



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

AGENDA

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Date: **Tuesday, 28th October 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:

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

Nikki Smith
Town Clerk
NS/GK/23.10.2025

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of Town Council held 29th September 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. CO-OPTION

- a) To receive a short 5 minute introduction from all co-option candidates in attendance and an opportunity for members to ask any additional questions. Person specifications attached at page 4.
- b) To resolve formally to co-opt the chosen candidate for the vacancy in Witham Town (South Ward).

6. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

To receive a Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the new Member of the Town Council for South Ward.

7. ESSEX COUNTY AND BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE

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

8. 20s PLENTY/ TACKLING SPEEDING

To receive an update from the Chairman of the Planning and Transport Committee.

9. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

To receive details of the Town Mayor's engagements attended for the period 25th September to 21st October 2025 attached at page 14.

10. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

To receive the Town Clerk's report on matters arising attached at page 16.

11. FINANCIAL SCRUTINY PANEL

To receive a report from the Financial Scrutiny Panel which met on 3rd October 2025 attached at page 17.

12. RISK REGISTER 2025/2026

To receive and approve the Risk Register for 2025/2026 attached at page 24.

13. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROLS POLICY

To receive and approve the Statement of Internal Controls Policy attached at page 29.

14. WITHAM'S VOICE

To consider issuing Witham's Voice just twice a year.

15. 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.

16. LAND TRANSFER

To receive a report attached at page 32.

17. COMMUNITY CENTRE

To receive a report attached at page 33.

18. BUS SERVICES

To receive an update on bus services in Witham attached at page 37.

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Please explain in no more than 200 words in total why you want to be a Councillor for Witham, and what you think you can contribute :

I have lived in Witham South at my current address for almost 20 years. My sons go to Witham primary and secondary schools and I am a Witham based business owner. So you can say I am very passionate about the town I live in.

Over the years I have been involved in a few local community groups. I was Chair of Chipping Hill Primary School PTA for 2 years and acted as secretary for the Witham Chamber of Commerce and am now a lifetime member.

I am currently on the board of trustees for Inspires MAT, an academy trust based in Witham. I am passionate that all Witham children get the same standard of education regardless of what part of Witham they live in and am aligned strongly with the ethos of Inspires MAT.

Having been a Conservative all my life and deciding to join the party as a member in 2024, I saw this opportunity advertised and thought this is the logical next step for me. I am not applying because I think it will look good on my CV but because I love Witham and wish to represent it and make positive changes and be a present and active community spokesperson. I have done my political agent training and worked as an agent/political administrator in the past but can assure you that whatever I appear to lack in political experience I will make up for in enthusiasm and hard work.

I spent 13 years working at Essex County Council in the HR team and worked closely with the County Councillors so have experience of local government.

(Optional) If unsuccessful in selection for one of the available Councillor (member) vacancies, would you consider serving the Council in another capacity, such as a non-Councillor voting member of a Committee?

Yes

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Appendix 2 – Candidate application form

APPLICATION FOR CO-OPTION TO WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I [JOHN CHARLES GOODMAN (full name)] of

[ (1)]

hereby apply for co-option to Witham Town Council.

I declare that on the date of application shown at (2) below:

- I am at least 18 years old.
- I am a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- I meet at least one of the following four qualifications (tick as appropriate):

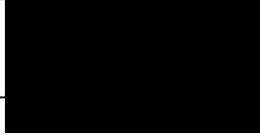
☒ I am registered as a local government elector for the parish of Witham in respect of the qualifying address shown at (1) above, or;

☒ I have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the town during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below)
(Show description of land or other premises below)

☐ My main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of this application (shown at (2) below) has been in the town or;
(Show address below of place of work and, where appropriate, name of employer)

☒ I have lived in the town or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) Show address in full if different from address shown at (1) above.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 78A of the Local Government Act 2000 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

Applicant's signature  Date 4/10/2025 (2)

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Please explain in no more than 200 words in total why you want to be a Councillor for Witham, and what you think you can contribute :

I served as a Town Councillor representing Witham West Ward between October 2008 and May 2023 and during that time I was also pleased to have been elected by my fellow Councillors to the office of Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2011 / 2012.

