



# Kings Hill Parish Council

*Enhancing the lives of the Kings Hill Community*



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## PRESS RELEASE

### **15% increase in 2020-21 precept**

There have been a number of enquiries regarding the recent council tax increases, particularly the Kings Hill Parish Council tax increase of 15%, and the purpose of this press release is to address those questions.

Resident's concerns are entirely reasonable given the lower levels of the other tax elements, which are more in line with the prevailing rate of inflation. In this context, the Kings Hill Parish Council increase appears excessive.

As you will know from earlier press releases, Kings Hill Parish Council has over the past two financial years been running the Sports Park at a significant loss – circa £150,000 in 2018-2019 and a projected loss of £90,000 for the current financial year 2019-2020. Over that period, it has been necessary for the council to use its reserves to fill the shortfall. Those reserves are now almost exhausted.

During the latter part of 2019, and flowing into 2020, the parish council has found it necessary to take a number of highly unpopular actions to stem the losses, and to increase the Sports Park revenues. As many will know, these measures included:

1. the pitch maintenance which has now been outsourced
2. the removal of the 10% Kings Hill Football Club discount
3. the removal of the Kings Hill Football Club priority booking

... and we continue to pursue further actions to:

4. maximise grass pitch and 3G pitch hire revenues for the 2020-21 season
5. increase the footfall in the café, with existing and new customers
6. introduce new sports to the park, namely rugby, netball and tennis

These measures are doing a lot to bring the Sports Park back into balance, but they will necessarily take time, and some further investment. It is in

this context that the Kings Hill Parish Council has had to make the unpopular decision to increase the Precept (the Parish Council portion of the council tax).

The parish council is also pursuing two other investigative actions, namely:

- To examine ways for the Sports Park to be more independently run, within a self-funded or externally supported financial framework
- To examine in more detail the root causes of the prior year losses such that the council can avoid making the same mistakes in future.

The Parish Council apologises to the residents of Kings Hill for this necessary action, but it has no option but to balance its books.

#### Notes to Editors:

**Kings Hill Parish Council** was formed in 1999 and consists of 12 elected parish councillors serving the local community on a voluntary basis. Parish Council officers undertake the work of the Council representing the community and delivering community benefits throughout the village. We are consulted on planning applications in the parish and work closely with local community groups serving Kings Hill and the local area. The provision and management of allotments, looking after open spaces, maintaining bus shelters and community building, providing facilities for the community, such as the Kings Hill Community Centre and Kings Hill Sports Park, are just some of the responsibilities carried out by Kings Hill Parish Council.

For further information on Kings Hill Parish Council please contact the Clerk to Kings Hill Parish Council on 01732-870382 or [clerk@kingshillparish.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@kingshillparish.gov.uk).