

WHITNASH TOWN COUNCIL



Whitnash Community Hub

BUSINESS PLAN

2018 -2021

November 2018



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Executive Summary

1. Whitnash Town Council (WTC) intends to implement the wish of the town community (Neighbourhood Plan Referendum November 2015) to replace the several community facility and amenity sites with a single Community Hub to be located in Acre Close Field.
2. As a preliminary activity to this Business Plan, a detailed Option Analysis has been carried out to investigate the interests of the potential stakeholder group (Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council, Whitnash Sports and Social Club, Whitnash Primary School).
3. This Business Plan identifies the main features of the proposed Community Hub including the Whitnash library relocation and presents outline costings and 3-year projections.
4. The initial costings produced by an earlier Feasibility Report (TFT 2015) are considered out of the affordability range of the Council – with re-engineering of design and facilities, this has resulted in a more realistic and affordable option for the new Community Hub building.
5. There are several community centre case studies in the locality. Chase Meadow Community Centre usage and building design has provided the frame of reference for this Business Plan. Their support and willingness to share experiences and user profiles is greatly appreciated.
6. The new Community Hub project has a pre-tender cost estimate of £2,220,307. The cost includes construction, professional fees, risk and contingency allowances, inflation and client direct costs including an allowance for work needed to relocate playing pitches.
7. A Funding Plan has been developed in association with Warwick District Council which includes loan arrangements, developer contributions (S106 and CIL) and bids for external funding including Sport England and Landfill Trust grants. There is currently a budget shortfall. To meet the shortfall the Town Council are applying for a further loan from the Public Works Loan Board and Warwick District Council are considering a further grant for the project at its November 2018 Executive meeting.
8. Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has agreed to relocate the existing library facilities in Whitnash into the proposed Community Hub building. This has meant an extension to the footprint of the previous building plans with the additional capital costs to be fully funded by WCC. This will provide an exciting 'Library of the Future' facility for Whitnash.
9. The programme of 'design, procure and build' is ambitious. The Business Plan has received approval by the Town Council and has initiated release of preliminary works funding by Warwick District Council.
10. Whitnash Town Council, in association with Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council, has initiated the project development phase, using a detailed procurement process to appoint architects and building surveyors along with sub-contracted services to

prepare detailed designs, build specifications and cost plans leading to submission of full planning application by March 2018. Planning Permission was achieved in September 2018.

11. Following planning and building control approvals and services investigations, project management and main contractor procurement will follow in 2019, leading to a works construction start in Summer 2019 and anticipated completion in Summer 2020.

Section A - Project background

Whitnash Town Council (WTC) is leading the development of a new Community Hub to host the community services, sports and social requirements of the residents of Whitnash. Dissatisfied with the current 'dispersed' community facilities around the town, and the poor building quality of the existing Community Centre building on Acre Close Fields, WTC has placed the development of a new, centrally located Community Hub at the top of its priority list within its Neighbourhood Plan¹.

The benefits of a new Community Hub are considered as:

- A new Centre closer to the heart of community encouraging walking
- Multi-use facility for health, sports and social activity
- New 'library of the future' due to relocation of existing facility
- Improved security (for users and for the premises themselves)
- Better use of available space on Acre Field
- No change to road access for cars and pedestrians
- Better car parking and safer pedestrian/vehicle interface
- No reduction of playing pitch areas
- Sharing of junior playing pitches with Junior School

The Council, supported by Warwick District Council, commissioned a Feasibility Study by Tuffin Ferraby Taylor (TFT) for the project which reported back in July 2015. The Study included an Option Analysis, comparing the various possible layouts and facilities that could be incorporated within the new development, along with a cost plan estimate. However, these proposal came with a high capital cost estimate of £3.632m (2015 cost basis) – and gave cause for concern to the Town Council that the project as proposed would not be affordable based upon available and accessible funds. Consequently, a Funding Review leading to this Business Plan was commissioned by Warwick District Council (WDC) on behalf of the Town Council.

Section B - Project proposal

Project rationale

The case for a new Community Hub was included as a priority in the Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan which was submitted as the community's contribution to the WDC Local Plan - gaining overwhelming support in the November 2015 referendum (92.6% of the vote).

The Community Hub initiative is put forward as a key part of the 'Vision for Whitnash' and is included within the Neighbourhood Plan as follows:

"In 2029 Whitnash will have a strong, local identity of a sustainable, thriving town which serves its local residents and businesses well and continues to have close family and community support. Community facilities will be enhanced, green spaces and historical links maintained and a realistic number and mix of housing built in and around Whitnash will meet the needs of all ages and groups in the town."

¹ Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan 2015

More specifically, the need for a new, modern and integrated Community Hub is clearly spelt out within the Neighbourhood Plan:

Objective 1 - Providing a New Community Hub

*Whitnash has a strong local identity and the town has expanded considerably over recent years with extensive areas of new housing development. With the proposed new development in the Local Plan, Whitnash is likely to increase its population further over the Plan period. **However Whitnash lacks a main focus or hub for local facilities such as shopping, office space and a community centre.** The Town Council has aspirations for improved office and meeting space, and recognises that the existing community centre in Acre Close playing fields is dated and requires replacing or significant updating and investment. The location of the building is also isolated and located away from other facilities such as the library and shops. There is a need to bring the various facilities together to provide a focus for the town which meets the needs and aspirations of all.*

The Neighbourhood Plan also highlights the current limitations of community facilities for a town of its population size, and the need to enhance such facilities e.g. those around Acre Close, to ensure that they continue to meet local and current needs (Objective 2 - Protecting Existing Local Facilities). Behind the very positive targets for the next 15 years included within the Neighbourhood Plan lies a concern that community facilities are failing not only to service current demand but will struggle to meet the future demands created as a result of the proposed expansion of residential areas within the town's boundaries² (Appendix 3).

The age profile of Whitnash residents has been highlighted as having *"a slightly younger population age profile compared to England, with 24.3% under 18 years compared to 21.4% nationally (2011 Census). A lower proportion is at retirement age with 16.7% over 65 years, compared to 21.4% nationally. The town also has a mix of different ethnic groups, and a relatively high proportion of people from India; 11.2% of the population are of Asian / Asian British (Indian) origin compared to 4.9% in Warwickshire and 2.6% in England³."* It is important that the facilities being proposed within the new Community Hub must reflect these various needs especially of young families.

With new housing developments (circa 550 new houses) within the town curtilage proposed⁴ the demand for community facilities will only increase and the case for a dedicated community hub in a single location will get stronger.

Project partners

The scope and success of the Project will be influenced by the commitment and involvement of 'project partners' and other stakeholder groups in the area. Of these, the partner organisations that could have a major 'consideration' with regard to the Community Hub Project - apart from the Town Council - will be:

- Whitnash Primary School (WPS)
- Warwickshire County Council (WCC) – library service
- Warwick District Council (WDC)
- Whitnash Sports and Social Club (WSSC)

² Warwick District Council Local Plan (draft)

³ Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan 2015

⁴ Warwick District Local Plan

Project considerations

The Project Development phase has considered the following options:

- Demolition of the current Community Centre building and replacing with a new Community Hub building adjacent to Acre Close entrance.
- Refurbishment of the current Community Centre building and hard court area with change of use for a pre-school nursery facility.
- Inclusion of a new community sports hall within the Community Hub (2-court or 4-court).
- Relocation of the existing WCC Whitnash library to new Community Hub.
- Possible integration of the Community Hub with the redevelopment plans for the existing WSSC sports facilities.
- Re-organisation of the layout of playing fields to accommodate the new Community Hub and parking.
- Possible 'shared use' of the school playing fields for junior football.
- Options for re-routing of transport access, parking and pedestrian routes.

Section C - Current Situation

As indicated above, the current community facilities accessed and used by the public are dispersed across the Town:

- Town Council Offices / Library – Franklin Road
- Community Centre – Acre Field
- Football and rugby pitches – Acre Field
- Church Halls at St Joseph's; Whitnash Methodist Church and St Margaret's Church Centre

Community Centre, Acre Field

None of the above is capable of extending provision due to the limitations of building size – and therefore unable to meet the expanding needs of the Whitnash community.

The best example of this is the current Community Centre on Acre Close Field. Built some 35 years ago, this building has serviced the Town quite well and provides one large hall area (used for venues, activities and indoor bowls) as well as several meeting rooms and kitchens. However, the

building is no longer 'fit for purpose' and would now require substantial investment in its fabric and infrastructure if it were to provide future accommodation – especially to reduce energy costs and to provide a pleasant user environment.