In my final year as a Councillor I was privileged to be appointed, for a second occasion, as Deputy Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2022 / 2023 and whilst in this role I was deeply moved and honoured to read from the Town Hall steps the Proclamation of Accession of King Charles III following the death of the late Queen Elizabeth II in September 2022

Although I did not seek re-election in May 2023, I have continued to sit on one Sub-Committee and one Steering Group as a co-opted resident covering aspects of the Council's work in which I have a particular interest.

With my previous experience of almost 15 years as an elected Town Councillor and, latterly, over the past two years serving as a co-optee, I believe that I am now again in a position to actively represent the people of Witham and I would therefore welcome another opportunity to make a worthwhile contribution to the Council's ongoing aims and aspirations.

(Optional) If unsuccessful in selection for one of the available Councillor (member) vacancies, would you consider serving the Council in another capacity, such as a non-Councillor voting member of a Committee?

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Appendix 2 – Candidate application form

APPLICATION FOR CO-OPTION TO WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I [STEPHEN ERIC HICKS (full name)] of
[REDACTED] (1)]

hereby apply for co-option to Witham Town Council.

I declare that on the date of application shown at (2) below:

- I am at least 18 years old.
- I am a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- I meet at least one of the following four qualifications (tick as appropriate):

☒ I am registered as a local government elector for the parish of Witham in respect of the qualifying address shown at (1) above, or;

☒ I have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the town during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) (Show description of land or other premises below)

[REDACTED]

☒ My main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of this application (shown at (2) below) has been in the town or;
(Show address below of place of work and, where appropriate, name of employer)

☒ I have lived in the town or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) Show address in full if different from address shown at (1) above.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 78A of the Local Government Act 2000 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

Applicant's signature

[REDACTED]

Date 13th October (2) 2025

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Please explain in no more than 200 words in total why you want to be a Councillor for Witham, and what you think you can contribute :

HAVE LIVED AND WORKED IN AND AROUND WITHAM, SINCE 1988 HAVING A KEEN EAR LISTENING TO THE MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE OF OUR TOWN, OFTEN ADVISING OF BEST ROUTE FORWARD AND VERBAL GUIDANCE TO RESOLVE CONCERNS RAISED AND EXPERIENCED. WITH 12 YEARS AS A PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCILLOR I HONESTLY CONSIDER MYSELF AS A PREPARED FOR THE ROLE MATURE PERSON READY TO ASSIST IN DEBATES AND DECISIONS. PREVIOUSLY AS A TOWN COUNCILLOR I HAVE BEEN CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AND HAD AN EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE RECORD. I AM A PEOPLE PERSON AND EVEN AS A NON COUNCILLOR AM INVOLVED WITH PEOPLE OF WITHAM.

(Optional) If unsuccessful in selection for one of the available Councillor (member) vacancies, would you consider serving the Council in another capacity, such as a non-Councillor voting member of a Committee?

YES WOULD CONSIDER.

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Appendix 2 – Candidate application form

APPLICATION FOR CO-OPTION TO WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I [LENA SLOMA (full name)] of

[[REDACTED] (1)]

hereby apply for co-option to Witham Town Council.

I declare that on the date of application shown at (2) below:

- I am at least 18 years old.
- I am a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- I meet at least one of the following four qualifications (tick as appropriate):

☐ I am registered as a local government elector for the parish of Witham in respect of the qualifying address shown at (1) above, or;

☒ I have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the town during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) (Show description of land or other premises below)

☒ My main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of this application (shown at (2) below) has been in the town or;
(Show address below of place of work and, where appropriate, name of employer)

☒ I have lived in the town or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) Show address in full if different from address shown at (1) above.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 78A of the Local Government Act 2000 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

Applicant's signature [REDACTED] Date 16.09.2025 (2)

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Please explain in no more than 200 words in total why you want to be a Councillor for Witham, and what you think you can contribute :

I have been living in Witham with my family for the past eight years and during this time, the town has become a very important part of our lives. My children attend local schools, so creating a safe, supportive and welcoming community is a priority for me. I want Witham to continue to be a place where families can thrive and feel proud to call home.

Professionally, I have experience working in a business environment, which has given me a strong understanding of the challenges local businesses face. I believe it is vital to support and promote local enterprises as they are the backbone of our community and play a key role in its growth and prosperity.

