

PARISH OF ST LAWRENCE



Minutes of the Parish Assembly

Held on Monday 27th July 2020 at 7.00p.m.

Assembly Room, St Lawrence

Present: 29 Principals and Electors

Welcome:

The Connétable welcomed all present and introduced the Procureurs of the Parish, Mr Bruce Harrison and Mr Martin Sabey, the Parish Administration Officer, Mrs Emma Woodward the Parish Secretary, Mrs Leasa Nozedar and Mr Don Connolly of Alex Picot Chartered Accountants.

The Connétable led the Assembly in prayer.

Apologies:

Senator Le Fondré, Reverend Phil Warren, Michael Orpin, Sue Noble.

Deputies in Attendance:

Deputy Gregory Guida.

Minutes taken by Parish Secretary Mrs Leasa Nozedar.

The Connétable advised that the Assembly was being recorded for minuting purposes.

Convening Notice:

An Assembly of the Principals and Electors of the Parish will be held at the Parish Hall on **Monday 27 July at 7.00pm** for the following business:

1. To receive and, if agreed, to approve the Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 3rd February 2020.
2. To receive and, if agreed, to adopt the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2020, the said accounts having been audited by Alex Picot Chartered Accountants and examined by the Comité Paroissiale named for that purpose.
3. To approve the estimates of the funds required by the Parish for the financial year ending 30th April 2021 to include a sum of money for the upkeep and maintenance of the by-roads.
4. To approve a Rate for the financial year 2020/21 in accordance with Article 21 of the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005.
5. To approve a sum to be taken from the Parish Property Capital Expenditure Fund to cover unforeseen repairs to the Parish Hall.
6. To name the Comité Paroissiale to examine the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2021.
7. To appoint auditors to audit the Connétable's accounts for the year ending 30th April 2021.
8. To elect three parishioners to the St Lawrence Sports & Community Centre Management Committee.

Copies of the audited accounts will be available at the Parish Hall and on our website from

Wednesday 22nd July.

Deidre Mezbourian
Connétable de St Laurent

22 July 2020

1. To receive and, if agreed, to approve the Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 3rd February 2020.

The Connétable asked for a proposer and seconder for the minutes. They were proposed by Mr Mike Haden and seconded by Mr Sean Morvan.

On a show of hands, all were in favour with none against; the Minutes having been approved were signed by the Connétable as President of the Assembly.

2. To receive and, if agreed, to adopt the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2020, the said accounts having been audited by Alex Picot Chartered Accountants and examined by the Comité Paroissiale named for that purpose.

The Connétable invited Mr Don Connolly from Alex Picot, to address the Assembly. Mr Connolly explained that he would go through the accounts welcoming any questions at the end, focusing on where there were significant differences between the actual and the budgeted figures. He explained the process they had gone through this year during COVID-19 and praised the Parish team for getting all information to Alex Picot working in difficult lockdown conditions.

Starting with Audit and Accountancy Mr Connolly explained that Mr Jim Sloan had prepared the accounts the previous year but had very sadly passed away in March 2020. £14,602 against £7750 was due to extra training, bookkeeping and Alex Picot preparing the accounts this year.

The Honorary Police Expenses were down this year compared to last year where traffic equipment was purchased.

Legal and Professional fees £15,703 against £5000 was due to Data Protection costs and a one-off legal fee of £4000 for the new refuse contract. Mr Connolly explained that following the resignation of the Parish Registrar last year, all Birth, Death and Marriage certificates are now produced by the Parish of St Helier at a charge per certificate.

Salaries, Social Security and Pension Contributions are up from £136,000 to £140,152, due to unforeseen changes to the staff.

Tresor remains the same.

Establishment – Heat, light and water has increased due to workmen using Masion du Gardien during Parish maintenance work.

The Roads Account had increased this year. Mr Connolly explained that this was due to the driving licence bulk renewal, this cost is split over 10 years.

He also explained to the Assembly that there is a new line for Trafficworx Permit Fees. Following a new law whereby companies including utility and scaffold, have to apply to the Parish for permission to work on or close Parish Roads. They will now be charged, with the income coming to the Parish.

Mr Connolly advised that the repairs and improvements to by-roads included pot holes and some additional work to remove tree roots, costs of which were recovered from the land owner.

The surplus of £4053 will be transferred to the Roads Reserve Fund.

Mr Connolly informed the Assembly that the number of rateable quarters had dropped, this was due to a large property being uninhabitable due to building works.

For the financial year ended 30th April 2019, expenditure over income amounted to £19,773.

Mr Connolly referred to the Parish Property Capital Expenditure Fund with expenditure of £132,499 this year. This was budgeted for when the Assembly agreed last year to allocate a sum of £180,000 of this fund towards maintenance and repairs to the Parish Hall.

Having completed his presentation, Mr Connolly asked the Assembly if they had any questions.

