

CABINET
9 DECEMBER 2021

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
13 DECEMBER 2021

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS 2022/23

1. Summary

To agree the level of financial contributions to be paid to Parish and Town Councils in 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- 2.1 That the following contributions be made to Parish and Town Councils, to compensate for lost council tax income in local areas from the council tax support scheme:

	£
Bean	334
Darenth	1,923
Longfield	631
Southfleet	198
Stone	7,021
Sutton at Hone and Hawley	1,737
Swanscombe and Greenhithe	14,435
Wilmington	1,317

- 2.2 That the contributions be made subject to the Parish and Town Councils submitting suitably analysed details of estimated net expenditure for the ensuing year by 31 January each year, and actual net expenditure for the preceding year no later than six months after the end of each financial year, in a format prescribed by the Council.
- 2.3 That the payments be made in two equal instalments; the first on 30 April 2022 (or next working day) and the second, the latter of 30 September 2022 (or next working day) or seven days following receipt of the Parish or Town Councils' 2021/22 accounts, certified as correct by their Clerks.
- 2.4 That the Council continues to operate the Capacity Building Fund and makes a contribution of £20,000 into the fund in 2022/23.
- 2.5 That the Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services be granted delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree the Capacity Building Fund bidding criteria.
- 2.6 That Capacity Building Funding bids from Parish and Town Councils be submitted to the Grants Panel, and that the Chief Officer and Director of

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Corporate Services be granted delegated authority to approve the award of the bid(s), on the recommendation of the Grants Panel.

RECOMMENDATION TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL

- 2.7 That, the proposed contributions to Parish/Town Councils, be part of the overall budget, subject to formal approval at the 28 February 2022 Budget meeting.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. The Council provided funding to Parishes/Town Councils following the introduction of the Council Tax Support Scheme. The amount received by Parishes/Town Councils in relation to this was £27,596 (in total) in 2021/22. Initially the Council received a separately identifiable grant element for this but now any remaining funding is unidentified. Any distribution of funding to Parish and Town Councils is at the discretion of the [Borough] Council.
- 3.2. It is important that Parish/Town Councils receive sufficient notice of the Council's plans in this area in order to set their own budgets and Council Tax levels.
- 3.3. In 2019/20, the Council's revenue support grant funding stopped. Given this cessation, the Council has reduced the level of funding available to Parish/Town Councils in past years and it is the intention that the same direction of travel will continue in future years.
- 3.4. To aid the transition to lower contributions, the Council also set aside £40,000 in 2021/22 within the Capacity Building Fund in order to assist Parish and Town Councils to become less reliant on core funding from the Council and to explore innovative ways of working.
- 3.5. Given that the Capacity Building fund has been ongoing for several years it is now proposed to reduce the Council's commitment to the fund. The grants will continue and increase their focus on assisting Parish and Town Councils to become less reliant on funding from the [Borough] Council by building capacity and exploring innovative ways of working.
- 3.6. Funding remains in place at the same levels as 2021/22 for lost council tax income in local areas from the council tax support scheme.
- 3.7. The proposed level of Council Tax Support Grant and Capacity Building Fund for 2022/23 is shown in Appendix A.

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4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The contribution by the Council assists Parishes and Town Councils to provide high quality services that reflect public aspirations and to ensure that public and open spaces are clean and safe.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	The total sum payable by the Council to Parish and Town Councils in 2022/23 will be £27,596. In addition, the Council will continue to operate the Capacity Building Fund and make a contribution of £20,000 into the fund.
Legal Implications	Section 136 of the Local Government Act 1972. - two or more local authorities may make arrangements for defraying any expenditure incurred by one of them in exercising any functions exercisable by both or all of them.
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	No uncertainties and/or constraints

6. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable

7. Appendices

Appendix A - Amounts payable to Parish and Town Councils in 2022/23

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Parish Accounts		Tim Sams (01322) 343148	Financial Services/ Corporate Services	N/A