

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF BRADDAN
PARISH COMMISSIONERS**
held in Commissioners Office, Close Corran, Union Mills, Braddan
at 7.00 pm
on Tuesday 22nd May 2012

In Attendance:

Mrs M Hodge	Chairman
Mr A Jessopp	Vice-Chairman
Mr C Slinn	
Mr J Quaye	
Mr P Halsall	
Mr J C Whiteway	Clerk
Miss M J Radcliffe	Deputy Clerk and Finance Officer

- AGM12/01 Welcome by the Chairman**
The Members were welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.
- AGM12/02 Issue of Summons / Agenda**
It was noted that all members had received Summons/Agenda at least three clear days before the date of the meeting.
- AGM12/03 Minutes of Previous Meeting**
The Minutes of the 2011 AGM which had been previously approved, were noted.
- AGM12/04 Chairman's Report**
The following report was given by the Chairman:

Chairman's Report 2011/12.

This past year has seen some progress at Braddan, although we are still hampered by the ongoing litigation with the former clerk which has progressed slowly due to his actions. We hope this court action will eventually reach a conclusion in the next year.

In April 2011 we received the judgement from the High Courts in relation to the Petition of Doleance submitted by Tels Ltd. It was pleasing to note that the Authority was indeed following the proper procedures in relation to granting access to its accounts, and the ruling, that clarifies the situation, will be of assistance to all Local Authorities and Central Government in the future. Thankfully we received a costs order for our legal expenses caused by defending this action, although at the time of this report no moneys have been received from the company. The collection of these monies has been referred to the Coroner for action.

The development of two car parks in the parish, one at Union Mills and one at Port Soderick Village Hall, have been delayed by the Highways authority who had traffic management concerns. We understand that these issues will be dealt with shortly, planning permission will be granted, and work should be starting very soon. I am sure that both communities will experience great benefit from these long-awaited

22/05/12

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CHAIRMAN'S
INITIALS

developments.

Recent elections have resulted in some changes on the Board. Firstly, in the General Election last September, Commissioner Kate Beecroft was successful in her campaign to join the House of Keys; this precipitated a by-election, and Juan Cottier was elected to the Board in her place. The other result of the General Election was that we 'changed our Quayle', with Martyn Quayle being replaced by Howard Quayle as the MHK for Middle. We are delighted with the interest that Howard has taken in the Board's activities; we have an excellent working relationship with him, and feel that Braddan now has a voice that will be heard in the House of Keys. Progress has been made on several fronts in the way we deal with Waste. A new Joint Committee has been set up to run the Civic Amenity Site at Middle River and this seems to be working well. Six Local Authorities are involved in that project, Braddan, Douglas, Laxey, Lonan, Onchan and Santon, and we hope that this project will be seen as an excellent example of authorities working jointly together. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the Kerbside Collection service; this was set up three years ago with Braddan, Douglas and Onchan working jointly on the pilot scheme. The government paid for the 3-year pilot scheme, but when this came to an end last September, and the local authorities had to decide to fund the on-going service, Onchan pulled out, leaving Braddan and Douglas to work together to promote what we consider to be a valuable contribution to recycling. You will have noted that in spite of the increased share of the costs to be paid by Braddan, your rates have not gone up!

The Refuse Collection arrangement that we had with Onchan came up for renewal last year, and with tenders received from both Onchan and Douglas, The Corporation's proposal was the most acceptable, and so Douglas now have a new 3 year agreement, starting on the 1st April 2012 for refuse collection in the parish. We look forward to a good working relationship with our new contractors.

The coming year, with potential problems arising from the financial constraints, promises to raise some interesting issues for local authorities to grapple with. The recent Permitted Development Order has raised concerns among the authorities in that, as currently proposed, it would seem to allow for totally unaccountable random development. We, among many others, have raised our concerns in our response to the consultation document, and we await the outcome. Local Authority Reform is once again on the political agenda, and along with the recent Boundary Commission Report, needs to be discussed thoroughly by us all.

So, we live in interesting times as they say, and I am sure that the new Board will give full consideration to all the issues that arise through the year, and will always do their best to achieve the outcome that is of greatest benefit to the residents of the Parish of Braddan.

AGM12/05 Clerks Report

The following report was given by the Clerk:

We started the year with our third business plan that again seemed to be well received.

