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| Meeting | Winchester Town Forum |
| Date and Time | Thursday, 22nd January, 2026 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.

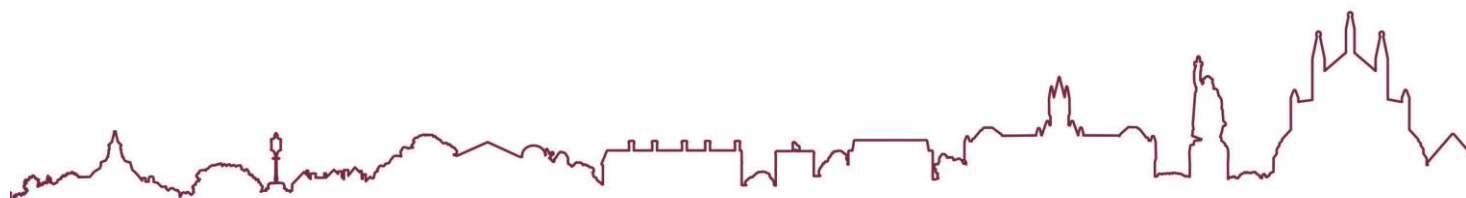
AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To record the names of apologies given
2. **Disclosures of Interests**
To receive any disclosure of interests from Councillors or 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 10 November 2025** (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, 16 January 2026** via democracy@winchester.gov.uk or (01962) 848 264 to register to speak and for further details.

6. **Update on Policing in Winchester (Verbal Update)**

7. **Winchester Town Account Budget for 2026/27 (to be recommended to Cabinet) (WTF342) (Pages 11 - 22)**

8. **Informal Groups - 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 2025/26 (Pages 23 - 24)**

To note the current Work Programme for 2025/26.

Laura Taylor
Chief Executive

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14 January 2026

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: Westwood (Liberal Democrats)

Vice-Chairperson: Eve (Liberal Democrats)

Liberal Democrats

Aron
Batho
Becker
Learney
Morris
Murphy
Reach
Scott
Tippett-Cooper
Thompson
Tod
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).

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

Monday, 10 November 2025

Attendance:

Councillors

Westwood (Chairperson)

Eve
Batho
Becker
Learney
Morris
Murphy

Reach
Scott
Tippett-Cooper
Tod
Wise

Apologies for absence:

Councillors Aron and Thompson

[Full video recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received as set out above.

2. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Tod declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of items 6 and 8 on the agenda due to his role as a Hampshire County Councillor. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, he remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Audit and Governance Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson provided an update regarding the Community Governance Review (CGR) following the request of the forum at its meeting on 23 January 2025 for the council to undertake a review covering the unparished town wards.

It was noted that the first stage of public consultation had been launched to consider whether to create a new parish/town council for the town area, which would run until the end of the year. All residents, businesses and community groups were encouraged to participate to ensure the Winchester town area continued to have adequate community engagement, local democracy and effective delivery of services in the future.

Public engagement drop-in sessions had been arranged to support the consultation and inform residents of this process, prior to second stage consultation during Summer 2026 and final decision-making expected in Autumn 2026. These were scheduled to take place as follows:

- 12 November 2025 - Guildhall, Winchester
- 18 November 2025 - Badger Farm Community Centre
- 26 November 2025 – Community Lounge, Henry Beaufort School
- 29 November 2025 – Guildhall, Winchester

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2025**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 September 2025 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait and Madeleine Durie (Chief Executive Officer, Youth Options) spoke during public participation, and a summary of their comments are set out below:

Ian Tait

He considered that there had been a lack of progress in the regeneration of Central Winchester, with particular reference to the derelict state of the former R.A.O.B Club building in Cross Keys Passage, noting to the previous planning application to develop the site which was refused by the planning committee in September 2024.

He stated that he had attempted to track regeneration progress through various websites and via council papers which he suggested had not been updated in some time and stated that the last Cabinet Committee: Regeneration took place in October 2024 with no further meetings scheduled.

In response, Councillor Tod stated that a number of public events had been held during July 2025. These had been well publicised with further to follow in due course. Up-to-date information was available on the Jigsaw: Partnerships and Places website relating to the regeneration project and access links to information boards were also available on the council's website, including an option to sign up for electronic newsletters. Councillor Tod agreed to forward these details on to Mr Tait for his reference.

