

NOTES TO SUPPORT THE 2026–2027 BUDGET CALCULATIONS

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT COSTS

Total: £74,860 | Net Increase £1,980

The administrative budget underpins a wide range of statutory and strategic functions delivered by Kings Hill Parish Council (KHPC). These include planning consultations, liaison with principal authorities on matters such as highways, waste management, housing, and environmental services. While these services do not incur direct costs, they are supported through the administrative budget, which also encompasses governance, compliance, and the operational capacity of the Council.

The budget reflects the ongoing cost of maintaining a fully functioning office to support the Council's activities. Office-related expenditure remains stable and continues to be managed prudently.

1. AUDIT FEES

2026–2027 Provision: £5,350 | Increase: £200

In accordance with statutory requirements, KHPC is subject to both external and internal audit. The external audit fee is determined by the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (SAAA). The recommended provision for 2026–2027 is £5,350, an increase of £200 from the previous year (£5,150). Should additional audit costs arise—such as those resulting from public objections—these can be met from reserves. The external audit fee, set by the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (SAAA), is £1,680, assuming the Council's income remains within the £750,001 to £1 million band. The internal audit is carried out independently by Mulberrys, with two audits per year.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ALLOWANCE

2026–2027 Provision: £2,500 | No Change

Under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman is entitled to an allowance to cover expenses incurred in the execution of their duties. This includes engagement with other councils, attendance at civic events, and associated hospitality and travel. The recommended provision remains unchanged at £2,500.

3. MEMBERS' EXPENSES

2026–2027 Provision: £550 | Increase: £25

This allocation covers travel expenses for members undertaking official duties outside the parish. While not explicitly budgeted, provision may also be made for issuing tablets to members who opt in. Although elected councillors are entitled to claim allowances, they have historically chosen not to do so, collectively saving the Council more than £5,600 annually. Typically, the rate is 5-7.5% of the allowances paid by TMBC to Borough Councillors which was £5,452 in 2025-2026

4. MEMBERS' TRAINING

2026–2027 Provision: £850 | Increase: £50

This allocation supports elected members in attending relevant training, conferences, and seminars—such as those provided by the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC). The budget reflects anticipated uptake while maintaining sufficient provision to support ongoing development. At the time of preparing this report we are expected to welcome four new councillors who will be offered training opportunities.

5. OFFICE COSTS

2026–2027 Provision: £2,710 | Increase: £110

This budget covers essential operational expenses including advertising, marketing, postage, printing, stationery, and reference materials. It also supports initiatives to enhance community engagement and ensure the Council remains well-equipped with up-to-date resources.

6. OFFICE EQUIPMENT & REPLACEMENTS

2026–2027 Provision: £4,700 | Increase £200

This provision ensures the continued maintenance, servicing, and replacement of IT and office equipment owned by the Council. The allocation reflects a stable forecast for equipment lifecycle and support needs.

7. NEWSLETTERS, ANNUAL REPORT & SURVEYS

2026–2027 Provision: £8,000 | No Change

This budget supports the production and distribution of the Council's quarterly newsletter, "*The Hill*", which provides updates on Council activities and community information. It also includes funding for the statutory Annual Report and a potential community survey, last conducted in 2018 to reflect the evolving needs of a growing population including the development of the Sports Park. The survey would also inform the 2027-2030 Strategic Plan. Engagement with residents on Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's Local Plan is also anticipated. No change is recommended since we are now offering advertising space in "*The Hill*" which will subsidise publication costs of the newsletter.

8. SUBSCRIPTIONS

2026–2027 Provision: £4,250 | Decrease £580

This covers annual subscriptions to key organisations including the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC), National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Kent Men of the Trees, the Kent Tree and Pond Warden Scheme, and professional bodies such as SLCC and the National Allotment Association. These affiliations support best practice, training, and sector-wide collaboration. The council may also wish to consider taking out a Survey Monkey subscription

(Recommendation arising from the Planning & Transport Committee) at costs as follows:

Team Plans (Minimum 3 users, billed annually)

- **Team Advantage:**

£25/user/month

Includes 50,000 responses/year, shared asset library, and collaborative features.

- **Team Premier:**

£75/user/month

Includes 120,000 responses/year, advanced analytics, multilingual support, and click map visualisation.

9. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

2026–2027 Provision: £8,000 | Increase £1,000

This budget supports the Council's IT infrastructure, including website hosting, accessibility compliance, data backups, and software updates. Council must also be mindful of Digital Transformation & Accessibility and potential upgrades required to the Council's website to meet enhanced accessibility standards (WCAG 2.2). The budget includes a provision of £1,000 to support the costs of streaming council and committee meetings.

10. TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

2026–2027 Provision: £3,600 | Increase: £300

This allocation covers telecommunications and internet services for both the Parish Office and the Community Centre. The increase accounts for inflationary pressures and potential service upgrades.

11. STAFF TRAINING

2026–2027 Provision: £4,200 | Decrease £525

The Council maintains a strong commitment to professional development. This budget enables officers to attend relevant training and conferences, ensuring compliance with evolving legislation and best practice. The Clerk holds CILCA and PIALC, while other staff continue their development through ILCA, FILCA, ILCA to CILCA, AAT and related qualifications. This investment supports a skilled and resilient workforce.

12. INSURANCE (Parish Council)

2026–2027 Provision: £4,250 | Increase £250

Insurance premiums have experienced volatility in recent years; however, KHPC benefits from a long-term agreement (LTA) initiated in 2022–2023, which provides a degree of cost stability. The current policy includes comprehensive cover for public liability, employer liability, asset protection, and fidelity insurance (now referred to as fraud and dishonesty cover), with a £1 million limit to reflect peak cash holdings following receipt of the precept. The recommended provision

is expected to meet all insurance obligations, including any new assets acquired during the year.

13. ELECTION EXPENSES

2026–2027 Provision: £0 | No Change

As 2026 is not a scheduled election year, no provision has been made for election-related costs. Should a by-election be required, associated expenses can be met from general reserves.

14. BANK FEES

2026–2027 Provision: £450 | No change

This allocation covers anticipated charges associated with the Council's banking arrangements. The modest increase reflects adjustments in service fees and transaction volumes.

15. CIVIC EXPENSES & ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

2026–2027 Provision: £2,450 | No Change

This budget supports the statutory Annual Parish Meeting, which must be held between March and June, as well as other civic responsibilities. The provision remains unchanged and is considered sufficient to meet expected costs.

16. LOAN REPAYMENTS

2026–2027 Provision: £0 | No Change

No budgetary requirement required as the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan has been fully repaid.

17. LEGAL, PROFESSIONAL & ACCOUNTANCY SERVICES

2026–2027 Provision: £23,000 | Increase: £1,000

This budget supports the procurement of legal, financial, and consultancy services. In recent years, KHPC has successfully brought several financial functions in-house—such as VAT and management reporting—resulting in significant cost savings. The retained budget allows for ad hoc professional advice, planning and legal fees (e.g., licensing agreements).

18. STAFF COSTS

2026–2027 Provision: £278,000 | Increase: £73,000

Supplementary Report refers

BUILDING COSTS

2026–2027 Provision: £63,100 | Decrease: £3,450

19. Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR)

Provision: £8,500 | Increase £5,000

The Council's National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) liability increased in 2025/2026 following the withdrawal of transitional and mandatory rate reliefs, for

which the Parish Council is no longer eligible. The recommended budget provision of **£8,500** reflects the full liability without reliefs and is consistent with previous years when discretionary and mandatory reductions were excluded. This amount is expected to meet all obligations for the financial year.

20. Utilities

Provision: £20,000 | Decrease £10,000

Utility costs, including gas, electricity, and water have stabilized following recent market volatility. Solar panels were installed earlier this year, and while their full impact is still being rationalized, they are expected to contribute significantly to reducing electricity costs and may generate income through the sale of surplus energy to the National Grid.

21. Maintenance Contracts, Cleaning Supplies & General Repairs

Provision: £27,500 | Increase £1,250

This allocation covers routine maintenance, cleaning supplies, and minor repairs. Staffing costs for caretaking and cleaning are accounted for separately under staff costs.

22. Equipment & Replacements

Provision: £7,100 | Increase: £300

This budget supports the replacement and maintenance of building-related equipment. The modest increase reflects inflationary adjustments and anticipated lifecycle replacements.

COMMUNITY CENTRE

2026–2027 Provision: £15,300 | Decrease £50

23. Booking System

Provision: £550 | Decrease £200

KHPC uses the Scribe booking system to manage Community Centre reservations. The fee paid reflects licensing and support cost adjustments.

24. Licensing

Provision: £2,000 | Increase: £150

This covers the performance rights licence and the TMBC premises licence. The increase accounts for standard annual uplifts.

25. Insurance (Prologis Recharge)

Provision: £12,750 | No Change

The Council is recharged for insurance costs by Prologis. The decrease reflects a significant rise in the 2023–2024 premium which stabilised in 2024-2025 and is expected to do so again in 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. The Parish Council has not been invoiced for the 2025-2026 premium at the time of preparing the 2026-2027 budget.

