



PARISH OF ST MARY

MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD AT ST MARY'S PARISH HALL On the Thursday 11th July 2019 at 8pm

An Assembly of the Principals and Electors of the Parish of St Mary was held at the Parish Hall on Thursday 11th July at 8pm to conduct the following business:

- To receive and, if deemed advisable, approve the minutes of the Parish Assembly held on Thursday 2nd May 2019
- To receive and, if deemed advisable, adopt the accounts of the Connétable for the financial year 1st May 2018 to 30th April 2019, the said account having been previously audited by the Parish Accountants and examined by the Committee appointed for that purpose.
- To approve the transfer from the Reserve Fund to the Roads Committee £30,000 for the upkeep of the by-roads during the financial year ending 30th April 2020.
- To approve the transfer from the Reserve Fund to the Community Projects budget £9,000 for the building of a Parish Petanque Club House.
- To receive and, if deemed advisable, approve the Connétable's Estimates for the financial year 1st May 2019 to 30th April 2020, including grants to various charities and organisations and tax the rate accordingly.
- To name a Committee to examine the accounts of the Connétable for the financial year 1st May 2019 to 30th April 2020.
- To appoint an auditor to examine the accounts for the financial year 1st May 2019 to 30th April 2020.

The Connétable, John Le Bailly, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. Special thanks were given to Derek Maltwood (Procureur du Bien Public) for attending despite his current bad health. Apologies were received from Daniel Reed, Peter Le Liard and Tony Gilbert.

The meeting was attended by 33 people who were eligible to vote.

The Secretary read the convening Notice for the Assembly and it was duly signed by the Connétable.

Item 1 – To receive and, if deemed advisable, approve the Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 2nd May 2019

The Connétable advised that copies of these Minutes had been circulated to the Assembly for approval. There being no matters arising, Deputy David Johnson proposed the adoption of the Minutes and they were seconded by Cynthia Cotillard.

Item 2 - To receive and, if deemed advisable, adopt the accounts of the Connétable for the financial year 1st May 2018 to 30th April 2019, the said accounts having been previously audited by the Parish Accountants and examined by the Committee appointed for that purpose.

The Connétable introduced and welcomed Andy Myers (AM), Audit Director from Alex Picot to the Assembly and invited him to give an overview of the Connétable's accounts.

AM advised the Assembly there were a number of items to bring to their attention:

General Account

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AM explained the columns and advised that he was unable to comment on the 'Estimates' columns.

- Rates received - increased from last year due to Parish Rate increase from 1.2 to 1.4 and also the States of Jersey paid rates on properties which they owned for the first time. The surcharge also provided a higher income. Outstanding Parish Rates of £15,000 is low and good recovery for these debts is practised well.
- Sundry receipts – down from £2800 in 2018 as this payment was from the States in lieu of rates payments
- Bank interests provided a higher income

Page 5 :

Administration

- Office expenses increased by £11,000 due to higher costs in IT and GDPR regulations– a commitment made through the Comité des Connétables. Also office furniture costs and Registrar costs increased.
- Wages & Salaries – increased due to changes in roles of staff and hours
- Credit card charges – increased due to more parishioners using this form of payment

Public Works

- Parish Church & Rectory showed significant costs due to refurbishment, tree maintenance and insurance costs. This figure includes £10,000 transferred from the Reserve for plumbing costs. The Reserve for the Rectory and Cottage is now exhausted.

Honorary Police

- Increased spending due to IT, Boydcams, insurance and training costs.
- Police car cost of £3000 is an agreed amount transferred to the Reserve each year

Donations & Grants

- Youth Project funding – an agreed amount paid to the Youth Service for a youth worker's salary
- Charity donations – as agreed at last year's Assembly

AM stated the actual spend of £361,739 has increased mainly due to the spend on the Rectory.

Page 4 showed an excess of expenditure figure of £16,452 and this is reflected in the transfer of funds from the Roads & the Rectory & Cottage Reserves.

The balance in hand of £223,627 is above the recommended minimum amount of £185,000.

Roads Account – the activity of this account was explained with a special note concerning the Driving Licence receipts and payments. Due to the high increase in renewals for a particular year this amount is now reflected over a period of 10 years to provide a more consistent figure. The final balance of this account carried forward totalled £51,999 with an additional £30,000 from the estimates for 2020 (final total £81,999).

