

Budget 2026/27 statement

Woodbridge Town Council approved an 18.9% increase in its precept request for the financial year 2026/27 at its meeting on Wednesday 21st January 2026 – the Town Council’s request represents 6% of the total Council Tax levied on a household.

The terms of reference for the Council’s Finance Committee state that the Committee shall review the Clerk’s proposals for the annual budget forecast including the financial precept.

The Committee has since September considered various versions of the budget spreadsheet, and at its January 14th meeting agreed its recommendation to Full Council.

Draft 1 – 24.09.25

Draft 2 – 31.10.25

Draft 3 – 26.11.25

Draft 4 – 10.12.25

Draft 5 – 14.01.26

This statement aims to provide guidance to parishioners interested in the Council’s budget forecast for 2026/27 financial year.

What is a precept?

All local councils set a precept as every council has a budget – the amount of money required to fund their operations. The precept is a calculated amount of money after a council has deducted its predicted income from its planned expenditure for the upcoming year. Most budgets have specific lines (budget codes) detailing the identified income streams (rent payments, hire fees etc) and expenditure items (salaries, cleaning, expenses etc). It is the role of the Council’s Finance Committee to consider each budget line and agree on the sum for the forthcoming year.



How is the precept converted into a Council Tax figure?

Once the income and expenditure budgets have been agreed, the calculated precept figure is divided by the Council tax base, a figure which is provided by East Suffolk Council in early November. The Band D figure is used as these are the most common house size in the District (Bands A – H). This calculation provides the Woodbridge Town Council proportion of the Council Tax levied on Band D properties, which for the 2025/26 financial year is £156.95.

The figure commonly associated with Council Tax is the percentage increase from year to year – the Council Tax bills issued by East Suffolk show this figure individually for each tier of local government and is the most recognisable figure for Parishioners.

The difference between the Band D Council Tax for the current year (2025/26) and 2024/25 is £10.59, which in percentage terms equated to a 7.2% increase – the table below provides more detail for the last three years of budget calculations:

Highlights	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Band D Equivalents	3389.95	3378.86	3540.24
Band D Council Tax	£ 125.40	£ 146.36	£ 156.95
Net Band D Increase	£ 5.90	£ 20.96	£ 10.59
Percentage Terms	4.9%	16.7%	7.2%
Cost per week	£ 2.41	£ 2.81	£ 3.02
Increase per week	£ 0.11	£ 0.40	£ 0.20

How is the precept collected?

East Suffolk Council (ESC) set a deadline of January 26th, 2026, to receive precept requests from Town and Parish Councils. ESC provides a simple form which is returned by the Town Clerk. ESC publishes the precept requests in February and the Council will receive funds in two equal tranches via bank transfer in April and September.

Woodbridge Town Council budget requirements for the 2026/27 financial year.

Income

WTC receive income from a variety of sources including commercial leases of property, direct hires of land and buildings, service charge and property insurance recovery, bank account interest and Community Infrastructure Levy.

WTC requirement	2025/26	2026/27
Total income (ex Precept)	£229,476	£79,233

The income forecast is much reduced for 2026/27 as the 2025/26 (current year) forecast included £150,000 from the sale of Council assets (15 Tide Mill Way and Theatre Street toilets).

Take away that sum, and the day-to-day income for the current year is £79,476 – WTC are forecasting for £79,233 of income for 2026/27.

Highlight income figures include:

Kingston Pavilion – The lease with Longfields provides that two lease payments will be received in 2026/27 to the sum of £4,500 – the same amount will be received in this financial but against a budget of zero, as the Council had not signed a lease agreement at this point last year.

Hire of Whisstocks Place – The ad hoc and regular hiring of Whisstocks continues to be popular and income for this year has exceeded budget by over £2000 – the forecast has been increased to £5000 accordingly.