In addition, I have completed university studies focused on supporting children with special needs, particularly those with autism and Asperger's Syndrome. My passion is to create a dedicated support group for children with additional needs and their families, offering them guidance, understanding and a safe space to connect. By becoming a councillor I hope to represent our community's needs, support local businesses and work towards making Witham an even better place to live for all residents.

(Optional) If unsuccessful in selection for one of the available Councillor (member) vacancies, would you consider serving the Council in another capacity, such as a non-Councillor voting member of a Committee?

I would like to be involved with the new Witham Community Centre currently being developed near A14 as I am passionate about supporting the local community and supporting and contributing to projects that bring people together.

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Appendix 2 – Candidate application form

APPLICATION FOR CO-OPTION TO WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I, Alex Townsend (full name) of
[REDACTED] (1)]

hereby apply for co-option to Witham Town Council.

I declare that on the date of application shown at (2) below:

- I am at least 18 years old.
- I am a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- I meet at least one of the following four qualifications (tick as appropriate):
 - ☒ I am registered as a local government elector for the parish of Witham in respect of the qualifying address shown at (1) above, or;
 - ☒ I have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the town during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) (Show description of land or other premises below)
 - ☐ My main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of this application (shown at (2) below) has been in the town or;
(Show address below of place of work and, where appropriate, name of employer)
 - ☒ I have lived in the town or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (2) below) Show address in full if different from address shown at (1) above.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 78A of the Local Government Act 2000 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

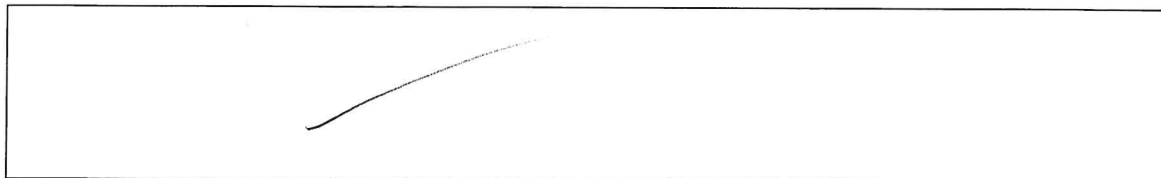
Applicant's signature [REDACTED] Date 10/10/25 (2)

WITHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Please explain in no more than 200 words in total why you want to be a Councillor for Witham, and what you think you can contribute :

I have lived in Witham for most of my life, went to school here and lived here as a married man with children so I feel like I have a lot of local knowledge. I am a member of the Labour Party and regularly attend branch and constituency meetings. I have experience of attending meetings and working as a staff governor in my first teaching post (Palmer's College, Grays 2002-2015). In this position, I was also for a time, a curriculum manager and Union Representative. I would like to serve my town and be part of processes to both maintain and improve it as a desirable place to live.

(Optional) If unsuccessful in selection for one of the available Councillor (member) vacancies, would you consider serving the Council in another capacity, such as a non-Councillor voting member of a Committee?



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**LIST OF MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN
25th September 2025 to 21st October 2025
Councillor Paul Heath**

Thursday 25th September 2025

Attended The Well Café for their Fairtrade Tea Party.

Monday 29th September 2025

Attended the Town Hall for the Coffee, Cake and Crochet morning in aid of The Alzheimer's Society.

Tuesday 30th September 2025

Attended the Craft Club at Witham Football Club.

Monday 6th October 2025

Attended the first anniversary of the Veteran's coffee morning at the RBL.

Tuesday 7th October 2025

Attended the Craft Club at Witham Football Club.



**LIST OF DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS BETWEEN
25th September 2025 to 21st October 2025**

Councillor Jack Coleman

Sunday 5th October 2025

Attended the High Sheriff of Essex Justice Service at Chelmsford Cathedral.

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ITEM NO: 10

Officer Report: Town Clerk's Report

POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACE REVIEW

To note that the District Council is reviewing polling district and polling place and is considering changing the polling station from Templars Academy to the Rickstones Church. Further details can be found here- <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/voting-elections/braintree-district-council-official-elections/6>

Response is required by 21st November 2025.

Advice: To receive and note.

