



Meeting	Winchester Town Forum
Date and Time	Thursday, 25th January, 2024 at 6.30 pm.
Venue	Walton Suite, Winchester Guildhall and streamed live on YouTube at www.youtube.com/winchestercc

Note: This meeting is being held in person at the location specified above. Members of the public should note that a live video feed of the meeting will be available from the council's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/winchestercc) during the meeting.

A limited number of seats will be made available at the above named location however attendance must be notified to the council at least 3 working days before the meeting. Please note that priority will be given to those wishing to attend and address the meeting over those wishing to attend and observe.

AGENDA

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

- 1. Apologies**
To record the names of apologies given
- 2. Disclosures of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Members and Officers in matters to be discussed.
Note: Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare disclosable pecuniary interests, personal and/or prejudicial interests in accordance with legislation and the Council's Code of Conduct.

If you require advice, please contact the appropriate Democratic Services Officer, prior to the meeting.
- 3. Chairperson's Announcements**
- 4. Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 5 - 10)**
That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023 be signed as a correct record.



BUSINESS ITEMS

5. **Public Participation**

To receive and note the questions asked and statements made from members of the public on issues relating to the responsibility of this Forum.

Members of the public and visiting councillors may speak at the Forum, provided they have registered to speak three working days in advance. Please contact Democratic Services **by 5pm on Friday, 19 January 2024** via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

6. **Update from Sarah Davis, BID Manager regarding bins and refuse in Winchester City Centre (Verbal Update)**

7. **Winchester Town Account Budget for 2024/25 (to be recommended to Cabinet) (WTF328) (Pages 11 - 20)**

8. **Informal Group - Verbal Update**

Optional: The Chairs of any of the informal groups may briefly update the Forum on any recent developments from their group.

9. **Work Programme 2023/24 (Pages 21 - 22)**

**Laura Taylor
Chief Executive**

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17 January 2024

Agenda Contact: Claire Buchanan, Senior Democratic Services Officer
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**With the exception of exempt items, Agenda, reports and previous minutes are available on the Council's [Website](#)*

MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson: Reach (Liberal Democrats)

Vice-Chairperson: Batho (Liberal Democrats)

Liberal Democrats

Becker
Edwards
Eve
Learney
Morris
Prest
Scott
Tippett-Cooper
Thompson
Tod
Westwood
Wise

Conservatives

Green

Quorum = 5 members

The two County Council Members representing the Winchester Town area are invited as observers.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A public question and comment session is available at 6.30pm for a 15 minute period. There are a few limitations on the questions you can ask. These mainly relate to current applications (including grants), personal cases and confidential matters.

To reserve your place to speak, you are asked to register with Democratic Services three clear working days prior to the meeting –Please contact Democratic Services via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

VOTING

- apart from the Chairperson, every Member has one vote when a matter before the meeting requires a decision.
- in the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson may exercise a casting vote and that vote may be exercised in any way seen fit.
- a Member may abstain from voting, or vote differently from how they may have indicated during the debate, without further explanation.

The way each Member voted will not be recorded in the minutes, unless a motion to have a Recorded Vote has been passed.

Disabled Access

Disabled access is normally available, but please phone Democratic Services on 01962 848 264 or email democracy@winchester.gov.uk three clear working days prior to the meeting to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place.

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting will be recorded and broadcast live from the Council's YouTube channel. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Access to Information Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution for further information, which is available to view on the [Council's website](#). Please note that the video recording is subtitled, but you may have to enable your device to see them (advice on how to do this is on the meeting page).

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Wednesday, 8 November 2023

Attendance:

Councillors

Reach (Chairperson)

Batho
Becker
Edwards
Eve
Learney

Morris
Thompson (from item 8)
Tippett-Cooper (from item 6)
Wise
Westwood

Others in attendance who addressed the forum:

Councillor Lee

[Full video recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Prest, Scott and Tod.

2. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures made at the meeting.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Hiscock, Hampshire County Council, to the meeting.