TOWNSEND BAR COSTS

26. 2026–2027 Provision: £0 | Decrease: £3,000

No provision is required as the bar has been removed.

ALLOTMENTS

2026–2027 Provision: £8,550 | Decrease £2,300

27. Running Costs

Provision: £4,350 | Increase: £500

This allocation covers general maintenance and operational costs, offset by income from allotment rents. A small contingency is included.

28. Landscaping

Provision: £4,200 | Increase: £200

This budget supports grounds maintenance and weed control. The increase reflects updated contractor rates.

29. New Allotments

Provision: £0 | Decrease £3,000

No funds required in 2026/2027 as £7,500 is held in earmarked reserves from previous financial years' budget allocations which will support the cost of improvement works at the new allotment site, including perimeter landscaping and car park enhancements.

PLAYGROUNDS AND OPEN SPACES

2026–2027 Provision: £13,600 | Increase £2,100

30. Playgrounds and Open Spaces Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping

Provision: £9,350 | Increase £350

The Council secured improved value for open spaces maintenance following a more competitive quotation received. The budget reflects this while ensuring service standards are maintained. The budget provision for 2026/2027 has been set to reflect current service levels.

31. Play Area Inspections and Maintenance

Provision: £1,250 | Increase £750

This allocation covers routine inspections (e.g., ROSPA) and minor repairs. Any significant maintenance requirements will be met from the play equipment earmarked reserves.

32. Bus Shelter and Village Sign Maintenance

Provision: £500 | Decrease £500

This budget supports the cleaning and upkeep of the parish's bus shelter and village sign. The increase reflects planned remedial work to the sign's base.

33. Salt Bin Refills

Provision: £2,500 | Increase £1,500

This provision ensures the Council can maintain winter resilience by refilling salt bins as needed. The Planning & Transport Committee has recommended that the budget be increased from £1,000 to £2,500 to provide funds for salt bin repairs / replacements as needed.

EVENTS

2026–2027 Provision: £21,000 | No Change

34. Community Events (2026 End of Summer Party)

Provision: £20,000 | No Change

This budget supports KHPC's organised community events. For 2026/2027, the major planned event is the End of Summer Party, which remains a key fixture in the Kings Hill calendar for fostering community spirit and engagement. In previous years, this budget also covered additional events such as D-Day and VE Day commemorations. KHPC still has the balance of the 2025/2026 budget as the events were part covered by a £15,000 National Lottery Grant. This balance will be used to supplement the costs for the 2026/2027 event. Our aim is to ensure value for money while continuing to support meaningful community activities.

35. Remembrance Activities

Provision: £1,000 | No Change

This allocation covers the Council's contribution to the Poppy Appeal, wreaths, signage, and road closure fees associated with Remembrance Day.

PROJECTS

36. 2025–2026 Projects

Provision: £0 | Decrease £140,000

Several projects budgeted in 2025–2026 were either completed or fully funded through earmarked reserves:

- **Community Assets** - £15,000 to be transferred to reserves if unspent
- **Community Centre Decorating Works** – £15,000 for hall redecoration and flooring replacement, to be transferred to earmarked reserves if not spent
- **Mary Ellis Bar Contingency** – £10,000 No further provision required unspent funds will be transferred to reserves at year end
- **Sports Park Infrastructure Improvements** – £100,000, unspent funds to be transferred to earmarked reserves to support expansion of facilities and utilities in response to growing demand from local sports groups.

37. 2026–2027 Projects

Provision: £157,500 | Increase: £137,500

Community Asset Transfers: £15,000 which together with the 2025/2026 provision of £15,000 provides a budget of £30,000 to cover legal and valuation

costs associated with the potential transfer of assets from KCC, Rouse Kent, and Prologis

Local Government Reorganisation: Provision of **£5,000**

Town Council Status: Provision of **£5,000** to fund rebranding if KHPC decides to move from a Parish to a Town Council

Safety & Resilience £5,000

- £2,500 to further develop the Community Resilience Plan and allocate a resilience fund.
- 2026-2027 contribution towards TMBC's ASB Team: Parish Council contributed £2.5K in 2025-2026

Bus Service Survey £2,500. A recommendation from the Planning & Transport Committee

Sports Park Expansion / Infrastructure Improvements – £100,000, which together with the unspent funds from 2025-2026 will provide funds to continue the councils work to support the expansion of facilities and utilities in response to growing demand from local sports groups.