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Financial Risk Assessment

CONDUCTED BY THE FINANCIAL SCRUTINY PANEL

Interim Assessment / ~~End of Year Assessment~~

PANEL MEMBERS:

Councillor	P.R Barlow
Councillor	B Fleet
Councillor	E Adelaja

OFFICERS:

N. Smith	(Responsible Financial Officer)
N.Zaviazun	(Finance Assistant)

Panel date: 3rd October 2025

The financial scrutiny panel was constituted by resolution to ensure a thorough and transparent process is in place to actively scrutinise the actions of officers who control the financial administration of Witham Town Council.

The panel exists to make recommendations to officers and suggest process changes and new processes where required, with any such recommendations being endorsed by the Policy & Resources Committee.

Summary of Recommendations:

Section 1: Budget Management

Section 2: Administration

Section 3: Policy & Internal Control

Section 4: Tenders

Section 5: Other Recommendations

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

SECTION ONE: BUDGET MANAGEMENT

Item	YES	NO	REC	Evidence:
1. Have the Council's Financial Regulations been followed?	√			One double payment. Corrected.
2. Has each committee approved a draft budget and corresponding business plan for the current financial year?	√			Yes
3. Did the Estimates Committee make recommendations to Full Council on each budget ahead of setting the precept?	√			
4. Have the budgets set by Council been followed by the relevant committees?	√			See exception report
5. Has the Council followed due process in setting the annual precept?	√			
6. Has the Council kept within its respective committee budgets for the year to date?	√			Exception S106. Set up a new budget line for S106 income
7. Has each committee received a budget report as part of its agenda papers?	√			Except planning as no spend
8. Have regular reports on the financial status of the Council been made to the Policy and Resources Committee?	√			
9. Has the Clerk sought approval from the Council for expenditure and emergency expenditure outside of the Scheme of Delegation?		√		N/A
10. Have Members received recommendations on appropriate budget virements where required?		√		Towards end year
11. Are all earmarked reserves duly accounted for and up to date?	√			
12. Can officers provide the panel with an up to date analysis of the general reserves and balances of the Council?	√			

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

SECTION TWO: ADMINISTRATION

Item	YES	NO	REC	Evidence:
1. Have officers complied with Financial Regulations in terms of general administration?	√			
2. Have accounting procedures been followed in accordance with the Account & Audit Regulations 2015?	√			
3. Was the Annual Governance & Accountability Statement (AGAR) completed as soon as practically possible and referred to Council?	√			At the last full Town Council Meeting
4. Have members considered a supporting set of accounts that correspond to the AGAR?	√			At the Annual Meeting in May
5. Have arrangements been made for an end of year or interim internal audit to take place?	√			November 2025 scheduled
6. Are adequate arrangements in place for the public inspection of documents including minutes and agenda papers?	√			Website and Notice board
7. Is the financial scrutiny panel meeting as planned?	√			
8. Has the Policy & Resources Committee considered copies of receipts, payments and corresponding bank reconciliations?	√			Evidenced
9. Are reconciliation documents supported by a corresponding bank statement?	√			The members sign bank reconciliations
10. Where used, have cheques received the correct number of signatures and all stubs countersigned?		√		N/A. No cheques needed
11. Have BACS schedules been duly signed by the current number of signatures and corresponding payments countersigned?	√			Evidenced
12. Have three signatures been sought for all expenditure in excess of £5,000?	√			Evidenced
13. Is the petty cash account balanced with all supporting paperwork present?	√			Monthly CC payment
14. Has the RFO/Assist RFO countersigned each petty cash receipt?	√			
15. Do all receipts booked have a corresponding invoice present?	√			Evidence available
16. Have all invoices for payment been initialled by signatories?	√			Evidence available