General Reserve – the spending on these accounts were explained to the Assembly.

Balance Sheet (Page 3) - Current Assets – AM explained that Driving Licences are to be shown over a 10 year period and it was noted that Creditors were higher than 2018.

Audit Report (Page 1)

The Auditor's 'Basis for Qualified Opinion' was explained to the Assembly. This was necessary as the accounts had not been audited prior to 2018 and consequently the auditors are unable to confirm the appropriate allocation of funds between the Reserves. As these funds are used over the years this statement will be removed.

Accounting Policies (Page 10)

AM stated these policies are in line with those followed in other parishes.

Questions then followed:

Trevor Le Sage queried the Land and Buildings owned by the parish (Page 11) in particular the East Rectory Field and West Rectory Field, could the Connétable give an understanding of the ownership of these fields.

The Connétable replied that the fields are shared between the Church and the Parish but are under the jurisdiction of the Parish as advised by Ken Syvret. He further stated that the fields were Ecclesiastical Rectorat land and not Glebe land. This asset is shared by both parties but the income is not. This is written into the Rector's remit. He went on to state that the trees on the West Rectory field belonged to the Parish and therefore the Parish was responsible for the cutting of these trees.

Rev Canon Tim Neil advised the Assembly that the fields were Rectorat land and not Parish land.

Trevor Le Sage queried the paying by ratepayers for the cutting of these trees on church land.

Rev Canon Tim Neill stated he would enquire with the Dean as to the ownership of the fields.

James Drew queried the bank balances stating that the revenue shows a £50,000 increase however there is an excess of expenditure of -£71,000 resulting in a balance sheet showing a fall in next current assets of £115,000.

AM confirmed this statement and further explained the following expenditure:

- Road cleaning – paid for 2 road cleans this year and only one last year. The Connétable advised that the Roads Committee are monitoring this cost closely this year.
- Roads Account have £51,999 brought forward along with £30,000 from the budget to cover additional costs this year

With no further questions the Connétable requested for a proposer for the adoption of these accounts. James Drew then proposed the Assembly adopt the accounts and this was seconded by Richard Sowerby.

Item 3 – To approve the transfer from the Reserve Fund to the Roads Committee £30,000 for the upkeep of the by-roads during the financial year ending 30th April 2020.

The Connétable advised the Assembly that this Item did not now require approval following a decision at the Accounts Committee meeting on 09.07.19.

Item 4 – To approve the transfer from the Reserve Fund to the Community Projects budget £9,000 for the building of a Parish Petanque Club House.

The Connétable stated that the Petanque Club are wishing to purchase a flat pack system and that this was a thriving club which needed a space to store items and host other visiting clubs. Quotes received to date are approximately £10,000. The Connétable recommended this purchase is made by the Parish and it will become a Parish asset. He further explained it is planned to erect it at the back of the Community Centre and would enhance the area.

Richard Sowerby explained it would be erected on a piece of land not currently being used. He further stated it would be an asset for the elderly of the parish along with the school children and encourage new members as proven the case in Trinity. The funding of £9,000 would cover everything – planning, erecting, plumbing. The running costs would be covered by club members.

Michael Rondel raised health and safety concerns especially over the exit of club house.

The Connétable added that this was a proposal in principal. There would be no further costs to the parish. He further stated that all parishes have been asked by Jersey Sport to find a Sport suitable for all parishioners.

Chris Bunt asked how many members the club currently has – it was confirmed as 30

James Drew stated the following 3 points:

- The parish has a current £170,000 increase in expenses – should we spend even more?
- The fact that the Petanque club needs another building just outside the current Community Centre building
- Not sure why parishioners should pay for the benefit of 30. The cost should be down to club members.

It was noted that there are safeguarding issue when using the Community Centre by other clubs.

Annette Johnson requested if there was a potential for an income from this project. The response was it had not been discussed as yet.

Trevor Le Sage stated that the maintenance issue will become a parish responsibility, if it could create an income this will cover these costs.

The Connétable advised this would be a 10 year replacement plan and needs to be looked at questioning feasibility of this transfer of funds.

Robin Stockton, Treasurer of the Petanque Club stated that the club is financially secure.