There were 14 Public Meetings last year with an attendance rate of almost 92%.

Mr Quayle MHK was a regular attender at our meetings both before and after his election to House of Keys

General Issues

At the start of the year there was some hope that we would be able to resolve the problem of the biggest eye sore in the parish, Port Soderick Hotel. , After a series of complaints, discussions were held with Goughs Advocates who administer the site on behalf of one of their clients, and they indicated an early solution could be achieved. Unfortunately and we are not sure why, the commitment just seemed to die away.

Trees and High Hedges is a function transferred to us from Central Government in 2007. During the year our Community Warden helped to sort out a number of problems amicably, but in November a resident appealed to the High Bailiff's Court against a remedial notice served by the Commissioners. We unfortunately had to appoint legal representation to defend the action with a Court date set for May 2012.

Relationship with Union Mills FC continues to develop, and perhaps in the forthcoming year the Commissioners should consider building a relationship with the other new sports clubs in our parish.

We have always struggled with providing services to businesses, mainly because its difficult to find out their expectations of us. However we focussed our attention on Snugborough Trading Estate where we tidied up the road surfaces installed road markings and installed streetlights. At the end of the year plans had been finalised for the installation of new estate signage.

Closer working relationships with other Authorities were a feature of the year. We encouraged this initiative and even arranged a meeting of all Authorities to work with Baker Tilley to discuss a common issue, Contingency Planning. Jason Roberts the clerk from Port St Mary is certainly on board with the concept and came forward with a range of issues that can be considered during the next year such as purchasing powers for telephones, insurance policies and possibly internal audit.

The Commissioners took an innovate approach to their normal Christmas gathering and actually donated the money that they would have spent on the party to the two schools, two Youth Clubs and the Age Concern Lunch Club all in the Parish. That was very well received

Leisure

A brave step was taken by the Board to actually start progressing the scheme for the development of Strang Corner Field which had been put on hold due to the potential costs of resolving the litigation action taken by Mr Lewin against the Authority.

The Board has purchased the services of Home Strategic who will undertake both on line and face to face surveys with the general public early in the next year.

A survey of the expectations of the youth of the Parish indicated that they felt that a BMX track would be an asset to the Parish, and after a great deal of effort and sweat, planning approval for the BMX track was gained and a vision for Cronk Grianagh Park was developed.

Housing

At the 1st April 2011 we had 34 on our Housing List, and at the end of the year we had 31.

Single applicants no children	9
Couples no children	4
Single with children	12
Couple with children	6

During the year we allocated 6 from the Housing List and also arranged 15 Internal Transfers.

Maintenance:

There were 318 orders raised for work to be done, and 288 (90%) were completed on time.

Satisfaction Survey

98% Good
2% Average
0% Poor

Cronkbourne Village simply rumbled on with major discussions about the consultancy fees charged. The fees issue were resolved late in the year.

We are delighted to report that the scheme to replace 100 boilers actually started during the year.

The other major development was a full independent review of the condition of our housing stock that has allowed us to compile a 25 year plan for our housing maintenance programme.

Staffing

Finally I am pleased to advise that during the year Moira Radcliffe successfully completed the first module of the ACCA Foundations in Accountancy and had commenced the next module on the course.

**AGM12/0
6****Finance Officers Report**

The following report was given by the Finance Officer:

This financial year started with a balance of £12,790,893 in our reserves, of which £435,510 is held in the general revenue fund and £203,474 in the housing repairs reserve. The accounts for the year ending March 2012 are in the process of being drafted but indicative figures for the year are good and show a surplus of approximately £175,000.

The timetable for completion of the accounts set down by the Audit Regulations is fairly tight, so in the coming weeks I will be working with the support of Ian Begley from SMP to pull the accounts together. In the coming months the board will be asked to consider drafts of the Financial Statements before they are issued to the Auditors PKF. This has to be no later than 31st July with the Auditors being required to complete their audit by 31st October. We have received confirmation from PKF that our audit testing work is planned to start on 23rd July 2012.

The internal audit has once again been carried out by Alexander Elliot. This provided the board with an independent opinion on the adequacy

and effectiveness of the internal control systems, not just financial controls but those in many areas of the organisation. This year they have been requested to examine our controls and procedures for assessing investment opportunities and whether or not our system of charging refuse disposal is fair and equitable. The Board are to consider their findings in the coming weeks.

