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Ratepayers meeting held at St Saviours Community Centre on 29th April 2019 at 7.35pm with 30 parishioners in attendance. The meeting was chaired by Mr N Le Poidevin (NLP) (Senior Constable).

1. Copies of draft minutes of the parish meeting held on 30th April 2018 had been made available to those present and NLP asked if anyone wanted him to read out these minutes. No-one asked him to do so.

Mr D Bertrand proposed (seconded by Mr S Gibbs) that the minutes from the meeting on 30th April 2018 should be approved and this was unanimously agreed.

2. Copies of the Constable's 2018 accounts had been made available to those present and NLP asked if there were any questions concerning them.

A question was asked about the costs of household waste collection and disposal during 2018 since there was significant difference between the collection and disposal costs when compared to the previous year.

It was explained that the total cost for collection and disposal combined was similar in both 2017 and 2018, but that during the course of 2018 the waste strategy had changed. From 1st September 2018 the cost of waste disposal was subsidised by the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), but the parish had been obliged to agree new (more costly) collection arrangements with the contractor, - these arrangements now require the collection of 3 different types of household waste each week.

Mr D Bertrand proposed (seconded by Mr J Brache) that the Constables' Accounts for the year ended December 31st 2018 should be approved and this was unanimously agreed.

3. NLP highlighted the various items of expenditure that comprised the total secular rate of £90,110. *Notices detailing the proposed ecclesiastical and secular rates together with the refuse habitual unit charge had been published in La Gazette on 11th and 25th April 2019.* NLP asked if there were any questions or comments.

One parishioner asked if any progress had been made concerning 'plurality'. *This is where two parishes 'share' the same Rector but only one parish is responsible for the associated housing costs of the Rector. (Currently the Rector housed at the St Saviour's Rectory is responsible for both St Saviour and Torteval Parish Churches, but only St Saviour's ratepayers are responsible for the costs associated with the*

maintenance of the St Saviour's Rectory. Torteval leases the Torteval Rectory and benefits from the rental income).

NLP explained that over 3 years ago the Policy and Resources Committee indicated that the matter would be considered by them but this has now stalled. The last two letters that the Constables have written to the Committee concerning 'plurality' have not been answered (or even acknowledged).

It was evident from comments made by those present that there was a great deal of dissatisfaction with the apparent (political) disinterest in the matter.

The cost of the Rectory maintenance (*£30k is recommended in the 2019 Remede*) was questioned. A parishioner asked if the Douzaine has considered selling the Rectory and purchasing a smaller, more economically manageable, property to house the Rector and his family.

NLP explained that this has been discussed by the Douzaine, but under current legislation (if the Rectory is occupied) the Parish cannot sell the Rectory without the consent of the Rector. The Constables do not have this consent and cannot, therefore, progress the matter.

A parishioner pointed out that when a Rectory became vacant it was possible for the parish to agree to sell a Rectory, but questioned where any future Rector might be housed. This person also stated that he could see no reason why the Plurality Law, agreed by the States over 25 years ago, had never been enacted and agreed that the current situation is unfair to ratepayers of St Saviour.

NLP was then asked what the proposed £30k maintenance costs for the Rectory and Church Hall would be used for.

It was explained that the Douzaine commissions a property survey/report every 5 years and the most recent report was prepared towards the end of 2018. The report highlights maintenance that should be completed urgently, annually, within 12 months and then at other points, up to and beyond a 5 year period. Some of the work is difficult to cost because it recommends 'inspections and treatment by specialists'.

There are annual costs that have to be paid (insurance and property tax total over £4k) and it is considered prudent to keep a small reserve for unforeseen events. The Douzaine is planning to keep £5k so that funds are available for unforeseen problems with the Rectory/Church Hall and spend in the region of £20k+ on the maintenance recommended in the report. If approved the Douzaine Property Committee will determine the order of priority for the work to be carried out.

One person commented that in these times of financial constraint it is difficult to understand how the Church can support a position that requires parishioners to contribute more to the cost of Rectory maintenance than is absolutely necessary, and it was evident that this was a view supported by others.

Mr D Bertrand proposed (Mr J Brache seconded) that the secular remede (£90,110) be approved in full. This was unanimously agreed.

4. NLP advised the meeting that the recommended refuse habitual unit charge for 2019 was £118,000 and asked if there were any questions or comments, reminding the meeting that the household waste collection arrangements had been changed during 2018 and explaining that weekly collections are for food waste (every week) and 2 other types of segregated waste on an alternating basis.

A question was asked about the collection charge (levied by the parish) and the WDA's £85 processing charge.

NLP explained that the £85 charge is nothing to do with the parish. It is simply a processing charge so that the various strands of waste can be processed by the States.

The proposed charge (totalling £118K) is for the roadside collection of household waste and all habitable units will pay the same. The charge will be divided by the number of habitable units and is expected to be between £104 and £105 per unit.

Before the new waste strategy was implemented, in September 2018, the various waste contractors had met with the WDA. At these meetings the WDA indicated that the vehicles in use at that time would not conform to the new standards being stipulated, especially in relation to the collection of food waste. The St Saviour's contractor (who also collects waste for St Andrew, St Martin and Vale parishes) subsequently purchased vehicles that would comply with the requirements indicated by the WDA.

The Guernsey Press carried a story on Friday 26th April which highlighted that refuse collection charges in the different parishes varied with St Saviour being the highest cost.

A parishioner referred to this article and asked why St Saviour had the highest cost per habitable unit (estimated at £104 - £105).

NLP explained that the contractor collects for four parishes and that for 2019 the Vale parish has used a residual balance from previous years to subsidise the 2019 charge. St Martin and St Andrew are charging just under £100 per habitable unit. However the density of houses and the time taken to collect the waste has a bearing on the contractor's fees. St Saviour has the fewest habitable units per square kilometre and therefore it takes longer to collect the waste, - hence the higher cost.

The parish contractor has advised the Constables that he is the only contractor to have supplied waste collection vehicles that meet the requirement (as advised by the WDA) for the collection of food waste and has suggested that other parishes have their food waste collected in open topped vehicles. This being the case, and not having to invest in compliant waste collection vehicles he is not surprised that competitors have been able to offer lower costs. The contractor has expressed surprise (to the Constables) that the WDA allow such collections of food waste.

NLP said that the Constables receive very few complaints about the waste contractor. This opinion was supported by one parishioner who commented that he considers that waste containers are always replaced to where they were taken from, but that in other parishes he has noted containers being 'all over the place'.

Sir de Vic Carey proposed (Mr A Courtney seconded) that the refuse habitual unit charge be approved in full. This was unanimously agreed.

5. The meeting approved that the Constables should apply to the Royal Court for permission to levy the owners and refuse habitual unit charge sums.
6. The meeting agreed that owners rate be levied by applying the relative Cadastre category factors and that the refuse habitual unit charge be applied to all housing units.
7. The meeting agreed that all necessary measures relating to the above should be taken by the Constables and Douzaine as they may deem advisable.

A request was made asking the Constables to post future accounts on the parish website at the same time as notice is given of the forthcoming parish meeting.

NLP agreed that the Constables would do this.

NLP said that he would also arrange for the draft minutes to be posted on the website as soon as they were available.

NLP wished to place on record that parishioners are grateful to Mr S Gibbs for preparing the accounts and Mr R Stapley for providing an independent assurance report, both giving their time to the parish free of charge.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.10pm.