The Chairperson announced that scaffolding had been erected in the High Street where investment works were currently taking place and that the structure of the new doctor's surgery was being progressed on the corner of Upper Brook Street/Friarsgate; two positive updates since the last meeting had taken place.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 September 2023 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait spoke during public participation, a summary of his comments are set out below.

In addition, Councillor Lee addressed the forum in relation to Item 6 (Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position). His comments are summarised under the relevant item below.

In summary, Ian Tait made reference to the following points:

- Spoke at Cabinet in January 2023 raising the matter of the state of the public conveniences in the city centre and welcomed the report and the proposals considered by Cabinet at its meeting in September 2023 on this matter.
- Referred to the revised cleaning and maintenance regime with one person being responsible for both the Abbey Gardens and Market Lane public conveniences which had seen little improvement.
- The lack of baby changing facilities at Market Lane due to anti-social behaviour remains unresolved.
- Broken cubicle doors, overflowing basins, lack of toilet paper and low pressure on water fountains remained outstanding at the Market Lane facilities. Suggested regular cleaning and maintenance checks were essential to mitigate these ongoing issues.
- The costly damage from anti-social behaviour to the conveniences at River Park must be overcome.

In response to the matters raised by Mr Tait, the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency emphasised the importance of public conveniences across the district and raised ongoing concerns surrounding anti-social behaviour and drug misuse in facilities, particularly Market Lane. This had prevented baby changing facilities being reopened and would be looked at as part of a wider action to tackle behaviour in this location with a view to bring this back into use. The cleaning and maintenance regimes in place would continue to be monitored going forward.

6. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL POSITION (DRAFT BUDGET OPTIONS) (WTF324)**

Councillor Lee addressed the forum on this item. In summary, he made reference to the following points:

- Speaking as Winchester district resident, trust member and city councillor who cherishes the city's unique historic surroundings and the part the city plays in the wider district.
- Signposted an opportunity to address the rising environmental economic financial and planning challenges for the city and environments.
- He stated that whilst master plans were welcome, there must be strong mitigating joined up actions for the unique locality covering energy, transport, economic social climate and nature crisis including the need to create and attract businesses.

- Incomplete considerations of the best planning outcomes for the city and wider district.
- Made reference to the Station Approach risk register under the timing risk, namely for Central Winchester Regeneration, Station Approach, the former leisure centre, entry junction 9, St John Moore Barracks, northern park and ride Bar End and Bushfield. Whilst these developments would run independently, it was clear significant cross collaboration to integrate and address challenges to ensure sustainable development, co-benefits and proper affordability and viability tests were achieved. Following recent preview of the regulation 18 amends for the new local plan, he could not see how, without a city-wide neighbourhood plan, the challenges could be addressed in sufficient detail for the best planning development outcomes.
- Councillor Lee stated that the local plan and the masterplan should be considered to be deficient, as without a city-wide neighbourhood plan, there would be insufficient detail to deal with the interlinked critical challenges.
- Considered that the Winchester Movement Strategy should be put into the context of a city-wide plan to further improve Winchester.
- A Winchester city neighbourhood plan would empower the community to create a shared vision and deliver the local sustainable development challenges.
- In conclusion, he urged the forum to reinvigorate an approach for a neighbourhood plan led by a community group using the vision created in 2021 and the work previously undertaken by the Town Forum (Planning for the future) Informal Group.

In response to the matters raised by Councillor Lee, the Chairperson stated that whilst the forum shared the aspirations, these matters did not fall within the scope of the report or the remit of the forum. The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency made reference to the quantity of resource required for work of this scale and clarified that there were no available resources within the town account. It was noted that there was ongoing work on a North Winchester plan, but the consensus in communities was that they would like individual community plans, rather than one for the entire city.

In conclusion, it was suggested that Councillor Lee address the matters raised with Cabinet Committee: Local Plan going forward and review previous forum papers where this matter was discussed in 2019 and 2020.

