



Kings Hill Parish Council is a corporate body of 12 elected representatives working together to improve the lives of Kings Hill residents. This is a review of our past year.

From the Chairman

This annual report is a positive reflection of a dramatic turnaround in the management of finance and staffing resources, within a more progressive council membership over the past 10 months. The majority of councillors' in place since that time have brought a wide range of valuable business skills and along with a new, enthusiastic staff team. A comprehensive analysis of the parish council finances and renewed commitment to the legitimate management of public funds has enabled the reversion from a certain deficit into a positive position. The change in council membership has reinvigorated the drive to provide Kings Hill residents with more meaningful representation in addition to a more focused strategic direction.

Overview of Performance

Following these significant changes, Kings Hill Parish Council has achieved the following: -

In spite of the additional challenges of economic recovery as the country has emerged from the Covid pandemic, the KHPC finances have been the subject of intense rebuilding and restructuring to provide a healthier and more robust operating framework, including the accumulation of sufficient reserves to maintain this position. This has however, required a 7% uplift in the annual precept for the coming year and will hopefully minimize the need for such an uplift in 2023. This rise actually equates to an increase of just over £1 per month for households. If the current trend continues, allowing for inflationary pressures, fuel and materials price rises; the objective is to achieve a nil increase for 2023. This should be possible through more realistic assessments and stringent scrutiny of our plans for income and expenditure over the coming year.

The restructuring of the finances has also enabled the repayment of a loan from TMBC and has ensured that no further loans are required.

Financial analyses necessarily required a 'belts and braces' assessment of resources. As a consequence, the staffing structure has been reviewed and a significant reduction of organisational costs has been achieved over a very short period of time. This has been enabled through the implementation of a more effective staffing structure. This is reflective of income, business needs and efficiencies, contributing to a change in organisational culture and more resilient business practices, within the Parish Council model for an area such as this.

The new staff team have been involved in assisting councillors to reshape financial management but also in developing income generation potential through much improved, service/facility user oriented communication. It is a credit to the new team to have created positive relationships with our hirers and customers that had been previously lacking, generating new income generation opportunities as a consequence. The recent Parish Council office upgrades are being maximized to improve visibility and capacity for further future development.

Issues were identified with the transfer of the Sports Park to TM Active last year, which placed the Parish Council at risk of a number of liabilities. As contracts had already been signed by the previous administration, it was necessary to re-engage with TMA. As a result of positive negotiations, a number of concessions were agreed to reduce risks to Kings Hill Parish Council. This process has significantly improved the working relationship with TMA and established a thorough and strong partnership for the ongoing benefit of Kings Hill residents and sports park users.

The events of the past two years have reinforced the importance of openness, transparency and accountability with regards parish council business. The majority of councillors recognise their responsibilities to the residents of Kings Hill and are establishing an ongoing working group to organize community engagement events and activities. This will help to not only bring community groups, residents and local businesses together but to encourage meaningful community involvement to steer the future direction of the council.

Future Plans

Plans for the coming year therefore necessarily include the establishment of a resident engagement working group to enable planning and implementation of community-based events. The objective is to encourage knowledge, ideas and information sharing through networking and community engagement, improving relationships that will enable the area to thrive.

Identification of grants and other income generation opportunities.

Skills audit of councillors to create a balanced council with the capacity and capabilities to properly serve the residents of Kings Hill with due diligence and respect.

Continue to reviews ways to improve quality standards, council performance, effective financial management and the maintenance of a positive, customer oriented staff and organisational culture.

Tackle the issues and concerns of the residents regarding the future of our parish collaboratively.

Community Centre

Mary Ellis Hall: After some initial problems with acoustics which left the hall almost unusable this has been resolved with the Developer and we now have we have a very useful hall which has regular bookings. The acoustics are now very good and with new activities planned for the future. The Parish Council are also planning to develop hospitality facilities in this area.



Townsend and Jim Fry Halls: The Parish Council are looking to plan a program of refurbishment in these areas over the coming year to provide an up lift to the useability and enjoyment for our long term hirers.

Committee Structures: All sub committees of the council were closed down in 2021 and all the previous responsibilities of these committees are now covered at Full Council. If you have a concern or a suggestion you can still put this forward at a meeting and know that the whole council will be looking at the idea. Following the meeting 13 April 2022 the Planning Committee was reformed.



Allotments: The Parish Office have been working closely with the allotment holders and the allotment holders association to improve vacant or unmanaged plots. We now have a virtually full site with a waiting list developing for the new allotments that should be built and ready to occupy late in 2022. A significant improvement with the new site will be that they will be level and suitable for those in wheelchairs or with limited mobility.

What is a Parish Council?

A Parish Council is the tier of local government closest to the people. It is not linked to the church in any way. The Council can respond to the needs of the community - delivering the services or representation it most needs. To do this well we need to hear from the community about local issues, so please keep in touch.

Who runs the Council?

Parish Council elections were held in May 2019 to elect twelve councillors to run the council for four years. They work for the community on an unpaid basis. A Parish Clerk is appointed to advise the Council and manage the administration of the Council. All decisions are made by the corporate body of the council at constituted meetings, it is unlawful for an individual councillor to make or carry out decisions of the council outside of a meeting.

What does Kings Hill Parish Council (KHPC) do?

KHPC is responsible for the following:

- Management and upkeep of Kings Hill Community Centre
- Maintenance of the playground and green in Anson Avenue and other open spaces in Phase 1
- Installation and replenishment of salt bins in residential areas
- The provision and maintenance of a bus shelter
- Community Notice Boards
- Kings Hill Allotments
- Consulted on all planning applications in the parish
- Acting as a liaison between the community and other local organisations and Councils
- Nominating representatives to serve on local voluntary, public and community organisations

You can contact us
via our website



www.kingshillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Write to us at Kings Hill Community Centre, 70 Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, ME19 4LG.

Follow us on social media.

Your Councillors

Tony Petty (Chair)
Shakira Falzon-Thomas (Vice)
Andrea Kilvington
Angela Vincent
Dave Hurring
David Rush
David Waller
Margaret Colman
Siobhan Kirk
Sarah Barker



Jubilee Events



These activities will be supported by the Parish Council where resources will be allocated to local residents groups and organisations who are planning to celebrate the event in a variety of ways. The Parish Council has secured lottery funding to put on events purchasing items that can be shared with the community, including: bunting, pop up shelters, tables, chairs, PA system, high viz vests. Applications for support must be in by the end of April 2022 so that resources can be co-ordinated.