



Meeting	Winchester Town Forum
Date and Time	Thursday, 23rd January, 2025 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

- 1. Apologies**
To record the names of apologies given
- 2. Disclosures of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Councillors and Officers in matters to be discussed.

Note: Councillors are reminded of their obligations to declare disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs), other registerable interests (ORIs) and non-registerable interests (NRIs) in accordance with 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 held on 11 November 2024** (Pages 5 - 10)
That the minutes of the meeting be signed as a correct record.



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, 17 January 2025** via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

6. **Winchester Town Account Budget for 2025/26 (to be recommended to Cabinet) (WTF336)** (Pages 11 - 20)

7. **Request for Governance Review (WTF337)** (Pages 21 - 24)

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 2024/25** (Pages 25 - 26)

To note the current version of the Work Programme for 2024/25.

Laura Taylor
Chief Executive

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15 January 2025

Agenda Contact: Claire Buchanan, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01962 848 438 Email: cbuchanan@winchester.gov.uk

**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

Aron
Becker
Eve
Learney
Morris
Murphy
Scott
Tippett-Cooper
Thompson
Tod
Westwood
Wise

Conservatives

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

Monday, 11 November 2024

Attendance:

Councillors

Reach (Chairperson)

Aron
Batho
Becker
Eve
Learney

Morris
Murphy
Tod
Westwood

[Full video recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Scott, Thompson, Tippet-Cooper and Wise.

2. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Aron declare a personal (but not prejudicial) interest concerning any matters relating to Stanmore Community Association due to her role as Chair of Trustees.

Councillor Tod declared a personal but non-pecuniary interest concerning agenda items that may be related to his role as a County Councillor.

Councillor Eve disclosed a personal but non-pecuniary interest as a member of Friends of St Giles Hill that was referred to within the agenda items.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson made reference to the recent busy period and highlighted issues such as road closures in the north of the city and the replacement service contracted to Stagecoach from Southern Gas Networks.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 September 2024 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait and Deidre Wood addressed the forum during public participation and their comments are summarised below.

Ian Tait

Raised concerns regarding anti-social behaviour in the city centre, particularly around the old fountain in front of King's Walk and St Maurices Covert. He mentioned issues such as groups of people openly drinking alcohol, taking drugs, begging, and using offensive language. The council had previously removed the fountain and benches, which temporarily resolved the issue, but the group had since moved to other areas.

In response, Councillor Becker highlighted the complexities of the behaviours involved and emphasised that the council continued to endeavour to address these issues with the support of Outreach services such as Trinity Winchester, The Winchester Beacon (formerly Winchester Churches Nightshelter) and the NHS and would raise the anti-social behaviour issues with the Community Safety Team.

Deidre Wood (on behalf of Flashing Lights Action Group (FLAG))

Made reference to the heavy traffic and pollution in Hyde Street. She proposed the installation of a speed management device under Hampshire County Council's new process. She highlighted the dangers and health risks associated with the current traffic situation and requested the council's support in addressing these issues.

In response, the Forum supported the statement made regarding excessive traffic flow and speeds in Hyde Street, although it was recognised that this was a Hampshire County Council matter. Councillor Batho, on behalf of Speedwatch Winchester, spoke regarding the significant speed of traffic measured in Hyde Street and in other areas such as North Walls and Stanmore Lane and advised that he had been in early discussions with officers regarding the installation of speed management devices. Councillor Batho agreed to liaise with Mrs Wood to establish if there was an opportunity to arrange an informal meeting to review suggestions and report back to the next meeting of the Forum.

6. **TOWN FORUM GRANTS PROGRAMME UPDATE (WTF332)**

The Chairperson introduced the report highlighting the successes and achievements of the grant programme in 2023/24 and the revised criteria for applications in 2024/25, which were closely in line with the town vision outcomes. The report set out the important role that members provide in supporting the community engagement process and also outlined the requested budget saving of £10,000 for the next financial year, with reductions to the community grant scheme, Play to the Crowd, and Citizens Advice.