Councillor Learney provided an overview of the report as member of the Town Accounts Informal Group who had reviewed the medium-term financial position. Councillor Learney outlined the ambitious programme of works and facilities provided to residents and made reference to the notable increases to contract inflation and other costs which had a significant impact on the Town Account and required management within limited resources.

Councillor Learney reported that a changed approach to the playground refurbishment programme was anticipated which, if agreed, would result in a positive impact to the budget to maintain a reserve of 10% of the budget without further changes for the next year. However, it was emphasised that it would not be possible to maintain this level of reserves without further action being taken.

The forum were reminded that the town charge was broadly the equivalent of a parish precept, but compared (based on an average band D annual council tax property charge) to market towns in the district and that of surrounding local authorities, the town precept charge was significantly less and offered very good value for money for the quality of facilities and services provided to those residing in the town area.

It was recognised that options would be constrained going forward, with limited ability to raise funds through charges, with increases to town precept charges being bound by the Government's capping regime. Therefore, following the review of the playground refurbishment programme, further budget reviews were scheduled to look at services such as cemeteries, open spaces and grounds maintenance and grants over the next year.

At the conclusion of debate, the forum supported that report and thanked officers and the Town Accounts Informal Group for a robust medium term financial position.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be received and the budget issues identified be noted for consideration; and
2. That the comments of the Forum be noted and reported back to Cabinet in relation to the wider budget consultation.

7. **BUDGET REVIEW: PLAY REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME - FINAL PROPOSALS (WTF326)**

The Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement and the Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing introduced the report which was provided as part of the medium-term financial strategy planning, requested by the forum, to review areas of its expenditure and identify ways that costs could be reduced; this included the play area refurbishment programme. The report set out the proposed new five-year programme and how the programme of work will be managed to ensure the play areas remain safe, high quality and accessible for everyone.

It was proposed that going forward equipment would only be replaced when it was deemed necessary. Although the proposal did have an increase to the reactive maintenance budget in order carry out an increased number of 'fit for purpose' inspections and any necessary repairs to equipment, the revisions to the refurbishment programme overall would deliver a financial benefit to the forum, as set out in the report.

Members asked a range of comments and questions which were responded to by the Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement and the Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing, these included the following matters:

- Costs included within Appendix 1 relate specifically to the KGV play park, rather than the skate park.

- Damage caused due to anti-social behaviour.
- Changes to consultation approach with play area users on reactive repairs to individual sites to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

At the conclusion of debate, the forum supported the report and its positive prudent financial impact and thanked officers for the work carried out.

RESOLVED:

1. That the five year refurbishment programme to play areas, as set out in Appendix 2, be approved: and
2. That an increase of £5,841 to the Town Account budget from 2024/25, in respect of an increased reactive maintenance and annual life expectancy reports on play equipment as detailed in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7, considered as part of the town budget process for 2024/25, be approved.

8. **INFORMAL GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Forum received individual updates from the Chairpersons of various Town Informal Groups, where updates had not already been provided within the items considered above. Each summarised the work that had been carried out by the respective groups over the previous two-month period.

Councillor Batho – Town Vision Group

Progress updates from the group included:

- (i) An initial meeting of the town vision group had taken place to review and reflect on what had taken place, with a report that comes to the forum on an annual basis on this matter. The direction of travel for the vision going forward would be reviewed at the next informal group meeting next month. It was noted that this was a vision and planning group to discuss the policies going into the local plan for the town area.

Councillor Tippett-Cooper – Heritage Group

Progress updates from the group included:

- (i) The Buttercross and Hyde Abbey Gateway – there had been positive discussions with Historic England and matters were on track to submit the draft application for the restoration works by the end of this year, with a view to commence works by Spring 2024.
- (ii) Roman Wall at The Weirs – special maintenance was due to treat and remove weeds at the exposed area of the roman wall at the Weirs shortly.
- (iii) Nunnaminster – It was noted that a bid had been placed with the shared prosperity fund for rejuvenation of this site and investigate the restoration of the interpretation boards.