There being no questions the Connétable asked for a proposer and seconder to approve the accounts

for the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2020.

Proposed: Miss Pam Staley

Seconded: Mr Peter Noble

On a show of hands, all were in favour with none against.

3. To approve the estimates of the funds required by the Parish for the financial year ending 30th April 2021 to include a sum of money for the upkeep and maintenance of the by-roads.

The Connétable then presented the budget for the year ended 30th April 2021 as set out on page 20.

The Connétable explained that Advertising would be reduced by half as the Parish would not need to advertise for outings and events due to COVID-19.

Audit and Accountancy would be reduced as Emma Woodward is now looking after the finances for the Parish and is doing a good job. Alex Picot will continue to do the audit for the Parish.

Bank and Credit Card Charges have increased due to more people paying online and over the phone particularly during the COVID-19 period.

The Connétable gave the Assembly a breakdown of the charges that the Parish will incur from the Comité des Connétables explaining that the Rates and Electoral System Expenses will be merged into the Comité des Connétable line in the accounts continuing that the budget is higher this year due to provisions for a new IT Strategy. The Connétable explained that following an attempted hacking incident on the NHS, all Parishes undertook an IT review, this highlighted some failings by all Parishes. Subsequently, following an open tender process, the Comité des Connétables appointed Focused IT to undertake IT for the Parishes. The Connétable budgeted approximately £6000 for the work which should start in September / October.

The Connétable informed the Assembly that the Parish had purchased 2 new laptops from Computer Expenses, to enable staff to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Connétable informed the Assembly that there would be no increase to the Honorary Police budget and gave a breakdown of the forecasted expenditure.

The Connétable explained that Legal and Professional fees would be merged with Human Resources. This included the Data Protection Officers and annual Data Protection fee and following the resignation of the Parish Registrar's last year, the processing of all Birth, Death and Marriage certificates are produced by the Parish of St Helier at a cost per certificate.

Maintenance and Renewal of Equipment would be used for a new sound system for the Assembly Room, new chairs for the Parish office staff as they had not been purchased last year and a new printer for the office.

The Connétable informed the Assembly that the proposed increase for salaries covers pension and social security and the budget for salaries was up to £150,000. Following the retirement of Mrs Joy Le Cornu, a senior member of staff is being recruited to hopefully start at the end of this year or beginning of next year. The figure of £150,000 will increase next year as the new member of staff will be paid for a full financial year.

Special Functions and Gifts will be merged with Sundry Expenses. The budget will be down this year as events have been cancelled due to COVID-19.

The Tresor will remain the same at £12,000, for the day to day running and upkeep of the Parish Church.

There will be a slight increase in the cost of cleaning this year due to extra cleaning being undertaken in the Parish Hall as a result of COVID-19.

Heat, Light and Water was expected to reduce as the Parish Hall is not in use for events.

The Connétable explained to the Assembly that the Parish went out to tender last year for the Refuse Collection. Two companies tendered and the contract was awarded to MBM Services with a saving of around £20,000 per year. As they are not starting until February 2021 there is not a big difference in the budget for 2020 / 2021.

The Connétable explained that the Roads Account would remain the same with a budget of £10,000. The Parish Roads Committee has a policy to repair all potholes when reported. Due to COVID-19 there had been a delay in work with the contractor not working during lockdown but work would commence in the Parish week beginning 3rd August 2020.

Total expenditure before grants and special votes including the annual £10,000 for the upkeep of the roads is £582,953.

The Connétable explained that there is a proposal to reduce the grants to Parish Associations this year as COVID-19 has put a stop to all activities. The Rector was satisfied that the Parish reduce the grant to the Church from £10,000 to £7500.

A nominal amount of £1000 was proposed under Special Votes, for the Parish Vehicle Fund, although all Parish vehicles are in good working order at the moment.

The budget for the Youth Worker remains at £15,000 which pays towards the cost of the Youth Worker at St Lawrence Youth Project.

Total expenditure for the next financial year was forecast at £624,053.

The Connétable informed the Assembly that as per her Financial Report at the front of the accounts the Comité des Connétables have agreed to all try to keep their rate to the same as last year, to avoid hardship from the rates as a result of any impact that COVID-19 may have had on them. The Parish will be looking to keep the rate at the same as last year at 0.85p.

The Connétable opened the floor to questions.

David Renault addressed the Assembly, he said that he thought the amount of £10,000 towards the Roads Account was inadequate and is not going to repair all pot holes. He thought that some roads need to be resurfaced including the road in which he lives, as there are a number of potholes in it.

The Connétable referred Mr Renault to page 7 of the Parish accounts informing him that £10,000 is a nominal amount. The Parish spent £25,000 on road repairs last year. The Parish uses the income that comes into the Roads Account which last year was £56,488 and the Parish would be expecting to get a similar amount this year. The Connétable advised the Assembly that the Parish had £119,000 in the Roads Reserve fund (page 12) which is there for any unforeseen expenditure.