It was reported that the team were running a webinar on 25th November 2024 to provide insights into how previous recipients had used their grants and the Chairperson encouraged members of the forum to participate on this webinar.

The Town Centre and Community Manager sought continued engagement with members in the allocation of remaining grant funding for 2024/25.

During debate, the impact of small grants on organisations across the town area and the importance of the grants programme were emphasised.

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommendations set out in 1 to 5 of the report, be noted; and
2. That the £10,000 budget saving for 2025/26 achieved by a reduction of £5,000 to the Winchester City Community grant scheme and a reduction of £2,500 each in core grant contribution to Citizens Advice and Play to the Crowd, be approved.

7. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL POSITION (DRAFT BUDGET OPTIONS) (WTF333)**

Councillor Learney provided an overview of the report as Chairperson of the Town Accounts Informal Group who had reviewed the medium-term financial position. Councillor Learney outlined that the report set out the financial position of the town account and provided an opportunity for discussion prior to recommending a final budget in January 2025.

Reference was made to the capping regime that affected the town account. The Forum noted that the town charge was a special expense combined with the council's charge for council tax for the purposes of determining whether a tax referendum should be held and resulted in a lower charge annually in comparison to the precepts set by other parishes within the district.

Councillor Learney highlighted several pressures on the budget including costs related to the new King George V pavilion and the proposed River Park pavilion, coupled with high inflation. Expenditure reviews were underway which may provide opportunities for rebalancing expenditure.

The forum proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by Councillor Learney and the Finance Manager (Strategic Finance).

- (a) Context of the interaction between the council's medium-term position and the broader TC25 project.
- (b) Opportunities for potential revenue generation, including cemetery management, sports pitch fees and the external hiring of facilities.
- (c) The need to adapt to changing patterns of public space usage was highlighted.

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. Members were encouraged to contact Councillor Learney directly if they had specific items of detail in the setting of the budget.

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.

8. **OPEN SPACES AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE - IDV CONTRACT DISCUSSION (PRESENTATION)**

The Interim Corporate Head of Service: Place and the Contract Manager gave a presentation setting out the scope of work done by IdVerde and Wettons, the contract management process, and the upcoming contract renewal in 2027.

A copy of the presentation was made available on the website following the meeting [here](#).

The forum proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by relevant officers.

- (a) The impact of climate change on grass cutting and leaf clearance.
- (b) The need for flexibility in the new contract.
- (c) The importance of engaging with residents and raising awareness of the availability of digital tools for grass cuttings etc.
- (d) The need to minimise carbon impact within the new contract.

At the conclusion of debate, the forum thanked officers for an informative presentation and welcomed the next steps coming forward in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received and the comments raised, as set out above, be noted.

9. **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 Tippett-Cooper – Culture Informal Group

The Chairperson provided a progress update from the group on behalf of Councillor Tippett-Cooper as follows:

- (i) The Buttercross – work was scheduled in the Spring to clean the Buttercross
- (ii) Hyde Abbey Gateway – The application for the maintenance, pigeon proofing and associated works for this project had recently been submitted to Historic England.

Councillor Batho – Climate and Open Spaces Informal Group

Progress updates from the group included:

- (i) KGV Pavilion – a path had been constructed to join the Garrison Ground to the MUGA which had been reported as complete.
- (ii) Works had commenced to the Talavera Road play area to bring the facility back in use.
- (iii) The top surface of the central walkway to River Park had been resurfaced and barriers would be introduced in areas to prevent floor risk.

Councillors Batho and Becker – Grants and Community Empowerment Informal Group

Progress updates from the group included:

- (i) A number of applications had been received for the district grant which related to the town so these applications had been transferred for consideration of an award of a town grant instead.

Members of the forum were asked if they were approached by a group to come and speak in support of that organisation for the award of a town grant.

Councillor Wise – Streets and Spaces Informal Group

The Chairperson provided a progress update from the group on behalf of Councillor Wise as follows:

- (i) The Nunnaminster – the new interpretation boards have arrived and were due to be installed shortly.

