



Andover Town Council

Policy and Resources Committee Budget
To **review, amend, approve** for consideration to Full Council.

Item No.

To: P&R Committee

From: Town Clerk/RFO

Date of Report: 2
October

Overview

This report evaluates the proposed budget allocations for 2025/26 and 2026/27 against the strategic priorities and actions outlined in the approved Business Plan. The aim is to ensure that financial planning supports the Council's mission to "help make Andover a great place to live and work" through cost-effective, lawful, and community-focused services. The proposed draft budget reflects a proposed 10% increase for inflationary purposes across all budget lines.

Key Observations:

Please note that this is an initial draft of the Policy and Resources Committee budget. It will be reviewed again on the 6 January 2026 prior to recommendation to Full Council.

Lines requiring review:

- **Duplicate Budget Lines:**
 - **Staff Training** and **Staff Travel** appear in multiple places (e.g., 4201/1 and 4701).
 - **Recommendation:** Consolidate to improve clarity and tracking as indicated in the spreadsheet.
- **Payroll Costs:**
 - Currently listed as £0 with a note of -£1,960.24.
 - **Recommendation:** Add a dedicated budget for payroll service invoices to accommodate the invoices raised by the Payroll provider to administer staff remuneration.
- **Subscriptions/Memberships:**
 - Currently a negative spend which suggests misallocation.
 - **Recommendation:** Move Edge invoice to Accounts Support as suggested.
- **Refreshments:**
 - Currently under P&R but used for Councillor refreshments.
 - **Recommendation:** Move to Community & Events (C&E) budget.

Alignment of 2026/2027 Budget with Business Plan Goals

A. Community Engagement and Communication

- Website & Community Development:
 - Budget: £9,050 (2025/26), £9,977.63 (2026/27)
 - Business Plan Link: Action 2.5 (Council Website), 2.4 (Communication), and 1.6 (Visit Andover Website)
 - Rationale: Supports transparency, improved communication, and community engagement.
- Website Hosting:
 - Budget: £1,050 (2025/26), £1,157.63 (2026/27)
 - Rationale: Ensures continuity of digital presence and supports the goal of promoting Andover online.

B. Governance, Training, and Respect

- Members Training & Courses:
 - Budget: £2,000 (2025/26), £3,000 (2026/27) – **would recommend increasing this further to £3000 to give more access to training for members.**
 - Business Plan Link: Action 5.1 (Civility and Respect), 4.2 (Staff Training)
 - Rationale: Promotes good governance and councillor development.
- Staff Training:
 - Budget: £4,000 (2025/26), £4,410 (2026/27)
 - Rationale: Supports Action 4.2 and 4.3 (Staff well-being and training).

C. Staffing and HR¹

- Employment Costs:
 - Budget: £236,250 (2025/26), £300,000 (2026/27) – **recommended inflationary increase to accommodate statutory annual increase and cover the unknown liability to come out of the LGPS.**
 - Business Plan Link: Action 4.1 (Staff Structure), 4.2 (Training), 4.3 (Well-being)
 - Rationale: Ensures delivery of services through a well-supported team.
- HR Consultancy:
 - Budget: £12,500 (2025/26), £12,500 (2026/27) – **recommend this is left as is to support the LGR.**

¹ Local Government Act 1972 – Section 112
P&R Committee

- Rationale: Supports restructuring and fair employment practices.

D. Community Events and Representation

- Town Mayor & Remembrance Wreath:
 - Budget: £105 each year
 - Business Plan Link: Action 1.2 (Carols), 1.4 (Remembrance Day)
 - Rationale: Supports civic pride and community traditions.
- Election Costs:
 - Budget: £26,250 (both years) – **recommended as in order to prepare for worst case scenario, ATC should have enough in EMR to carry the election costs alone (£3.00 per elector – 38,677 = £116,031) there is currently £80,000 in EMR.**
 - Business Plan Link: Action 3.1 (Lawful Precept)
 - Rationale: Ensures democratic representation.

E. Office and Operational Support

- Office Costs (Rent, Printing, Stationery, etc.):
 - Budget: £40,950 (2025/26), £45,147.38 (2026/27) – **to cover any inflationary rise in rent.**
 - Business Plan Link: Action 3.2 (Justifiable Budgets), 3.9 (Policies and Procedures)
 - Rationale: Support

F. IT Support & Equipment²

- Updated Budget Recommendation: Increase from £4,200 (2025/26) and £30,000 (2026/27) - **recommended to reflect a full system upgrade to improve efficiency and security in line with legislation and to upgrade office equipment as previously agreed.**
- Justification:
 - Compliance: Ensures systems meet evolving legislative and data protection requirements.
 - Efficiency: Unlocks full potential of the current computing package, enabling time savings and operational streamlining.
 - Scalability: Supports future growth without requiring immediate additional staffing resources.