The current Community Centre has other characteristics why it is not conducive to full community usage i.e. not 'fit-for-purpose':

- internal layout restrictions
- location - some 100m from Acre Close and the reluctance of pedestrians to access the building especially in the winter, in inclement weather and at night times
- security and vandalism

Town Council Offices / Library – Franklin Road

This building is owned by Warwickshire County Council – and houses the Whitnash Library as well as the Town Council office. The meeting areas in the building are limited in size, meaning that the Council’s own meetings have to take place in the Acre Field Community Centre.



Like other town councils in similar situations, WTC would like to bring together the Council’s and other public services e.g. library, police, advice into a single ‘one stop shop’ and in an accessible, central location within walking distance of shops. **This is a prime objective of the new Community Hub proposed.** An agreement has been reached (December 2017) between WTC and WCC to relocate and integrate existing facilities at Franklin Road within the proposed Community Hub at Acre Close Field, creating a new ‘Library of the Future’⁵ for the Whitnash community.

Community Centre current usage profile

The current Community Centre has a range of user groups on a regular or intermittent basis:

User Group	Approximate use timing	
Regular Users		
Whitnash Dog Club	Mon evenings	7.00 – 7.45pm
Leamington Hibs FC	Mon evenings	5.45 – 6.45pm
Youth Club	Tues evenings	6.00 – 8.15pm
Childminder Toddler Group	Wed mornings	9.15 – 11.15am
Short Mat Bowls	Wed afternoon	1.00 – 5.00pm
Zumba	Wed evenings	7.00 – 8.00pm
Dandy Development	Thurs mornings	9.15 – 12.15am
Martial Arts (Shaolin Freestyle)	Thurs evenings	7.00 – 8.30pm
Whitnash Town Council (meeting room)	Thurs evenings	6.00 – 8.00pm
Occasional Users		
Whitnash Residents Association	4 x per annum	
Whitnash Community Forum	3 x per annum	
Ad hoc users		
Whitnash Fund Day	1 x per annum	
Craft Fayre	2 x per annum	
Divali	1 x per annum	
Range of private hires		

⁵ The Library of the Future ~ Arts Council 2013

Section D – Community Hub Project Plan

The Town Council wishes to bring together a number of currently dispersed services and organisations within a new community sports and social complex to be located on the Acre Close Field, providing an accessible, central and safe community hub. The requirements for consideration and inclusion are as follows:

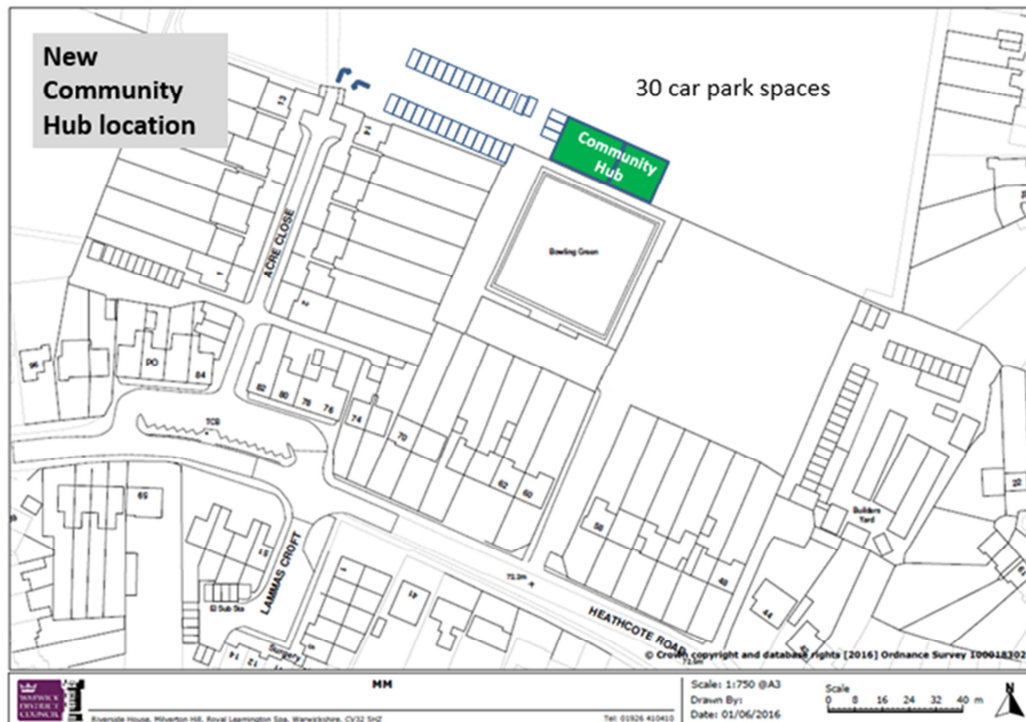
- Town Council office and meeting room
- Community and Sports Hall for events and hire
- Improved outdoor sports areas
- Drop in space for police safer neighbourhood plan
- Community organisation meeting rooms
- Café and social hub
- Library, information, one stop shop services (dependent upon WCC requirements)

Full reference has been made to the following preliminary studies carried out since 2015, namely:

- Feasibility Study - Tuffin Ferraby Taylor (July 2015)
- Funding Strategy Report – ATI Projects Ltd (December 2015)
- Partnership Scoping Paper – ATI Projects Ltd (January 2016)

Planned development

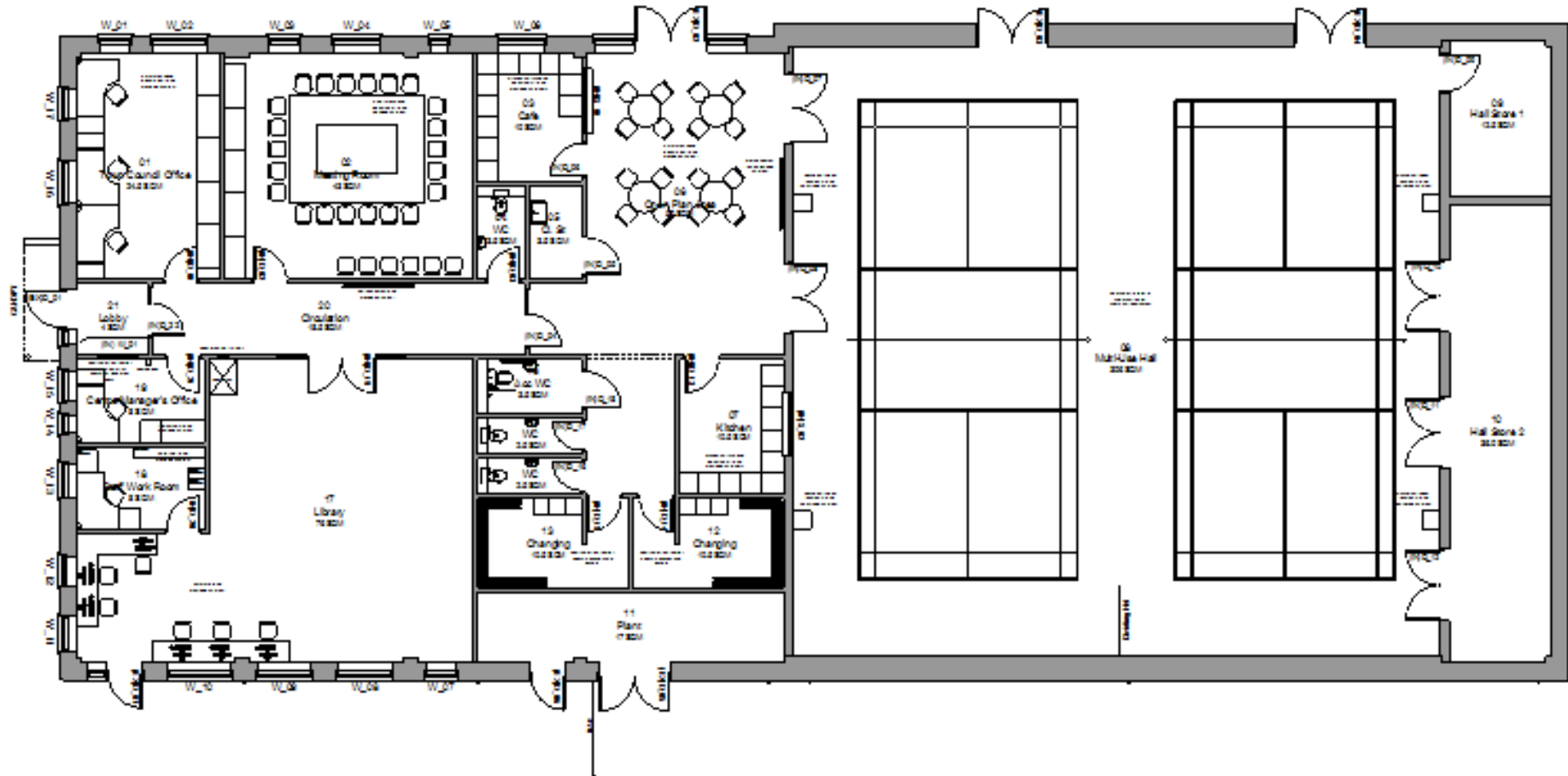
Following a detailed options investigation, WTC has decided to develop a new Community Hub building to contain a 2-badminton court size multi-use hall along with studio, a community café, council offices and meeting/activity rooms and including new indoor changing rooms. The outline plans and costings are based upon a similar sized and purposed community centre at Chase Meadow⁶ and they are also a similar size to that of Warwick Gates Community Centre (both with 2-badminton court halls).



