



PARISH OF ST HELIER



Minutes of the Rates Assembly	
Wednesday 7 July 2021 at 7.00 pm	
Assembly Room, Town Hall	
37/21	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b></p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Procureur Geraint Jennings, Deputy Judy Martin, Deputy Carina Alves, Deputy Mary Le Hagarat, Stewart Mourant, Steve Beddoe, Lyndsay Feltham, Julian Rogers, Bob Le Brocq and Jackie Hilton.</p> <p>The following Parishioners could not attend in person but gave apologies and are taking part electronically by Zoom: Sarah Richardson, and John Baker.</p> <p><b>Deputies in Attendance:</b> Stephen Ahier, Rob Ward, Inna Gardiner</p> <p><b>Procureurs in Attendance:</b> Peter Pearce</p>
38/21	<p><b>Item 1: Presentation of the Accounts (Financial Statements) for the Financial Year 2020/2021</b></p> <p>The Constable opened the Assembly by referring to the unequal treatment of St Helier ratepayers who bear the cost of public amenities, which are funded by the States in other Parishes; and his disappointment there had been little change since last year's Assembly.</p> <p>The Constable expressed his thanks and gratitude to all honorary volunteers who have given of their time during the year. Particularly singled out, were the Honorary Police, especially the four Centeniers who had undertaken charging duties throughout the coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>Don Connolly, Auditor, from Alex Picot &amp; Co., congratulated Neil Macdonald, Resources Director, and the whole Parish team. The audit had identified it had been a challenging year, but a number of positive policy changes were made. He confirmed the accounts as accurate, and stated they provide a true reflection.</p> <p>Neil Macdonald, Director of Resources, took the Assembly through a PowerPoint presentation of the Accounts / (Financial Statements) for 2020/21. He explained that because of the pandemic, income was lower than previous years, due to a loss of revenue and a drop in non-rates income to the tune of £200K. Expenditure has increased by £90K, mainly due to staffing costs at St Ewold's Care Home, and roadworks costs increase year upon year. Operational costs have reduced, as there was a shortage of resources to undertake repairs. On a positive note, a valuation of Parish property has reflected that properties are in a good state of repair. In total the impact of Covid 19 on the Parish across 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, amounted to £455K.</p> <p>The Parish has completed a number of new projects, and positive changes have been made in relation to climate change. The St. Helier Youth and Community Trust have demonstrated support of the Parish's young people, making grants of £136K to schools and the Youth Service. Other community related projects received grants of £17K.</p> <p><b>Questions on the Accounts:</b></p> <p>Deputy Ward asked if employees had consented to monthly pay, and if the depreciation in the accounts has been effected by the Covid pandemic.</p> <p>Neil Macdonald confirmed depreciation is not effected by the pandemic, as it is mainly relates to vehicles. Discussions took place with Union Officials and it was agreed those changing to monthly pay would receive an advance early in January.</p> <p>Deputy Gardiner asked why recycling income had increased to treble what it was previously.</p> <p>Neil Macdonald confirmed it involved the timing and sending of invoices.</p> <p>The Constable thanked the Director for the presentation and asked if there was a proposer and seconder for the Accounts.</p> <p>The Accounts were proposed by Deputy Stephen Ahier and seconded by Deputy Rob Ward; the Assembly unanimously adopted them.</p>

<b>39/21</b>	<b>Item 2: Receive the Annual Report for the Financial Year 2020/2021</b>
	<p>Jason Turner, CEO presented the first annual report. He explained the Strategic Objectives set out in the Strategic Plan adopted by the Assembly last year, provided the context for the annual report. He shared with the Assembly, Parish achievements during 2020/2021.</p> <p><b>Questions on the Annual Report:</b></p> <p>There were no questions in relation to the annual report and the Assembly voted to receive it unanimously.</p>
<b>40/21</b>	<b>Item 3: Presentation of the Estimates (Budgets) and approval of the Assembly for the financial year 2021/22</b>
	<p>Neil Macdonald, Resources Director, presented the estimates (budgets) for 2021/2022, explaining an increase in staff costs due to a change of management structure at St Ewold's Care Home, and allowances made for the return of employees from long-term sickness. There are additional sums for roads maintenance and operational expenditure, which include staff training and climate change initiatives.</p> <p>Deputy Ahier questioned possible legal action arising from the Requete brought before the Parish Assembly, and asked if money was set aside for that purpose. Neil Macdonald stated a decision was made not to allow for it in the budget, if the amount proved excessive, it would need to come from general reserves.</p> <p>Deputy Ward questioned the rise in the cost of dog licences, stating there were very few facilities provided for people to walk their dogs. He asked, if it is Parish policy to maintain the rate by increasing non-rate charges?</p> <p>The Constable explained the decision to increase dog licences was taken by the Comite des Connétables, as the cost of the licence did not cover the cost of processing it.</p> <p>John Baker congratulated the Parish on its performance this year, stating from the accounts presented; people would never know there was a pandemic. He praised the work of the Procurers and his fellow Road Committee members, but expressed disappointment that the Procureurs had failed to support green initiatives, by not agreeing to offer parking free of charge to support electric car companies.</p> <p>The Estimates were proposed by Deputy Inna Gardiner and seconded by Deputy Rob Ward and were unanimously adopted.</p>
<b>41/21</b>	<b>Item 4: Approve the Parish Rate for the Financial Year 2021/22</b>
	<p>The Assembly were advised that it was proposed to keep the rate the same, the Constable asked if there were any amendments, higher or lower, to the proposed rate of 1.15p</p> <p>There being no further amendments, on a proposition by Procureur Peter Pearce and seconded by the Dean, Rev. Mike Keirle the rate of 1.15p was unanimously approved by the Assembly.</p>
<b>42/21</b>	<b>Item: 5 Election of the Accounts Committee to examine the Accounts for the Financial Year 2021/2022</b>
	<p>The Constable thanked the Accounts Committee for all the hard work conducted throughout the year, and informed the Assembly that the following Committee Members had indicated their willingness to seek re-election:</p> <p>Jackie Hilton, Bob Le Brocq, David Croxford, Sarah Richardson, John Baker, Stewart Mourant, Bernie Manning, Steven Beddoe, Mario Pirozzolo and Jason Lagadu.</p> <p>On a proposal by Procureur Peter Pearce and seconded by the Dean, Rev. Mike Keirle, ten members of the Accounts Committee from 2020/21 were unanimously elected enbloc for 2021/2022.</p>
<b>43/21</b>	<b>Item 6: Approval of the appointment of Parish Auditors for 2021/2022</b>
	<p>On a proposition by David Croxford and seconded by Andrew Lewis, the Auditors Alex Picot &amp; Co were re-appointed for 2021/22; approval of the Assembly was unanimous. On behalf of the Parish, the Constable thanked Don Connolly and his team for all their hard work.</p>
	<p>The Constable thanked the ratepayers for their show of confidence in the Parish; he thanked the Auditors, the Procureurs, the Accounts Committee, all Parish employees for all their hard work. The date of the next Parish Assembly was confirmed as <b>Wednesday 28th July 2021 at 7.00 pm.</b></p>