

Withersfield Parish Council

DRAFT Annual Accounts for 2024-25

This report summarises the income and expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2025. It outlines how the Parish Council has used the money entrusted to it for the benefit of residents of the parish.

The accounts show a deficit of £1,133 for the year. However, during the year we funded the costs of parking improvements at the Village Hall, on which VAT was payable. This is reclaimable by the Parish Council and will result in a positive outturn for the year once this is taken into account.

It also outlines how the Parish Council intends to use the funds available to it during the current year.

Our reserves have reduced from £32,000 at start of 2024-25 to £30,508 at the start of the current year.

Background:

The annual accounts of the Parish Council should be approved at the first Parish Council meeting following the end of the Financial Year. For Withersfield this is our meeting on 6th May.

Our income from the Parish Precept increased a little in 2024-25 as we agreed a small Council Tax rise in 2024. This was to take account of increased costs of insurance and grounds maintenance.

Graveyard income increased from £658 to £1,551 last year. Income from this source is not predictable and relates to the numbers of interments that take place during the year.

We had budgeted for any final costs in completing our neighbourhood plan (£250). However, this was not needed as the plan remains to be completed. Any costs to complete the plan will be a call on our contingency reserve in this or future years.

Balances:

The Parish Council established a number of Capital Reserve funds last year. It is from those reserves that projects are funded.

In the last year we spent £5,538 (net) contributing to the costs of parking improvements for the village hall. We anticipate a VAT reclaim of around £2,500 reducing our contribution to £3,000.

We have received grant from West Suffolk – from Cllr Wijenayaka's locality budget to fund a community event. This is being held in our reserves.

Other items funded from our reserves are set out in the report below.

We remain able to fulfil the advice previously given by auditors that our balances should be at a level of around twice the annual expenditure of the Council.

The draft accounts will be passed to our internal auditor (SALC) and any comments or observations will be reported to a Parish Council meeting.

2025-26 Budget:

The budget for 2025-26 is also set out in this report.

Our Parish Precept remains at a similar level to last year as new homes on the Arboretum were not yet occupied on the qualifying date. Next year we should expect to see an increase in income to take account of the new homes.

We have received a grant of £1,660 from Community Action Suffolk (CAS) to fund an options report for a playground for the village. This is being used to fund a consultant to work with us in the coming months to develop our plan.

The Parish Council has approved expenditure from its reserves to fund a traffic calming scheme during 2025-26. This consists of “gateways” on village entrance roads and “Slow” road markings. This will be funded from the reserve designated for Traffic Calming” This is anticipated to cost in the region of £12,000 although part of this will be funded by a Section 106 grant relating to the development of the Arboretum estate (phase 2).

Maintenance of our village greens and graveyard increases for the third successive year and represents the largest item of expenditure at £5,900 for the year. The contract comes up for retendering this year.

Other items remain as in previous years. No increase in Council Tax has been necessary to fund the work of the Parish Council in the coming year.



Terry Rich

Chairman
May 2025

DRAFT SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2024-2025

Income	Budget	Actual	
Precept from West Suffolk Borough Council	10,100	10,100.00	
Income from Graveyard	750	759.00	
Bank Interest	65	360.00	
VAT reclaim	600	119.00	
Grants	0	350.00	
Contribution to Sports Pavilion insurance	150	150	
Contribution towards Parking improvements from VHC	0	10,218.00	1a
Contribution towards parking improvements from reserve	3000	3,000	1b
Total Income in 2024-25	14,665	25,056.00	
			£25,056.00
Expenditure			
Clerk's salary	3500	£2765.00	
Clerk expenses	150	£139.00	
Payroll	120	£108.00	
Training	300	0	
Grass cutting - village greens & graveyard	5750	£5750.00	
Subs/memberships	375	£356.00	
Donations	100	£124.00	
Bank/audit	260	£272.00	
Insurance - Parish Council	450	£490.00	
Insurance – Sports Pavilion		£308.00	
Website	60	60	
Village greens lease		10	
Hall rental	60	25	
Litter & waste management	120	0	
Election costs	0	0	
Data Protection	50	40.00	
Parking improvements at Village Hall/Town Green	3,000	15,746.45	1c
Neighbourhood Plan – provision for final costs	250.00	0	
Total Expenditure in 2024-25	14,660	£26,193.00	
			£ 26,193.00
Total surplus/deficit for year			-£1,137.00*

- VAT reclaim on carparking scheme pending

Notes to the draft accounts

1a	The Village Hall Committee contributed £10,218 towards the cost of parking improvements
1b	The Parish Council agreed a £3,000 contribution from reserves toward the parking scheme
1c	The Parish Council paid the total cost of the scheme – including VAT which is reclaimable

BUDGET for 2025 - 26

Income		
Precept from West Suffolk Borough Council	£10,040.00	
Income from Graveyard	£950.00	1.
Bank interest	0	
VAT reclaim	£2689.00	2.
Grants – West Suffolk	1660,00	3.
Contribution towards Insurance of Sports Pavilion	150.00	4.
Total Budgeted Income for 2025-26	£15,489.00	
		£15,489.00
Expenditure		
Clerk's salary	£3,200.00	
Clerk expenses	£150.00	
Payroll	£120.00	
Training	£200.00	
Grass cutting - village greens & graveyard	£5,900.00	5.
Subs/memberships	£400.00	
Donations (SARS/EAAA/Red Cross)	£180.00	
Bank/audit	£270.00	
Insurance - Parish Council	£510.00	
Insurance - Sports Pavilion	£330.00	4
Hall rental	£60.00	
Website	£60.00	
Village Green lease	£10.00	
Withersfield News - contribution	0	
Playground project feasibility study	1,200.00	3
Balance of Playground grant transferred to reserves	460.00	3
VAT on parking improvements transferred to reserves	2,400.00	2
Data Protection	40.00	
Total Expenditure in 2025-26	£15,490.00	
		15,590.00
Projected surplus/deficit for year		-001

Notes to 2025-26 budget

1.	Estimate only – varies from year to year.
2.	VAT reclaim includes cost of parking improvements undertaken in 2024-25
3.	Grant from CAS and cost of consultant – Playground development scheme
4.	Sports & Recreation Committee contribute £150 towards cost of Sports Pavilion insurance
5.	Contract for grass cutting includes an annual uplift. This is from £5,750 to £5,900 in 2025-26

Parish Council Capital Reserve Funds	AVAILABLE BUDGET	SPEND/ INCOME	AVAILABLE BUDGET	
	2024-25		2025-26	comment
Traffic Calming and 20 mph schemes	10,000	0	10,000	Includes Friends of Withersfield donation.
Playground Development fund • CAS Grant	5,000	+1,660	6,660	
Parish assets maintenance fund reserve	2,500	-93	2,407	Defibrillator pads/battery
Miscellaneous Parish Projects reserves • West Suffolk Grant	5,000	+10,218 -15,756 +2,400 +350	 2,212	Parking improvements at Village Hall/Town Green) VAT reclaim on parking scheme Grant to fund Community Event
Contingencies reserve	2,500	0	2,500	(e.g. 4 yearly election costs, one-off unplanned and unavoidable items of expenditure}
West Suffolk Grant	500		500	To be allocated (Speedwatch/VAS activities)
Unrestricted reserves	6,500	-228 -43	6,229	Survey Monkey subscription Christmas Lights
TOTAL	32,000		30,508	