RESOLVED:

That the updates received from the Town Informal Groups, be noted.

9. **WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

The Chairperson reported that due to a number of reasons, several items that were due to be considered at this meeting had been moved to the next meeting in January on the work programme.

In addition, the Chairperson had requested that an item be added to the work programme for allocation in the next municipal year, this should be amended to be read 'Update from the Friends of St Giles Hill Park'.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the amendments set out above, the work programme for 2023/24 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 7.15 pm

Chairperson

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET FOR 2024/25 (TO BE RECOMMENDED TO CABINET)

25 JANUARY 2024

REPORT OF FINANCE MANAGER

Contact Officer: Darren Kennedy Tel No: 01962 848464 Email dkennedy@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL TOWN WARDS

PURPOSE

This report presents the current financial projections for the Town Account for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 and financial sensitivities, in order that recommendations can be made to the Cabinet on the budget to be set within the Winchester Town area for 2024/25.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Agrees the draft budget for 2024/25 and the indicative projections for the strategy period as shown in Appendix 1;
2. Approves an increase in the target minimum town reserve balance from 10% to 15% of annual net service expenditure;
3. Approves an increase of £5,841 to the baseline town revenue budget from 2024/25, in respect of increased reactive maintenance and annual life expectancy reports on play equipment;
4. Considers the Council Tax precept for the Town area which it wishes to recommend to Cabinet, noting the requirements for the Council to keep within overall referendum requirements.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

1.1 The responsibilities of the Town Forum are delivered within the wider goals of the Council Plan. The Town Forum focuses on themes in the plan by delivering targeted services.

- a) We deliver our greener faster agenda via the open spaces we look after. We contribute to 'living well' via the careful management of open spaces, play areas, having close ties with Planning policy and looking after our heritage sites. We work very closely with Winchester City of Sanctuary, making Winchester a welcoming city to all.
- b) We support 'homes for all' by being active in our homelessness work in the city, and by supporting the energy efficiency retrofit of the homes the Council owns.
- c) By working with the BID and direct with businesses and the culture offer we have within the city, we strongly support our vibrant local economy.
- d) We are owners and advocates of the Winchester Vision and seek to give our residents and businesses options to influence our services and to have a say in where we spend our money. We welcome the public to our meetings and are promoters of 'your services, your voice'.
- e) Under the theme of pride in place, we are very focussed on service delivery for the improvement of our city centre and have demanded higher standards in cleanliness, removal of graffiti and the reduction of anti-social behaviour in the city centre. Much of our budget is focussed on keeping the city centre clean and well cared for.

This budget paper is proposed in the context of maintaining the momentum we have built up to achieve our goals, in the challenging financial times we are currently experiencing.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1 Identifying and analysing the financial risks and pressures helps to ensure the effective prioritisation of resources in order to deliver the Council Strategy and maintain a balanced budget.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None directly in this report, though individual projects are subject to review by Legal Services and Procurement where required.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Services provided by the Town Forum are budgeted for within this paper. Any future changes to services or service levels may impact on the workforce who deliver those services. Should there be any proposed changes following the recommended review, each case for change will identify the impact on the resources.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None directly resulting from this paper.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 This report has been discussed with the town account informal group and relevant staff. Recommendations agreed at town forum will go to Cabinet in February as part of the General Fund budget. To note that town budget is part of the general fund budget consultation process and Cabinet papers.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The budget is shaped to support the Council Plan and priorities within it.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 None directly resulting from this paper.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 No personal data was used in the preparation of this budget paper.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 The main source of funding for baseline recurring expenditure is the town precept. As a stable source of funding overall financial risk is therefore relatively low but consideration must be taken of the requirement for the town to keep within government referendum limits (a restriction not currently applicable to parish councils).

