

**MINUTES OF KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2013
IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7 PM**

PRESENT

Andrew Cumming – Chair, John Maltby, Yvonne Martin, John Robinson, Giles Hollingworth, John Hume, Veronica Partridge, and the Clerk – Sarah Partridge

28/13 APOLOGIES - None

29/13 ACCEPT MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

30/13 CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS – None received

31/13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2013 were signed and dated as being correct.

32/13 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No progress on applications had been received and new applications had been received to consider.

33/13 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE PRECEPT AMOUNT FOR 2013/2014 – FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF NEW FINAL TAX BASE AND SUPPORT GRANT FIGURES ISSUED BY BABERGH IN FEBRUARY 2013

Following the precept decision made at the meeting on 30 January the Parish Council had received further information and clarification from Babergh District Council about the tax base and local council tax support grant. The tax base for 2013/14 has now been confirmed as 171.55 and the grant at £471. Councillors discussed this change and the potential impact on the precept in 2013/14 and future years. Babergh stated in their letter that there is no guarantee that the district council will receive or be able to pass on the same level or any grant in 2014/15. There is also the potential that the government will introduce an automatic council tax referendum trigger for excessive council tax increases in 2014/15; there is no indication of what an excessive percentage increase would be. The total cost of a referendum (approx. £1000) would be borne by the Parish Council and would have a significant impact on the budget. Councillors agreed that the precept of £6375 agreed at the last meeting was fair and the forecasts for future years left little room to make significant savings.

Forecast figures assuming the Parish Council receives a grant in 2013/14 and no grant in 2014/15

	Option 1 - Original decision new tax base & grant		Option 2 – max increase to offer protection against loss of grant or restriction to increase precept in future due to precept referendum		Option 2a - Increase band D by less than 10% - no protection against potential precept referendum	
	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15
Budget	£6375	£6596	£6846	£6596	£6671	£6596
Grant	£471	£0	£471	£0	£471	£0
Precept	£5904	£6596	£6375	£6596	£6200	£6596
Tax base	171.55	171.55	171.55	171.55	171.55	171.55
Band D £	£34.42	£38.45	£37.16	£38.45	£36.14	£38.45
Band D % increase	4.6%	11.7%	13.0%	3.5%	9.9%	6.4%
Band D £ increase	£1.53	£4.03	£4.27	£1.29	£3.25	£2.31

(2012/13 Band D £32.89)

After some deliberation Councillors were unanimous in their decision to choose option 2. This will mean the parish element of the council tax bill for a band D property will rise by £4.27 to £37.16 which is a 13% increase. Councillors were very reluctant to make this decision but felt that in order to protect parish council finances in the long term; this was the least worst option. The uncertainties surrounding the withdrawal of the support grant and the threat of a costly automatic precept referendum made any other outcome too high risk. All Councillors agreed to take every opportunity to explain this decision to parishioners and a note will be put in the next newsletter before council tax bill are received by residents.

34/13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - None

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

There are no sheets appended to these minutes.