



24 July 2024

Email: piddinghoepec@gmail.com

Dear Piddinghoe Householder,

CONSULTATION ON WHETHER TO INCREASE COUNCIL TAX TO COVER THE FUNDING SHORTFALL FOR THE VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT

Piddinghoe's Village Hall is an important asset for our community. As a meeting and activity space it provides a focal point for social interaction, from regular coffee mornings and pilates classes, to film, disco and quiz nights. Converted from a farm outbuilding in 1972, the hall's fabric, fittings and decor are wanting, however, with poor energy ratings and out of date amenities. It desperately needs investment.

The hall is run by a Management Committee (the VHMC) as a charity (no. 264645), the trustees of which are Sarah Woolger, Angie Ridge and Amanda Brimble. With support from many other volunteers the VHMC has for several years been developing plans for comprehensively refurbishing the hall and has been raising funds for that purpose.

Planning permission was granted for the refurbishment in April last year, quotes were received for the construction and applications made for grants to cover the estimated costs of just over £200,000.

The VHMC has so far accumulated two thirds of the funds needed, as follows:

VHMC reserves	£30,000
Valerie Mellor Bequest	£25,800
Platinum Jubilee Fund	£38,757
Lewes DC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	£38,757
Total	£133,314

This leaves some £67,000 to raise. Further grant applications are in hand, but the Jubilee Fund offer is time-limited and depends on the balance required for the project to proceed to be raised by this November.

This shortfall places this vital community project in jeopardy. The Parish Council is therefore considering the possibility of borrowing the balance required from the Government's Public Works Loan Board. This would be given as a grant to the VHMC charity to enable the project to proceed. The borrowing would be repaid by the Parish Council to the PWLB by means of a charge on the council tax bills for households in Piddinghoe parish.

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What's the impact on your council tax?

Naturally the Parish Council would only go ahead with this borrowing with the clear support of parishioners. An example of the impact on council tax bills is as follows:

- > The current parish precept is £11,515, giving a Band D council tax for Piddinghoe Parish Council of £89.89 a year.
- > A PWLB loan of £70,000 over 25 years (current fixed interest rate 5.28%) would increase the parish precept to £18,011 a year.
- > Band D council tax would rise by £48.01 a year, that is an extra £4.80 for each of the ten monthly direct debits.

As the Council will borrow only the funds necessary to cover the shortfall for the project, the impact on council tax bills may be lower. A smaller loan of £50,000 would add £3.38 to monthly direct debits for Band D.

Band A-C households will pay less than these estimates, while Band E-H households will pay proportionately more. Some households (eg single occupancy) pay reduced council tax.

What do you think?

The Parish Council **NEEDS YOUR VIEWS** on this proposal. We are holding an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council at **7:30pm on Tuesday 13 August** to decide whether to apply for a loan from the PWLB to cover the funding shortfall for our Village Hall. Please complete and send the tear-off slip to indicate if you support or oppose this.

Thank you.



Paul Bevan
Chair of Piddinghoe Parish Council

*Please complete and post, by hand or Royal Mail, in the envelope provided before **Saturday, 10 August 2024** to Glebe Cottage, Piddinghoe, BN9 9AS (opposite the Village Hall).*

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This household **SUPPORTS / OPPOSES** (delete as necessary) the proposal to cover the funding shortfall (up to £70,000) for the Piddinghoe Village Hall refurbishment from the Parish Council council tax precept.

Address:

Name: (print)..... Signature.....

Any comments: