				12,000.00	500.00	11,500.00	11,500.00 (95%)
36	Carnival Grant				8,000.00		8,000.00	8,000.00 (100%)
37	Citizens Advice				10,000.00	10,000.00		(0%)
38	CCTV				14,000.00	4,854.33	9,145.67	9,145.67 (65%)
39	Community Safety				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00 (100%)
40	Community Special Constables Expenses				5,000.00	884.33	4,115.67	4,115.67 (82%)
41	Witham Train Memorial				500.00	770.00	-270.00	-270.00 (-54%)
42	Community Special Constable Recruitment				1,000.00	170.00	830.00	830.00 (83%)
43	Other Community Support				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00 (100%)
44	Witham Dog Show				2,500.00	2,364.04	135.96	135.96 (5%)
45	Witham Street Entertainment Festival				23,000.00	21,406.98	1,593.02	1,593.02 (6%)
46	Remembrance				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00 (100%)
47	Twinning				500.00		500.00	500.00 (100%)
48	Halloween Event				2,200.00	715.00	1,485.00	1,485.00 (67%)
49	Music Event				10,000.00	7,348.45	2,651.55	2,651.55 (26%)
50	VE Day				2,500.00	2,126.55	373.45	373.45 (14%)
51	VJ Day				1,000.00	1,151.53	-151.53	-151.53 (-15%)
52	Christmas Events & Tree				4,500.00	1,113.04	3,386.96	3,386.96 (75%)
53	Easter Quest				1,650.00	704.90	945.10	945.10 (57%)
54	New Events & Events Improvment				1,500.00	1,458.19	41.81	41.81 (2%)
55	Silver Cinema				300.00	109.11	190.89	190.89 (63%)
SUB TOTAL		71,050.00	28,973.52	-42,076.48	261,378.00	109,626.49	151,751.51	109,675.03 (32%)

Summary

NET TOTAL	71,050.00	28,973.52	-42,076.48	261,378.00	109,626.49	151,751.51	109,675.03 (32%)
V.A.T.					6,981.34		
GROSS TOTAL		28,973.52			116,607.83		

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Witham Festival

The Witham Festival was a great success, attracting over 13,000 visitors. The event featured amazing new acts and received excellent feedback, with no negative comments reported. Looking ahead to next year, we plan to introduce a public vote, allowing attendees to choose which acts they would like to see perform at the festival.

Halloween Event

This year's Halloween event was very successful, with around 600 children taking part. We received lots of positive feedback, particularly about the non-scary theme, which allowed younger children to participate and enjoy the event fully. The community response was overwhelmingly positive and supportive.

Upcoming Christmas Market

Preparations for the Christmas Market are well underway, with over 120 stalls already booked and more booking forms still being received.

Visitors can look forward to a wide variety of stalls, offering:

- Clothing, toys, souvenirs, and books
- Cleaning products and gifts
- Pet products, local crafts, and handmade items
- Delicious food stalls with a festive Christmas atmosphere

There will also be plenty of entertainment on stage, featuring performances from local groups and special guests, including James Arnott with his Punch and Judy Christmas Edition.

To add to the festive experience, there will be real reindeer in The Grove, creating a magical atmosphere for families and children.

Santa's Grotto

This year's Santa's Grotto will run for four days — on two Saturdays and two holiday dates. New presents have been ordered, and we hope to welcome and delight around 200 children throughout the event.

The Grotto will once again be a highlight of the Christmas celebrations, offering a magical experience for families and young visitors

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ITEM NO: 12

Officer Report: Social Media Report – 1st August 25 – 31st October 25
Issue:

The most popular posts on social media in the last 3 months have been:

Facebook: Thanks to volunteers for clearing Mill Lane Meadow post – 137 likes

Instagram: Notice of upcoming Witham Rail Crash service – 11 likes

The posts that reached the most people through the algorithms of social media:

Facebook: Thanks to volunteers for clearing Mill Lane Meadow post – 13.6k

Instagram: Notice of Witham Street Entertainment Festival next day – 411

Traffic on our social media pages:

Facebook

Visits to our profile: 11.8k (Same as last quarter)

Views of our content: 764.6k (First time reporting this statistic)

New followers: 201 (Up from 143 last quarter)

Total Followers: 4,610 (Up from 4,450 last quarter)

People reached: 76.9k (Up from 46.6k last quarter)

Instagram

Visits to our profile: 214 (Down from 268 last quarter)

Views of our content: 22.4k (First time reporting this statistic)

New followers: 46 (Down from 55 last quarter)

Total Followers: 960 (Up from 932 last quarter)

People reached: 1.6k (Down from 1.9k last quarter)

We continue to post daily Monday to Friday, promoting WTC events and any other WTC initiatives. On Tuesdays we post or share something climate related, on Thursdays we post anything relevant to the weekend, e.g. Sunday Cinema and on the first of each month we post the upcoming meetings for that month. We also share anything that is relevant to the community, such as information from Essex Police

During the last quarter we have had several events which help to boost our social media figures, both in the run up to the events and by posting photographs of the event afterwards.

Advice:

To receive & note

The following lists budget lines with the current budget and proposed budget for 2026/2027

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PROPOSED COMMUNITY COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR 2026/2027			
	2025/2026	2026/2027	
Community	Current Budget	Proposed Budget	Difference
Information Sales Income	65000	65000	0
Witham Festival Income	1500	1500	0
Music Event	1500	1500	0
Dog Show	1000	1000	0
Witham Pride	500		-500
Teddy Bear's Picnic	50	50	0
Christmas Events	1500	1500	0
Total Income	71050	70550	-500
Community Team - Salaries & Employer N.I & LGPS Contributions	84728	176414	91686
Town Clock	1500	0	-1500 <i>Only needs servicing every other year</i>
Christmas Decorations	13000	13000	0
Information Centre Stock	55000	55000	0
Information Centre Advertisement & Administration	3000	3000	0
Community Grant Aid	12000	12000	0
Carnival Grant	8000	8000	0
Professional Advice Support Fund	10000	10000	0
CCTV	14000	14500	500
Community Safety	1500	1500	0
Community Special Constables Expenses	5000	5000	0
Community Special Constable Recruitment	1000	1000	0
Other Community Support	1500	1500	0
Witham Open Garden		750	750 <i>New event, positive feedback receive from Voice consultation</i>
Witham Summer Fayre		1500	1500 <i>Possible new event</i>
Witham Dog Show	2500	2500	0
Witham Street Entertainment Festival	23000	23000	0
Teddy Bear's Picnic		1000	1000
Remembrance	1000	1000	0
D-Day Event/VE Day	2500		-2500
Witham Train Memorial	500		-500
VJ Day	1000		-1000
Twinning	500		-500
Halloween Event	2200	2700	500 <i>Extra helpers required</i>
Music Event	10000	10000	0
Christmas Events & Tree	4500	5750	1250 <i>Increase in size of event and cost of tree & helpers required</i>
Easter Quest	1650	1700	50
New Events & Events Improvement	1500	1500	0
Silver Cinema	300	300	0
Overhead Expenditure	261378	352614	91236

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