

**WOOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL – 24 JANUARY 2024**  
**REPORT OF THE CLERK**  
**BUDGET AND PARISH PRECEPT 2024-25**

The Council is requested to determine the budget and parish precept for 2024-25.  
A summary of the estimated net expenditure for 2024-25 is given below. A copy of the draft budget for each committee has been supplied.  
The Council agreed on 6 December 2023 that the budget should be prepared on a no growth basis.

**Environment and Amenities**

Environmental works and events	13750
Battery Lane Allotment Site	500
	14250

**Finance and General Committee** 26400

**Total net expenditure** 40650

**Martinscroft Village Green**

The Council authorised an inspection of trees on the southern length of the Green and works have been completed to trees overhanging the highway. The periodic cleaning of the cenotaph has also been completed. Repairs are to be undertaken to trip rails.

The agreed scheme for traffic calming measures included recognition of maintenance work. Provision has been made for tree works and, road maintenance.

**Hillock Lane amenity area**

Liaison is continuing with the Borough Council on use of the amenity area as part of a scheme for Woolston Playing Fields. Until this information is received consideration of environmental improvement works to the amenity area has been halted.

Provision has been made for unplanned works e.g., tree works and participation in any scheme promoted by the Borough Council.

**Woolston Playing Fields**

Responsibility for the management of the playing fields has been with the Borough Council from 1 September 2012. No further discussions have been held with the Borough Council on the future use and management of the playing fields and the associated impact on the amenity area. Provision has been made for participation in any scheme promoted by the Borough Council.

**Election costs provision**

Provision has been made for the repayment of the costs of elections based on the policy agreed by the Borough Council to have the option of repayment by instalment.

**Friends of Woolston Park**

Provision of has been included in the draft budget for Community Events, as in previous years. Separate provision is made for works by the Group in the park. The Council on 6 December 2023 agreed to support repairs to the Ranger Cabin by allocating the budget provision for 2023-24 as a contribution to these works, and to carry over this provision to 2024-25 if works are not completed in the current financial year.

### **Road safety scheme**

Provision has been made for a road safety scheme to assist in speed control of vehicles. This has been delayed to allow a scheme to be developed in liaison with the Borough Council and the Police.

### **Facilities for young people**

The Council has considered supporting facilities for young people subject to consultation with other agencies and young people in the parish. The Council has received reports of possible contributions from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire. Provision was made in 2023-24 allow a contribution to a scheme.

### **Old Billy scheme – New Cut Canal**

The Council has given approval to a scheme along the New Cut Canal to celebrate the life of Old Billy, the World's oldest working horse. Culture Warrington have led on the development of the scheme. Draft artwork has been provided by Culture Warrington based on the Old Billy book published in 2023 and now in use in primary schools across the Borough. Physical works to instal signs along the length of the canal towpath are planned to be completed in this financial year.

The Council is working in partnership with the Borough Council in implementing the scheme. Poulton with Fearnhead parish council have given support to the scheme and the New Cut Heritage and Ecology Trail Group volunteers have been requested to instal the signs along the towpath working with officers of the Borough Council. The Borough Council will provide the final estimated cost of the works when current costs have been obtained.

### **Battery Lane Allotment Site – new site entrance gate**

The Council on 6 December 2023 gave approval to the replacement of the entrance gate. The estimated cost of £2500 is to be met from existing budgets.

### **Earmarked reserves 2024-25**

Provision has been made for the following earmarked reserves:

Martinscroft Village Green	5000
Tree works	3000
Woolston Playing Fields/Hillock Lane Amenity Area	3000
Road safety scheme – speed control	2500
Facilities for young people	1000
Election costs	3000
Total	£17500

### **Calculation of Precept for 2024-25**

Closing balances 31/3/23

Council	43142	
Charity	10460	
Total balances at 31/3/23		53602

Precept 1/4/23	26181	
Council balances	43142	
Total		69323

**Estimated net expenditure 2023-24**

Committee budgets	35445	
Earmarked reserves	2750	38195

**Estimated balances at 31/3/24**

Council	31128	
Charity	10640	
Total balances		41768

**Budget provision 2024-25**

Net estimated expenditure	40650	
Earmarked reserves	17500	
<b>Total provision</b>		<b>58150</b>

Estimated amount to be met from Precept £27022

**Level of Precept**

The precept for 2023-24 was £26181 giving an amount of £11.34 for a Band D property. The tax base notified by the Borough Council for 2024-25 is 2319 compared to 2309 for 2023-24.

A precept of £26300 using the notified tax base for 2024-25 would give an estimated amount of £11.34 for a Band D property. This would meet the criteria set by the Council for a no growth budget cost as applied in determining the precept for 2023-24.

Other examples of the estimated result of the precept figure for a Band D property for the year 2024-25 are:

£25000	£10.78
£26181	£11.28
£26250	£11.32
£26300	£11.34
£27022	£11.65

**Recommendation**

That the Council determine the Budget and Precept for 2024-25.