

# CALVER PARISH COUNCIL

20 Daleview Road  
Sheffield  
S8 0EJ  
17<sup>th</sup> March, 2022

Karen Henriksen  
Director of Resources  
Derbyshire Dales District Council

## **Request for financial support – re-imbursable expenditure re grass cutting of the Village Green, public open space, Sough Lane, Calver**

Dear Karen,

On behalf of Calver Parish Council, I would like to make an application to ask if DDDC can support the Parish in re-imbursing in part, the costs borne by the Parish Council on behalf of local parishioners in the grass cutting of a new asset that the PC have recently acquired from the former Calver Cricket Club and now designated as a village green for open community use and enjoyment. The PC had previously been in negotiation with the Cricket Club regarding future use of the facility given that no cricket had been played on the field for over 4 years and the continued viability and sustainability of the Club came into question and it was deemed that there was little prospect of this becoming viable due to sufficient interest and persons wanting to play or willing to commit their time in support of a number of programmed cricket fixtures either as part of a league or on an ad-hoc friendly basis.

Therefore, after discussions with the Club, In September 2021 the Parish Council took over responsibility for the former cricket ground, now the village green, which sits near the centre of the village. It is a prominent and visible site from many locations. In planning terms it is a protected open space for community use and it lies within the Calver Conservation Area. Our vision, is to use it as a public open space and we are due to consult further with local parishioners at our Annual Parish meeting on 21/4/22 for their views as to what particular uses it might be put, in this regard. Naturally, given the pandemic over the last couple of years, this will be the first opportunity to have an open public meeting to gauge local opinion. Notwithstanding, whatever particular uses are to be made of the field, it has and will continue to need ongoing grounds maintenance.

We are a small Parish Council with a limited disposable budget. For the year ending 2020/21 our income was under £8000 and after meeting running and other similar costs only about 50% was available for discretionary projects. The estimated expenditure on the village green for 2022/23 is £2300. The grass cutting contract costs are some £1700 pa and the remaining costs are in respect of utility costs (electricity and water supplies) and other associated or miscellaneous running/upkeep costs.

It can be seen from the above that the new village green, welcome though it is, will be a large call on our finances. The Parish Council has determined to introduce the costs of running the green in a phased manner. If the full first year costs were applied to the

Council Tax precept it would have introduced a significant 27.66% increase in tax for our taxpayers.

At next months' Annual Parish Meeting we intend to discuss with the residents how they would like to see the village green managed and ask them if there are any features they would welcome. Some obvious suggestions are things like a children's play area which we do not have at this time. Clearly the aspirations of our residents will need to be managed according to our ability to pay and raise funds. From this it can be seen that any resource which DDDC can supply would help to allow us to maintain the green and potentially free up money to meet local residents ideas.

Given the recent acquisition we have not developed any income although this will be looked at alongside residents wishes. Clearly as a village green there will be limited scope to see a significant income stream which is what the former cricket club found when they sought to maximise income.

In setting the precept for 2022/23 financial year and factoring in our estimated annual cost of running the village green, our precept has increased by 8.39% over the current 2021/22 level. Given the well publicised current impacts now facing our taxpayers with the increase in standard of living costs not least arising from increased fuel/energy prices, it would be greatly appreciated if DDDC were able to offer support to the Parish and it's residents in the form of re-imbursable expenditure relating to the grass cutting element and in this respect I would like to ask if DDDC are able to assist in meeting 75% of our annual £1700 costs in 2022/23.

I understand that this matter would require consideration at the Governance & Resources Committee and I would be grateful if this matter could be considered at your next meeting which I understand is due to take place on 21/4/22.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely



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