Madeleine Durie

Addressed the forum in her role as Chief Executive of Youth Options regarding the organisations work within Winchester, the challenges faced and the need for continued support for young people, making particular reference to the following points:

- Youth Options taking over youth work responsibilities in Winchester from Street Reach for the past 18 months having worked together previously.

- Secured funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to include two additional nights of street-based youth work within the town centre this month.
- The varied services offered by Youth Options which included targeted support for children and young people, as well as street-based youth work. Working with schools providing one-to-one support, progression opportunities and training and employment programmes for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Subject to funding, Youth Options hoped to be able to offer programmes to NEET young people in the Winchester area.
- A youth club was currently held at Unit 12 in Winnall, which had proved successful with high attendance. However, as this space was a shared amenity with other users it was not adequate for future use. Youth Options were actively seeking new space in central Winchester to offer young people drop-in support. On-going youth support for young people was considered critical, and the importance of the safeguarding role of youth workers in bridging the gap between teachers, parents and the police in providing advice and guidance. It was requested that this continued to remain significant during Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

In response, the forum raised a number of comments and questions which were responded to by Madeleine Durie, these related to the need for enhanced collaborative working practices at local level, the need for an accessible, central, adequate sized safe space for young people, the continuation of crucial community based prevention work for young people, the diversity of youth needs, supporting young women and girls in safe spaces, linked dialogue with the police and the council's community safety team regarding anti-social behaviour, and details of the Millbrook project, a successful well used facility funded by significant government grant. This enabled the refurbishment of a purpose-built youth centre facility approximately a year ago, which had also generated income by other service users who rented the facility when it was not utilised by Youth Options.

Councillor Westwood thanked Madeleine Durie for her comments and suggested Youth Options linking with other organisations and businesses such as Chesil Theatre (Stephanie Danby, Chairman of Chesil Theatre also present at the meeting) who had similar aims and aspirations to engage and enhance capabilities for young people in central Winchester.

6. **WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL POSITION (DRAFT BUDGET OPTIONS) (WTF341)**

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 and precept for 2026/27 to Cabinet in January 2026.

In addition, it was highlighted that were further recommendations set out in the report, namely, to approve additional expenditure of £60,000 for emergency tree

works in 2025/26 and an allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) of £50,000 towards the extension of Chesil Theatre, which was fully supported by the forum and would provide an improved community facility for the town.

It was noted that due to the successful implementation of savings, the town account was in a better financial position than since previously considered. As such, the Town Account Informal Group had proposed several changes in respect of Grants and Vision Delivery, Public Conveniences and Tree Works, as set out in paragraph 11.10 (a) (b) and (c) of the report. With the amendments, the town account reserve balance was projected to fall below the recommended 15% of expenditure which would need to be considered in final budget recommendations.

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) The possibility of further investment of reserves.
- (b) The review of fees and charges for cemeteries and open spaces, including adequate measures and charges for damages to open spaces, such as at River Park.
- (c) Winchester Speedwatch – previous support from the forum to fund equipment, the concerns of residents regarding speed limits and the need to raise speed awareness.

In addition, Councillor Batho raised a request for the forum to consider evaluating the capital revenue costs associated with the installation of speed indicator devices to be included in the financial budget for 2026/27. In response, this approach was welcomed and supported by forum members and Councillor Learney agreed to investigate this as part of the budget.

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 bring forward any initiatives for consideration by the informal group in the setting of the budget.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the report be received and the budget issues identified be noted for consideration;
- 2. That the comments of the Forum be noted and reported back to Cabinet in relation to the wider budget consultation;
- 3. That the additional revenue expenditure of £60,000 for emergency tree works in 2025/25 funded by the town centre, be approved;
- 4. That the allocation of Town Community Infrastructure Levy contributions of £50,000 towards the extension of Chesil

Theatre, be approved, subject to meeting the conditions and release of grant by 31/03/2027; and

5. That the provision of speed indicator devices be investigated for potential inclusion in the town account budget, to be recommended to Cabinet in January.

7. **INFORMAL GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Forum received individual updates from the Chairpersons of various Town Informal Groups, where available. Each summarised the work that had been carried out by the respective groups over the previous two-month period.

Councillor Murphy – Streets and Spaces Informal Group

Progress updates from the group included:

- a) The latest vacancy rate for the High Street was 2.3% compared to the national average of 13.3%.
- b) Forthcoming events were discussed, including the Christmas light switch on taking place on 13 November organised by Winchester BID.
- c) Managing the enforcement of on street parking by delivery lorries, particularly in the one-way system.