Late last year I received an invite from Antony Boyd of Douglas Corporation to attend a meeting of Local Authority finance officers group to discuss issues such as external audit, compliance, budgeting and rate setting issues and the work of internal audit. At that point it was envisaged that if the meeting was successful the group would meet every 6 months. The first meeting of the group was held in February and hosted by SMP Partners. The meeting was very positive and various items were discussed, it was an ideal opportunity to learn from the experience of others and discuss different ways of doing things. It was agreed that the meeting had been of benefit and further meetings were to be arranged.

During the year we invested £536,000 which has returned interest of £5,368.

We have not borrowed any additional funds during the year, although we have had borrowing approval for replacement boilers, which will be converted to a loan upon completion of the works.

In November 2011 we were advised by the Isle of Man Bank that due to Standard and Poors downgrade of the Isle of Mans sovereign rating from AAA to AA+ they would be invoking a clause within our lending agreements which allowed an increase of 0.25% in the lending margin on our fixed rate loans. Our original margin was 0.2% over base so this increase brought the margin up to 0.45%. This has resulted in the borrowing costing £718,180 more than originally planned, which is split as follows:

General Revenue 15 year loan	£19,084
Housing Revenue 15 year loan	£16,174
Housing Revenue 30 year loan	£682,923

Our loans are paid annually so this increase doesn't come into effect until June 2012.

The Parish Rate Book contained 1882 properties at the end of the year, having grown by the addition of 19 new properties, 14 of which are new homes. This has resulted in the Rateable value of the parish increasing by 4,586 resulting in £10,410 of additional income to the parish.

The General Rate fund started the year with an arrears balance of £2,402 brought forward, unfortunately £1,434 of this balance remains at the year end, but we are continuing to pursue recovery from the two ratepayers concerned. At March 2012 the balance carried forward for rate arrears amounted to £1,691 made up of £2,453 in arrears and £762 of rates paid in advance. The arrears equate to 0.21% of the total rate due for the year and arise from 13 properties. In the year allowances of £12,537 has been granted to charities under Section 74 of the Rating Act, these charities deserve a mention for the work they do:

The Joey Dunlop Foundation £717.32
 The Ardwhallan Adventure Centre £326.88
 Port Soderick Hall Trustees £45.40
 Share the Care Hospice Shops £1,316.60
 Hospice Care £9,007.36
 Rob Vine Fund £467.62
 The Children's Centre £656.03

Memorial Hall has been increasingly used for birthday parties and celebrations this year and income from hall hire has increased to £4,016 which is an increase of 40% over the previous year. This is despite still being able to offer youth and charity groups the use of the hall free of charge. Three groups benefit from this, the Brownies, The Youth Club and the Age Concern Lunch Club all are well attended and provide valuable activities for members of the community.

Moving onto expenditure there are a few areas of particular note:

Staffing costs have increased due to two pay awards being made in the year. The first in August 2011 saw pay increase by 1.5% back dated to April 2010 and determined by the Civil Service pay award for 2010-11. The second was award was made in March 2012 and saw a pay increase of 1.75% backdated to April 2011 as determined by the Whitley council pay award. These awards have had a knock on effect for the pension contributions which in the year were 6% for employees and 23% for the employer. The employee contributions are to change with effect from 1st April 2012 to banded contributions based on pensionable pay.

The authority has a dedicated team of 6 staff, who collectively have 57 years of experience with years in service ranging from 4 years to 19 years. In the year to 26.5 days were lost to sickness.

Expenditure on legal fees has once again been a high cost to the authority, (although not as high as last year) with expenditure in this area amounting to £76,343 for the year, which can be broken down as follows:

- 15% or £11,792 was spent on General legal advice which includes Peninsula fees and the Court summons charges.
- 6% or £4,611 was spent on the Petition of Doleance brought by Tels and the pursuit of the costs awarded by the Court of £24,000
- 79% or £59,940 was spent in defence of the on-going civil action being taken by C S Lewin.
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Some of the revenue funded capital expenditure carried out in the year include: purchasing of a replacement photocopier and new computer terminals and hardware for the office; carrying out improvements to the drainage and fencing at the car park for Memorial Hall; installing a bib tap outside the garages for the garage tenants to use; installing street lighting in Snugborough Trading Estate; purchasing and installing new litter bins; and improving the swings in the playgrounds to enable disabled children to use them.