Item	YES	NO	REC	Evidence:
17. Are a range of signatories being used for all payments being made by the Council?	√			Six signatories
18. Has a mandate been sought by officers for any borrowing of funds including from the DMO (if applicable)?		√		N/A
19. Is the VAT control account in order and supported with a corresponding VAT file detailing return claims, dates of claims and items of expenditure being claimed for?	√			HMRC regularly chased
20. Have all Direct Debit mandates been accounted for and duly signed by at least two signatories?	√			
21. Have all receipts payable to the Council been deposited on a best endeavour basis?	√			Evidenced
22. Do all paying-in books correspond with receipts present in the cashbook?	√			Evidenced
23. Have payments to staff to defray expenses incurred on behalf of the Council been made?	√			Evidenced
24. Are credit card statements supported by corresponding VAT invoices and all credit card expenditure made in accordance with financial regulations?	√			Evidenced
25. Has the Council published a Privacy Notice which has been reviewed in the last twenty four months?	√			March 2024. To be renewed 2026
26. Does the Council possess a Data/Document retention policy and actively file, archive and dispose of data in accordance with that policy?	√			Audit 2026 + training

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

SECTION THREE: POLICY & INTERNAL CONTROL

Item	YES	NO	REC	Evidence:
1. Has the Council reviewed its schedule of hire charges within the last twelve months?	✓			Increasing April 2026
2. Are all investments being managed in accordance with the Town Council's Treasury and Investment Management Policy?	✓			Reviewing every 6 months
3. Are all insurances schedules up to date and provide adequate cover for all services provided including fidelity guarantee insurance?	✓			Evidence provided
4. Is a current copy of Employer's Liability insurance present and in date?	✓			Set on display
5. Can officers demonstrate that all vehicles have Vehicle Excise Duty, a current MOT paid and in date and up to date vehicle insurance?	✓			
6. Is an up to date copy of the Council's registration with the Information Commissioners Office present and available for inspection?	✓			Evidence seen
7. Have all internal payments (E.g Information Centre Payment Requests) been raised via an Internal Payment Request form?	✓			
8. Examine the payments folders. Has each invoice been duly marked with an 'Approved for Payment' stamp and initialled by the approving officer?	✓			Evidence seen
9. Have all invoices been conspicuously marked with a four digit nominal code?		✓		Nominal codes removed
10. Can officers provide evidence that all BACS payments made in relation to salaries correspond to payroll schedules?	✓			
11. Are all payments of sums due to HMRC correctly accounted for?	✓			Evidence seen
12. Are all LGPS payments supported with a balancing PN11 return?	✓			Evidence seen
13. Have all travel claims been duly marked with an 'Approved for Payment' stamp? Where parking or other expenses are claimed, are supporting tickets or receipts attached to the claim?	✓			
14. Has a stock check been conducted for the Information Centre within the last twelve months?	✓			Mainly done in March plus interim
15. Have the financial regulations been reviewed by the Council in the last twelve months?	✓			May 2025

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

SECTION FOUR: TENDERS

Item	YES	NO	REC	Evidence:
1. Have any tenders in excess of £25,000 been made within the last twelve months?	✓			Christmas lights
2. Has capital expenditure made from the Earmarked Reserves been approved by the relevant committee?	✓			CCTV, other security
3. Have all sealed tenders been opened by an officer with a Member present and a record kept?	✓			
4. Are all contracts awarded supported with an appropriate order letter and basic contract terms?	✓			
5. Are officers capable of demonstrating that value for money is being sought for general expenditure and procurement?	✓			Regular assessments by Town Clerk + staff
6. Has there been any incidents of contract dispute in the last twelve months and a record of disputes and outcomes kept?		✓		Election dispute settled

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

SECTION FIVE: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Swapping savings accounts

Approved by the Financial Scrutiny Panel: (Councillor) _____

Endorsed by the Responsible Financial Officer: _____

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Witham Town Council Risk Register 2025/2026

