

THE WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT

In accordance with Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Council has taken the decision in previous years to treat all expenses of the Council as general expenses other than those identified as special expenses.

Special expenses are costs incurred for the provision of an amenity or service that is primarily for the benefit of one locality. In the Winchester District, these expenses are levied by the Council to cover the costs of local services in the Winchester town area which elsewhere would be dealt with by parish councils. Under the current policy, the following expenditure is charged to the Winchester Town account:

1. Magdalen Hill and West Hill Cemeteries

The costs relate to maintenance of the cemeteries at Magdalen Hill and West Hill. West Hill is now rarely used for burials and has been landscaped over several years, making it open and easier to maintain.

2. Allotments in the Town

The Council owns approximately 21 acres of allotment land in the Town area, most of which is leased to the Winchester New Allotment Holders Society Ltd. There is a net credit relating to rental income after charging a small management charge.

3. The “parish” element of grants for community facilities in the Town

Grants for revenue and capital purposes are awarded to community and arts projects and are allocated annually by Members.

4. Recreation Grounds and Open Spaces

All parks and playing fields in the Town (except Abbey Gardens, Riverside Walk, the Weirs Gardens, and St Giles Hill which are treated as a district expense) e.g. North Walls and King George V recreation grounds are regarded as being for Town residents.

5. Neighbourhood Services

Five Neighbourhood officers provide a patrol service to the Town Forum area. In addition they deliver specialist expertise to both the forum area and the wider district by working in partnership with ward members, local police teams, community groups and internal and external officers. Accredited by the police chief constable and utilising specific powers within legislation the team can deliver against their specialist roles e.g. ASB, Fly Tip, Trade Waste, Begging and other social issues that impact on others. They provide a first response service to other services within the city council.

6. Footway lighting in the Town

This covers electricity and maintenance and capital charges for the provision of new or replacement lights in the Town area.

7. Bus shelter cleaning and maintenance in the Town.

8. Christmas lights in the Town

These costs represent a 50:50 Town / General Fund share of the costs of providing festive lights in the Town over the Christmas period.

9. Town Forum Support

This is the cost of servicing Forum meetings and includes a proportion of a Committee Administrator's salary, hire of meeting rooms, printing etc.

10. Public Conveniences

50 per cent local revenue funding of public conveniences by Parish Councils and Town Account.

11. Bridge Maintenance

General repairs to WCC owned bridges in the Winchester Town Area

12. Grit Bins

Revenue budget to provide for maintenance of grit bins in the town area.

13. Night Bus Contribution

A recurring revenue budget contribution to support the operation of a night bus.

14. Community Speed Watch

An annual recurring budget to cover any costs associated with the Community Speed Watch scheme.

15. One-off capital and revenue budgets as detailed in the report.

16. Interest on Balances

Interest is credited to the account annually based on the average balance for the year 31st March.

Net expenditure on other facilities located in the Town area is currently charged to the whole District. These facilities include the River Park Leisure Centre, the Guildhall, Abbey House, the City Museum and the four parks and playing fields listed above at 4. Income from car parks and town centre property is credited to the whole District.