⁶ www.chasemeadowcc.co.uk

Community Hub Layout

The Consultants have re-engineered the original layout and costings included within the TFT 2015 Study to form a more realistic and affordable community building facility whilst retaining most of the features required by the Town Council. This has been presented to the architects (Baily Garner) who have designed several potential layouts. The drawing below is the final iteration and has received planning approval.



Layout of new Community Hub

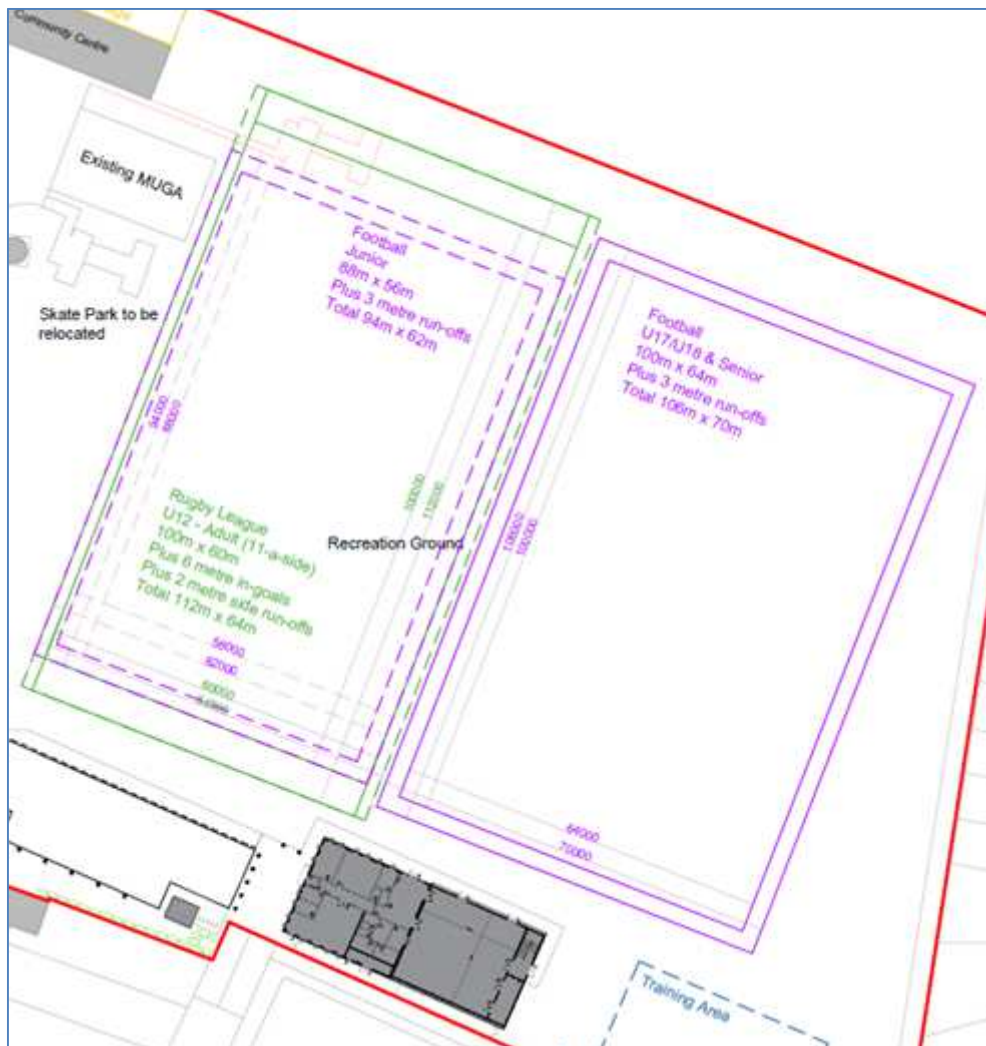
The layout of the new Community Hub includes the building/room requirements as presented by the WTC for the TFT Feasibility study in 2015. Additional functionality has been added through the provision of external doors on the north side of the building to open onto Acre Close Field.

The building location is to the north of the WSSC bowling green enabling sufficient parking and access from Acre Close. The 2-court 'Community Hall' allows for sporting and non-sporting activities to take place – providing an area that is manageable and flexible in use. WDC Cultural Services have indicated that they would support the development of this size of multi-use sports hall – and that it contributes to the indoor sports provision for the District.

The Community Hub building ensures a suitable fit with boundaries and access routes, as part of meeting planning requirements.

Acre Field Pitches

The layout takes account of the soccer and rugby pitch layout as below:



As the new Community Hub is located on playing fields, extensive consultation has taken place with Sport England. Sport England requires that the project does not negatively impact on the clubs using the pitches both during and after the construction period. As a result of this the project has commissioned a feasibility study by pitch specialists STRI to demonstrate that it is possible to relocate the pitches to enable continuity of play for the rugby and football teams. Revised pitch layouts have been agreed with the teams. These are shown below. The planning permission includes conditions to ensure that the pitch layouts are provided in advance of work starting on site and also prior to occupation of the building.

Outside of this project, WTC will seek additional grants and funds e.g. developer contribution monies, for Acre Field community playing field improvement.

Organisation and Management of the new Community Hub

Whilst management of the new Hub will initially rest with Whitnash Town Council, consideration will be given to establishing and managing the Community Centre as a social enterprise - the definition of which is 'a business which makes its money from selling goods and services, and reinvests profits back into the business or the local community and unlike charities and community groups, social enterprises can be owned and run by paid staff, or by people who have invested money in them'.

"Social enterprise" isn't a single legal structure and can therefore adopt different models depending on the community organisation's needs and the way they work. The most appropriate for the new Community Centre would be a Community Interest Company (CIC). A CIC is a limited company with special features to ensure that it works for the benefit of the community and commits their assets and profits permanently to the community by means of an "asset lock", ensuring that assets are used for the benefit of the community. A CIC differs from a charitable company in that it can be established for any purpose which benefits the community, whereas a charity must have exclusively charitable purposes.

Funds are available to support communities wishing to establish a CIC and operate a community facility such as the Community Hub proposed at Whitnash e.g. Power to Change.

Staffing Profile

This Business Plan includes the employment from 'Day 1' of a Centre Manager and an Assistant Centre Manager, acknowledging that during the early months, the occupation levels will be lower than during Years 2 and 3. However this will provide the opportunity to get systems in place, for training and for promotional activities to take place.

WTC has already received offers of voluntary support from local groups and individuals once the Hub is in operation.

WCC will be maintaining their current level of library staffing once the Library is established within the Community Hub.

Section E - Financial Plan

Community Centre - Present financial situation

Annual letting income for the Community Hall has increased slightly over the last 4 years:

- Year end 31.3.2014 - £8,811
- Year end 31.3.2015 - £8,878
- Year end 31.3.2016 - £9,814
- Year end 31.3.2017 - £10,790

Current Community Centre annual costs included within the Council's budget for 2016-17 are £27,094 representing an annual loss. (Source: WTC)

Construction Costs

Initial costings prepared by Tuffin Ferraby Taylor (TFT) based on plans not including the Whitnash Sports and Social Club were for a range of options ranging from £3.1m to £3.6m total costs.

