

Kent County Councillor
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Maidstone Rural West Residents' Update 2022/23

Dear Resident,

It has been my privilege to represent you at County Hall for the last two years.

The second year has been even more challenging than the first, as you all are aware, the war in Ukraine, the sudden rise in inflation, the cost of living crisis and the resultant rises in service, delivery and unit costs have required KCC to undertake some radical financial cuts.

Most recently, KCC is offering to allocate £100 to any household which meets the need criteria. Please access the KCC website to see if any resident you know could qualify.

The aftermath of the COVID pandemic and its variants has seen the pressure on the NHS continue, and it is my earnest wish that a period of fewer medical emergencies is seen in the coming summer months to give our exceptional NHS workers a reprieve.

In addition to this the ongoing number of both legal and illegal migrants continues to impact on our services, specifically, with Adults and Children's services, with their budget service costs increasing by between 10 - 15%. There have also been periods of time where 'Operation Brock' has caused some significant disruption to freight and KCC residents going to and from work. These costs although unseen are real, and add to the costs which businesses are having to cope with.

For the financial year 2022/23 I was allocated a Members grant of £10,000 and I have been very careful to allocate some funds to support a wide range of projects, for vulnerable people. In the coming year 2023/24, quite rightly the grant has been reduced to £3600.

Although receiving a better-than-expected settlement for the forthcoming year, pressures coming from a combination of factors, including rising prices, the rising demand to support both our elderly residents and the most vulnerable young children has given KCC a shortfall of many million pounds. The resulting cost cutting measures agreed for the budget to discretionary services has caused concerns, many of these service cuts and the respective details are currently out for consultation. Please ensure your voice is heard and respond.

I sit on five cabinet committees, (a change from last year) which give me a broad section of work to complete, these are:-

1. Adult Social Care (vice-chair of this committee)
2. Reform and Public Health
3. Audit and Governance

4. KCC Pension Committee
5. SEN(D) sub committee

I would like to pay tribute to the Leader of KCC, Mr Roger Gough, who leads by example and continues to fight for our residents at both a local, regional and national level.

I list below the exact details of the Members Grant to show complete transparency.

Examples of support provided in Maidstone Rural West: (£10,000 + 4680 (u/s))

Communities		
Applicant	Project	Amount
Team Tutsham Charitable Trust	Allocation for child support and equipment/infrastructure costs	£2500
Marden Wildlife – covers EF/WF and Hunton	Volunteer Wildlife surveys for Village Farms	£750
Loose Parish Council	Costs towards alleviating West Street traffic	£2000
Loose parish Council	Love Loose Hate Litter	£300
Holy Trinity Church Pre-school	Fencing for stay and play group	£373.97
Hunton Village hall	Upgrading of Village hall heating	£500
Fusion (Charity)	Assist with Adult Literacy/Numeracy	£1000
Mid-Kent – Motor Neurone Disease Association		
Mid-Kent – Motor Neurone Disease Association	Support Group sessions	£1956
Coxheath – Park Road Highways	Assist with cost of resurfacing of road	£2000
West Farleigh Parish Council	Refurbishment of Play Area	£1000
Hunton Primary School	Refurbishment of play area to nurture area	£2500

As a Member of the County Council, I welcome contact with residents, support groups and local business. The Member Grant will always be available to assist vulnerable groups, be they of any age and if I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to be in contact with me.

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