Councillor Tippet-Cooper - Culture Informal Group

Progress update from the group included:

- a) The Buttercross – the website had been updated. It was noted that the contractor appointed to start the refurbishment works has advised that the scaffolding would be erected in February 2026, with works to commence in March.
- b) Hyde Gate – A landscaping plan had recently been received, to be submitted with the building plan to Historic England for approval. Subject to planning permission, works should be progressed in due course.

The importance of clear communication and information regarding the details of works due to take place at both sites was emphasised. Councillor Tippet-Cooper agreed to report this for action.

Councillor Eve - Climate and Open Space Informal Group

Progress updates from the group included:

- a) Oram's Arbour works had recently been completed
- b) River Park works were progressing well with the pavilion and planning for the footpath – thanks were given to the officers for their progress of maintenance works.
- c) The opening of Allegra's Ambition at the Garrison Ground had taken place recently and the forum were encouraged to visit this excellent facility.
- d) Councillor Batho provided an update on the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at St Matthew's field and made reference to comments received from Emma Back of Winchester Sports and Leisure Trust. It was noted that discussions

had taken place with officers to investigate the submission of an application for district CIL to provide this facility, as well as potentially looking at spaces in Dean Lane Park. Support for providing a MUGA facility in northern Winchester was proposed and feedback was sought.

In response, forum members supported and endorsed a MUGA at St Matthew's field. In addition, Councillor Learney suggested that when the amount of available town community CIL was explored, that it should be sufficient to fund a MUGA at St Matthew's field and still leave a surplus to spend. She encouraged members of other town wards to come forward with possible ideas and a list of proposals for consideration to ensure the funds were used to benefit the local community.

Councillor Aron - Grants and Community Empowerment Informal Group

An update was provided on behalf of Councillor Aron with progress from the group including:

- a) Previously small grants had an underspend which had been lost at the end of the financial year, this had seen an increase in grants and recipients included Friends of St Giles Hill, the new life church in Stanmore, and Joyful Jams who provided movement session for elderly people in Winchester. Grants continued to be validated carefully, and thanks were given to the finance team for ensuring that grant funding continued and had not been cut as had previously been envisaged.
- b) Members were encouraged to attend the session where a grant application had been submitted by a business in their ward.

RESOLVED:

That the updates received from the Town Informal Groups as set out above, be noted.

8. **WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26**

The Chairperson advised that officers had been in discussion with Chief Inspector Korine Bishop who would be attending the forum in January or March to provide an update on policing in the town area. This item would be added to the work programme once a date to attend had been confirmed.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme for the remainder of 2025/26 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 7.40 pm

Chairperson

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT BUDGET FOR 2026/27 (TO BE RECOMMENDED TO CABINET)

22 JANUARY 2026

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

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

WARD(S): TOWN WARDS

PURPOSE

This report presents the current financial projections for the Town Account for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30 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 2026/27.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Agrees the draft budget for 2026/27 and the indicative projections for the strategy period as shown in Appendix 1;
2. 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.
3. That the Corporate Head of Economy and Community has the delegated authority to approve the grant criteria and allocations, in consultation with the Winchester Town Forum (Grants and Community Empowerment) Informal Group, the Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement.
4. Approves the £60,000 grant budget for 2026/27 be allocated: £20,000 to Citizens Advice, £20,000 to Play to the Crowd and £20,000 to the Winchester City Community grant scheme.

5. Approves a £57k capital budget and authority to spend, funded from S106 sport contributions, to be allocated: £7k for electronic scoreboards for cricket at KGV, and up to £50k for cricket nets at North Walls.
6. Approves a one-off revenue budget of £15k for a Speed indicators feasibility study.

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. This budget paper is proposed in the context of maintaining the momentum we have built up to achieve our goals.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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.

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 paper 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 the 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

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 None required

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 2029/30 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 implementation of the budget options.</i> | <i>Long term strategic planning. Transformational efficiency savings.</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> |

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| <i>The re-tender of the grounds maintenance contract which expires in 2027.</i> | <i>Medium term financial projections include annual inflationary uplifts. There will be soft market testing and opportunity to review service levels.</i> | <i>Transformational efficiency savings. Ensuring best value is achieved from the contract.</i> |
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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 unavoidable growth, such as tree care, has put further pressure on the town account budget. 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 2026 and their recommendations are contained within this report.

Winchester Town Precept

11.3 The town forum recommended a precept for 2025/26 of £90.08 (per band D property), which was approved at Council in February 2025. The decision on the level of council tax for 2026/27 will be taken at Council in February 2026.