However, it was clear to the Town Council that such an ambitious capital project was highly unlikely to access sufficient funds to realise the TFT proposals. Instead, ATI Projects were asked to produce a redesign of the original building layout and purpose to meet the core objectives and within a revised budget estimate.

For the purposes of this Business Plan and subsequent funding bids, an initial outline cost based on construction and fit out cost estimates based upon similar community building projects was produced. This indicated a total project cost of £1.612 m (March 18). Following on from this, more detailed specifications and costings were produced by design architects and quantity surveyors. Resulting from this, the pre-tender estimate (November 2018) indicates a construction cost of £2,220,307. This figure includes client direct orders estimated at £110,700 for essential items such as the relocation of playing pitches, etc.

The increase in the costs from March 18 can be attributed to a number of factors including,

- the addition of a number of items previous excluded from the initial cost estimate such as inflation, pitch related works to ensure no loss of facility to the clubs,
- a more accurate understanding of the detailed components of the building resulting in revisions of costs for those elements
- increases in construction costs in the wider economy

Source of Capital / Gap Funding

The estimated project costs including construction costs and fees to design and build the new Community Hub, including Client Direct Order costs estimated at a total of £110,700, bring the total project cost to £2,220,307.

To match these estimated costs a range of funding streams (loans, grants, and developer contributions) had previously been agreed or was applied for to cover the design, planning, capital works and professional fee costs:

- Developer contribution (S106/CIL) via Warwick District Council⁷ £590k confirmed
- New Homes Bonus – via WDC £500k confirmed
- Warwickshire County Council (Library) £150k confirmed
- Sport England Community Fund – currently at application stage £150k tbc
- Landfill trusts – currently at outline application stage £60k tbc

The November 2018 pre-tender estimate requires that additional funding is secured from the following sources;

- Additional New Homes Bonus – via WDC £500k tbc
- Additional WTC Public Works Loan Board Loan⁸ £250k tbc

The PWLB⁸ loan funding is to be paid back over 20 years through income generated by the Hub. In addition, due to the staged payments of Section 106 and CIL contributions, WDC has agreed to provide short term loan funding over the first 5-6 year period.

Estimated project construction costs

To ensure consistency, the estimated project costs to build the Community Hub as per the drawing on Page 8 were compared with the costs proposed by the initial TFT feasibility study. . The proposed Community Hub in this Report has a significantly smaller footprint than the building proposed by TFT, and retains the building functionality requested by the Town Council.

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Whitnash Community Centre - Pre Tender Estimate

Whitnash Community Hub Executive Summary



Project: Whitnash Community Centre	Details: Whitnash Community Hub - PTE
Building: Whitnash Community Centre	

Code	Description	Total
1	Construction Costs	1,548,063
2	Main Contractor Overheads & Profit	139,326
3	Subtotal	1,687,389
4	Project/design team fees	205,324
5	Surveys	15,900
6	Subtotal	221,224
7	Works Cost Estimate	1,908,613
8	Risk Allowance Estimate:	
9	Design Development	95,431
10	Construction Risk	50,101
11	Employer Change	0
12	Employer Other	0
13	Cost limit (excluding inflation)	2,054,145
14	Inflation:	
15	Tender Inflation	
16	Construction Inflation (mid point)	55,462
17	Client Direct orders	110,700
18	Cost limit (including inflation)	2,220,307
19	Construction Cost per m2 (GIFA)	2,241
20	Cost per m2 (inc fees, risk & inflation)	2,949

GFA: 754.00 m2

Income & expenditure forecast 3 years – Indicative Summary and Discussion

Whitnash Community Hub		EXISTING COMMUNITY CENTRE	SCENARIO 1 BASED ON CHASE MEADOW USAGE AFTER 3 YEARS			SCENARIO 2 -10% INCOME			SCENARIO 3 +20% INCOME		
Income Projection 3 Year Plan		2016/17	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
INCOME		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ROOM HIRE											
Community Hall (289m ²)	Income Apr-Dec 2016 was £7772. Pro-rated for 2016/17 is therefore £10,362.		16,173	26,058	29,724	14,556	23,452	26,751	19,407	31,269	35,668
Meeting Room 1 (22m ²)			2,464	4,035	4,628	2,218	3,632	4,165	2,957	4,842	5,553
Meeting Room 2 (22m ²)			2,464	4,035	4,628	2,218	3,632	4,165	2,957	4,842	5,553
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2 Combined (44m ²)			10,782	17,442	19,816	9,704	15,698	17,834	12,938	20,931	23,779
Meeting Room 3 (7.5m ²)			770	1,231	1,477	693	1,108	1,329	924	1,477	1,772
Catering Kitchen (18m ²)			1,284	2,353	2,462	1,155	2,118	2,215	1,540	2,824	2,954
OTHER INCOME											
Rent for Parish Council Office - current agreement 2016/17, based on £250 pcm fr 2018	1,984		3,000	3,060	3,121	2,700	2,754	2,809	3,600	3,672	3,745
Café Franchise - estimate	n/a		8,000	8,160	8,323	7,200	7,344	7,491	9,600	9,792	9,988
TOTAL INCOME	12,346		44,937	66,374	74,178	40,443	59,737	66,760	53,925	79,649	89,014
EXPENDITURE											
STAFFING											
Manager + 1.0 FTE	n/a				37,871			37,871			37,871
Manager + 1.0 FTE	n/a			37,128			37,128			37,128	
Manager + 1.0 FTE	n/a		36,400			36,400			36,400		
UTILITY COSTS - VARIABLE - 2016/17 base											
Water	827		651	1,050	1,170	586	945	1,053	781	1,260	1,404
Gas	2,778		3,255	5,190	5,850	2,930	4,671	5,265	3,906	6,228	7,020
Electricity	933		760	1,215	1,355	684	1,094	1,220	911	1,458	1,626
OTHER FIXED COSTS - 2016/17 base											
Insurance	1,500		1,500	1,530	1,561	1,350	1,377	1,405	1,800	1,836	1,873
Hall Rates - estimate for new building StR	7,442		10,000	10,200	10,404	9,000	9,180	9,364	12,000	12,240	12,485
Telephone/Alarm	288		300	306	312	270	275	281	360	367	375
Hearing Loop Mtce	242		300	306	312	270	275	281	360	367	375
Hall Repairs & Mtce	4,095		3,000	3,060	3,121	2,700	2,754	2,809	3,600	3,672	3,745
Cleaning Mats/Paper Towels	508		500	510	520	450	459	468	600	612	624
Hall Security	974		1,000	1,020	1,040	900	918	936	1,200	1,224	1,248
Hall Annual Shutter Mtce	473		400	408	416	360	367	375	480	490	499
Fire Extinguisher Mtce	171		170	173	177	153	156	159	204	208	212
Hall Sundries	105		200	204	208	180	184	187	240	245	250
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	20,336		58,436	62,300	64,317	56,232	59,783	61,673	62,843	67,335	69,607
PROFIT/LOSS	-7,990		-13,498	4,074	9,861	-15,788	-47	5,088	-8,918	12,314	19,407
BANK BALANCE			-13,498	-9,425	436	-15,788	-15,835	-10,748	-8,918	3,396	22,803

Note: The I&E forecast above does not include any costs of loan borrowing

New building occupation profile

As the Community Hub will be a new building with an increased range of facilities for community use and hire, this will impact upon the costs of operation and management. We have taken as a good local template the occupation rates currently being achieved in the Chase Meadow Community Centre – on which the new Whitnash Community Hub is based. The intention has been for the Whitnash Community Hub to match the level of occupation and income of Chase Meadow by the end of Q4, Year 3. In Year 1 (likely to be 2019-20), due to the new facilities, publicity and marketing campaign, the occupation rates build up fairly quickly to achieve approximately 80% of Chase Meadow's current usage profile by Q4. During Years 2 and 3 there is a steady increase leading to the 100% usage profile of Chase Meadow by Q4 Year 3.