RESOLVED:

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

10. **WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the inclusion of an update from Councillor Batho at the next meeting in respect of the matter set out in item 5 above, the work programme for the remainder of 2024/25 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.00 pm

Chairperson

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET FOR 2025/26 (TO BE RECOMMENDED TO CABINET)

23 JANUARY 2025

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Kelsie Learney, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

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

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This report presents the current financial projections for the Town Account for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 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 2025/26.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Agrees the draft budget for 2025/26 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 15% to 20% of annual net service expenditure;
3. 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. Homes for all

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 projections 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 None directly resulting from this 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 2028/29 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 planning enables enough lead in time for the</i>	<i>Long term strategic planning. Transformational efficiency savings.</i>

	<i>implementation of the budget options.</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>
<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>Changes in local government structures create additional risk and pressure on town budgets and reserves.</i>	<i>Ensure the town reserve is adequately resourced in order to deal with the risks faced within the town account.</i>	<i>Transformational efficiency savings.</i>

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

11.1 This budget report has been produced within an environment of ongoing financial challenges for the town account. Past high inflation had a significant impact on town budgets and inflation has again started to rise (November CPI 2.6%). Increasing expenditure puts a significant strain on the town account which is predominantly funded by the town precept, which is subject to government referendum principles.

11.2 The Winchester Town Forum (Informal Account) Group met in January 2025 and their recommendations are contained within this report.

Winchester Town Precept

11.3 The town forum recommended a precept for 2024/25 of £85.38 (per band D property), which was approved at Council in February 2024. The decision on the level of council tax for 2025/26 will be taken at Council in February 2025.

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 2025/26 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 2025/26 was confirmed in November and has resulted in a slightly above average increase in the tax base for the town area from 14,919 to 15,143. 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% (£2.55) to £87.93 for 2025/26. Potential options relating to the precept are shown below.

Town Precept

% MAX District Increase	% TOWN Precept Increase	Additional Income £000	Town Precept	Town Precept £ Increase
	0%		£85.38	
2.99%	3.66%	47	£88.50	£3.12
2.94%	4.0%	51	£88.80	£3.42
2.79%	5.0%	64	£89.65	£4.27
2.71%	5.5%	70	£90.08	£1.58
2.05%	10.0%	127	£93.92	£5.42

Budget Review 2025/26

- 11.8 The December publication of the white paper on English devolution has created an additional element of risk and uncertainty that had not been part of the initial budget review process. Given the increased risk and the substantial assets controlled by the town account, it is considered prudent to increase available reserves held within the town reserve. The current strategy is to maintain a reserve balance of at least 15% of net baseline expenditure and it is proposed to now target a balance of at least 20% of net baseline expenditure, equating to c£260k.
- 11.9 Out of the initial four main budget review areas, agreed in the 2023/24 budget process, two reviews remain in progress:
- a) **Cemeteries** – a review is underway in order to set out options for the future of the cemeteries. Additional time is needed in order to explore the potential options further and therefore this review will be brought to the town forum.
- b) **Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance** – given the complexities and sensitivity around this review it has been agreed to run this review within the existing TC25 project. A verbal update was given to the town forum in November.

11.10 A review of bus shelter cleaning and maintenance is underway, including where the future responsibility of this sits, and further details will be presented in due course.

11.11 The following budget growth proposal has been identified during the budget review process:

a) The town forum support budget has remained at £5,000 for a number of years. Following a review of officer time and meeting room usage it has been identified that costs are now around £17,500 per annum and so the budget forecast has been uplifted by £12,500.

11.12 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – the Neighbourhood CIL (Town) receivable balance stood at £0.701m as at April 2024, with additional in-year 2024/25 billing of £0.155m as at 07/01/2025. Commitments include £0.495m towards North Walls Pavilion; £0.037m towards the KGV Park Plan; £0.050m towards Abbots Barton and Hyde Scouts Facility; £0.020m towards St Giles Hill Stabilisation works; 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.

