

Parish meeting 20 January

Present: Doug Creed, Xavier Ficquet, Graham Meader, Maureen Cox, Bryony Bensly, Stephen and Vera Constant

1. Precept

Doug had a phone call with BANES council to get some guidance about precept but couldn't get any.

Last year the precept was £1720 a year which is about £1 per week per villager, depending on rateable value. The council tax is £54 for a band D. Doug found out that Kelston is one of the lowest precept taxes around Bath. Radstock, for example, has 3 times more tax than Kelston. There was a discussion about how the precept is spent. Main expense items in 2019/20 are for cutting the church grass (£514) and childrens' Christmas party (£400). The precept currently has accumulated, unspent funds of approximately £12,000. The village hall is losing money and counts on the money raised from village events. The last fete raised about £8000. Smaller events last year raised about £800. The Village Hall has a reserve of about £15000, kept for maintenance and emergencies.

After a long discussion, it was agreed to vote to raise the precept to £2500 . The new precept amount will need to be approved by BANES.

4 were in favour + 2 abstentions to raise the precept to £2500.

Following the vote to raise the precept, a there was a discussion about how to spend it .

The meeting then put to a vote to give £500 to the church and £500 to the village hall to help as they wish and to continue paying for the Christmas fete and the membership fees.

All voted in favour.

Doug said he will prepare a new budget.

2. Phone box

The village has taken over the telephone box from BT for £1. Precept to pay for the paint, Old Crown offered to redecorate. Maybe used the phone box as book exchange or noticed board, but nothing was decided

3. Furniture

Graham Meader to look at getting 2 new waterproof noticed boards.

In principle, the meeting agreed to setup a video projector and sound system in the village hall, paid by the village precept and a special grant.

Wishes to replace the tables and chairs was expressed by the meeting but no decision was taken.

Discussion about clearing the village hall basement took place, but no solution was found as the village does not have any storage facility.

4. Fete.

The heating was not set in the village hall, and after 1h30 of meeting at freezing temperature, the meeting wanted to keep it short. Ideas of doing a fete with the Bath Soft cheese open farm day was discussed. The meeting had no opposition with that idea but questioned if the merger would raise enough money for the village. It was decided to leave it to the Kelston Fund Raising Group to discuss it and make the decision. This group needs to meet shortly and decide the events for next year.

Xavier Ficquet

Village Secretary