Section F – Marketing and Promotion

Whitnash Town Council's plan is that the new Community Hub will 'first and foremost' address the need for a community facility for those residents who live or work within the Parish of Whitnash. This includes those who are delivering activities or services into the town for the benefit of local people. However as the Community Hub will be required to attract income to cover revenue costs, the facilities will be made available for hire to other organisations e.g. Warwickshire College Trident Centre, private companies and individuals in Leamington Spa, Warwick and across Warwick District. There is however no intention to compete with other community centre and WDC sports and leisure centre offerings.

Service offer

As shown in the proposed layout (Page 7) the Community Hub would be 'multi-purpose'. Apart from the relocation of the Town Council's own office and services, the building will provide meeting and activity area for community organisations and clubs, a library, and a multi-purpose hall suitable for larger meetings, primary school functions, sports and leisure activities. Small private meeting rooms will also be available for hire or for use by community service organisations e.g. social care, neighbourhood police.

A central foyer and café area is designed to attract community users and provide a safe, relaxing and informative meeting place. A small catering facility will be included to be run either on a local franchise basis or by volunteers.

Market definition

The Quality of Life Report published by the Warwickshire Observatory⁹ and detailed below, provide an overview of the age profile of Whitnash Town's population:

Children (0-15)	Working Age (16-64 years)	Older People (65+ years)	Total
1,900 (20%)	6,100 (64%)	1,600 (16%)	9,600

In developing the Neighbourhood Plan which highlighted the current limited facilities for community activities, sports and leisure for a town of its population size and profile, a local referendum (November 2015) gave overwhelming support for a new Community Hub as a priority for the town. With proposed development of several hundred new homes in Whitnash over the next 15 years¹⁰ there is an even greater need to provide multi-use community facilities to meet future needs.

The Town Council is confident that the new Community Hub will fill a gap and a need within the town and will reflect the experiences of other local community centres such as Chase Meadow and St Chads, that have generated considerable demand from existing and new user groups as a result of new facilities provided.

These could include:

- Mums and Toddlers Club (linked to the proximity of the Whitnash Primary School)
- Parent and child activities/classes/crèche
- Scouts, brownies and other uniformed groups
- Youth groups / activity clubs
- Hobby or interest groups e.g. local history group, sewing group, slimming club
- Community based organisations e.g. Women's Institute; Mothers' Union

⁹ Quality of Life Report 2013-14 ~ Warwickshire Observatory

¹⁰ Warwick District Council Local Plan Consultation document March 2017

- Health and well-being groups e.g. Dementia Café; AgeUK
- Local consultation events e.g. planning applications
- Community activity base and forum hosting
- Business events and meetings
- Town council meetings
- Library reading classes
- Adult education classes e.g. IT, languages
- Exercise classes e.g. Zumba, Yoga, Pilates
- Music, bands, choral, gigs, theatre performances
- Cinema nights
- Computer user group e.g. 'Silver surfers'; AbilityNet
- Room and hall hire for birthday parties/christenings/wakes/Divali

Market penetration

Prior to building completion and opening, a programme of pre-launch marketing will take place within the town and amongst local organisations and businesses groups to raise awareness of the new Community Hub, its facilities, its availability and booking information including online bookings. Once the Centre is open, a programme of special events will be held to ensure maximum coverage – these will include the 'grand opening' event itself, open days, sports/fun activities, cinema nights and concerts hosted by the Town Council to encourage future use of the Centre.

The communication channels for marketing the Centre have been identified and include:-

- Whitnash Town Council website www.whitnashtowncouncil.gov.uk and magazine
- Social media pages e.g. Facebook, Twitter
- Local press and media e.g. Leamington Courier and Observer
- Posters in local shops, the Library, Health Centre, Primary School, nursery schools
- Council noticeboards across the town.
- A leaflet drop across the town
- Third party websites e.g. WDC/WCC council links; Warwickshire Directory; Warwickshire College; Netmums
- Direct contact e.g. email, letters, phone etc. with commercial operators of children's classes, dance clubs, slimming clubs, and exercise classes.
- Local sports and social clubs
- Direct contact with local business wishing to hire the Hub for meetings or sports activities.

Target user profiles

1. **Young families and pre-school** - With the planned increase in housing in Whitnash and surrounding areas, this will increase the number of young families. The new Community Hub and Library will not only provide a suitable environment for parents and children but will also attract commercial organisations providing services and activities for this key user group and always on the lookout for new modern venues for their activities. This will form an important day time usage profile and income opportunity for the Hub.
2. **School age users** – formal arrangements will be made with Whitnash Primary School and other local schools and pre-school nurseries and include usage by early years uniformed groups e.g. Rainbows, Beavers, Cubs, Brownies as well as youth groups and activity clubs. The Town Council is acutely aware that many school students do not have the resource to access main leisure centre facilities in Warwick or Leamington – and are keen to encourage 'walk to play' routines for local young people.

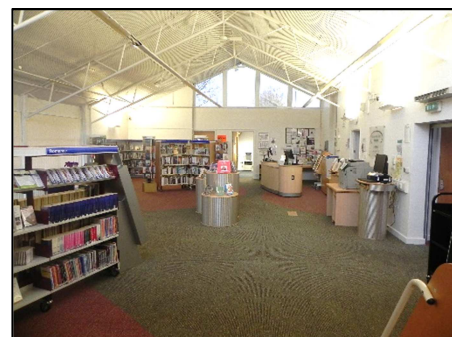
3. **Teenagers** - Whitnash Town Council is keen to ensure that there is no excuse for anti-social behaviour due to 'boredom' and lack of access for teenagers and young adults. Whilst the new Hub will provide facilities for older uniformed groups e.g. Scouts, Guides, Rangers, it will also encourage informal youth group activities. Reductions in youth services due to public sector budget cuts is encouraging the introduction of volunteer-led services – a development the Town Council are keen to promote and support. It is yet to be decided on the 'times of opening' of the new Community Hub – but this target sector's needs will be carefully scrutinised and considered in discussions with youth representatives.
4. **Working age users** – most likely to use the Community Hub facilities in the evenings and at weekends for social and leisure purposes. This category will form an important part of the income generation anticipated – and close liaison with the District Council leisure services will ensure that gaps in provision are filled.
5. **Over 65's** – WTC consider this grouping as a major user of the new Community Hub facilities during the daytime – and as such will be a key target market. Some will have a relatively high level of disposable income and access 'pay and play' facilities and services. Others however will be less well-off and find transport to other 'out of town' facilities challenging - the Council is keen to ensure that the new Hub provides affordable access for all.
6. **Business users** – whilst this is not anticipated to be a large user group for the new Hub, nevertheless the building and facilities should provide a quality and professional environment for selected hire activities and promotions.

Competition and Complementarity

The Council has no intention of opening up the Community Hub as competition with other venues in the locality – whether they are similar community centres or part of the District Council's leisure, culture and sports offerings. The demand for the new Hub and Library is very well supported amongst the residents of Whitnash – and the Council has been careful to design a new facility that is both affordable, fit for purpose and suits the demands of the whole community. Indeed the Hub will fill a big gap in Whitnash town's provision – and will work closely with other centres to ensure mutual benefits e.g. Chase Meadow, Warwick Gates, and St. Chads.

The potential to 'fill the community facility gap' can be illustrated by several situations in and around the town:

Whitnash Library – currently owned and managed by Warwickshire County Council, the current service will be relocated to the new Community Hub as part of the re-organisation of library services across the county. The Hub facility will reflect the new multi-media and resource methods now being adopted as part of 'Library for the Future'. This will benefit from the increased and multi-use footfall that the Hub is likely to attract and represent a real driver for 'one-stop-shop' provision – in a central location and within walking distance for many residents.



Whitnash Primary School – an expanding school servicing the town and located on the edge of Acre Close Field without its own school hall. WPS will be a major user of the Hall in particular – for



daytime sports activities, assemblies, performances – and in the evenings for parents' evenings. The School is in regular communication with the Council to ensure that its requirements can be serviced through the new Community Hub.



Whitnash Sports and Social Club – a well-established private sports club provides good facilities for lawn bowls, petanque, tennis and indoor games as well as a social bar for members. They also host local football and rugby clubs that use the sports pitches on Acre Field and provide changing rooms. Whilst not part of this current Business Plan due to budget limitations, at a later stage consideration will be given to constructing new outdoor changing rooms as part of the new Hub and adjacent to the outdoor pitches.

