

KIRKBY MALZEARD, LAVERTON AND DALLOWGILL PARISH COUNCIL

PUBLIC EXHIBITION AT THE MECHANICS
INSTITUTE - SEPTEMBER 9, 2017

TO GAUGE SUPPORT FOR AN INCREASE TO THE
PRECEPT FROM THE COUNCIL TAX TO FUND
LARGER GRANTS FOR LOCAL ORGANISATIONS.

The Parish Council is currently considering whether to increase the precept which it receives from Council Tax payments made by the occupiers of properties within the Parish, in order to provide additional funding to local organisations.

£2,200 has been allocated within our budget for the current (2017-18) financial year for such payments and this will be shared out following a formal application process. Each organisation is asked to justify the funding request that they make with reference to their current financial position, their projected budget requirements and specific uses for which the money would be used. Last year (2016-17) £1,600 was allocated to the Mechanics Institute, £500 to the Highside Playing Fields Association and £115 to Kirkby in Bloom.

To put these figures into perspective the total precept which the Parish Council receives this year (2017-18) will be £9,680. This is a relatively small proportion of the total sum collected through the Council Tax, most of which goes to North Yorkshire County Council, Harrogate Borough Council, Adult Social Care, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commission.

The Parish Council also receives an annual income from rents received where land owned by the Council is let (the Highways Yard at Laverton, the Wood-yard on Kirkby Moor Road and the Pinfold in Kirkby Malzeard) which this year totalled £1,770. A detailed breakdown of how the money is used is itemised within our annual accounts which are available on our website www.kmldpc.btck.co.uk but essentially the bulk is used to pay our Clerk (necessary to meet our statutory responsibilities), grass cutting within the villages, public liability insurance for Council owned areas such as Lamberts Quarry, general maintenance throughout the Parish and sums towards the upkeep of the Children's Play area in Kirkby Malzeard.

This year a Band D Council Tax payer within our Parish paid a total sum of £1725.87 of which £18.93 was for the Parish Council precept. By comparison a Band D Council Tax payer in Grewelthorpe paid £20.52 towards the Parish, in Azerley (Galphay, Winksley and Mickley) £21.98 and in Grantley/Sawley Parish £27.80. Some other parishes are considerably higher and others are lower.

Our suggestion is that next year (2018-19) we increase the figure for local organisation grants from £2,200 to £4,000 and in the following year (2019-20) increase this again to £6,000 at which level it would remain for the intervening years until it is reviewed again prior to the 2023-24 precept being set, when a further consultation will be held. Allowing for minor increases elsewhere in our budget we have assumed approximate total precept sums for 2018-19 of £12,000 and for 2019-20 a figure of £14,000. We currently have reserves of approximately £10,000 and we can use some of these if any unforeseen expenditure arises on other items over the next two years.

Harrogate Borough Council have advised us that for a Band D taxpayer (Band D is the mid-range payment) the suggested increases would result in an extra annual amount of just over £5 per household in 2018-19 and a further £4 for 2019-20 onwards, which equates to 10p per week for the first year and then a total of 18p

for the following years. These figures are approximate but they would not anticipate any substantial variation. Bands A, B and C will pay proportionately less and Bands E, F, G and H proportionately more.

It is hoped that the additional funding for local organisations will help sustain the facilities within the Parish in the coming years. Any local organisation can apply for funding but we shall not be allocating money unless it is justified. If there was a year when we felt that payments amounting to the total fund available could not be justified the balance would be held over to the following year and the precept reduced for that year.

We have asked the three organisations who currently receive funding to explain why they feel that additional sums are needed.

Highside Playing Fields Association

Kirkby Malzeard is extremely fortunate in having excellent village sport and recreation facilities at the Highside Playing Fields which are available for use by all. These include a Public Play Area, Sports Pavilion, Bowls Green and Club House, Tennis Courts, Cricket, Football pitches for both Senior and Junior teams, a Multi-Use Games Area and Quoits Court. The ongoing funding of these great facilities is almost entirely down to village fund raising and the main grant we obtain towards grass cutting from Harrogate Borough Council is due to be withdrawn shortly.

We are becoming extremely concerned about the long-term funding viability of these village recreation facilities especially when now faced with further grant cuts. There is a real chance that in 2 to 3 years Highside will no longer have sufficient funds to continue. If this happens then Highside and all the sport facilities may close in which case there will no longer be any Bowls, Tennis, Junior and Senior Football, Cricket, Playing Fields, or Public Play Area in Kirkby Malzeard.

Obviously, Highside are trying to do everything they can to continue to raise money through events such as the recent successful Duck Race at Laverton, however Highside does need financial assistance at a local level, with grant funding provided by the Parish Council through raising the Precept, which we hope would be fully supported by all members of the Parish to enable your excellent recreation facilities to continue.

Mechanics Institute

The Mechanics Institute Village Hall (formerly The Mechanics Institute) was established and built as a 2-story building in 1859 as part of the great Victorian Education and Training initiative to educate the laboring classes. In 1936 the top storey was removed and the large hall was added.

In more recent years an annex, toilets and kitchen refurbishments have taken place and unlike the original building (gifted by an individual) a large amount of grant aid capital had to be raised.

Over the years the cost of maintaining this well used Village resource has steadily increased and despite the prudence and hard work of the voluntary Trustees to raise monies, annual costs have caught up with annual income. Due to the age and size of the building, basic structures have needed attention. Roof, Electrics, re-pointing, re-decoration have had to be dealt with in order to comply with public comfort and safety.

The Governance and Management of the Hall has historically been by public subscription and membership income falls well short of the annual overheads. The Halls consistent use as a public venue is the only source of income and as such requires public ownership.

In order to improve the buildings ambience, the Trustees are currently aiming to improve the buildings reception, hospitality and meeting / information areas by applying for a National Lottery grant. We sincerely hope that the Public, via the Parish Council will back an increase in the precept to continue supporting this valuable community asset.

Kirkby in Bloom

Kirkby in Bloom is a village organization that helps make Kirkby Malzeard a lovely place to live and visit. We care for the Jubilee Garden, the welcome sign and benches, troughs and shrubs around the village. We coordinate the annual entry into Yorkshire in Bloom and village tidy ups. We are grateful for the Parish Council's annual funding of the Yorkshire in Bloom entry fee and our insurance cover. We are requesting additional funding to put up a heritage information board and for necessary repairs and replacements of benches and troughs to further enhance our lovely village.