Wedding income – Wedding bookings are currently restricted to July and August to allow for window repair works to be completed at the Shire Hall, and hence the budget has been reduced to £21,000. £13,000 of bookings have already been taken with a large number of provisional bookings which will hopefully materialise. If the window repairs are completed before July, additional ceremonies could be booked from September.

Interest – The Council receives interest from accounts held with HSBC, Suffolk Building Society and Unity Trust – communication received from those organisations provides that rates will decrease to the following:

HSBC – 1.35%

SBS – 2.7%

UT – 2.10%

The balance of the SBS and UT accounts is relatively stable (although significant spends from EMR's could impact the SBS account) so forecasting the income to be received is reasonably achievable. The balance of HSBC Money Manager account fluctuates monthly, with interest received from that organisation quarterly. £6,040 was received during the FY 2024/25, and to date, £2818 in the current year.

HSBC – £5000.

SBS – £290,835 * 2.7% = £7,852.

UT – £203,094 * 2.10% = £4,265.

Total – £17,117.

CIL – The Council forecast for the first time in the current year to receive CIL, and the same amount has been included for 2026/27. In line with The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 (Regulation 9), CIL funds can only be allocated to a project once they have been received.

RBS code	Budget item (INCOME)	Cost Centre	Location	2026/27
1100	Hire of Elmhurst Park	110	Elmhurst Park	£1,000
1110	Lease of Kitchen Garden	110	Elmhurst Park	£0
1200	Hire of Kingston Field	120	Kingston Field	£400
1210	Pavilion Property income	120	Kingston Field	£4,500
1216	Unit 3 Service Charges - Deben Wharf	160	Organisation	£6,426
1217	Unit 2 Services Charges - Heritage Building (WMT)	160	Organisation	£853
1218	Unit 1 Service Charges - Longshed (WRT)	160	Organisation	£2,067
1220	Tennis Court income	120	Kingston Field	£2,228
1230	Allotment rents	120	Kingston Field	£600
1500	Hire of Shire Hall (Inside)	150	Shire Hall	£2,000
1505	Hire of Shire Hall (Market Square)	150	Shire Hall	£1,000
1520	Hire of Whisstocks Place	160	Organisation	£5,000
1525	Whisstocks Quay income	160	Organisation	£1,725
1620	Wedding income	160	Organisation	£21,000
1690	Interest received	160	Organisation	£17,000
1700	Market Rents received	170	Comm. Wellbeing	£4,000
1871	Tide Mill Quay income	170	Comm. Wellbeing	£1,000
1900	Building Insurance Re-charges	160	Organisation	£2,434
1870	CIL	160	Organisation	£6,000
1905	Capital receipts	160	Organisation	£0
				£79,233

Expenditure – Operating costs and Town Support

WTC separates its expenditure budget into ‘Operating costs’ - the day-to-day expenses of the Council, and ‘Town Support’, the funding providing provided for specific projects and events in the parish.

Operating costs

WTC requirement	2025/26	2026/27
Expenditure (Operating costs)	£379,343	£568,127

The forecast increase of £188,784 can largely be attributed to the increase in Staffing budget, which is summarised in more detail below – the Staffing budget (£394,027), represents 69% of the Council’s operating costs, up from 52% in the current year.

The largest removal from the operating costs budget was the £80,000 for the Council’s grounds maintenance contract, but this contract value is replaced by salary and on costs

for the Council's two new gardeners (as part of the Staffing budget), and a further £19,790 for in year requirements. The costs to empty the bins on the Council's estate, which in the current year is met from within the £80,000, is a standalone amount of £9,500 as part of an agreement with East Suffolk Services Ltd.

Other significant increases include:

Insurance – The Council's insurers originally advised that we should expect a 30% increase in the cost of insurance for the forecast, but following a review of the Council's planned increase staff and vehicular fleet, this forecast was increased to 40%. The budget for insurance costs therefore increases from £12,500 to £17,870.