Trident Centre (Warwickshire College) – a major Further Education training centre within a short walk (1 km) from Acre Close Field and with no on-site sport or leisure facility, this represents a potentially important user group especially for the Hall and team sport provision.



Section G - Risks and Issues

Risk Analysis

As part of this Business Plan and as a requirement for the funding applications planned for the new Community Hub, a risk analysis is provided below:

Risk	Level	Mitigation
Construction costs exceed pre-tender estimate	Medium	A pre-tender estimate has been prepared by Quantity Surveyors. If the tenders returned show that costs exceed the pre-tender estimate then either further funding will be sought or further value engineering will take place to reduce cost.
Inability to obtain funds timed to fund construction	Medium	Several developer contribution and external funding streams have been identified with majority funding coming from New Homes Bonus and S106/CIL developer contributions via Warwick District Council. WDC has now agreed with WTC to provide a bridging loan to fill the funding gap until S106/CIL payments are all realised. An analysis has been made of the criteria to be met for each grant awarding body and the likelihood of obtaining them. Community crowd funding to be investigated.
Insufficient parking is available on the new Hub site	Low	As access to the new Community Centre will remain via Acre Close this Business Plan assumes the same level of traffic as for the existing community hall (which will be decommissioned). Pre-application advice will be sought from WCC Highways Planning team in advance to maximise the amount of permitted car parking. Planning permission has been achieved for the Hub. It is therefore unlikely that this risk will materialise. However as the existing community hall will be retained (whilst being decommissioned) customers will be able to access additional parking in the north east of the playing fields.
Unable to fulfil planning conditions, including the requirements for the playing pitches	Medium	Planning conditions to be carefully monitored by project team. A detailed programme of work to be produced and owned by WDC Client Agent setting out what work needs to happen and by when. Close communication with Whitnash Sports and Social Club, Whitnash Town Football Club and Leamington Royals Rugby Club.
Insufficient income from new Community Centre to cover costs	Medium	The Business Plan includes a forecast of the likely income for the new Community Hub to reach the same level as similar centres in the area within 3 years. The plan also includes sensitivity models for a -10% and also a +20% income level. The new Community Hub was a key component of the Neighbourhood Plan and well supported in the Referendum and has strong local support. A marketing and promotional campaign will be carried out.

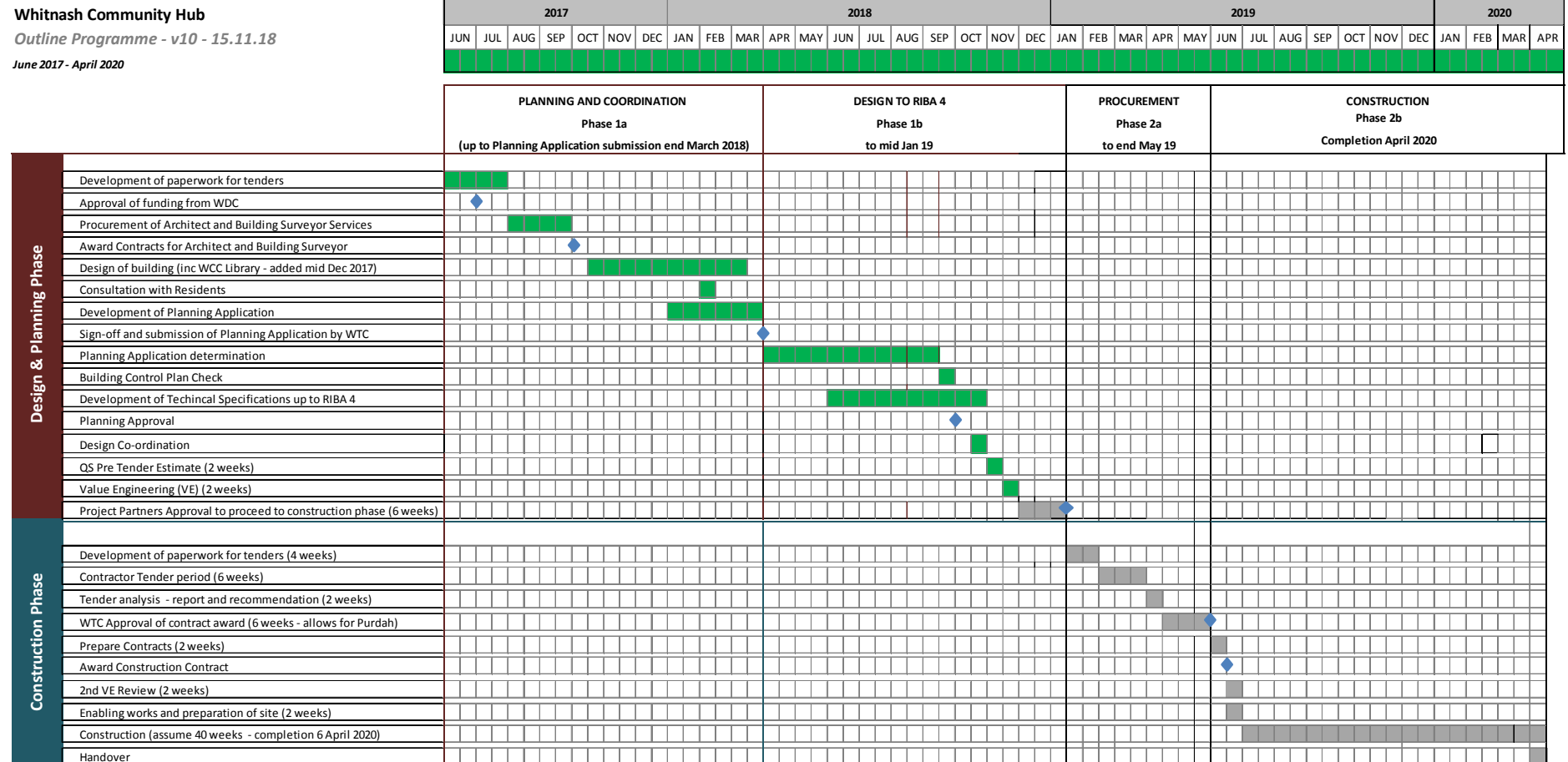
Issues Log

ISSUE LOG							
Project: Whitnash Community Hub						Date:	March 2017
Issue	Description	Priority (H, M, L)	Category	Responsibility	Status	Date Resolved part resolved	Resolution/ Comments
001	Robust Business Plan required to meet funding criteria	H	Funding	ATI /WDC	Closed	30.3.17 20.12.17 October 18	Business Plan (including Library) completed and refreshed Oct 18 to include pre-tender estimate.
002	Funding needs to be secured and confirmed from WDC	H	Funding	WDC / AJ WTC	Open		Additional grant of £500k from WDC Additional loan from PWLB to be approved.
003	Initial Prudential borrowing need for WTC	H	Funding	WDC / WTC	Closed	18.12.17	WTC confirm £100k PWLB application
004	Access to external grants – Sport England	H	Funding	ATI	Open	(20.12.17)	Community Asset Fund application in
005	Landfill Trust external grants	H	Funding	ATI	Open		Landfill Trusts applications
006	Design and layout of new Hub building	M	Planning requirement	Architect in place	Closed		Planning Permission Granted – September 18

007	Public consultation event to be arranged	M	Promotion and Marketing	WTC / ATI	Closed		Feb 6 th 2018 Acre Field
008	Availability of utilities for new building	H	Funding	Project Manager	Open		Utilities connections underway