Town Council Agenda - 28th October 2025

Agenda Item 12

Subject	Risk	Responsibility	Management & controls	Review & action required	Impact & Likelihood once mitigated
FINANCIAL					
Precept & budget	Adequacy of precept	Councillors	To determine the precept amount required, WTC regularly receives budget update information. Precept setting follows a set process that moves through every committee and is approved by FTC in January.		Impact – 8 Likelihood – 3
	Requirements not submitted to BDC	Clerk	Submitted by the Clerk in writing to BDC following budget/precept approval and before end January.		Impact - 10 Likelihood – 1
Financial records & reporting	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	Clerk/councillors	Budget update, bank balances and breakdown of receipts and payments produced and approved at each P&R. The Council has Financial Regulations that set out the requirements. Financial Scrutiny Panel meet twice a year.	Review the Financial Regulations annually.	Impact – 8 Likelihood – 2
Insurance.	Insurance not in place Events not adequately covered	Clerk	Process payment for annual premium promptly. Employers and Public liability insurance is a necessity.	Review insurance provision annually. Include % increase in budget;	Impact – 10 Likelihood – 2 Impact – 10 Likelihood – 2
	Cost increase		Out of Council's control	Obtain quotes at least every 3 years	Impact - 5 Likelihood – 8
Annual return.	Inaccurate or incomplete	Clerk	Clerk to attend training/ workshops as required. Annual Return is completed and submitted to the internal auditor for completion and signing. Utilise RBS for Accounting package output	Book RBS for online assistance with annual return.	Impact – 7 Likelihood – 3
	Submit within time limits	Clerk/councillors	Meeting held to approve accounts in time for sending to Auditors	Review dates on receipt of audit pack	Impact-7- Likelihood – 2

Witham Town Council Risk Register 2025/2026

Town Council Agenda - 28th October 2025

Banking	Fraud Incorrect payments & bank mistakes	Clerk Clerk Clerk	Two/three signatories required for payments depending on amount. Clerk reconciles bank statements monthly. The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.	Review bank mandate annually at Annual Meeting and after a vacancy arises Council review reconciliations Monthly Review the Financial Regulations annually.	Impact – 8 Likelihood – 2
Best value for works	Work awarded incorrectly	Councillors	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements and values for contracting works. Project budgets to be closely monitored	Review Financial Regulations annually	Impact – 6 Likelihood – 2
Accountability	Overspend on services	Clerk Councillors	Clerk to provide regular agenda items for budget /spend review for each committee	Budget review on regular basis	Impact - 7 Likelihood – 4
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	Clerk	Town elections every four years; next in 2027.	Include sufficient reserves in budget for each election year	Impact --6 Likelihood – 7
General Data Protection Regulations	Risk of financial loss for compliance failures or damages claimed by data subjects.	Clerk	Data & Document Retention Policy Staff provided with adequate training Named Data Controller	Reviewed every two years	Impact -9- Likelihood – 2
Council Management					
Councillors	Roles performed inadequately	Councillors	Councillors provided with adequate training, reference materials and access to assistance. Membership of Association of Local Council or relevant alternative.	Review annually and on filling a vacancy	Impact – 6 Likelihood – 6
	Conflict of interest	Councillors	Declaring of interests will remain on each agenda.	Annual renewal	Impact – 8 Likelihood – 6

Witham Town Council Risk Register 2025/2026

Town Council Agenda - 28th October 2025

	Failure to attract candidates for councillor vacancies	Councillors Councillors	Registers of Members Interest to be maintained and reviewed regularly by Councillors. Actively publicise Council activities & vacancies on noticeboard, newspapers & websites; seek candidates amongst friends & neighbours	Members take responsibility to update their Register.	Impact - 10 Likelihood – 4
Powers	Illegal activity or payments	Councillors	Witham Town Council are using the General Power of Competence, this is Power of First resort, and will be assumed as the power utilised for all resolutions, unless another Power is specifically stated.	Council to resolve at every Annual Meeting that they qualify to use the General Power of Competence	Impact - 10 Likelihood – 1
Meetings & process	Failure to achieve quorum at meetings	Councillors Clerk	Attend all meetings Issue meeting agenda promptly	Standing Orders reviewed annually and provided to all councillors on election	Impact – 10 Likelihood – 8
	Business conduct	Councillors/Chairman	Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chairman according to Standing Orders. Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.		Impact – 10 Likelihood – 4
	Council decisions not implemented	Councillors/Clerk	Chairman should be provided with training & guidance. Review minutes for confirmation of action, Clerk report at full meetings.		Impact – 10 Likelihood – 2
	Lack of public participation	Councillors/Clerk	Ensure meetings are publicised on noticeboards & website. Publish agenda and minutes on website. Communicate verbally with residents. Ensure public participation on all agendas & seating available		Impact -2- Likelihood – 9
Statutory documents - Minutes/ Agendas/	Notices Accuracy and legality	Clerk	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements.		Impact – 10 Likelihood – 2
		Councillors/Chairman	Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.		

