

MINUTES OF BRADDAN PARISH COMMISSIONERS

Held via internet conferencing at 2pm on Thursday 28 January 2021.

In Attendance

Mr A C R Jessopp Chairman
 Miss C Corkill Vice Chairman
 Mr N Mellon
 Mr J Quaye
 Mr J C Whiteway Clerk
 Miss M J Radcliffe Deputy Clerk and Finance Officer

21/048 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mr Dentith.

21/049 Declaration of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

21/050 Issue of Summons / Agenda

It was noted that all members had received the Summons/Agenda at least three clear days before the date of the meeting.

Section 1**21/051 Estimates 2021/2022**

The Chairman advised that the meeting had been called to finalise the budget for the forthcoming year and set the Parish rate.

The Chairman however stated that unfortunately, since the last meeting, the authority had been informed of an increase of £200k in the cost of Strang Corner Field. Consideration had to be given to how this increase could be met, preferably without seeking additional borrowing, and whether the project remained financially viable.

It was noted the increase had been created by the global cost of steel production and because the order had not been placed before Christmas it was subject to market forces.

Consideration was given to the use of the general reserves to meet this amount and the Finance Officer provided advice on the state of the reserves and how the money could be achieved with the merging of schemes which had been funded by internal loans against the reserves.

The consequence of using the reserves for consultants' fees and this amount of £200k, would be that they were reduced from £1m to £140k at the completion of Strang Corner.

However it was noted that when Strang Corner had been built, the existing office would become an asset to sell or rent out. Informal advice had been received that the sale or conversion of the office could realise between £400k and £600k which would bring the reserves back up to possibly £700k.

Mr Quaye suggested that consideration should also be given to leasing out the property rather than selling, and the Clerk was asked to seek opinions from estate agents to determine the best option available.

After a lengthy discussion it was **unanimously resolved** to press on with the Strang Corner Field and to fund the additional money from reserves.

With this decision made, it was accepted that some of the earlier plans they had discussed, such as lighting the Heritage Trail and the road to Middle Park would need to be deferred for the time being.

Regardless of the deferment of some new schemes, all the existing services were to continue unchanged including:

- Search fees to remain at £105
- Green waste collection in the summer will be carried out fortnightly on Saturday mornings from 11:30-1:30 to assist in the removal of green waste from the wheelie bin disposal route.
- Kerbside recycling service
- Weekly waste collection
- Commercial Refuse collection recoveries held at same price as 2020-21.
- A third wildflower meadow in Cronk Grianagh
- Street Traders licence fees held at £50.00
- The charges for Memorial Hall hire were to be held at same levels as 2020-21
- The continuation of the hanging baskets
- Continued support of the Community Garden
- Library costs remain the same, as it was felt that supporting the Mobile Library was critical to support social interaction and mental health throughout the pandemic
- £37k for the sweeping of streets, clearing of gullies, spraying of weeds and cutting of hedges
- The Community Celebrations budget to support local groups with their Christmas parties and the ISB Skate Board group to host the annual Skate Jam was to continue
- Landscaping works allowed for the removal of diseased trees in the Snugborough Estate housing estate area
- The construction of the toilets at Grianagh Park, although this was now to be fully funded from Reserves rather than as a loan against reserves.

New schemes approved were:

- A budget of £7,653 for the capital cost of borrowing 70k for the Refurbishment of the playgrounds including stripping and re-painting equipment, replacement fences, and pathways at Clybane Playground and Union Mills Park.
- Purchase of 100 additional recycling trolleys to expand the numbers in circulation from the trial carried out last year.
- Replacement of 11 litter bins
- Civic Amenity Site – the first year of capital costs for the construction of a new site at Middle Farm industrial estate.

After discussing all these matters it was agreed that the rate should be set at 224p in the pound which was a 10.3% increase on the previous year.

A discussion was held on the consequence of a rate increase but a comparison of rates of other authorities still showed Braddan to be still in the lower half.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 4.30pm

Signed

Date 4/2/21