Padel Tennis: A further contribution of £25,000 to be made available alongside S106 funds and grants

SPORTS PARK

2026–2027 Provision: £78,900 | Increase: £5,900

38. Termination Reserve Fund

Provision: £25,000 | No Change

This reserve is maintained in accordance with lease obligations and provides for potential termination liabilities.

39. Insurance (Prologis Recharge)

Provision: £12,500 | Decrease £2,500

This covers the insurance premium recharged by Prologis. The Council is recharged for insurance costs by Prologis. The decrease reflects a significant rise in the 2023–2024 premium which stabilised in 2024-2025 and is expected to do so again in 2026-2027. The provision allows for potential premium increases and additional coverage requirements.

40. Capital Renewals

Provision: £0 | Decrease: £3,000

Based on the Capital Renewals Matrix, the forecasted requirement for 2026–2027 is £25,600. As circa £20,000 is held within earmarked reserves it is being

recommended that these be used to offset costs in 2026/2027 which will reduce the required budget provision to £6,000.

41. Repairs & Maintenance

Provision: £10,400 | Increase £400

This allocation supports routine maintenance of the Sports Park facilities.

42. Contribution to Head Office Costs

Provision: £15,000 | No Change

Subject to council approval and to completion of 2026 lease review

43. Contingency (Sports Park)

Provision: £5,000 | No Change

This contingency fund provides flexibility to respond to unforeseen maintenance or operational issues.

44. Irrigation (Sports Park Water)

Provision: £5,000 | Increase: £5,000

Contribution towards increased water costs following the installation of the Irrigation system.

45. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE (GPC)

2026–2027 Provision: £11,500 | Increase £1,000

KHPC has adopted the General Power of Competence, enabling it to undertake any lawful activity that an individual may do, provided it is not restricted by other legislation. This provision supports community-beneficial initiatives and discretionary spending.

COMMUNITY GRANTS & DONATIONS

Provision: £10,5000 | Increase £500

This budget enables KHPC to support local groups and organisations through its established Grants Policy. The funding provision allows for broader community impact and greater flexibility in responding to funding requests.

46. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMPETITION

Provision: £1,000 | Increase £500

Prize pot for the Council's Annual Christmas Lights Competition.

47. MANAGEMENT FEES

Provision: £20,500 | No Change

- **Kings Hill Estate Management:** Circa £5,750
- **Liberty Property Trust:** Circa £14,750

These fees cover the Council's contractual obligations for estate and property management services.

48. CONTINGENCIES

Provision: £60,000 | No Change

- **KHPC General Contingency £30,000:** This general contingency supports unforeseen costs and emerging priorities. It is recommended that KHPC maintain working balances equivalent to 10–15% of the precept to ensure financial resilience.
- **KHSP 3G Pitch Renewal £30,000.** Balance in reserves at 31.03.26 expected to be £157K this provision of £30,000 will create a budget of £187,000. It is expected that the pitch surface will need to be renewed during 2027 this typically involves uplifting and removing the worn synthetic carpet, minor repairs to the sub-base and shock pad (if needed) and installing new 3G artificial turf with infill. At October 2025 the estimated cost is in the region of £130,000 – £160,000 for a full-size pitch (approx. 106m x 70m). Costs vary based on turf quality, site access, and drainage condition

FORECASTED BALANCES (as of 31 March 2026)

• Opening Bank Balance (30 Sept 2025):	£964,941.96
• Plus Estimated Income (Oct 2025 – Mar 2026):	£113,446.65
• Plus Expected Grants not yet received at (30.09.25)	£82,000.00
• WKRSR £20,000	
• S106 Drawdown £62,000	
• Less Estimated Expenditure (Oct 2025 – Mar 2026):	£340,272.90
• Projected Year-End Balance:	£820,115.70

This balance is within the recommended range of 6–12 months of gross expenditure, ensuring a sound financial position.

PRECEPT OPTIONS

1. 0% Increase

Predicted expenditure as per draft budget	£802,810.00
Less Predicted income as per draft budget	£315,900.00
Less Contribution to reserves	£13,090.00
Precept	£500,000.00

2. 5% Increase

Predicted expenditure as per draft budget	£802,810.00
Less Predicted income as per draft budget	£315,900.00
Less Contribution to reserves	£39,090.00
Precept	£525,000.00

3. 5% Decrease

Predicted expenditure as per draft budget	£802,810.00
Less Predicted income as per draft budget	£315,900.00
Contribution from reserves	£11,910.00
Precept	£475,000.00