Witham Town Council Risk Register 2025/2026

Town Council Agenda - 28th October 2025

		Clerk	Minutes and agenda are published according to the Publication Scheme.	Review Publication Scheme annually	
Employees	Role performed inadequately	Councillors/clerk	Clerk & all employees have job descriptions and Contract of Employment. They are provided with adequate training, reference materials and access to assistance.	Annual review of conditions of employment .	Impact – 10 Likelihood – 4
	Salaries & expenses incorrectly paid	Clerk	Salaries are outsourced and paid via BACS. Cross check of scheduled payments made between officers. Expenses (following NALC guidelines where relevant) claimed on regular basis & presented with receipts to Council.		Impact -9- Likelihood – 2
PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT/ Outside AREAS					
Assets	Damage/ injury to third party	Councillors	Public liability insurance held.	Insurance cover & asset register reviewed annually	Impact – 8 Likelihood – 4
	Damage to assets	Councillors	Annual programme of inspection. Maintenance/ repair/ replacement requirements identified and brought to attention of the Clerk. Repairs made in accordance with Financial Regulations and updated where necessary on Asset Register.		Impact – 7 Likelihood – 4
Meeting location	Adequacy, Health & Safety risk	Councillors	Meetings held in Town Hall. Open access for public and lift available for use. Other areas halls available for hire in town if larger numbers expected.	Assess numbers expected and move to larger premises if required.	Impact – 7 Likelihood – 2
Council records	Loss of paper records through	Clerk	Town records (semi-historic & current) stored in Parish offices.	Send historical records (minute books etc) to Essex archive at appropriate juncture.	Impact – 9 Likelihood – 5

Witham Town Council Risk Register 2025/2026

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	theft, fire damage, etc				
	Loss of electronic records through data corruption, theft etc.	Clerk	Records stored on an Internal, encrypted Cloud Device. Device is locked to the Clerk's password only, and backed up internal in RAID 1 config, plus USB backup weekly, but enabling localised networking for all computers. USB backup held offsite		Impact – 9 Likelihood – 2

Scores for likelihood - 1-10

Very unlikely 1 Very likely 10

Scores for impact – 1-10

Low impact 1 High impact 10

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Statement of Internal Control for the Year Ending 31st March 2026

Scope of Responsibility

Witham Town Council (The Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, The Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control as required by Section 2 of the Annual Return – Annual Governance Statement.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Identifying and assessing risks:

The authority identifies, assesses and records risks associated with actions and decisions it has taken or considered taking during the year that could have financial or reputational consequences in accordance with Assertion 5, Section 1 of the AGAR.

The Internal Control Environment

The Council:

The Council has appointed a Chairman, who is responsible for the running of meetings and for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful. The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets and sets the level of precept at a full council meeting in the fourth Quarter of the financial year. The Full Council meets at least four times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives and actions to achieve them at each meeting. The Council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems, and procedures.



Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Council operates an approved Scheme of Delegation. The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments:

All payments by cheque or BACS are authorised by two or three Members of the Council (depending on the amount) and later reported to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Income:

All income is received and banked in the Councils' name in a timely manner and reported to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Risk Assessments / Risk Management:

The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of actions and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

Internal Audit:

The Council has appointed an Independent Internal Auditor who reports to the Council on the adequacy of it's:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management

Reviews

The effectiveness of the internal audit system is reviewed annually.

External Audit:

The Council's External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn, submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is presented to the Council.



REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- The Financial Scrutiny Panel;
- The Full Council;
- The Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risks;
- The independent Internal Auditor who reviews The Council's system of internal control;
- The Council's external auditors, make the final check using the Annual Return, a form completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Chairman and the Internal Auditor, and issue an annual audit certificate. The external auditors for 2025/2026 will be PKF Littlejohn.
- The number of significant issues that are raised during the year.

SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

No significant internal control issues were identified during the financial year ended 2024/2025. The internal auditor in their report for the financial year ending 31 March 2025;

- a) made the following recommendations:
- To review the level of Fidelity Cover.

EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDING

The external auditor in the 2024/2025 certificate stated that :

Except for the matters reported below, on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

APPROVAL

A Statement of Internal Control shall be approved each year.

Approved 28th October 2025

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