

RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS

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2023-24 Rate Setting:

The last few financial years have been very disruptive and presented many challenges including the availability and cost of goods, materials and our ability to provide a safe environment for the public and our staff. Our budgeting procedures have to take such challenges into account, and after considerable discussions, review and analysis, it was agreed that the 2023-24 Ramsey Town rate should be increased by 4.94%. This is a 22p rise to 467p in the £.

For an average 3-bedroom semi-detached house in Ramsey the increase amounts to additional annual town rates of approximately £29 (or 55p per week); this does not include rate increases set by other Authorities, e.g. Water, Sewerage or Burial rates.

In agreeing the town rate we had to factor in additional costs that are outside of our direct control, including:

- A 7.2% increase in the waste disposal charges at the Energy from Waste Plant,
- a 3.5p rate increase towards the running costs of the Northern Swimming Pool, and
- high global inflation rates.

The new rate will allow the Commission to ensure the performance of necessary duties in a safe and effective manner and to enhance existing facilities around the town for the benefit of residents and visitors. These include:

- the development of new public conveniences on the Millenium Garden site,
- investment in solar panels at the Town Hall to help reduce emissions and reduce running costs,
- the maintenance and upgrading of decorative street lighting,
- improving disabled access to the Town Hall,
- investment in various items of new equipment,
- the replacement of old fleet vehicles in line with our replacement plan, and
- the organisation and support of local events for the continued development and promotion of our town.

Where we are legally able the Commission will continue to seek available Government grants and Manx Lottery Community Funds in order to help fund certain capital community projects.

Chart 1 below shows the Ramsey Town rate since 2013-14 and compares the actual town rate to the level of those rates if year-on-year inflation had been applied. Historically the Commission has utilised reserves to set levels of rates below inflation. Although that is not sustainable for a long period the Commission have taken the current financial situation into account when setting an annual rate which is below inflation calculated by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI).

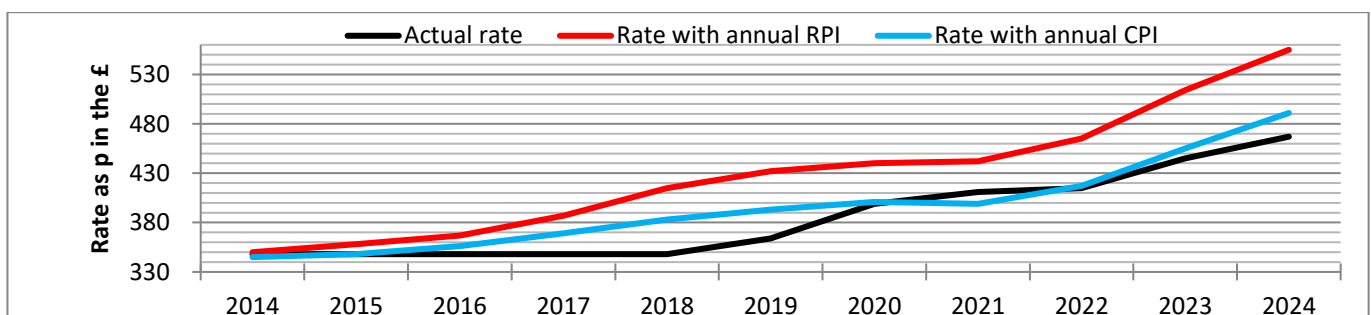


Chart 1 – comparison of actual rates to those calculated using RPI and CPI

Annual Expenditure:

The town rate income has to fund all the local services provided by the Commissioners including:

- collection and disposal of domestic refuse and litter,
- off-street car parking,
- street lighting and street cleaning,
- maintenance of public parks and gardens,
- the public library, and
- contributions to the running costs of the Northern Swimming Pool and the Northern Civic Amenity Site.

Several years ago Central Government re-allocated the responsibility for local services to the Commission; this was achieved with minimum disruption or increase in staff. This has continued and is likely to continue further with greater demands being made on our available resources and will inevitably lead to increased costs.

The Commission remains of the view that the rating system is outdated and that revaluation is well overdue. In this respect the Commission has, over the years, actively contributed to consultations instigated by Central Government towards a revised and fairer rating system.