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

	2025/2026 Forecast	2026/2027 Forecast	2027/2028 Forecast	2028/2029 Forecast
Assumptions:				
Contract inflation	4%	3%	3%	3%
Percentage increase in tax	3%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base	Actual	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

11.14 The sensitivity of the above assumptions is as follows:

a) Contract Inflation is around £7k per 1%.

b) A 1% precept increase generates additional funding of just under £13k 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

- 11.15 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).
- 11.16 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.
- 11.17 There is currently a total budget of £0.590m in the capital programme for play area refurbishments to the end of 2028/29.

Reserves

- 11.18 The Winchester Town Account earmarked reserve is available to support planned one-off expenditure over the medium term as well as a contingency balance which is set aside to deal with any urgent / unexpected requirements. It is proposed in this report to increase the target contingency balance from 15% to 20% of net expenditure. This is to deal with the uncertainty and risks associated with the Government white paper detailed in 11.8 above.
- 11.19 The current forecasts in Appendix 1 shows the reserve decreasing to 11% in 2026/27. Additional funding or reductions in expenditure will need to be identified in order to meet the proposed target of 20%.
- 11.20 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.
- 11.21 It should be noted that the forecast reserve balance shown in Appendix 1 does fluctuate on a year-by-year basis and individual end of year balances are impacted by 'lumpy' one-off expenditure such as the play area refurbishments.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 Continue with the current target precept level of 15%. 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:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position (Draft Budget Options) – WTF333 – November 2024

Winchester Town Account Financial Planning 2024/25 – WTF331 – September 2024

Town Account Budget for 2024/25 – WTF328 – January 2024

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Projections

WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT - Medium Term Financial Projections

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/28	2028/29
	Outturn	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Assumptions:						
Contract inflation		6%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Utilities		5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Percentage increase in tax		5.5%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Tax Base		14,919	15,143	15,324	15,508	15,694
Cost of Services						
Recurring Budgets:						
Allotments	(3,879)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)
Bus Shelter Cleaning / Maintenance / New Provision	11,930	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Cemeteries	97,360	87,039	91,199	95,886	100,719	105,704
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	20,465	33,873	32,607	33,536	34,513	35,538
Grants and Vision Delivery	64,812	70,000	60,000	50,000	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		5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
Night Bus Contribution	9,049	12,751	13,261	13,659	14,069	14,491
Public Conveniences (Contribution)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces	764,789	866,607	920,651	956,624	983,086	1,010,052
Tennis Court Improvements		9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Town Forum Support	5,000	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500
Total Recurring Budgets	1,074,026	1,222,770	1,270,218	1,302,205	1,334,886	1,368,285
Total Cost of Services	1,074,026	1,222,770	1,270,218	1,302,205	1,334,886	1,368,285
Taxation and Non-specific grant income						
Council Tax Income	(1,186,879)	(1,273,758)	(1,331,489)	(1,387,770)	(1,446,450)	(1,507,595)
Interest on Balances	(11,017)	(5,560)	(6,444)	(5,175)	(4,297)	(6,273)
Total Taxation and Non-specific grant income	(1,197,896)	(1,279,317)	(1,337,932)	(1,392,945)	(1,450,747)	(1,513,868)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked reserves						
Reserves	(123,870)	(56,547)	(67,715)	(90,740)	(115,861)	(145,583)
Capital Expenditure funded by Town Reserve Reserve	153,850	220,000	110,000	120,000	50,000	90,000
Opening Reserve Balance (at 1st April)	(408,220)	(378,239)	(214,785)	(172,500)	(143,240)	(209,100)
Closing Reserve Balance (carried forward)	(378,239)	(214,785)	(172,500)	(143,240)	(209,100)	(264,683)
Closing Reserves forecast as % of net expenditure	35%	18%	14%	11%	16%	19%
TAX						
Tax at Band D	£80.93	£85.38	£87.93	£90.56	£93.27	£96.06
Increase over previous year (£)	£4.22	£4.45	£2.55	£2.63	£2.71	£2.79