Computer Maintenance Contract – The Council's planned increase in staff number requires that the maintenance support provision from React has to be increased accordingly – each Officer and Councillor has a license to access Microsoft Office 365, and this is payable monthly based on the fees issued by Microsoft. The increase in staff needs to be met with an increase in budget to account for these costs. Additional cyber software protection has also been advised by React, whilst there day to day service have also increased in cost.

Utilities – The Council's new toilets in Elmhurst Park will soon be open and the daily cleaning of that facilities has been included in the forecast, as well as the electric, water and sanitary bin provision – a budget of nearly £12,000 is required for this service to be provided to the public. The Finance Committee also agreed to the request from the Amenities Committee to include the daily cleaning of the publicly available toilet on Kingston Pavilion, which adds a further £5,500 to the budget. £1,500 is also provided for the Changing Places facility, in the hope/expectancy that this project can be completed in 2026/27.

Professional/ estate agent fees – The £15,000 included in this code is intended to used to assist the Council's due diligence in regard of Local Government Reorganisation – specialist services such as legal advice and consultant fees would be met from this code.

Staff training – The Staffing Committee recommended that the staff training budget be calculated as a percentage of the Council's total salaries – the Finance Committee have set this at 2%, which leads to an increase from £1250 to £4646.

RBS code	Budget item (OPERATING COSTS/ EXPENDITURE)	Cost Centre	Location	2026/27
4000	Grounds Maintenance Contract	100	General	£0
New	Bin Emptying contract	100	General	£9,500
New	WTC vehicles - in year costs	100	General	£5,290
New	Estate planting and improvement to kitchen garden	100	General	£10,000
New	In house - Contingency	100	General	£4,000
New	In house - equipment	100	General	£500
4005	Routine Maintenance	100	General	£2,129
4005	Routine Maintenance	110	Elmhurst Park	£2,514
4005	Routine Maintenance	120	Kingston Field	£2,363
4005	Routine Maintenance	130	Fen Meadow	£500
4005	Routine Maintenance	140	Other	£1,300
4005	Routine Maintenance	150	Shire Hall	£2,888
4005	Routine Maintenance	200	Whisstocks Place	£4,100
4100	Utilities - Elmhurst Park Gardeners Shed	110	Elmhurst Park	£2,000
4100	Utilities - War Memorial	140	Other	£300
4100	Utilities - Shire Hall	150	Shire Hall	£7,500
4100	Utilities and cleaning - Whisstocks Place	200	Whisstocks Place	£3,200
4125	Utilities and cleaning - Elmhurst Park toilets	110	Elmhurst Park	£11,814
4125	Cleaning - Kingston Pavilion	120	Kingston Field	£5,500
4125	Cleaning - Changing Places toilet	140	Other	£1,500
4410	Allotment expenses	140	Other	£200

RBS code	Budget item (OPERATING COSTS/ EXPENDITURE)	Cost Centre	Location	2026/27
4510	Telephone	150	Shire Hall	£1,100
4515	Cleaning	150	Shire Hall	£3,000
4600	Salaries	160	Organisation	£232,312
4601	Salaries PAYE Tax/NI	160	Organisation	£83,587
4602	Salaries Pension Contribs	160	Organisation	£78,127
4636	Staff Vacancy advertising	160	Organisation	£515
4603	Travel/ mileage costs (Officers)	160	Organisation	£1,000
4604	Subsistence costs (Officers)	160	Organisation	£250
4620	Mayors expenses	160	Organisation	£2,000
4630	Deputy Mayors expenses	160	Organisation	£400
4635	Hospitality	160	Organisation	£150
4750	Surgeries and External Meeting	160	Organisation	£500
4640	Stationary	160	Organisation	£1,000
4642	Website	160	Organisation	£250
4645	Computer Maintenance Contract	160	Organisation	£17,000
4650	Staff training	160	Organisation	£4,646
4655	Councillor training	160	Organisation	£750
4660	Photocopier	160	Organisation	£1,500
4670	Postage	160	Organisation	£155
4675	Wedding expenses	160	Organisation	£2,750
4685	Maintenance Officer supplies	160	Organisation	£2,000

