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Clerk: Donna Griggs

## KEGWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

1 LONDON ROAD, KEGWORTH, DERBY, DE74 2EU

6 November 2024

Mr P Stone  
Strategic Director of Resources  
North West Leicestershire District Council  
Council Offices  
PO Box 11051  
Coalville  
Leicestershire LE67 0FW

Dear Paul

### **Re: Closed Churchyards and Double Taxation**

At their meeting on Monday this week, councillors resolved that I should write to you to let you know that they disagree with the revised special expenses policy and they fully endorse the letter sent to you by Ashby Town Council on 29 October 2024

It is not clear what has precipitated this change of policy by the District Council. It is understood that part of the justification for the change is the issue of the boundary wall of St. Michael's Church in Stretton en le Field. It is claimed that that this wall will need to be repaired and would, therefore, put an undue burden on each council taxpayer within the parish meeting area. No condition survey report on the wall has been provided and no costings have been shared to justify this statement.

The special expense arrangements have been in place in the district for many years and appear to have been working well. No prior warning or discussion took place with the impacted parish councils before the decision was made.

The legal advice received by the District Council on this matter, that it may have been acting irregularly or unlawfully in treating some items as special expenses rather than being paid from the general fund, has not been released to elected members or the public.

No serious attempt has been made by the District Council to address the issue of double taxation and the five principles of double taxation set out by the National Association of Local Councils. No attempt has been made by the District Council to address the issues which underpin the financial relationship between itself and the parish/town sector.

The justification of the District Council for its actions to remove areas of expenditure from special expenses and move them to the general fund are, in the view of the Parish Council, paper-thin.

Since the 2021/22 financial year, the Parish Council has spent more than £380,000 in maintaining the St Andrew's closed churchyard in Kegworth. This work has included completely re-building the front church wall, repairing the side church wall, and repairing flood lighting. The re-building of the front church wall resulted in the Council taking on a Public Works Loan Board loan of £130,000 over 10 years, which is currently costing more than £14,500 a year to repay.

During 2024/25, or early in the 2025/26 financial year, it is anticipated that the Council will also need to spend £25,000 - £30,000 to repair the worn steps at the main entrance.

It is the view of the Parish Council that the changes to the special expenses regime are unfair, unjust, inequitable, one-sided, unjustifiable and indefensible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Dm Griggs'.

Donna Griggs  
Clerk to Kegworth Parish Council