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Failure to set a balanced budget over the medium term.</i>	<i>Financial projections are shown up until 2027/28 and the scenario planning highlights the potential sensitivities. Planning over a longer period will help to ensure understanding of the scale of the financial challenges and early</i>	<i>Long term strategic planning. Innovative funding streams. Transformational efficiency savings.</i>

	<i>planning enables enough lead in time for the implementation of the budget options.</i>	
<i>Council's service priorities are not reflected in the budget.</i>	<i>The budget planning process, including the process of outcome based budgeting and the informal account group meetings which review the detailed budgets and strategy.</i>	<i>Ensure the prioritisation of resources to best meet the outcomes of the authority.</i>
<i>High levels of contractual inflation and the continuation of current precept referendum limits.</i>	<i>Medium term financial planning and sensitivity analysis highlighting the challenges posed by high inflation.</i>	<i>Transformational efficiency savings.</i>

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1 This budget report has been produced at a very challenging time for the town account. High inflation levels have had a significant impact on budget projections due to high levels of contractual expenditure within the town, such as grounds maintenance. It was recognised during the budget process last year that material savings were required in order to deliver a balanced medium term budget.
- 11.2 The Winchester Town Forum (Informal Account) Group have met three times in total in order to establish the key focus of the budget process and any priority resource considerations to bring back to the Town Forum.

Winchester Town Precept

- 11.3 The town forum recommended a precept for 2023/24 of £80.93 (per band D property), which was approved at Council in February 2023. The decision on the level of council tax for 2024/25 will be taken at Council in February 2024.
- 11.4 The town will need to consider its proposed strategy for the Town Precept but will need to bear in mind that any decisions will be subject to 'referendum limits' and may be impacted by decisions taken on the level of district Council tax.
- 11.5 It has now been confirmed the overall referendum limit for the Council in 2024/25 be either 2.99% or +£5, which means +2.99% applies as the higher limit. This would mean the maximum district and town increase would be just under 3%. The maximum increase for the town or district are interrelated, for example if the district increased by a lower percentage then the town could increase by a higher percentage and still remain within the overall referendum limit.

- 11.6 The council tax base for 2024/25 was confirmed in December and has resulted in a slightly above average increase in the tax base for the town area from 14,666 to 14,919. This means an overall precept increase of around £20k before any change in the precept charge.
- 11.7 This paper assumes a core precept increase of 3% (£2.43) to £83.36 for 2024/25. Based on the forecasts within Appendix 1 this would leave the town reserve below recommended levels in 2025/26. Potential options relating to the precept are shown below and it should be noted that the grounds maintenance contract was uplifted from October 2023 based on September CPI of 6.7%. This contract is the most significant expenditure line within the town budget.

Effect of increasing the Town Precept 2024/25

% MAX District Increase	% TOWN Precept Increase	Additional Income £000	Town Precept	Town Precept £ Increase
	0%		£80.93	
3.00%	3.00%	36	£83.36	£2.43
2.75%	4.6%	56	£84.65	£3.72
2.62%	5.5%	66	£85.38	£4.45

Budget Review 2024/25

Review Update

- 11.8 The informal accounts group have presented a budget forecast in Appendix 1 which currently shows shortfalls in the medium term financial strategy reserve target of 10%, along with a desire to increase this target to 15%. This is despite a core baseline assumption of a precept increase of 3%. Consideration will need to be given as to whether to increase the precept above the current forecast of 3% for 2024/25.
- 11.9 An update on the four main budget review areas, agreed in the 2023/24 budget process, was presented to the town forum in September and November. It is noted that the reviews relating to Cemeteries and Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance have been merged into the TC25 programme with recommendations now expected during 2024/25. Given expenditure in these areas encompasses a very significant proportion of the overall town budget it is anticipated that the proportionate levels of scrutiny will be carried out and reported back to the town forum.
- 11.10 WTF326 Budget Review Play Refurbishment Programme, presented options for capital refurbishment of play areas which was significantly less than had been previously estimated. The total forecast of £470k over the five year period from 2024/25 to 2028/29 compared to previous assumptions of £770k over the same period. In order to support this programme and strategy update

a revenue growth requirement of £5,841 was identified in order to ensure that existing equipment continues to be maintained to a decent standard.