RBS code	Budget item (OPERATING COSTS/ EXPENDITURE)	Cost Centre	Location	2026/27
4830	Foreshore Rent	170	Comm. Wellbeing	£2,380
4881	Whisstocks floodgate - opening and closing	200	Whisstocks Place	£2,900
4900	Bank charges	180	Fees and charges	£600
4905	Insurance	180	Fees and charges	£17,870
4910	Audit & Accountancy Charges	180	Fees and charges	£2,500
4915	Other subscriptions (inc. SALC)	180	Fees and charges	£2,000
4920	Internal auditor	180	Fees and charges	£1,288
4925	Legal fees	180	Fees and charges	£13,000
5310	Pest control	200	Whisstocks Place	£500
4930	Professional/ estate agent fees	180	Fees and charges	£15,000
				£568,127

Town support

WTC requirement	2025/26	2026/27
Expenditure (Town support)	£169,425	£152,425

The Town Support budget is further subdivided as follows:

Events/ Event support

As the Council has resolved not to organise any additional public events in 2026/27, the events budget is reduced from £42,050 to £19,800.

Grant Scheme

The grant scheme, now operating on a three window per year schedule, has been increased from the £17,750 to £25,000.

Committee budgets

No change.

Projects

An overall reduction from £47,500 to £30,000. £25,000 is forecast for 2026/27 and 2027/28 to allow the Amenities Committee to undertake the improvements to Kingston Field which follow from the consultation funded in the current year.

WTC Estate

Increased from £7,625 to £19,125, of which £10,000 is included as the Council's expected contribution toward repair/improvement works to the Tide Mill pond. The Council's contribution to the permissive toilet at the Longshed has also been included at this section.

WTC Priorities

Increased from £18,500 to £32,500 as the Council continues to try and progress support in its priority areas – The Youth Council continue to receive £5,000 to utilise, with the same amounts provided for Young Adults and Seniors – Members are encouraged to propose projects to be funded from these budgets. The success of the Council’s new monthly videos, as well as cost for publishing in local freebies, requires a new Comms budget of £10,000. In the hope of a successful twinning with Doullens, that budget rises from £1,000 to £5,000.

RBS code	Budget item (TOWN SUPPORT/ EXPENDITURE)	Cost Centre	2026/27
EVENTS/ EVENT SUPPORT			
4131	Town Council supported events (General Amenities)	100	£0
4131	Christmas Lights Switch on event	200	£6,000
4805	Woodbridge Regatta	170	£600
4825	Remembrance Day	170	£1,200
4625	Mayors reception/ Civic event	160	£3,000
4853	Townwide Christmas Lights support	170	£9,000
GRANT SCHEME			
4800	Grants	170	£25,000
COMMITTEE BUDGETS			
5100	Amenities Committee budget	190	£10,000
5250	CEE Committee budget	190	£10,000
5200	Highways Committee budget	190	£5,000
5150	Planning Committee budget	190	£1,000
PROJECTS			
4135	Estate resilience (Other Amenity areas)	140	£5,000
4135	Kingston Pavilion (Kingston Field)	120	£25,000
4135	Amenities Committee consultancy (Organisation)	160	£0

RBS code	Budget item (TOWN SUPPORT/ EXPENDITURE)	Cost Centre	2026/27
WTC ESTATE			
4843	Permissive toilet scheme	170	£1,500
4810	Tide Mill support	170	£17,500
4135	Little Hub of Happiness – Mobile wifi and Ring Protect	170	£125
WTC PRIORITIES			
4841	Youth Engagement	170	£5,000
4842	Young adult support (18-25)	170	£5,000
4844	Seniors	160	£5,000
New	Comms	New	£10,000
4846	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPS)	160	£2,500
4847	International/ Twinning	160	£5,000
			£152,425