The Connétable invited a member of the Roads Committee to comment on Mr Renault's proposal. Mr Rodney Pallot commented that he was happy with the £10,000 proposed providing that if resurfacing was needed it would be taken from the Roads Reserve Fund.

The Connétable proposed that the new Roads Committee should review the policy of repairing pot holes to avoid major road resurfacing. They would report on their decision at the next Rates Assembly, when they may ask for an increased budget amount.

Mr Renault proposed an increase to £25,000 for the Roads Account; this was seconded by Mr Stephen Carter.

The Connétable put the proposal to the floor; to increase the vote for the Roads Account from £10,000 to £25,000. On a show of hands, 4 were in favour and 15 against.

The Connétable declared the proposal had not been carried.

The Connétable then asked if there were any further questions. There being no further questions the Connétable asked for a proposer and seconder to approve the estimates of the funds required by the Parish for the financial year ending 30th April 2021.

Proposed: Miss Pam Staley

Seconded: Mr Sean Morvan

On a show of hands, 17 were in favour with 1 against.

4. To approve a Rate for the financial year 2020/21 in accordance with Article 21 of the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005.

Procureur Martin Sabey addressed the Assembly and referring to Page 22 of the Accounts, recommended that the rate be set the same as last year at 0.85p. He explained that this would give a surplus of £9524.

The Connétable asked if anybody would like to propose a different rate. With no other rate proposed the Connétable asked for a proposer and seconder to approve a rate of 0.85p for the financial year 2020/2021.

Proposed: Mr Martin Sabey

Seconded: Mr Rodney Pallot

On a show of hands, 19 were in favour with none against. The Connétable declared the rate set at 0.85p per quarter.

5. To approve a sum to be taken from the Parish Property Capital Expenditure Fund to cover unforeseen repairs to the Parish Hall.

The Connétable informed the Assembly that at last years Assembly it was agreed to spend £180,000 to undertake repairs and maintenance to the Parish Hall. It was hoped that it would cover an extensive programme of maintenance and repairs.

The Connétable reminded the Assembly that before last year's Rates Assembly the Parish had commissioned Mr Andrew Arthur, a Chartered Building Surveyor, to undertake a survey of the Parish Hall and report back on all maintenance work that was required. He had produced a 41 page report, and the Assembly had approved a sum of £180,000 towards the maintenance and repairs.

The Connétable then asked Mr Arthur to address the Assembly to explain the extra work that had been identified. Mr Arthur had informed the Assembly last year that he would not be able to see the full extent of work needed until scaffolding had been erected. He reminded the Assembly that the Parish Hall is a Grade 2 listed building and the Parish would be required to carry out all work to high specifications. Mr Arthur had reported last year that there may be work required on the bell tower and cupola, which could not be seen from the ground. The Parish had contacted the Principal Historic Environment Officer, Tracey Ingle, to make her aware of the potential works and she was adamant that any work that needed to be done was like for like.

The Connétable continued that it had been agreed to come back to the Assembly to ask for any additional funds from the Capital Expenditure Account if additional work had been identified.

Mr Arthur explained that the reason the Parish needed to approve further funds for the extra works is mainly related to works at high level which had only been able to be seen from scaffolding once it was in place. One area that had been identified as needing extra work is in the Vingtenier's office; it has suffered quite extensively from damp which seems to have been a historic issue for many years. Once this had been opened up it had exposed roof areas that had historic decay in the timber work. In areas where the decay had been rather complicated, an engineer had been required to advise on the structural repairs in that area.

Water had also been witnessed penetrating through the joints of the dressed granite around the

window of the Vingtenier's office which had only been seen whilst doing the works, this is one of the area's that will exceed the provisional costs.

The large triangular zinc vents will need to be replaced on the bell tower roof as they are corroded, this all had to be agreed with planning and all materials have to be replaced with like for like. There had also been a rot problem in the top of the roof caused by water ingress. The biggest area of repair that had created the biggest expense is the cupola. At the top of the cupola is the historic weather vane, this had suffered quite extensively from corrosion and a number of parts have had to be replaced. The decision had been made to galvanise the weather vane, as this cannot be done locally it had been sent away. The roof that the weather vane sits on is covered in lead, water had been able to get in causing rot from the inside and decay on the South and West side. All lead had to be removed and repaired. There is a lot of rot in the structure at the top. The rot is also around the basin roof which had affected the timber beam detail around the head of the eight openings. In the eight openings are timber louvres which were not original, at least four of those are beyond repair. There is a drum detail inside that was galvanised and acted as a vent to direct air into the hall. Mr Arthur has met with Tracey Ingle to agree what should be done and she is very keen to keep the drum detail and put the zinc louvers back in place. There is also rot in the base of the Cupola. As the Parish Hall is a listed building, the Parish is required to put it back more or less as it was and in agreement with the Planning Officer. Mr Arthur explained that this is an expensive repair to put right.

