



City Councillors Report for November 2022



££££, less of it!

Work on budgets has continued, the median estimate of budgetary pressures are:

	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27
Contractual Inflation	7.0%	10.0%	5.0%	4.0%	2.0%
Pay Inflation	5.5%	5.5%	4.0%	4.0%	2.0%
Utility Inflation	100.0%	10.0%	5.0%	4.0%	2.0%
Covid reduction in Income	7.0%	3.5%	0.0%		

When the cap in council tax increases and the lack of clarity on New Homes Bonus is taken into account the savings to be made are:

General Fund Revenue (£m)	Forecast 2022/23	Forecast 2023/24	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27
Budget Shortfall (Base case)	-1.185	-1.728	-3.451	-4.133	-5.391

Both the services we provide, and the income streams are being reviewed. We have commissioned some work to quantify potential savings, the investment necessary to deliver those savings, and the impact on residents and businesses. They will have to be delivered by 23/24.

The impact on this year and most of next year are covered by an inflationary reserve set aside this year.

Any projects involving building work are subject to 40% materials inflation and a shortage of skills, which leads to delay and compounds the inflationary impact.

It is no easy matter to balance the books and also make the improvements that the district needs and invest in efficient working at a time of chaotic central Government financial mismanagement and total lack of direction. Developing solutions to several different scenarios consumes much officer and councillor time.

Local Plan

The Local Plan is now out for consultation at <https://winchester.citizenspace.com/policy-and-planning/local-plan-regulation-18/>

Comments that you provide will be considered in the final version that we submit for approval. Citizen space is a dedicated website. One of its advantages is that comments are put within sections related to topics. This makes the work of officers much easier when they sift through lots of comments. In contrast, an email or a letter, filled with comments on different several different topics requires a great deal of officer time to sift through and then draft comments into most appropriate topic. We would urge you to use the website and save vast amounts of money and time. Once you are registered updated information can be easily provided.



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Digital working

The largest item on the council budget is staffing costs, so we are constantly working on ways of improving efficiency, (as in the comment above.) We would encourage people making suggestions of reporting problems to use the WCC website or the app 'Your Winchester' rather than telephoning.

878 AD

A slightly more light hearted matter: The WCC has invested money into a real life exhibition centre for the on-line game '878 AD,' part of the Assassins Creed. The development and production of on-line games is a huge industry in this country, making a £2.2 billion contribution to the GDP. This is about the same as the British film industry. The exhibition will be a tourist attraction and will make our ancient city much better known across the world. The game has to do with King Alfred defeating the Vikings. No doubt your children and grand-children can tell you a great deal more about this popular game.

Re-fresh of the Council Plan

Much work has been devoted to a re-fresh of the Council Plan. This set five priorities

- Tackling the Climate emergency
- Living well
- Homes for all
- Vibrant local economy
- Your services, your voice

Progress has been made on these. Our latest residents' survey shows that these still remain the priorities that most residents wish us to concentrate on.

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