

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Andover Town Council</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">To review and recommend to Full Council a budget option for 2026/2027</p>	<p style="margin: 0;">Item No.</p>
<p>Produced for: Policy and Resources</p>	<p>By: Town Clerk/RFO and Cllr S Hardstaff</p>	<p>Date of Report: 9 December 2025 (amended 5 January 2026).</p>
<p>Background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Budget needs to be reviewed and recommended to Full Council as per Financial Regulations 4.6 		
<p>Proposal:</p> <p>To receive and review the budget report and figures and recommend an option to Full Council.</p> <p>The budget was considered and recommended in order to protect reserves and deliver a balanced budget whilst accommodating predicted spend.</p>		
<p>Items for consideration:</p>		
<p>1</p>	<p>The C&E Committee have recommended the following (which is reflected in the budget paperwork. Minute numbers indicated below):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CE 149/11/25/ CE 148/11/25 Community Engagement budget line be £1,000.00 and that the Annual Electors meeting funds be taken from this budget line. 2. CE 150/11/25 The Miscellaneous Events budget line be zeroed. 3. CE 151/11/25 Andover Pride budget line be increased by 5% to £7875.00. 4. CE 152/11/25 The Youth Services budget line remain unchanged at £50,000.00 5. CE 153/11/25 The Pensioners Service (Plus 55's) budget line remain unchanged at £20,000.00. 6. CE 154/11/25 The Grants budget line be decreased to £35,000.00. 7. CE 155/11/25 The Poppy Trail budget line be reduced to £1,300.00. 8. CE 156/11/25 The Defibrillator Provision budget line be decreased to £1,000.00. 9. CE 117/10/25 The existing budget line for the King's Coronation be zeroed and a new line added for the Storage of Coronation Lights – £200. 10. CE114/10/25 that the Christmas Lights budget be increased to £55,000 to accommodate the new extension and lights. 11. CE 116/10/25 that the addition of the following new budget lines be approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macmillan Morning – £200 • Christmas Carol Event – £1,000 • World War II – £0 (line zeroed) • Andover War Memorial Hospital Centenary Community Event – £4,000 (CE 157/11/25) • Town Charter Celebrations – £1,000 12. CE 118/10/25 That the following new budget lines be added with a zero figure for the time being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Electors' Meeting (as above it was subsequently agreed that this will come from the Community Engagement budget line CE 149/11/25) • Graffiti Wall • Community Opportunities (Item 11 – Annual Electors Meeting (AEM) - it was agreed to change this budget line to use for AEM) –(no longer required as per above CE 149/11/25/ CE 148/11/25) 13. CE 115/10/25 The administration and management of the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) be moved from the Community and Events Committee to the Planning Committee. 	
<p>2</p>	<p>The Allotments Committee have recommended the following (which is reflected in the budget paperwork. Minute numbers indicated below):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AC038/10/25 Allotment budget increase of 10% to accommodate rising material and labour costs 2. AC039/10/25 that grounds maintenance for the Ox Drove allotment site be increased to £2500 to accommodate grass cutting 	
<p>3</p>	<p>The Planning Committee have recommended the following (which is reflected in the budget paperwork. Minute numbers indicated below):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PC 136/11/25 That SID's admin and management budget line increase to £4,500 to support increased management fees. 	
<p>4</p>	<p>The Policy and Resources Committee have recommended the following (which is reflected in the budget paperwork. Minute numbers indicated below):</p>	

- PR 053/11/25 that the removal of budget lines with zero amounts and any duplicate lines be removed to improve clarity.

Summary:

Committee	Minute number	Amount	Note
Community and Events	CE 149/11/25 / CE 148/11/25	£1,000	Community Engagement budget line and that the Annual Electors meeting funds be taken from this budget line.
Community and Events	CE 150/11/25	£0	The Miscellaneous Events budget line.
Community and Events	CE 151/11/25	£7,875	Andover Pride budget line
Community and Events	CE 152/11/25	£50,000	The Youth Services budget line
Community and Events	CE 153/11/25	£20,000	The Pensioners Service (Plus 55's) budget line
Community and Events	CE 154/11/25	£35,000	The Grants budget line.
Community and Events	CE 155/11/25	£1,300	The Poppy Trail budget line.
Community and Events	CE 156/11/25	£1,000	The Defibrillator Provision budget line
Community and Events	CE 117/10/25	£200	King's Coronation budget line zeroed; new line added for Storage of Coronation Lights.
Community and Events	CE 114/10/25	£55,000	Christmas Lights budget line
Community and Events	CE 116/10/25	£200	Macmillan Coffee Morning budget line
Community and Events	CE 116/10/25	£1,000	Christmas Carol Event budget line
Community and Events	CE 116/10/25	£0	World War II budget line
Community and Events	CE 116/10/25	£4,000	Andover War Memorial Hospital Centenary Community Event (CE 157/11/25).
Community and Events	CE 116/10/25	£1,000	Town Charter Celebrations budget line.
Community and Events	CE 118/10/25	£0	Annual Electors' Meeting (subsequently agreed to come from CE 149/11/25 / CE 148/11/25).
Community and Events	CE 118/10/25	£0	Graffiti Wall budget line.
Community and Events	CE 118/10/25	£0	Community Opportunities (Item 11 - AEM; line no longer required as per CE 149/11/25 / CE 148/11/25).
Community and Events	CE 115/10/25		Administration and management of SIDs moved from Community & Events to Planning Committee.
Allotments	AC 038/10/25		Allotment budget increase of 10% to accommodate rising material and labour costs.
Allotments	AC 039/10/25	£2,500	Ox Drove grounds maintenance increased to £2,500 for grass cutting.
Planning	PC 136/11/25	£4,500	SID admin & management budget line increase to £4,500 to support increased management fees.
Policy and Resource	PR 053/11/25		Removal of zero-amount and duplicate budget lines to improve clarity.
Policy and Resource	PR 050/11/25	£300,000	Payroll budget line accommodate vacant role and potential LGPS payments

