

Increase in Precept for the Financial Year 2021/22 in Burrator Grouped Parish

As most parishioners are aware, the Royal Oak Inn is owned by the parish and leased to the tenant. Currently income from the lease of the Royal Oak is used to maintain the fabric of the Royal Oak Inn and to reduce the precept required by the parish to meet its obligations. These include the Clerk's salary, insurance policies, maintenance of parish property, benches and noticeboards, defibrillators in each village, the annual grass contract, the parish magazine amongst other things.

Although we are one of the biggest parishes in West Devon, we normally take the smallest amount of money from our rate payers, thanks to the rental income we receive from the Royal Oak Inn.

As a result of the current Covid-19 epidemic and the associated lock-down measures, the Royal Oak Inn has been forced to close for significant periods of time. To facilitate the interruption of business the parish council have supported the tenant by reducing the rent to match the level of business and temporarily permitting the use of part of the Meavy Green for alfresco service. However, the limitations imposed on the business have resulted in significant reductions in income both for the tenant and the parish council.

Currently, the parish council has to reduce expenditure for the current year and increase the precept for the coming year, 2021 to 2022, to ensure it can meet its obligations whilst maintaining a financial balance. The precept will increase from £5,000 to £22,000, an increase of 340%. The increase in parish rate would be as shown in the following table:

Year	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
2020/2021	£5.17	£6.03	£6.89	£7.75	£9.47	£11.20	£12.92	£15.50
2021/2022	£22.87	£26.69	£30.50	£34.31	£41.93	£49.56	£57.18	£68.62

Hopefully, the latest lockdown measures, the introduction of vaccination together with the proposed "road map" out of the pandemic will allow the operation of the Royal Oak Inn to return to normal in the near future. This should permit the parish council to reduce the future precept requirements back to previous levels.

The loss of the Inn's business this year has highlighted how valuable it is to everyone to lives in the Parish of Burrator in normal years, when it keeps our share of Council Tax so low.

Andy Paskins
(Chair, Burrator Parish Council)