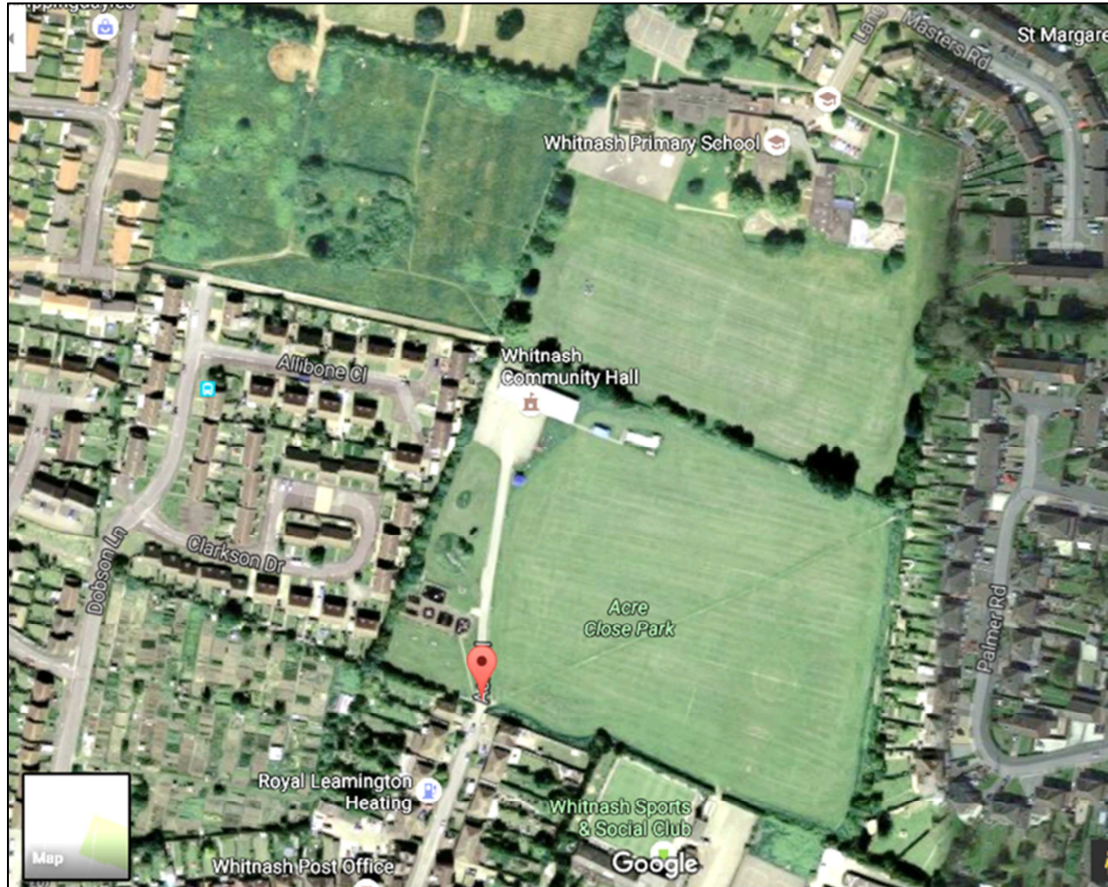
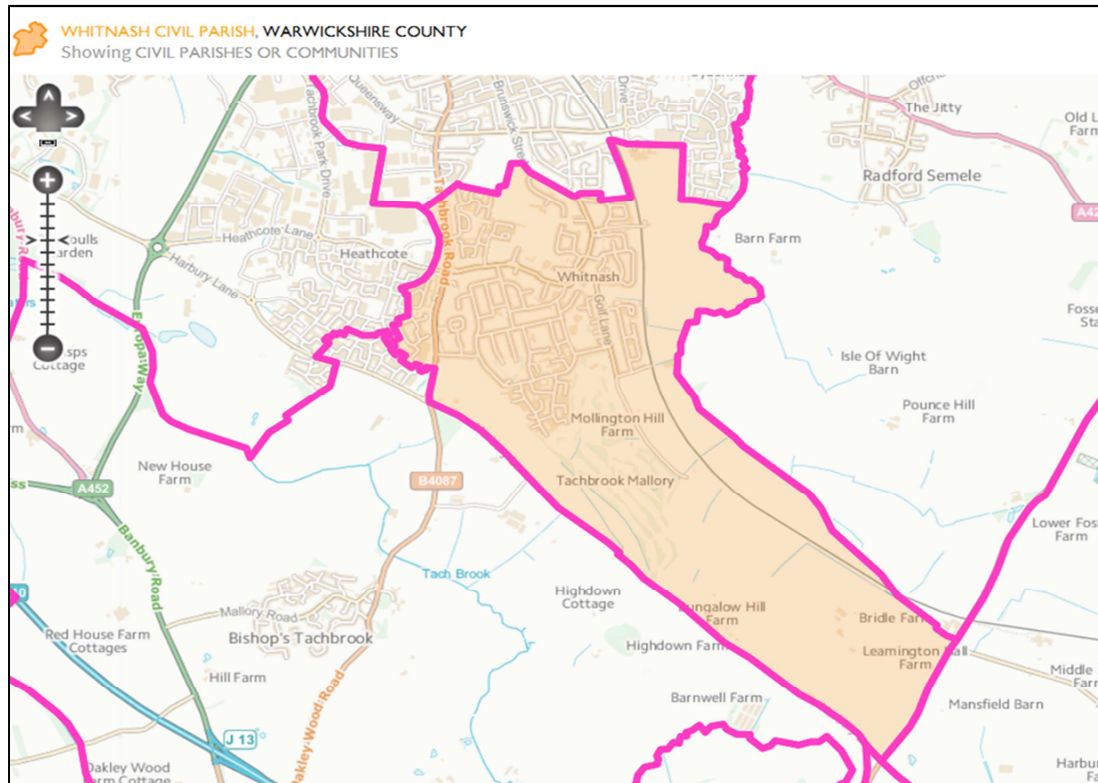
Section H – Project Plan and Milestones

The project timeline below is indicative and is designed to provide a clear target for 2017-2020 activities.



Appendices

Appendix 1 - Whitnash Local Maps



Appendix 2 –Whitnash Neighbourhood Development Plan Extracts

5.1 - A Community Hub for Whitnash

5.1.1 Whitnash has developed over time without a strongly defined town centre. The population has increased rapidly from the mid-20th century, and in the space of a few decades the population increased by over five times. The town has three neighbourhood shopping areas; Coppice Road, Heathcote Road /Acre Close and Home Farm Crescent, but there is no “town centre” as such, providing a focus or hub for Town Council activities, shopping and community facilities. The existing community centre is in a poor condition, rather outdated and is sited in a rather isolated location a short distance away from the Acre Close shops and across an area of public open space.

5.1.2 New sites with development potential for such a community hub are of limited availability, as the area is experiencing strong development pressure for new housing, and several possible sites such as those around Warwick Gates / Tachbrook Road on the boundary between existing and proposed housing areas, already have planning consent for residential development.

5.1.3 Warwick District Council is supportive of investment in a new community hub / town centre type of facility for Whitnash and recognises that the future sustainable growth of the town will require improvements in existing local facilities and services. The emerging Local Plan Policy HS6 Creating Healthy Communities advises that Development Proposals will be permitted provided that they address key requirements associated with delivering health benefits to the community as:

- a) good access to healthcare facilities;
- b) opportunities for incidental healthy exercise, safe walking and cycling networks;
- c) opportunities for community cohesion by the provision of accessible services and community facilities and places and opportunities for people to interact;
- d) Access to high quality and safe green or open spaces, and;
- e) Access to opportunities to partake in indoor and outdoor sport and recreation.

5.1.4 Warwick District Council recognises the need for a new community hub type facility in Whitnash and has commissioned a feasibility study for Whitnash Community Hub at Acre Close.

5.1.5 The Town Council have also identified a number of requirements for the proposed new facility. These include:

- Preferably centrally located rather than on the outskirts of the town
- A HUB (rather than just a hall / centre)
- Accommodation should be available to be utilised (not necessarily full time) by the following organisations/agencies, Town Council, Police (Safer Neighbourhood Team) Town Development Officer (not full time as shared post with Leamington Spa), Library and Internet library, meeting rooms, MP (not full time), Healthcare & Clinic facilities and Cafe.
- A large community hall of high standard that could be hired out by groups and individuals
- Purpose built for easy access with a car park
- A facility where local people can sell produce from allotments etc. / crafts / art work
- Space to be utilised by groups putting on displays etc. and also fundraising e.g. schools etc.)
- Central point to access for information
- **The Acre Close Site would be ideal.**

5.1.6 Currently, there is one doctor's surgery, one dentist and no opticians or hearing services in Whitnash. There are concerns that this may not be sufficient, both numerically and geographically, as the number of households increase as a result of the proposed new development in and around Whitnash. Local residents are dependent on Warwick Hospital for serious medical conditions and there is no direct bus service between the town and the hospital.

The Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (April 2014) identifies a proposal (H6 Leamington) for the expansion of existing medical centres in Leamington or provision of new facility under phase 2 (cost £2m). The details of this proposal have yet to be determined but including possible healthcare provision at the proposed community hub would support such a proposal in this same location as other local services, should it come forward.