The Commission's estimated net annual rate borne expenditure for 2023-24 totals £3,224,400 (2022-23: £3,147,025) the allocation of which is shown below in Chart 2:

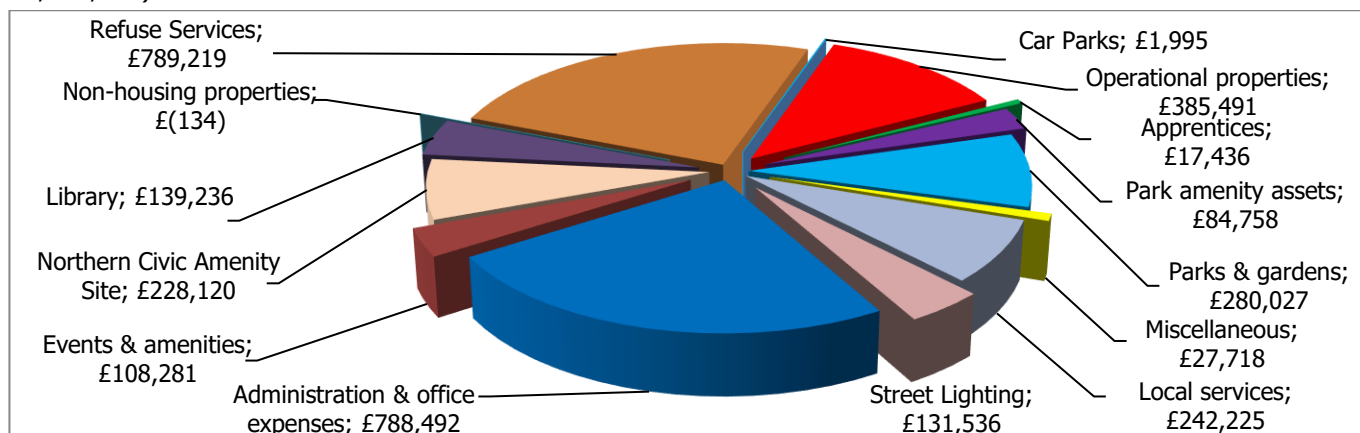


Chart 2 – allocation of estimated annual rate borne expenditure 2023-24

Public Sector Housing:

The Commission maintains 537 (2022-23: 557) public sector houses with an estimated expenditure for 2023-24 of £4,767,619 (2022-23: £4,302,124), this being funded from estimated public housing rent and rates and Government deficiency support of £1,213,785 (2022-23: £900,900) - Charts 3 and 4 below.

Public Sector Housing Expenditure 2023-24

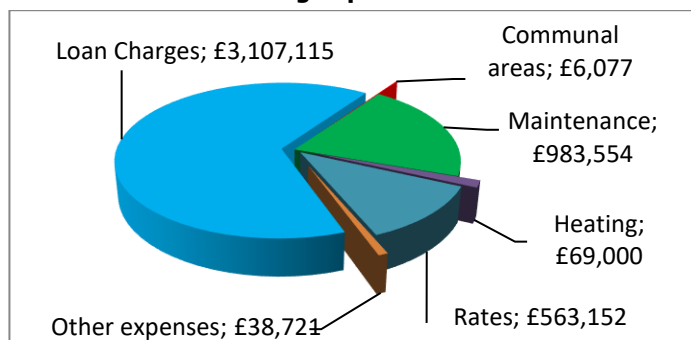


Chart 3

Public Sector Housing Income 2023-24

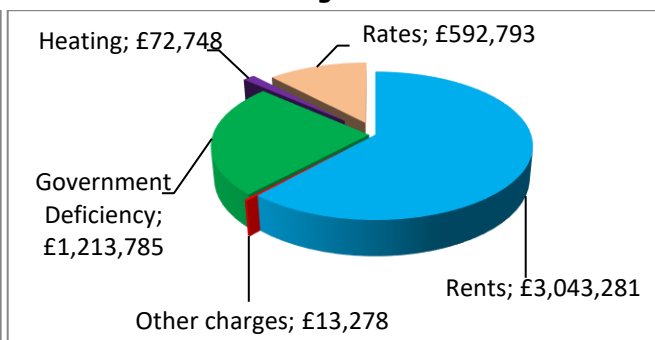


Chart 4

2023-24 Key Action Points:

During the forthcoming financial year the Commission will:

- Pro-actively develop, manage and promote community engagement and events within the Town.
- Continue to enhance its website www.ramsey.gov.im and social media presence to encourage greater public engagement including the live-streaming of public meetings.
- Continue to enforce the Town's Littering and Dog Control Byelaws.
- Continue an appropriate maintenance programme for Commission owned public sector properties.
- Continue to promote our successful independent retail offering and provide improved leisure facilities within the town for residents and visitors alike.
- Engage with the Department of Infrastructure for increased attendance of Parking Controllers to assist in the management of on-street car parking within the town centre.
- Continue to contribute toward the annual operating costs of the Northern Swimming Pool.
- Maintain and further develop our outdoor spaces for the benefit of the town.
- Provide day-to-day management and administration services for the Northern Civic Amenity Site on behalf of the Joint Committee of the Northern Local Authorities.
- Undertake the weekly collection and disposal of an estimated annual total of 2,850 tonnes of domestic refuse and provide commercial refuse services to the businesses in the town.
- Continue working with the Department of Infrastructure and Northern Local Authorities on the development of management arrangements for public sector housing in the north of the Island.
- Continuously strive towards our vision of making Ramsey a better place to be.

A more detailed Rates Statement and copies of our Audited Accounts can be found on the Commissioners website www.ramsey.gov.im.