

# Withersfield Parish Council

## Draft Budget for 2023-24

**Recommendation:** Councillors are asked to:

- i) approve 2023-24 draft budget estimate for submission to West Suffolk District Council as set out on the attached sheet.
- ii) that £2000 from Parish Council reserves is included in the budget – this allows for a Parish Projects budget of £1000 and a provision to cover election costs should, there be a contested election in May 2023.
- iii) agree that the Parish Council should not seek an increase in Council Tax rate for 2023-24

### Background:

Each November Parish Councils in Suffolk are asked to submit their estimated budget for the next financial year to their district Council. The District Council estimates the Parish Precept calculated on the basis of the number of inhabited properties with the Parish.

This is only the estimated or DRAFT budget as the final budget cannot be approved until the spring when the County and District Councils formally approve their overall budget.

### Estimated expenditure:

Having reviewed the current year's budget and projected spend, and taking account of known changes in costs in the coming year the following estimates are set out below for 2023-24:

**Administration: £6,640 (a decrease of £1400 over the 2022-23 budget figure)**

### Draft Admin Budget:

Item	BUDGET 2022-23	Projected 2022-23	Proposed 2023-24	comment
Clerk salary	3300	3300	3300	
Clerk Expenses	150	150	120	
Payroll	110	110	120	
Audit/Bank Charges	200	240	260	
Insurances	700	500	760	All Parish Council assets incl. Pavilion
Leases – village greens	10	10	10	
Village Hall rental	60	60	60	
SALC/CAS membership	300	300	400	
Training	200	200	500	increased budget as elections due
Web site	60	60	60	
Magazine	100	0	0	Magazine is cost neutral
Date Protection /GDPR	50	50	50	
Parish Council Elections	0	0	1000	Assumes contested election in May 2023
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5240</b>	<b>4980</b>	<b>6640</b>	

These increases are due to:

- a provision of £1000 being made to cover election costs should the May 2023 elections be contested.

- An increased provision for training, give the elections in May 2023 and the potential for a number of newly elected parish councillors
- Increases in insurance premiums introduced this year

**Other: £6350 – a decrease of £10,570 over 2022-23 budget.**

“Other” includes all other areas of expenditure incurred by the Parish Council, including environmental works (grass cutting) Parish projects (e.g. VAS) and maintenance of our assets.

The reduction relates to:

- 2022-23 included £8150 of grant supported Neighbourhood Plan expenditure
- Only £1000 provision is included for Parish Projects as £1000 as been set aside for the potential costs of elections in May 2023.
- A donation of £2,000 received from Friends of Withersfield towards the cost of implementing traffic calming measures to support the 20mph zone was included in 2022-23 budget but unspent. This has been included in the Parish Council’s earmarked reserves and does not appear in the 2023-24 budget.

**Draft “Other” Budget:**

	BUDGET	Projected	Proposed	
Item	2022-23	2022-23	2023-24	comment
Grass cutting/environmental	4000	4000	4500	Subject to retender for 2023-26
Maintenance of Parish assets including Graveyard maintenance	250	350	450	A provision to cover minor repairs to assets like notice boards or benches and sunken graves & rodent control in graveyard
Speedwatch	200	300	100	
Parish Projects	2000	2000	1000	
Traffic Calming	2000	0	0	A donation of £2000 income received this year from Friends of Withersfield towards costs of 20mph scheme – unspent but held as an earmarked reserve
Neighbourhood Plan	8150	8150	0	Locality grant must be spent during this financial year
Waste collection	120	120	120	To cover collection of waste from bins areas
Donations	200	200	180	Annual donations to SARS and British Legion
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16920</b>	<b>15120</b>	<b>6350</b>	

**4000**

**Use of Reserves & other income:**

The proposed level of expenditure will require that the Parish Council once again draws upon its reserves to the tune of £2,000 in 2023-24.

The Parish Council also benefits from occasional income from burials in the graveyard. The amount cannot be guaranteed and has varied between £300 to £2,000 over recent years. Income from this source reduces the amount that has to be taken from Parish Council reserves each year.

**Earmarked reserves:**

In 2020 the Parish Council created an earmarked reserve of £5,000 for investment in Parish infrastructure. The reserve has not had to be called upon so far in 2022-23. An unspent donation from Friends of Withersfield for £2000 towards costs of implementing traffic calming measures to support the 20mph speed zone has been added to this reserve.

### **The Precept:**

The precept (the amount of funding the Parish Council gets from residents' Council Tax) is anticipated to be at a similar level to last year £9440. It is calculated on the basis of the number of occupied properties. This remained at an almost identical level (up from 327.21 to 327.66) When the new homes at the Arboretum are built and occupied, the Parish Council tax base will increase accordingly.

### **Summary of proposed 2023-24 Budget:**

		<b>2023-24</b>			<b>(2022-23)</b>	
<b>Projected expenditure</b>	<u>Parish Council costs</u>	<b>£13190</b>			11740	
	<u>Neighbourhood Plan</u>	<b>0</b>			8150	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£13,190</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19890</b>	
<b>Financed by:</b>	Precept		£9,440			9,400
	VAT reclaims		1,000			500
	Income from Graveyard		750			750
	Use of reserves		2,000			2000
	Grants received					8150
			<b>13,190</b>			<b>20,800</b>
	Council Tax increase		0%		0%	

Terry Rich  
 Chairman  
 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022