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 2026/27 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 2026/27 was confirmed in November and has resulted in a small increase in the tax base for the town area from 15,143 to 15,170. This is a lower than average increase in the tax base.

11.7 This paper assumes a core precept increase of 5% (£4.50) to £94.58 for 2026/27. Potential options relating to the precept are shown below.

Effect of increasing the Town Precept 2026/27

| % Precept Increase | Additional Precept £ | Precept | Additional Precept Forecast £ |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 0% | 0.00 | £90.08 | £0.00 |
| 1% | 0.90 | £90.98 | £13,665 |
| 2% | 1.80 | £91.88 | £27,331 |
| 3% | 2.70 | £92.78 | £40,996 |
| 4% | 3.60 | £93.68 | £54,662 |
| 5% | 4.50 | £94.58 | £68,327 |
| 6% | 5.40 | £95.48 | £81,993 |

Budget Review 2026/27

- 11.8 Increased tree maintenance led to an in-year growth pressure of £60k which was approved at November Town Forum (WTF341). This increased pressure reflects increasing maintenance requirements in recent years as a result of regular tree surveys. The main causes are due to climatic elements leading to increased workload and also known diseases such as Ash die back. A baseline growth request of £30k per annum is included in Appendix 1 and will need to be subject to regular review, especially given the additional requirements seen in 2025/26.
- 11.9 Speed indicator signs have risen in popularity in parish areas around the district in recent years. Approval is sought in this paper for a one-off revenue budget of £15k to explore the feasibility of introducing speed signs within the town area.
- 11.10 A corporate governance review has commenced in order to determine whether to set up a Town Council from April 2027. The budget projections shown in Appendix 1 are based on the current town account which will remain in place for 2026/27 budget setting.
- 11.11 Fee and charge increases are delegated to the S151 Officer. Increases for the main income areas such as Cemeteries and Tennis Courts are proposed to increase by CPI inflation.
- 11.12 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – the Neighbourhood CIL (Town) receivable balance stood at £0.827m as at April 2025. Commitments include £0.495m towards North Walls Pavilion; £0.008m towards the KGV Park Plan; £0.050m towards Abbots Barton and Hyde Scouts Facility; and £0.050m towards the extension of Chesil Theatre.
- 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:

| | 2026/2027 Forecast | 2027/2028 Forecast | 2028/2029 Forecast | 2029/2030 Forecast |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Assumptions: | | | | |
| Contract inflation | 4% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Percentage increase in tax | 5% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Tax Base | Actual | 1.8% | 1.8% | 1.8% |

11.14 The sensitivity of the above assumptions is as follows:

- a) Contract Inflation is around £10k per 1%.
- b) A 1% precept increase generates additional funding of just under £14k per annum.
- c) A 1.8% tax base increase generates additional funding of c£26k per annum. Whilst 1.8% is a reasonable long-term forecast increase per annum, there can be significant year-on-year deviations to this average.

Community Grants

11.15 The £60,000 budget line detailed for Grants and Vision Delivery (in the Medium-Term financial position draft budget options WT341) is to be allocated as follows, in line with previous years distribution of the fund: £20,000 to Citizens Advice, £20,000 to Play to the Crowd and £20,000 to the Winchester City Community grant scheme for the next financial year.

11.16 The Communities Manager consulted on this recommended allocation, with the Winchester Town Forum (Grants and Community Empowerment) Informal Group and the Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement which has led to allocation above for the financial year 2026/27.

Proposed use of remaining S106 Sport contributions

11.17 There is a balance of £275k for S106 Sport contributions within the town area, with £218k allocated to the North Walls pavilion which will be used in this financial year.

11.18 This leaves £57k which is proposed to be used for:

- a) Electronic scoreboards for cricket at KGV approx. £7k. When the pavilion was first built, the idea was to facilitate scoring from the veranda, which can't be done as the existing scoreboards are too small to be seen at a distance
- b) Cricket nets at North Walls at a cost of up to £50k. This is a desirable facility for cricket clubs as well as the community.

11.19 The nets will need to be installed to coincide with the finish of the pavilion build, in early March 2026.

Capital Expenditure

- 11.20 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).
- 11.21 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.
- 11.22 There is currently a total budget of £0.350m in the capital programme for play area refurbishments to the end of 2029/30.

