Summary of comments by Parish Councils regarding proposed changes to Financial Arrangements.

Addington	no comments
Aylesford	no comments
Birling	no written comments received
Borough Green	Acknowledged - no comments
Burham	no written comments received
Ditton *Summarised comments, full letter attached*	It seems that the Government's cost cutting imposed on Borough Councils, is in turn being passed on to Parishes, who can ill afford the cuts. Including the Scheme of Financial Arrangements with Parish Councils in the cut back will put an unfair burden on Parish Councils who are already under great pressure to reduce their own expenses. This Council is not opposed to the strengthening of the Terms and Conditions for Special Works Projects, as this will ensure the money is well spend and in accordance with priorities.
East Malling & Larkfield	no written comments received
East Peckham	no written comments received
Hadlow *Summarised comments, full letter attached*	We share your concern that the government's allocation is woefully inadequate to meet the increased costs of providing the current level of service to people in our area. Whereas we accept that you may not be in a position to fully fund the needs of parishes in the coming financial year, we consider the proposed 0.4% penalises us unfairly for the following reasons: 1) The Consumer Price Index is likely to exceed 4% and the Retail Price Index is likely to exceed 5%. 2) Gas and electricity costs have increased by over 20%. 3) Providers of supplies and services such as our playing fields maintenance are likely to be seeking an increase close to inflation. 4) Salary and wages increases are likely to be around 2%. We assume TMBC budgets will not be using 0.4% as the likely increase in rates next year and the question of double taxation for people living in parishes no doubt will be raised by aggrieved residents living in our area if we were to fully fund the increase over and above 0.4%. For that reason we suggest that whatever percentage TMBC decides to increase the rates by it includes half the increase to uplift parishes' annual allocation as detailed in your letter, e.g. TMBC rate rise 4%; parish increase support 2%.
Hildenborough	no written comments received
Ightham	no written comments received
Kings Hill	no written comments received
Leybourne	no written comments received
Mereworth	no written comments received
Offham	no written comments received
Platt	no written comments received
Plaxtol	no written comments received
Ryarsh	no written comments received
Shipbourne	Acknowledged - no comments
Snodland	no written comments received
Stansted	Acknowledged - no comments
Trottiscliffe	no written comments received
Wateringbury	no written comments received
West Malling	no comments but expressed their sympathies for the position in which the Borough Council finds itself because of reductions in Government funding
West Peckham	no written comments received
Wouldham	no written comments received
Wrotham	Acknowledged - no comments

DITTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Community Centre
Kilnbarn Road, DITTON, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 6AH
Clerk of the Council: Sue Kavanagh
Tel: 01732 844749 ♦ Fax: 01732 845572
VAT Reg. No: 204 961474

Mr F Gahan
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4LZ

12th August 2008

Dear Mr Gahan

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISH COUNCILS 2008/2009

Thank you for your communication of 5th August 2008 regarding changes to the method of applying annual increases under the scheme of financial arrangements with Parish Councils.

It seems that the Government's cost cutting imposed on Borough Councils, is in turn being passed on to Parishes, who can ill afford the cuts.

Compared to last year this Council's total allocation will be down by £152.32 but the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index for August 2008 is likely to be higher than last year so parishes will get a "double whammy".

The reason for the cutback is given as "...reduction in Central Government support and the imposition of Council Tax Capping". This Council would like to know if the Borough Council has been capped and how it has calculated the "funding gap of £500,000"?

This Council would also like to ask why the Borough Council is suggesting that the Scheme of Financial Arrangements with Parish Councils be included in the cut back? This will put an unfair burden on Parish Councils who are already under great pressure to reduce their own expenses. The Parish Council would like to have details of the other "budget areas" being considered for cutbacks?

This Council is not opposed to the strengthening of the Terms and Conditions for Special Works Projects, as this will ensure the money is well spend and in accordance with priorities.

Yours sincerely

Sue Kavanagh

(Mrs) Sue Kavanagh
Clerk of the Council

QUALITY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNEX 1

Hadlow Parish Council

The Parish Office Hadlow Old School Hall Hadlow Kent TN11 0EH
PHONE 01732 851878 E-MAIL marylinapps@hadlowpc.co.uk
Hadlow Parish Council Web site: www.hadlowpc-kent.org.uk

Your ref: F/3/PR.42.8

13 August 2008

Mr Francis Gahan
Financial Services
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill, West Malling
ME19 4LZ

Dear Mr Gahan,

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISH COUNCILS 2009/10

In reply to your letter dated 5th August 2008 which was considered at our Parish Council meeting on 11th August, we share your concern that the government's allocation of financial assistance to Kent and its district councils is woefully inadequate to meet the increased costs of providing the current level of service to people in our area. Whereas we accept that you may not be in a position to fully fund the needs of parishes in the coming financial year, we consider the proposed 0.4% penalises us unfairly for the following reasons:

1. The Consumer Price Index is likely to exceed 4% and the Retail Price Index is likely to exceed 5%.
2. Gas and electricity costs have increased by over 20%.
3. Providers of supplies and services such as our playing fields maintenance are likely to be seeking an increase close to inflation.
4. Salary and wages increases are likely to be around 2%.

We assume TMBC budgets will not be using 0.4% as the likely increase in rates next year and the question of double taxation for people living in parishes no doubt will be raised by aggrieved residents living in our area if we were to fully fund the increase over and above 0.4%. For that reason we suggest that whatever percentage TMBC decides to increase the rates by it includes half the increase to uplift parishes' annual allocation as detailed in your letter, e.g. TMBC rate rise 4%; parish increase support 2%.

We are also concerned that not all parishes meet in August and we suggest that parishes are given more time to respond and in any case we would ask that the item is placed on the Parish Partnership Agenda on 11th September.

Yours sincerely,

Marylin Apps
Clerk
Hadlow Parish Council