The Connétable commented that clearly there has been a lack of maintenance over the years but it was very difficult to see the extent of work until the scaffold had been put in place and the Parish is required to maintain and repair to the highest quality.

The Connétable opened the floor to questions. There being no questions the Connétable advised the Assembly that she thinks £38,000 should be sufficient to cover the additional costs, however the Connétable and Procureur's recommend that the Assembly agrees a maximum of an additional £50,000 to cover the additional work.

Proposed: Mr Winston Le Brun
Seconded: Mr Rodney Pallot

On a show of hands, 21 were in favour with none against.

Mr Le Brun addressed the Assembly to thank Mr Arthur. The Connétable also thanked Mr Arthur for overseeing the work on behalf of the Parish.

6. To name the Comité Paroissiale to examine the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30 April 2021.

Before calling for a proposer and seconder, the Connétable explained that the Comité Paroissiale traditionally consists of;

The Connétable
The two Procurers
The Rector
The two Deputies
The two Churchwardens
A member of the Roads Committee
Chairman of the Rates Assessors
The four Centeniers

They meet before the Rates Assembly to have a presentation of the Accounts and to ask any questions they may have to satisfy themselves on the detail.

Proposed: Mr Mike Haden
Seconded: Mr Stuart Lusby

	<p>On a show of hands, 20 were in favour with none against.</p>
	<p>7. To appoint auditors to audit the Connétable's accounts for the year ending 30 April 2021.</p>
	<p>The Connétable informed the Assembly that following a discussion with the Procureurs they would like to again recommend the appointment of Alex Picot Chartered Accountants; she then called for a proposer and seconder.</p> <p>Proposed: Mr Sean Morvan Seconded: Mr Stuart Lusby</p> <p>On a show of hands, 20 were in favour with none against.</p>
	<p>8. To elect three parishioners to the St Lawrence Sports & Community Centre Management Committee.</p>
	<p>The Connétable thanked the current committee for all their hard work over the past year, namely Mr Sid Simkin and Mrs Marion Hibbeard and informed the Assembly that the Treasurer, Mr John Ferris, had very sadly passed away. The Connétable asked Mrs Orpin to pass on her thanks to Mr Michael Orpin for the support he had given to Mr Ferris and for the work he continued to do.</p> <p>The Connétable then asked for nominations for three Parishioners to serve on the St Lawrence Sports and Community Centre Management Committee.</p> <p>Mr Michael Orpin was proposed by Mr Sean Morvan and seconded by Mrs Pat Sabey.</p> <p>Mrs Marion Hibbeard was proposed by Mrs Jenny Cartwright and seconded by Miss Pam Staley.</p> <p>Mr Sid Simkin was proposed by Mr Peter Noble and seconded by Mr Bruce Harrison</p> <p>There being no further nominations, the Connétable thanked them for standing and declared them to have been duly elected, all for a further one-year term.</p>
	<p>Before closing the Assembly, the Connétable thanked everybody for attending. She took the opportunity to make brief reference to COVID-19 and the restrictions and changes we have all had to make and how it had impacted on our private and working lives. We have become used to self-isolating, social distancing, hand sanitising, working from home and the wearing of masks is now accepted as the reality of our everyday lives.</p> <p>In the 75th year of our Liberation we as a Parish had planned a special celebration for all ages by way of a Family Fun Day which was to have been held on the 10th May 2020. Two years of preparation and organising had taken place. The Connétable continued that it was hard to put into words the disappointment that we all felt when we knew the event could not go ahead. It had brought together Parishioners of all ages, both primary schools and had forged stronger links between them. The Connétable recorded thanks to Mrs Pat Sabey and Miss Karen Blampied for leading and creating such an enthusiasm on the whole project.</p> <p>The Connétable invited Mrs Sabey to say a few words. Mrs Sabey said that it had been a great deal of fun, the Parish became one united force and great friendships were made.</p> <p>The Connétable continued that fortunately the outside photographic exhibition entitled 'A Parish Story' was able to go ahead and is on display in the Moignard Liberation Garden until 11th November 2020.</p> <p>The Connétable also thanked everybody who had volunteered at the outset of COVID-19. She also made special mention of the Parish Secretary Leasa Nozedar, who had held the fort at the Parish Hall over the last few months as we all faced the unprecedented difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

	The Connétable concluded by thanking the Parish office team, the Procureur's and all members of the municipality for making St Lawrence a wonderful Parish in which we live, work and play.
	Meeting Closed:
	There being no further business the Connétable declared the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed:

Date

Deidre Mezbourian, Connétable
President of the Assembly