



Financial update

Avening Parish Council

I am writing to everyone in the village to update you on the Parish Council's financial position and to explain our plans for the coming financial year.

This has been a difficult year for all of us. The Parish Council has worked hard to make sure that we do what we can for each other during the pandemic and the restrictions imposed by it.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the Parish Council decided to freeze all but essential spend and running costs as we did not know what calls would be made on our funds. For example, out of our current precept (the precept is a Parish Council tax and is added to your Council Tax bill every year) of around £28,000, £13,000 is needed to keep the village in good order (e.g. grass cutting), the clerk's salary, insurances, and other expenses, all of which we had to continue to pay. It was difficult, however to make progress on projects such as the playing field improvements. As a result of freezing spend and deferring new projects, we have been able to build up our financial reserves and we are now in a good financial position.

However, during this year we have unexpectedly had to take back management of the Memorial Hall and have spent a lot of time reviewing the governance and management structure. There are several significant areas that need attention - drainage improvements to stop rising damp; roof repairs/replacement; kitchen refurbishment; floor repairs; and - as I'm sure every visitor to the Hall would agree - better toilet and handwashing facilities.

The principal tenant of the hall is Gloucestershire County Council who provide the funds on behalf of Avening School. We have therefore been talking to the GCC about both the long-term future of the Hall and to work with their specialists to carry out a thorough survey of the building. We already know that costs will be significant and we will need to put aside funds from our budget towards the total costs of the improvements, which could be around

£100,000 will be funded by the GCC and other grants, and thanks to your generosity from the WW1 events in 2018 e.g. sponsoring roof tiles, we already have around £2500 available for the roof. However, this year we will raise an additional £5000 via an increased precept. It is always a difficult decision to do this, especially in the current circumstances, and we have tried to keep the increase to as low as we possibly can, whilst protecting a much-loved and important community facility. For those in the lowest Council Tax band, this will mean an additional 73 pence on your monthly Council tax bill; for those in the highest band it will be an additional £2.20 a month.

Band	2020/21 precept	2021/22 Precept	Increase (PM)
A	39.95	47.29	£ 0.73
B	46.61	55.17	£ 0.86
C	53.27	63.05	£ 0.98
D	59.92	70.93	£ 1.10
E	73.24	86.69	£ 1.35
F	86.56	102.45	£ 1.59
G	99.87	118.22	£ 1.83
H	119.85	141.86	£ 2.20

We do hope that you will agree this is a modest outlay to secure the future of the Memorial Hall in its 100th year.

Our priority is to make the Hall safe and comfortable, and to ensure that our highly-respected School can continue to use it. We also want to make sure that when we can all get back together again, other users of the Hall also benefit from the improvements.

As always I am happy to listen your concerns and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you to everyone for all the efforts that have been made over the past year.

Cllr. Tony Slater. Chairman, Avening Parish Council.
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