David Munns proposed the transfer of £9,000 into Reserve and this was seconded by Glynn Bowers.

Chris Bunt further proposed that the funds are transferred but no spend is made before the details of the build are presented at another Parish Assembly.

This proposition was carried by a majority vote of 1 – 17 for and 16 against.

Item 5 – To receive and, if deemed advisable, adopt the accounts of St Mary's Youth and Community Centre.

The Connétable advised the Assembly that this item is to be deferred to a later date as the accounts are not yet ready for presentation.

Item 6 – To receive and, if deemed advisable, approve the Connétable's estimates for the financial year 1st May 2019 to 30th April 2020, including grants to various charities and organisations and tax the rate accordingly

The Connétable referred to the estimates on page 5 and asked the Assembly for any questions.

Trevor Le Sage queried the pensions estimate of £18,000 stating that the parish of St Peter costs were £7,000 last year and that £18,000 is out of proportion to the salary figure and currently high in the present climate.

AM advised that the figure of £7,000 was likely to be a payment to cover its share of the pre-1987 debt of the PECRS (Public Employees Contributory Retirement Scheme), in line with all other participating employers.

The Connétable advised Parish staff were looking at adverts and offers of employment elsewhere. This scheme requires the employer to contribute 16%.

Rev. Canon Tim Neill raised concerns of wages and salaries increasing from £83,000

to £128,000 in a 2 year period.

Marilyn Evans queried how long an employee needs to be in the pension scheme in order to benefit from contributions.

Trevor Le Sage proposed that the pensions were withdrawn from the Constable's estimates. This proposal was seconded by Martin Stodart.

The Connétable asked for a vote in favour of this proposition – 2 hands were counted.

Rev. Canon Tim Neill requested a sub-committee be formed to discuss the pensions estimate further.

Trevor Le Sage proposed to adopt this request for a sub-committee and re-present the estimate with full details of pension scheme at another Assembly. The proposition was seconded by Chris Bunt. A vote was then taken with 28 in favour and none against.

Roger Smith queried the Parish Gardening and Maintenance estimate of £6,000. As there were no previous costs in this budget can the Connétable explain what this amount is for.

The Connétable replied he was unable to confirm what this estimate was for.

James Drew stated the estimates show a 20% increase in expenses and a rate increase proposal of 25% over last 2 years. Surely we need to trim expenses, confirm the total expenses is too high and bring them down. James Drew then proposed the total is too high and the Connétable needs to come back to the Assembly with a more prudent figure.

The Connétable asked the Assembly where the cuts should be made. The refuse collection being reduced to once a fortnight? He further stated that the proposals in this budget does not give us what the Parish needs to do.

James Drew replied stating the Assembly needs to understand why there are these increases.

Rev. Canon Tim Neill proposed that the Assembly asks to have the figure reduced. If unable to do so demonstrate why it is not possible.

David Munns stated that 'did not the Accounts Committee approve the Connétable's estimates at a previous meeting?'

Martin Stodart stated that if the rate remained at 1.4 the income generated would total £335,734.

James Drew made a proposal: to invite the Connétable to present the General Account 2020 estimates to a budget of £346,000 and if successful do not raise the Parish Rate. If the Connétable is unable to reduce the estimates to this figure he must be able to demonstrate why costs stand as they are. This proposal was seconded by Rev Canon Tim Neill. A vote was then taken with 8 in favour 4 against and 11 abstaining.

Derek Maltwood, apologised for being unable to help with the Parish accounts in the last few months due to illness.

Item 7 – To name a Committee to examine the accounts of the Connétable for the financial year 1st May 2019 to 30th April 2020

The Connétable wished to thank the Committee who examined the accounts last year and proposed that this Committee was re-elected en bloc.

David Munns proposed that this item was deferred. The Connétable agreed to this proposal.

Item 8 – To appoint an auditor to examine the accounts for the financial year 1st May 2019 to 30th April 2020.

The Connétable asked the Assembly that Alex Picot be appointed once again to audit the accounts for this period. This was proposed by Derek Maltwood, seconded by Deputy David Johnson and approved unanimously.

The Connétable concluded that the next Assembly would be held in August and declared the meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Signed  Connétable Date 21/8/19