Source: 20250107 – Jan – P&R – Budget considerations

Notes:

Zero value budget lines.

P&R (Minute PR 053/11/25) recommended removing all zero-value and duplicate budget lines to improve clarity. CE (Minute CE 118/10/25) proposed adding new budget lines with a zero figure for now.

My position is that budget lines should only be included if funds are allocated. Zero-value lines imply no budget provision and any expenditure would need to come from operational reserves. Each line represents a financial commitment; if an item is introduced mid-year without a budget, it again draws on reserves.

Recommendation: Remove all zero-value budget lines and do not add new ones without an allocated amount, or allocate funds to the new budget lines.

Allotment budget increase

Please note that in 2022 it was resolved to accept the recommendation from the Allotment Committee to increase the allotment rental increase of 10% per year over the next 4 years and to change the billing period to 1st October to 30th September as listed in Appendix E (C165/02/22)

Overall figures for increase to current date:

	2022	2025 (to date)
Price per sq metre	£0.40	£0.53
Total income from allotments	£26,250	£33,041.98

Measures taken to reduce costs on allotments are:

- Removal of toilets
- Wardens carry more responsibility for grass cutting and vacant plot maintenance
- Reclaiming of costs from previous tenants upon vacating plots

The increase was applied from 2023 so the final year of this increase will be 2027. If members are minded to increase the allotment rental, following a thorough and robust review as to reasonableness, to mitigate budgetary increase requirements then a decision will need to be made and tenants notified before 6 April 2027 to comply with legislation.

Requirement	Description	Legislative Reference
Reasonableness	Rent must be justified and comparable to local rates—excessive profit indicates unreasonableness.	Allotments Act 1950, s.10(1)
Notice Period	A full 12 months' advance notice is mandatory, unless tenancy agreement allows shorter fair revision.	Allotments Act 1922, s.1 (as amended)
Timing of Notification	Notices must be issued outside the growing season (April 6–Sept 29).	Allotments Act 1922, s.1

Recommendation: To refer to Allotment Committee for consideration.

Local Government Reorganisation:

Members are reminded that with LGR approaching more could be asked of the Town Council in terms of assets and services. Members would be financially prudent to consider this when considering the budget.

Options outlined:

	Option 1 no increase	Option 2 - 5% increase	Option 3 - 5% increase + agreed amendments (10% for allotments)
Income Total	£617,744.00	£28,875.00	£28,875.00
Expenditure Total	£608,694.00	£649,513.71	£696,173.33
Percentage increase to budget	0%	6.71%	14.37%
Total precept needed to cover costs (exp - income)	£591,494.00	£620,638.71	£667,298.33
Precept 25/26	£591,494.00	£591,494.00	£591,494.00
Remaining predicted overspend (to keep precept the same need to find from EMR)	£0.00	£29,144.71	£75,804.33

Precept needed to protect reserves	£591,494	£620,638.71	£667,298.33
Predicted precept increase	0%	5.15%	12.82%
Increase per Band D property based on 17,482 per annum	-£0.24	£1.67	£4.34
per month	-£0.02	£0.14	£0.36
Total precept per annum per band D property 2026/2027	£33.83	£35.74	£38.41
*** Band D equivalent tax base figures has now been received from TVBC so the figures have been amended to reflect the new number of 17,482 (an increase of 121) *****			
<p>Important to note:</p> <p>Budget 1 – No Increase This option reflects the budget set last year, not the actual outturn. Maintaining this level will likely result in insufficient funds to cover payroll obligations, prevent the Council from initiating new projects or incentives, and leave inadequate resources for the upkeep of allotments.</p> <p>Budget 2 – 5% Increase The increase appears as 5.15% due to rounding adjustments. However, even with this increase, the budget would still fall short of meeting payroll requirements and providing adequate funding for allotment maintenance.</p> <p>Budget 3 – 5% Increase with Amendments This option incorporates a 5% increase alongside targeted adjustments. It ensures sufficient provision for payroll, allocates an appropriate uplift to the allotment budget to address rising labour and material costs, and allows for future projects currently under discussion.</p> <p>Important Consideration: With Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) approaching, the Town Council may be asked to assume responsibility for additional assets and services. Members are encouraged to take this into account when determining the most financially prudent budget option.</p>			
<p>Recommendations To review and recommend to Full Council a budget option for 2026/2027</p>			