5.1.7 The Town Council consider that the need for a new Community Hub is the overriding key issue to be addressed in the Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan. There is a need to identify a suitable site and planning policies to support the provision of a new, improved local community hub incorporating important local facilities such as a civic building / meeting rooms, office space and community facilities such as a library. The community hub should be centrally located to enhance and support retail facilities such as those at Acre Close and to provide complimentary environmental improvements such as improvements in local parking provision. 'Policy W1: A New Community Hub for Whitnash : Proposals for a new Community Hub for Whitnash' will be supported in principle.

The Community Hub is encouraged to include the following development:

- A new community centre to meet the needs of local residents and groups.
- A civic centre which provides office space for the activities of the Town Council.
- A new library with internet facilities.
- A police sub-station.
- Healthcare facilities
- Other suitable community and retail uses (A1 – A5).

The Community Hub will complement and enhance any existing local retail facilities and through careful siting and location and the provision of improved parking and high quality landscaping. Detailed proposals will be informed by the results of a feasibility study which will be commissioned to consider the cost implications, proposed uses, access and siting of the proposed Community Hub.

5.1.8 If the Hub is provided in the Acre Close area, a key area which would require addressing at an early stage would be the need to improve vehicular access to the proposed Hub. Access arrangements for the Community Hub should be discussed with the County Council as part of the proposed feasibility study.

5.2 Protecting Local Facilities

5.2.1 Whitnash has a range of local community facilities which serve the needs of local people and play a vital role in supporting the town's strong sense of local community and individual identity. These facilities include the following:

- Acre Close Playing Fields
- Washbourne Playing Fields (South Farm)
- Whitnash Community Centre, Acre Close

- Whitnash Library
- Whitnash Sports & Social Club (including bowling, football, rugby, petanque, tennis)
- Leamington Football Club
- St Margaret's Church Centre
- Leamington & County Golf Club
- Montgomery Road play area
- Brook Valley
- Harbury Lane open spaces
- Chapel Green

5.2.2 The Town Council recognises the importance of these facilities and would like to protect them from inappropriate changes of use. Shops in Acre Close and other neighbourhood centres at Coppice Road and Home Farm Crescent at present provide valued local retail facilities, but parking is limited and the lack of parking and problems of traffic associated with this need to be addressed.

5.3 Protection of Local Centres and Community Facilities

Within the defined local centres (see Map 4 below) of:

- Heathcote Road / Acre Close
- Coppice Road and
- Home Farm Crescent Development - retail (A1 – A5 uses) - community facilities permitted.

The loss of retail and community uses in these centres will be resisted and proposals for changes of use from retail, commercial, or community use, to residential uses at ground floor level in the defined neighbourhood centres will not be permitted. Residential uses will normally be allowed at first floor level to safeguard the vitality of the relevant centres where ground floors are retained in retail or community use.

The following local Community Facilities are to be protected for community use:

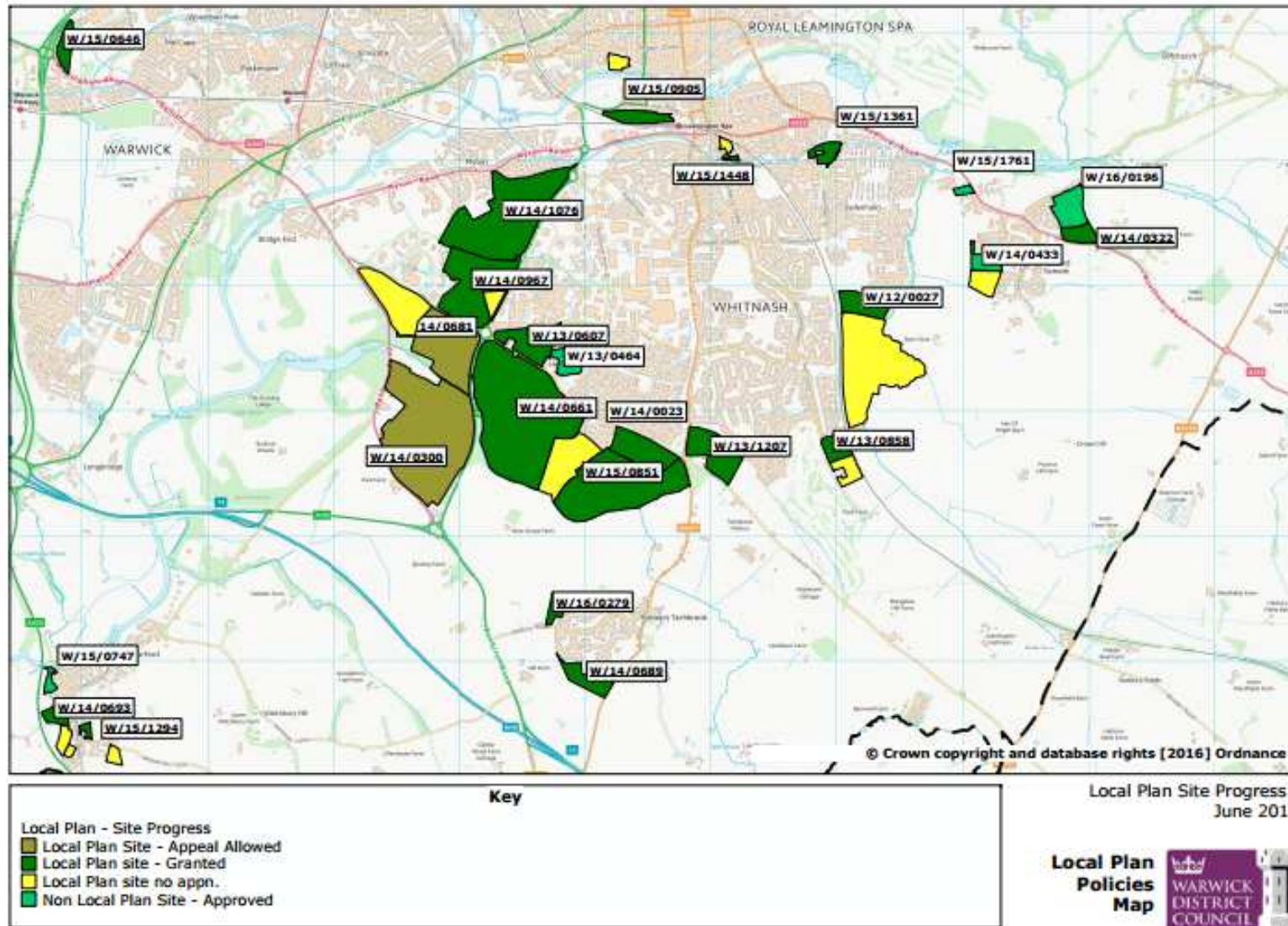
- The Whitnash Community Centre (or its replacement)
- The Whitnash Sports & Social Club
- St Margaret's Church Centre
- Whitnash Medical Centre
- Whitnash Library
- St Margaret's Church
- Whitnash Methodist Church
- St Joseph's Catholic Church

There will be a presumption in favour of the retention of any community facility for health and community uses. The change of use of the Community Assets defined above to other uses will not be permitted unless the following can be demonstrated:

(a) The proposal includes alternative provision, on a site within the locality, of equivalent or enhanced facilities. Such sites should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and have adequate car parking; or

(b) There is no longer a need for the facility, and this can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority advised by the Whitnash Town Council.

Appendix 3 – Warwick District Local Plan ~ Sites Progress July 2016



Appendix 4 – Whitnash Town Council Finance Summary (to be updated)

Whitnash Town Council, Franklin Road, Whitnash, CV31 2JH

Town Clerk: Mrs Jenny Mason 01926 470394

Whitnash Town Council sets an annual budget dependant on expected expenditure less expected income, this is our precept which is received from WDC.

Monies may be included in this figure that will be c/f at the year end and ring fenced in reserves for specific projects e.g. election expenses, capital expenditure and projects that have not been completed by the end of the financial year.

The Council may also receive grants which are ring fenced to be used only for the specific purpose they have been granted.

Our annual return details all income and expenditure for the financial year ending 31st March and includes grants and other specified income and expenditure.

The total of all bank balance at the yearend includes all earmarked reserves together with any grant & specified income which is c/f for on-going projects that haven't been completed during the current financial year plus 50% of our annual precept.



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