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REPORT TITLE: REQUEST FOR GOVERNANCE REVIEW

23 JANUARY 2025

REPORT OF CHAIR OF WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Contact Officer: Simon Hendeby, Strategic Director Email
shendeby@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): TOWN WARDS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to invite the Winchester Town Forum to consider making a request that a community governance review should be undertaken to explore the options for establishing a Town Council for central Winchester.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Winchester Town Forum is asked:

1. To agree to make a request to Winchester City Council to consider undertaking a community governance review with a view to establishing a Town Council for central Winchester.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 Tackling the Climate Emergency and Creating a Greener District
- 1.2 As this report seeks consideration of a request for a community governance review there are no direct consequences to this aspect of the Council plan at this time.
- 1.3 Homes for all
- 1.4 As this report seeks consideration of a request for a community governance review there are no direct consequences to this aspect of the Council plan at this time.
- 1.5 Vibrant Local Economy
- 1.6 As this report seeks consideration of a request for a community governance review there are no direct consequences to this aspect of the Council plan at this time.
- 1.7 Living Well
- 1.8 As this report seeks consideration of a request for a community governance review there are no direct consequences to this aspect of the Council plan at this time.
- 1.9 Your Services, Your Voice
- 1.10 As this report seeks consideration of a request for a community governance review there are no direct consequences to this aspect of the Council plan at this time.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 If a community governance review proceeds the cost would be met by Winchester City Council ('WCC') as has been the case historically. However, Winchester Town Forum has its own resources and reserves and may wish to consider making a contribution towards the costs of the review.
- 2.2 At this point in time it is not possible to provide an estimate of the likely cost of any review.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Community governance reviews within the borough can only be undertaken by WCC (in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ('the Act')).

- 3.2 Under the Act a community governance review can only be instigated by means of a community governance petition to WCC or directly by Winchester City Council at any time it deems necessary.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct asset or property implications stemming from the recommendation contained in this report.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1. If a community governance review is undertaken there will be consultation and communications to support the review.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no environmental considerations stemming from the recommendation contained in this report.

8 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 None

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1. This report recommends a request be made to undertake a governance review. The risks in relation to considering that request will be assessed by WCC.

11 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 11.1. The English Devolution White paper published on 16 December 2024 sets out proposals for local government reorganisation. This provides the context for a request for the consideration of a community governance review which could lead to the creation of town or parish councils.
- 11.2. If a review is undertaken, it will be in accordance with the duties outlined in the Act.
- 11.3. If a review proceeds section 93 of the Act requires WCC to consult with local government electors for the area under review; and any other person or body (including another local authority) which appears to have an interest in the review. Consultation must take place with local government electors,

appropriate local authorities and other relevant persons including political parties and local community interest groups.

WCC would be legally obliged to publish the terms of reference of the review, any proposals made as a result of the conduct of the review and any recommendations made on its website. WCC would have regard to the need to secure that any community governance review for the area under consideration reflects the identities and interests of the local community in that area and that it is effective and convenient. Relevant considerations will include the impact on community cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of the proposed area.

- 11.4. Elsewhere on this agenda, report WTF336 sets out the proposed budget for the Winchester Town Forum in 2025/26 and recognises the increased risk that is presented to the forum from the English Devolution White Paper. Unlike other governance reviews Winchester Town Forum is in a relatively unique position of having the ability to set a precept and provide services, although not formally operating as a separate town council.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1. Winchester Town Forum could decide not to request a community governance review. This course of action is not recommended as in the context of the English Devolution White Paper a review if undertaken, could mitigate risk for the future of the Winchester Town Forum.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:

Other Background Documents

English Devolution White Paper: power and partnership foundations for growth

APPENDICES:

None

23 JANUARY 2025					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	Winchester Town Account Budget for 2025/26 (to be recommended to Cabinet)	Darren Kennedy	23 January 2025		WTF336
	Request for Governance Review	Simon Hendey	23 January 2025		WTF337
10 MARCH 2025					
	BUSINESS	LEAD OFFICER	COMMITTEE DATE		STATUS/COMMENT
	No items at present				

Possible Items to be allocated for 2024/25
North Winchester Design Code (to be timetabled by officers when updates are available) – Date tbc