Domestic waste disposal charges at the EFW increased in April 2011 to from £29 to £30.74 per tonne, and the commercial waste disposal increased from £100 to £106 per tonne. The commercial waste collection charge is recovered from the individual businesses using our refuse service but the increase in domestic disposal charges has to be

accounted for within the Rate income. In the year the parish disposed of 385 tonnes of commercial waste and 1,217 tonnes of domestic waste.

The rent increase for the year was 5%. Rent arrears at the year-end amounted to £1,762 and accounts for just 0.26% of the gross rents due. There were a high volume of void properties this year with 24 properties (12% of the total properties) becoming vacant during the year. This accounts for £24,044 of lost rent income or 3.66% of total rent due. As a result of this, expenditure on housing maintenance has increased dramatically, the total budget spent on Void properties was £26,970.

Control of expenditure on housing maintenance in previous years has enabled us to create a housing maintenance reserve fund. There were three schemes carried out in the year, which will be partly funded from this reserve - these schemes include the replacement of wooden front doors with aluminium doors; the replacement of wooden fascia with pvc at Close Y Lhergy and Close Y Locker; and the replacement of internal doors at 32 properties Snugborough Avenue. And although these schemes cost in the region of £75,000 the transfer from the reserve is currently calculated at just £27k, this is as a result of careful spending of the housing maintenance allowance in the year.

Finally the bad news, debtors. As I've indicated previously we are continuing to pursue aged debtors through the Courts, and then chasing the coroner to assist us in obtaining payment. Our provisional year-end figures show we have debtors of £120,538 which is categorised as follows:

Rent Debtors	£1,762
Rate Debtors	£2,453
VAT Debtor	£46,749
Trade & Sundry Debtors	£69,574

Trade and Sundry debtors are high due to the invoices for waste disposal having been issued on 31st March and the refund of costs from Tels for the Petition of Doleance of £24,000 being included in these figures.

AGM12/07 Election of Officers

The Chairman vacated the Chair and the Clerk invited nominations for the Chairmanship of the Authority for the Municipal Year commencing 22nd May 2012.

a. Chairman

Mrs Hodge was nominated by Mr Jessopp and the nomination seconded by Mr Halsall.

There were no further nominations and Mrs Hodge was elected by unanimous vote.

Mrs Hodge thanked the members for their support and resumed the Chair.

b. To elect Vice Chairman for the 2009/2010 Municipal Year

Mr Jessopp was nominated by Mrs Hodge and the nomination seconded by Mr Quaye..

There were no further nominations and Mr Jessopp was elected by unanimous vote.

c. To elect two representatives to serve on the Richmond Hill Consultative Committee

Mr Jessopp was nominated by Mrs Hodge and the nomination seconded by Mr Slinn.

Mr Halsall was nominated by Mrs Hodge and the nomination seconded by Mr Jessopp.

There were no further nominations and Mr Jessopp and Mr Halsall were elected by unanimous vote.

d. To elect a representative to serve on the Eastern Community Amenity Site Committee and the Kerbside Implementation Team

Mr Slinn was nominated by Mrs Hodge to attend the ECAS Committee meeting and the nomination seconded by Mr Jessopp.

There were no further nominations and Mr Slinn was elected by unanimous vote.

Mr Jessopp was nominated by Mrs Hodge to attend the KIT meetings and the nomination seconded by Mr Halsall.

There were no further nominations and Mr Jessopp was elected by unanimous vote.

d. To elect a representative to serve on the Municipal Association

Mr Quaye was nominated by Mr Halsall and the nomination seconded by Mrs Hodge.

There were no further nominations and Mr Quaye was elected by unanimous vote.

e. To elect five representatives to serve on the Public Inquiry Committee

It was unanimously resolved that all the present Board members would serve on the Public Inquiry Committee.

AGM12/08 Motions for discussion

There were no Motions for discussion

AGM12/09 Any Other Business

There were no matters for discussion

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 07.50 pm

MA Hodge Signed

22nd May 2012 Date

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS