

Withersfield Parish Council

Draft Budget for 2025-26

Recommendation: Councillors are asked to:

- i) approve 2025-26 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 should seek no increase in Council Tax rate for 2025-26

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.

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 further (known) increase in costs of environmental works (village greens)
- ii) A further increases in our insurance premium.
- iii) The impact of establishing designated reserves which have a positive impact on our revenue budget and spend.

Estimated expenditure 2024-25

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 2024-25:

Draft Admin Budget: £5310 (a decrease of £330 over the 2024-25 budget figure)

	BUDGET	Projected	Proposed	
Item	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	comment
Clerk salary	3500	3200	3200	
Clerk Expenses	150	150	150	
Payroll	120	110	120	
Audit/Bank Charges	260	260	270	
Insurances	780	780	840	All Parish Council assets incl. Pavilion
Insurance contribution	-150	-150	-150	from Sports & Rec cttee.
Leases – village greens	10	10	10	
Village Hall rental	60	60	60	
SALC/CAS membership	400	400	400	
Training	300	0	200	No take up by cllrs in 2024-25
Web site	60	60	60	
Magazine	100	0	0	Magazine is cost neutral
Data Protection /GDPR	50	50	50	
Parish Council Elections	0	0	0	No elections due this year
TOTAL	5640	5040	5210	

Non Admin “other” budget: £5,970 – a decrease of £1,380 over 2022-23 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. In 2024-25 and subsequently parish projects and maintenance of assets are proposed to be funded from designated capital reserve funds and are therefore not provided for within our draft budget for 2024-25.

In 2023-24 a donation of £9762 was received from a bequest of a deceased villager, to be used for the benefit of the village, This money will be held in designated reserves, and is not proposed to be used to fund recurrent revenue costs.

Draft “Other” Budget:

	BUDGET	Projected	Proposed	
Item	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	comment
Grass cutting/environmental	5750	5750	5900	3 year contract raises to £6000 in third year
Waste collection	120		120	To cover collection of waste from bins areas
Donations	100	100	150	Annual donations to SARS and British Legion
TOTAL	5,970	5,970	6,170	

Use of Reserves & other income:

The proposed budget does not require the Parish Council to draw upon its reserves to fund revenue costs in 2025-26.

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

Earmarked/designated reserves:

Parish Council Capital Reserve Funds	BUDGET 2024	Expenditure 2024-25	New Balance 2025-26	
Traffic Calming and 20 mph implementation costs	10,000	0	10,000	Includes Friends of Withersfield donation, 33% of recent bequest and accrued Parish Projects budget from previous years.
Playground Development fund	5,000	0	5,000	Includes 33% of recent bequest
Parish assets maintenance fund reserve	2,500	0	2,500	To cover costs of one-off maintenance, repair and renewal of parish assets
Miscellaneous Parish Projects reserves	5,000	3,000 (1)	2,000	Contribution towards installation of grasscrete blocks on village green
Contingencies reserve	2,500	0	2,500	(e.g. 4 yearly election costs, one-off unplanned/unavoidable expenditure)
Unrestricted reserves	6,500	0	6,500	Balance of our reserves.
TOTAL	31,500	3,000	28,500	

(1) Represents net call on Parish Council funds after allowing for contribution from Village Hall Committee and VAT reclaim.

The Precept:

The precept (the amount of funding the Parish Council gets from residents' Council Tax) is proposed to remain unchanged this year.

Summary of proposed 2025-26 Budget:

		2025-26			(2024-25)	
Projected expenditure	<u>Parish Council costs:</u>					
	Admin:	£5,210			£5,640	
	Non admin:	£6,170			£5,970	
	TOTAL	£11,390		TOTAL	£11,610	
Financed by:	Precept		10,040			10,100
	VAT reclaims (estimate)		600			600
	Income from Graveyard (estimate)		750			750
	Use of reserves		0			
			£11,390			£11,450
	Council Tax increase		0%		7%	

Terry Rich
Chair, Withersfield Parish Council
6th November 2024