Recommendation to monitor delivery: Establish KPIs to measure progress against Business Plan actions, ensuring budgeted activities are implemented effectively and helping to report on the effectiveness of the Business Plan.

Strategic Budgeting Observations

- The budget reflects a commitment to justifiable and lawful spending, aligning with Business Plan Action 3.1 and 3.2.
- Investment in staffing and training supports the Council's goal to be a fair employer (Priority 4).
- Funding for website and IT upgrades and community events aligns with the Council's mission to engage residents and improve Andover's public image.

Conclusion

The proposed budget for 2026–2027 demonstrates strong alignment with the Business Plan's strategic goals. It supports statutory duties, community engagement, staff development, and operational efficiency. A few adjustments—particularly around budget line clarity and reallocation—would further enhance transparency and alignment.

Recommendations & Considerations

- To **review** and **approve** amendments to the proposed P&R Committee budget 2026/2027.

² SAPP 2025 – Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance

Description	2025/2026	2026/2027	Notes
Corporate Management	£30,575.00	£63,708.45	
Accounts Support	£3,675.00	£4,051.69	Would recommend moving Edge account support to this budget line from Subscriptions/membership (10% increase)
Bank Charges	£1,050.00	£1,157.63	(10% increase)
Legal & Professional Fees	£8,925.00	£9,839.81	(10% increase)
Audit Fees	£3,675.00	£4,051.69	(10% increase)
IT Support & Equipment	£4,200.00	£34,630.00	The whole system needs an upgrade not only to comply with legislation changes but to get the most out of the computing package being used. Will make time efficiencies in doing so, allowing growth without staffing impact, potential contracts are being sought for best value for money. Looking to incorporate cyber insurance protocol.
Website & Community Development	£9,050.00	£9,977.63	(10% increase)
Website	£8,000.00	£8,820.00	
Website Hosting	£1,050.00	£1,157.63	
Unity Bank Card Fees	£0.00	£0.00	
Democratic Representation	£5,255.00	£6,588.64	
Town Mayor	£105.00	£115.76	(10% increase)
Remembrance Wreath	£105.00	(£115.76)	-
Members Training & Courses	£2,000.00	£3,000.00	Recommend increase by £1,000 to allow further training for members
Members Travel	£0.00	£0.00	-
Public Building Hire	£3,150.00	£3,472.88	(10% increase)
Refreshments	£0.00	£0.00	Recommend moving to Community and Events Committee.
Room Hire Fund	£0.00	£0.00	Two budget lines appear similar, would suggest bringing together 4100/7 and 4100/4 (Room Hire and Public Building Hire).
Other Services to the Public	£26,250.00	£26,250	No increase needed, will cover worst case scenario if same set in 2027/2028
Election Costs	£26,250.00	£26,250	
Staffing - Employment Costs	£236,250.00	£300,000.00	recommended increase to accommodate statutory annual increase and cover the unknown liability to come out of the LGPS
Payroll	£236,250.00	£300,000.00	
Staffing - Non Salaried	£21,361.50	£25,846.69	
Staff Training	£4,000.00	£4,410.00	(10% increase)
Staff Travel / Fuel	£577.50	£636.69	(10% increase)
Payroll costs	£0.00	£2000	Payroll Costs are invoices from payroll company would recommend adding a budget for 2026/2027
Staff Parking	£4,284.00	£6,300	Costs are circa £120.50 per week so increase needed.
HR Consultancy	£12,500.00	£12,500	recommend this is left as it is to support the LGR
Administration - Office Costs	£40,950.00	£45,147.40	To cover any inflationary rise 10% added to all budget lines below.
Office Sundries	£315.00	£347.29	(10% increase)
Rent - Office	£15,225.00	£16,785.56	(10% increase)

Telephone & Broadband	£3,150.00	£3,472.88	(10% increase)
Photocopying & Printing	£5,250.00	£5,788.13	(10% increase)
Stationery	£1,575.00	£1,736.44	(10% increase)
Postage	£210.00	£231.53	(10% increase)
Subscriptions/Memberships	£3,675.00	£4,051.69	Would recommend moving the Edge invoice payment to Accounts support 4001/1
Insurance	£6,825.00	£7,524.56	(10% increase)
Advertising	£315.00	£347.29	(10% increase)
Office & Equipment maintenance	£3,150.00	£3,472.88	(10% increase)
New Equipment & furniture	£945.00	£1,041.86	(10% increase)
Publications	£315.00	£347.29	(10% increase)
Staff Training	£0.00	£0.00	Two Staff Training budget lines - recommend that they are combined.
Staff Travel	£0.00	£0.00	4702 would recommend combining with 4201/2 both are the same
Total	£360,641.50	£467,541.18	