

# Withersfield Parish Council

## Draft Budget for 2026-27

**Recommendation:** Councillors are asked to:

- i) approve 2026-27 draft budget estimate for submission to West Suffolk District Council as set out on the attached sheet.
- ii) note the current position with our designated reserves
- iii) agree the Parish Council seeks an increase of 3% increase in Council Tax rate for 2026-27

### Background:

Each November Parish Councils in Suffolk are asked to submit their estimated budget for the next financial year to their district Council. The District Council estimates the Parish Precept calculated on the basis of the number of inhabited properties with the Parish. The number of inhabited properties has increased from 327 last year to 361 resulting in an increase in income to the Parish Council.

This is only the estimated or DRAFT budget as the final budget cannot be approved until the spring when the County and District Councils formally approve their overall budget.

Three factors have been taken into account in drawing up this budget:

- i) A possible further increase in costs of environmental works (village greens) as we are currently retendering for 2026-2029
- ii) A further increases in our insurance premiums.
- iii) The impact of establishing designated reserves which have a positive impact on our revenue budget and spend.

### Estimated expenditure 2025-26

The Parish Council's expenditure is categorised as either "Administration" or "Other" for the purposes of calculating the precept that can be requested from the District Council. We have to follow their guidance on how items are categorised and accounted for.

Having reviewed the current year's budget and projected spend, and taking account of known changes in costs in the coming year the following estimates are set out below for 2025-26:

### **Draft Admin Budget: £5813**

(an increase of £613 over the 2025-26 budget figure but in line with projected 2025-26 outturn.)

	BUDGET	Projected	Proposed	
Item	2025-26	2025-26	2026-27	comment
Clerk salary	3200	3200	3360	Assumed 5% increase
Clerk Expenses	150	150	150	
Payroll	120	108	110	
Audit/Bank Charges	270	616	395	Turnover in 2024-25 required External audit
Insurances	840	885	890	All Parish Council assets incl. Pavilion
Insurance contribution	-150	-188	-190	from Sports & Rec cttee.
Leases – village greens	10	10	10	
Village Hall rental	60	60	60	
SALC/CAS membership	400	437	440	
Training	200	200	200	
Web site	60	60	66	

Withersfield News Magazine	0	0	0	Magazine is cost neutral
Data Protection /GDPR	40	52	52	
Email accounts .gov.uk	0	241	270	Decision to move to more secure email accounts
Parish Council Elections	0	0	0	No elections due until May 2027
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5200</b>	<b>5831</b>	<b>5813</b>	

**Non Admin “other” budget: £6,570 – a increase of £450 over 2025-26 budget.**

“Other” includes all other areas of expenditure incurred by the Parish Council, including environmental works (grass cutting) Parish Projects and maintenance of our assets. Parish projects and maintenance of assets are no longer funded from revenue and are funded from our designated capital reserve funds and are therefore not provided for within our draft budget.

**Draft “Other” Budget:**

	BUDGET	Projected	Proposed	
Item	2025-26	2025-26	2026-27	comment
Grass cutting/environmental	5900	5900	6200	Contract being retendered for 2026-29 – contingency against potential increase in costs
Waste collection	120		120	To cover collection of waste from bins areas
Donations	100	180	150	Annual donations to SARS and British Legion
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,120</b>	<b>6,080</b>	<b>6,470</b>	

**Earmarked/designated reserves:**

In 2024 the Parish Council agreed to establish a number of designated reserves to cover non-recurrent expenditure (e.g. Parish Projects, Asset maintenance and renewals)

Parish Council Capital Reserve Funds	BUDGET b/fwd to 2025	Expenditure/ Income during 2025-2026	Balance c/fwd to 2026-27	
Traffic Calming and 20 mph implementation costs	10,000	-8,000	2,000	Funds committed to cover costs of Village gateways and SLOW markings (estimate).
Playground Development fund	5,000	+1,660.00 -1,200.00 -83.00 -50.00 -123.50 -232.00	4,971.50	Grant from Community Action Suffolk Feasibility study Consultation events, printing etc. Consultation event – Lego hire Planning - pre-application advice Planning – Permitted Development application
Parish assets maintenance fund reserve	2,500	-330.00 +330.00 +	2,500	Supply and installation of No Parking signs on village greens. Contribution from Thurlow Estate to over No Parking signs + invoiced but not yet received
Miscellaneous Parish Projects reserves	2,000	+500		£500 Locality Grant for Speed watch activities

			2,500	
Contingencies reserve	2,500	0	2,500	(e.g. 4 yearly election costs, one-off unplanned/unavoidable expenditure)
Unrestricted reserves	6,500	+350 -500	6,350	Locality budget grant to fund community event Cost of Community Event. Costs of community event
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28,500</b>		<b>20,821.50</b>	

### **The Precept:**

The precept (the amount of funding the Parish Council gets from residents' Council Tax) is proposed to increase by 3% in 2026-27. This also takes account of an increase in the tax base from 327 to 361 (the number of inhabited properties in the Parish)

### **Use of Reserves & other income:**

The proposed budget does not require the Parish Council to draw upon its reserves to fund revenue costs in 2026-27 although it does assume that we will continue to get an income from our Parish Graveyard – estimated at £800 in 2026-27.

### **Summary of proposed 2026-27 Budget:**

		2026-27			(2025-26)	
<b>Projected expenditure</b>	<u>Parish Council costs:</u>					
	Admin:	<b>£5,813</b>			£5,200	
	Non admin:	<b>£6,470</b>			£6,120	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£12,293</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£11,320</b>	
<b>Financed by:</b>	Precept		11,393			10,040
	VAT reclaims (estimate)		200			2,690
	Income from Graveyard (estimate)		800			950
	Use of reserves		0			
			<b>£12,393</b>			<b>£13,680</b>
	Council Tax increase		3%		0%	

Terry Rich  
Chair, Withersfield Parish Council  
3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025