11.11 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – the Neighbourhood CIL (Town) receivable balance stood at £1.142m as at April 2023. Commitments include £0.295m towards North Walls Pavilion; £0.450m towards KGV Pavilion; £0.050m towards the KGV Park Plan; £0.050m towards Abbots Barton and Hyde Scouts Facility; £0.034m remaining on North Walls Lighting and Fencing; and £0.010m for Milland Road.

- The principles for spending the Winchester Town Forum's share of CIL were approved in November 2016 (see WTF245), in order to provide for the community led improvement of the environment and infrastructure in the Winchester Town.
- Based on historic receipts around £150k to £200k of town CIL is expected per annum. There are risks around relying on this funding as reductions in development in the town area or changes to the CIL scheme could significantly impact on future receipts. As such this future forecast is used for planning purposes but is not to be committed to schemes as certain funding.

11.12 The following central case assumptions have been used in the financial forecast shown in Appendix 1:

	2024/2025 Forecast	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast	2027/2028 Forecast
Assumptions:				
Contract inflation	6%	4%	2%	2%
Percentage increase in tax	3%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base	Actual	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

11.13 The sensitivity of the above assumptions is as follows:

- a) Contract Inflation is around £6k per 1%. If inflation were 15% for 2024/25 then this would cost an additional £30k per annum.
- b) A 1% precept increase generates additional funding of c£12k per annum.
- c) A 1.2% tax base increase generates additional funding of c£15k per annum. Whilst 1.2% is a reasonable long term forecast increase per annum, there can be significant year-on-year deviations to this average.

Capital Expenditure

- 11.14 Capital expenditure is either funded directly from the Town Account Earmarked Reserve, external funding such as CIL, or through the General Fund and repaid over the life of the asset (along with interest).
- 11.15 In January 2017 (WTF250) the Town Forum approved a strategy to fund the long term requirements of the play area refurbishment up until the end of 2024/25, from the Town Account Earmarked Reserve. Play area refurbishments in the town make up the largest proportion of town capital expenditure.
- 11.16 There is a total proposed budget of £0.744m in the capital programme towards play area refurbishments, £0.274m is approved to be spent in 2023/24 and £0.470m is proposed for 2024/25 to 2028/29.

Reserves

- 11.17 The Winchester Town Account earmarked reserve is available to support planned one-off expenditure over the medium term as well as a contingency balance of 10% of the total annual net expenditure which is set aside to deal with any urgent / unexpected requirements. Based on demands on the reserve over a number of years the informal accounts group are recommending that the target contingency balance is increased to 15% in order to provide greater cover for exceptional expenditure requirements. The current 10% level equates to c£120k based on forecast 2024/25 net service expenditure, which is a relatively small amount given the risks and responsibilities relating to the town. A level of 15% would increase this to £180k, providing greater assurance that risks can be dealt with from the town reserve whilst also allowing time to replenish the reserve. Given the current referendum limits and demands on the town budget it may take a number of years to build the reserve back up to target levels if there is unexpected unavoidable expenditure.
- 11.18 The current forecasts in Appendix 1 show the reserve falling to around 6% in 2025/26 (£80k). The town forum will need to bear this in mind when making recommendations relating to the town precept and the remaining review areas in 11.9.
- 11.19 Currently the capital budget forecasts listed above, particularly the significant programme of play area refurbishments are planned to be funded from the Town reserve. It is therefore important that long term planning ensures funding is in place to support these projects.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 Continue with the current target precept level of 10%. This option was rejected as it was considered it does not provide an adequate level of ongoing reserves to meet exceptional expenditure requirements.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

None

Previous Committee Reports:-

Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position (Draft Budget Options) – WTF324 – November 2023

Winchester Town Account Financial Planning – WTF322 – September 2023

Winchester Town Account Budget for 2023/24 – WTF314 – January 2023

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Projections

WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT - Medium Term Financial Projections

