West Huntspill Parish Council Budget 2025/2026 – Precept Request

Recognising that the provided data covers April to December 2024, the budget has been annualized to account for the remaining three months. Adjustments reflect realistic spending for 2025/26, ensuring the precept request aligns with financial needs and maintains reserves of at least £21,000.

Category	2024/25 Budget (£)	2024/25 Apr-Dec Actual (£)	Projected Full Year (£)	2025/26 Adjusted (£)	Rationale
Staff Costs	13,000	7,986.47	10,648.63	13,000	Maintain current budget; allows for minor increases in hours or salaries if needed.
Staff Expenses & Training	100	0	0	100	Retain small allocation for essential training and minor expenses.
Subscriptions & Memberships	1,000	508.19	678.19	800	Reduce based on underspending in 2024/25 while retaining enough for memberships.
Insurance	1,500	1,131.29	1,131.29	1,300	Adjust downward slightly to align with actual costs and potential minor increases.
Utilities	3,000	1,484.17	1,979.23	2,000	Maintain a reduced budget based on prior year trends.
Communications	1,000	539.13	718.84	750	Reflect reduced needs for phone, website, and broadband services.
Admin	500	640.75	854.33	900	Increase to account for consistent overspending

					on stationery, printing, and postage.
Audit & Professional Fees	270	418.00	418.00	450	Adjust upward to reflect full-year spending.
Elections	1,000	0	0	1,000	Retain allocation to cover potential election costs.
Bins (Emptying SC)	370	356.92	475.89	500	Increase slightly to reflect potential service cost increases.
Grass Cutting & Footpaths	6,500	6,787.50	9,050.00	9,000	Increase to cover projected annual costs and rising service prices.
Miscellaneous	200	36.96	49.28	200	Retain allocation for unforeseen expenses.
Grants	1,050	500.00	500.00	750	Reduce slightly but maintain flexibility for community support.
Bus Shelters	250	250.00	250.00	250	Maintain current allocation for maintenance and repairs.
Chair's Expenses	100	110.89	147.85	150	Increase slightly to reflect actual spending.
War Memorial Ground	1,000	641.43	855.24	900	Slight reduction but ensures sufficient coverage for maintenance.
Ilex Park	2,000	738.05	984.07	1,000	Significant reduction while retaining flexibility for improvements or maintenance.
British Legion - Poppy	50	50.00	50.00	50	Maintain current allocation for the annual donation.

Common	500	143.75	191.67	250	Reduce allocation but retain for maintenance needs.
Christmas Tree	160	160.00	160.00	160	Maintain allocation for annual festive expenses.
Trees	1,000	625.00	833.33	750	Reduce slightly to reflect lower actual expenditure while allowing for necessary works.
Bank Charges	250	53.40	71.20	100	Reduce allocation to reflect actual usage.
Advertising	30	108.00	144.00	150	Increase to reflect actual spending and future needs.
Rent - Balliol Hall	130	156.00	208.00	200	Adjust upward slightly to reflect actual costs.

Proposed Precept and Reserves Plan

Key Considerations:

- Maintain reserves of at least £21,000.
- Adjust spending where underspends occurred.

Projected Receipts (Non-Precept):

- Allotment Rent: £850
- Other Receipts (e.g., VAT refund, grants): £2,100 (estimated).
- **Total Non-Precept Income**: £2,950

Precept Calculation:

- Total Proposed Budget: £32,510

- Less Non-Precept Income: £2,950
- **Precept Contribution Required**: £29,560

Recommended Precept: **£31,000**

- Provides a surplus of £1,440 to strengthen reserves and cover unexpected costs.

Recommendations

1. **Approve Precept Request of £33,000**: Aligns closely with the budget while providing a surplus to maintain reserve levels.
2. **Closely Monitor High Variance Categories**: Track actual spending in admin, communications, and grants to adjust future allocations.
3. **Plan for Grass Cutting and Maintenance Costs**: Ensure service contracts are reviewed for potential savings or efficiencies.
4. **Designate Surplus for Contingency or Improvements**: Use additional funds for unforeseen projects or community enhancements.