

# RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS

[ PUBLIC ]

A Special Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was via telephone conference call on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. A. G. Cowie, Mesdames M. B. Quayle and J. Wedgwood, Messrs' Rev Canon N. D. Greenwood, J. McGuinness, L. Parker and W. G. Young.

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence had been received from Messrs. A. J. Oldham and F. B. R. Williams.

The Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Finance Officer were in attendance.

## **(2020/21:264) Budget 2021/22 Rate Setting:**

The Chairman welcomed Members and officers, and Members noted the Finance Officer's circulated report. Mr. McGuinness was invited to lead the discussion.

Mr McGuinness drew attention to a report circulated by the Finance Officer to the effect that 422p in £ rate would result in an operational deficit of approximately £180,000 effectively funded by existing reserves. The Finance Officer offered clarification to the effect that this would be the case if the projects proceeded as outright purchases, and that the deficit would be lower i.e., 414p in £ if financing options were taken.

Members proceeded to further review the list of projects:-

### **Fleet Vehicle Overhaul**

In the absence of Messrs' Williams and Oldham, Mr. McGuinness invited members comments. Mrs. Wedgwood had met with officers and expressed the view that the current expenditure on maintenance is untenable and related generally to the length of time vehicles are retained. Mrs. Wedgwood felt the Commission should progress a programme of replacements, specifically that the Commission should progress immediate with purchases of necessary replacements and progress an investigation of economic life and establish replacement programme.

The Chairman agreed that vehicle life is excessive, and the Commission needs to look at how it manages vehicle replacement.

Mr. McGuinness proposed budgeting for £38,000 in year 1, he expressed a wish to see an established replacement programme, detailing a 4-5-year plan. Mr. McGuinness noted that financing would result in stacking of costs, and therefore proposed approval of capital acquisition.

**Resolved:** Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Cowie, and agreed unanimously that a budget of £38,000 be retained for 2021/2 rate year to replace fleet vehicles.



**(2020/21:264) Budget 2021/22 Rate Setting Continued**

**Fleet Overhaul Housing**

Members noted that some housing vehicles were proposed to be replaced and funded through the housing allowance at no cost to the rate fund. Due to the accounting requirements this would be by leasing or lease purchase.

**Resolved:** Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Cowie, and agreed unanimously that replacement of housing fleet vehicles be provided for at no cost to the rate fund.

**Decorative Lighting – provision of two real trees and new lighting**

**Resolved:** Proposed by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed unanimously to retain the project within the 2021/2 budget.

**Street Regeneration – lights.**

Members noted the project entailed replacing the canopy lights and providing wire stays to support canopy and reduce damage. Messrs' McGuinness and Parker felt that the Commission should take advantage of grants available, noting that the canopy lights and replacement bins will be largely invisible improvements.

Mr. Parker suggested that option 2 be progressed, to allocate a budget of £31,000 and look closer at grant assistance. Mr. Cowie was keen to see the light canopy replaced as it was costing money at present. The Finance Officer pointed out that expenditure of £28,000k on the canopy would be eligible for grant assistance of £22,000, a net cost of £6,000.

Mr. Cowie proposed the Commission proceed with option, the motion was seconded by Mr. Parker but failed by 3 votes to 4 Mrs. Wedgwood and Messrs Greenwood, McGuinness and Young voting against.

**Resolved:** Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed unanimously to allocate £31,000 budget with expenditure to be formally approved in advance by the Commission.

**Bin-weight Upgrade**

Members noted officer reports that the existing system is becoming less reliable. Members discussed issues related to the software. Mr. Young suggested steps should be taken to test weighing system to ensure that it remains suitable for purpose.

Mr. Parker proposed that the project be deferred, the motion was seconded by Mr. Young.

*proposed*  
*Mr* Mr. Cowie *and* amendment that the project be retained subject to further testing of the existing system, the amendment was seconded by Mrs. Quayle.

**(2020/21:264) Budget 2021/22 Rate Setting continued**

Resolved: the amended motion was carried by 6 votes to 1, Mr. Parker voting against. In regard to funding Mr. McGuinness proposed the budget for acquisition be at a cost of £52,000 under loan/HP terms of 5 years, this was seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed unanimously.

**Seasonal Staffing**

Members further discussed the appointment of seasonal staff.

**Resolved:** Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed unanimously to make budgetary provision for only 2 seasonal staff during 2021/22.

**Riverside Workshop Alarms**

Mr. Cowie proposed the project be deferred for one year, the motion was seconded by Mr. Parker.

Members noted that the project was able to be undertaken without using off-island contractors.

Mr. McGuinness proposed the project proceed and a budget of £20,000 be provided in 2021/22, this motion was seconded by Mrs. Quayle.

**Resolved:** the amendment was carried by 5 votes to 2, Messrs' Cowie and Parker voting against.

**Wheely Bins**

A £13,266 budget is sought for wheely bin replacement. Mr. Cowie questioned the need to supply 150 new home with bins, the Technical Services Manager advised the figures had been obtained from developers.

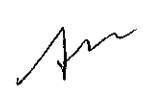
Mr. Cowie proposed that the number of <sup>240 bins</sup>~~240~~ bins provided in the budget be reduced to 200 only, <sup>AM</sup> a reduction of £2,450, the proposal was seconded by Mr. McGuinness.

Mr. Parker proposed the full budget be provided, the motion was seconded by Mrs. Wedgwood but failed on the Chairman's casting vote, Messrs' Cowie, Greenwood, McGuinness and Young voting against.

**Resolved** the original proposal was carried by 7 votes to 1, Mrs. Quayle voting against.

**Parks Machinery**

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Young and agreed unanimously to provide a budget of £5,000.



**(2020/21:264) Budget 2021/22 Rates setting continued**

**Water Feature Surround**

Mr. Parker proposed proceeding with the project, the motion was seconded by Mr. Young.

An amendment to proceed utilising the public open space commuted sum from Royal Park Phase II, approximately £4,000 to offset the cost, was proposed by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed unanimously.

**Coronation Park Toilets Roofing**

**Resolved** Proposed by Mrs. Wedgwood, seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed unanimously to proceed.

**Town Hall Entrance Doors**

**Resolved:** Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed unanimously be deferred until next year.

**Riverside Heating/ Town Hall Heating**

**Resolved:** Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed unanimously to proceed with the Riverside replacement boiler but to defer the town hall for more costing options from local contractors investigating alternative heating sources.

The Chairman thanked Members and officers for their contribution and proposed that the Commissioners meet in person on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2021, to conclude the rate setting process. It was noted that Members in self-isolation could choose to attend by telephone however only those present at a quorate meeting would have the ability to vote.

The meeting ended at 9.25 p.m., giving a time for payment of attendance allowances of 2 ½ hours.



Chairman