	2022/2023 Outturn	2023/2024 Forecast	2024/2025 Forecast	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast	2027/28 Forecast
Assumptions:						
Contract inflation		10.0%	6%	4%	2%	2%
Utilities		5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Percentage increase in tax		5.5%	3.0%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base		14,666	14,919	15,098	15,279	15,462
Cost of Services						
Recurring Budgets:						
Allotments	(3,879)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Bus Shelter Cleaning / Maintenance / New Provision	6,980	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Cemeteries	89,117	83,028	87,039	91,180	95,455	99,869
Christmas Lights	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Neighbourhood Service Officers (Contribution)	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
Footway Lighting	20,889	33,043	33,873	34,745	35,660	36,620
Grants and Vision Delivery	77,310	80,000	70,000	60,000	50,000	50,000
Support Costs for Grant Scheme	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Maintenance Work to Council Owned Bridges	280	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
Night Bus Contribution	8,480	12,029	12,751	13,261	13,526	13,797
Public Conveniences (Contribution)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces	714,639	758,666	810,766	839,070	857,193	870,634
GROWTH - revenue play area reactive maintenance			5,841	5,841	5,841	5,841
Tennis Court Improvements			9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces - Additional Budget	0	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Town Forum Support	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Total Recurring Budgets	1,023,316	1,147,766	1,210,270	1,234,096	1,247,674	1,266,761
One-off Budgets:						
Community Infrastructure	83,000					
Total One-off Budgets	83,000					
Total Cost of Services	1,106,316	1,147,766	1,210,270	1,234,096	1,247,674	1,266,761
Taxation and Non-specific grant income						
Council Tax Income	(1,103,623)	(1,186,879)	(1,243,622)	(1,296,290)	(1,351,265)	(1,408,455)
Interest on Balances	(7,828)	(11,988)	(5,560)	(3,727)	(2,405)	(1,984)
Total Taxation and Non-specific grant income	(1,111,451)	(1,198,867)	(1,249,182)	(1,300,017)	(1,353,669)	(1,410,439)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked reserves						
(Surplus added to Reserves) / Deficit taken from Reserves	(5,135)	(51,101)	(38,912)	(65,921)	(105,995)	(143,678)
Capital Expenditure funded by Town Reserve	135,614	274,000	100,000	110,000	120,000	50,000
Reserve	(83,000)					
Opening Reserve Balance (at 1st April)	(455,699)	(408,220)	(185,321)	(124,233)	(80,153)	(66,148)
Closing Reserve Balance (carried forward)	(408,220)	(185,321)	(124,233)	(80,153)	(66,148)	(159,826)
Closing Reserves forecast as % of net expenditure	40%	16%	10%	6%	5%	13%

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WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM – SCHEDULED ITEMS OF BUSINESS ETC

25 JANUARY 2024					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Update from Sarah Davis of BID regarding bins and refuse in Winchester City Centre	Simon Hendey	25 January 2024		Verbal Update from Sarah Davis of BID
	Winchester Town Account Budget for 2024/25 (to be recommended to Cabinet)	Darren Kennedy	25 January 2024		WTF328
11 MARCH 2024					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Winchester Town Vision – Annual Progress Update	Susan Robbins	11 March 2024		WTF329
	Update from Stagecoach	Simon Hendey/Andy Hickman	11 March 2024		Presentation from Operations Manager, Stagecoach Winchester

Items to be allocated for 2024/25
North Winchester Design Code (to be timetabled by officers when updates are available) – Date tbc
Update from the Friends of St Giles Hill Park regarding preliminary works – June 2024 (added at the request of the Chair, Cllr Reach)
Budget Review: Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance –IDV Contract – Proposals – Andy Hickman/Campbell Williams (moved from 2023/24 to 2024/25)
Budget Review: Cemeteries – Proposals - Karen Vincent (moved from 2023/24 to 2024/25)