Staffing budget

WTC requirement	2025/26	2026/27
Salaries	£119,032	£232,312
PAYE, Tax and NI contributions	£39,354	£83,587
Pension contributions	£39,031	£78,127
TOTAL	£197,417	£394,027

As detailed above, the Council has agreed to increase its staffing levels to both accommodate for the in house gardening of its estate (full time Head Gardener and Assistant Gardener), and administratively (with one eye on LGR and the other on workload, project timeliness and future proofing) with the agreed appointments of an Assistant Clerk (Full time) and Admin and Finance support Officer (30 hours).

The Council have also approved a recommendation from the Staffing Committee to improve the salaries of the Finance Officer and Admin. Officer and increase the hours of the Estates Officer and Maintenance Officer.

Taking into consideration PAYE, Tax, NI and Pension contributions, the forecast staffing budget is almost double of the current year (99.6% increase).

As whole, the staffing budget now represents 69% of the Council's operating costs, up from 52% in the current year, and most significantly, 60% of the precept, up from 35%.

WTC must submit to East Suffolk Council a breakdown of income and expenditure across budget codes for publication with the precept request – that document is shown below:

Woodbridge Town Council - budget information for East Suffolk Council						
Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Woodbridge	Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
2025-26	2025-26	2025-26	Town Council	2026-27	2026-27	2026-27
£	£	£		£	£	£
197,417	-	197,417	Staffing	394,027	-	394,027
119,125	217,833	98,708	Administration	118,703	59,780	58,923
3,764	1,095	2,669	Elmhurst Park	4,514	1,000	3,514
1,750	2,998	1,248	Kingston Field	2,363	7,728	5,365
83,429	-	83,429	Other Amenity Areas	33,519	-	33,519
13,808	3,550	10,258	Shire Hall	14,488	3,000	11,488
17,750	-	17,750	Grants	25,000	-	25,000
26,100	-	26,100	Partnerships	34,300	-	34,300
20,000	-	20,000	Parks and Playgrounds Upgrade	25,000	-	25,000
56,125	-	56,125	Other Major Projects	39,125	-	39,125
2,000	-	2,000	Public Conveniences	18,814	-	18,814
7,500	4,000	3,500	Whisstocks	10,700	7,725	2,975
236,350	-	236,350	Contributions from/to Reserves	13,438	-	13,438
785,118	229,476	555,642	Total	733,990	79,233	654,757

The Council agreed that the precept to be demanded from East Suffolk Council for the Financial Year 2026/27 should be £654,757, which represents an increase of 18.9%, makes a band D equivalent of £186.54, an increase of £29.59 a year or 57p a week.- Precept - £654,757

- Band D Equivalent - 3510.07
- Band D Council Tax - £186.54
- Net Band D Increase - £29.59
- Percentage Terms - 18.9%
- Cost per week - £3.59
- Increase per week £0.57

WTC requirement	2025/26	2026/27
Total income (ex Precept)	£229,476	£79,233
Contribution to reserves	£186,350	£13,438
Shire Hall contribution/ ringfence	£50,000	£0
Expenditure (Operating costs)	£379,343	£568,127
Expenditure (Town support)	£169,425	£152,425

Budget	£548,768	£720,552
PRECEPT	£555,642	£654,757

Highlights	2025/26	2026/27
Band D Equivalents	3540.24	3510.07
Band D Council Tax	£ 156.95	£ 186.54
Net Band D Increase	£ 10.59	£ 29.59
Percentage Terms	7.2%	18.9%
Cost per week	£ 3.02	£ 3.59
Increase per week	£ 0.20	£ 0.57

To view the publicly available version of budget spreadsheet please click [here](#).

Anyone with further questions should contact the [Town Clerk](#).



Mr G E Diaper

Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

28.01.26