Reserves

- 11.23 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 15% of the total annual net expenditure which is set aside to deal with any urgent / unexpected requirements.
- 11.24 The medium-term forecasts shown in Appendix 1 currently show the reserve balance achieving this target based on a precept increase of 5% in 2026/27.
- 11.25 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.
- 11.26 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 Proposing no precept increase for 2026/27. This option was rejected as it would not leave the town in a financially sustainable medium-term position.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Winchester Town Account Medium Term Financial Position (Draft Budget Options) – WTF341 – November 2025

Winchester Town Account Financial Planning and Assumptions for 2025/26 to 2029/30 – WTF340 – September 2025

Town Account Budget for 2025/26 – WTF336 – January 2025

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Projections

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WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT - Medium Term Forecasts

| | 2025/2026 Forecast | 2026/2027 Forecast | 2027/28 Forecast | 2028/29 Forecast | 2029/30 Forecast |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Assumptions: | | | | | |
| Contract inflation | 4% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Utilities | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Percentage increase in tax | 5.5% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Tax Base | 15,143 | 15,170 | 15,443 | 15,721 | 16,004 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Cost of Services | | | | | |
| Recurring Budgets: | | | | | |
| Allotments | (4,000) | (4,000) | (4,000) | (4,000) | (4,000) |
| Bus Shelter Cleaning / Maintenance / New Provision | 5,000 | | | | |
| Cemeteries | 91,199 | 97,345 | 102,222 | 107,252 | 112,439 |
| Christmas Lights | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 |
| Neighbourhood Service Officers (Contribution) | 45,000 | 45,000 | 45,000 | 45,000 | 45,000 |
| Footway Lighting | 32,607 | 33,536 | 34,513 | 35,538 | 36,614 |
| Grants and Vision Delivery | 60,000 | 60,000 | 60,000 | 60,000 | 60,000 |
| Support Costs for Grant Scheme | 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 | 3,500 | | | | |
| Public Conveniences (Contribution) | 50,000 | 82,000 | 84,460 | 86,994 | 89,604 |
| Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces | 908,691 | 934,153 | 956,208 | 978,944 | 1,002,383 |
| BUDGET GROWTH - Tree Works | 60,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 |
| Town Forum Support | 17,500 | 18,025 | 18,566 | 19,123 | 19,696 |
| One-off Budgets: | | | | | |
| Additional grant 2025/26 | 2,500 | | | | |
| Speed Camera Feasibility Study | | 15,000 | | | |
| Total Recurring Budgets | 1,286,997 | 1,326,060 | 1,341,968 | 1,373,850 | 1,406,736 |
| Total Cost of Services | 1,286,997 | 1,326,060 | 1,341,968 | 1,373,850 | 1,406,736 |
| Taxation and Non-specific grant income | | | | | |
| Council Tax Income | (1,364,045) | (1,434,816) | (1,504,348) | (1,577,176) | (1,653,578) |
| Interest on Balances | (8,951) | (5,994) | (5,836) | (9,383) | (13,064) |
| Total Taxation and Non-specific grant income | (1,372,996) | (1,440,810) | (1,510,184) | (1,586,558) | (1,666,642) |
| Transfers to/(from) Earmarked reserves | | | | | |
| Reserves | (86,000) | (114,750) | (168,216) | (212,708) | (259,906) |
| Capital Expenditure funded by Town Reserve | 110,000 | 120,000 | 50,000 | 90,000 | 90,000 |
| Reserve | | | | | |
| Opening Reserve Balance (at 1st April) | (223,785) | (199,785) | (194,535) | (312,751) | (435,460) |
| Closing Reserve Balance (carried forward) | (199,785) | (194,535) | (312,751) | (435,460) | (605,366) |
| Closing Reserves forecast as % of net expenditure | 16% | 15% | 23% | 32% | 43% |

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WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM – SCHEDULED ITEMS OF BUSINESS ETC

| 22 JANUARY 2026 | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|-----------------|--|----------------|
| | BUSINESS | LEAD OFFICER | COMMITTEE DATE | | STATUS/COMMENT |
| | Update on Policing in Winchester | Chief Inspector Korine Bishop, Hampshire Constabulary in attendance | 22 January 2026 | | Verbal Update |
| | Winchester Town Account Budget for 2026/27 (to be recommended to Cabinet) | Darren Kennedy | 22 January 2026 | | WTF342 |
| 9 MARCH 2026 | | | | | |
| | BUSINESS | LEAD OFFICER | COMMITTEE DATE | | STATUS/COMMENT |
| | No items at present | | | | |

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