

Paroisse de Saint Sauveur  
Minutes of the Douzaine Meeting held in the Lihou Room at the Community Centre at  
7.00pm on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Present	<p>Messrs J Brache (JB), M de Garis (MdG), R de Garis (RdG), ,Mrs A Foley (AF), Mrs K Fooks (KF), Mr E Higgins(EH), Miss M Macdonald (MM), Messrs M Tanguy (MT), K de la Mare (KdIM), and A Tempest (AT), (Senior Constable – presiding).          Mr G Chapman (GC), Parish Secretary was present to record the minutes</p>	
Apologies	<p>Messrs D Bertrand (DB), A Courtney (AC), P Duquemin (PD) and J Jorgenson-Lesbirel (JL).</p>	
Billet d'Etat	<p>Deputy S Langlois (SL) attended the meeting and was welcomed by AT.  <b>2017 Annual Budget.</b>          SL stated that the 2016 budget had not proved to be balanced with anticipated income tax and document duty receipts not being as predicted.          This new budget was seeking to see additional savings and additional income in the ration of 2:1, with £10 million in savings (cuts) and £5 million in additional taxes. There was also to be a sale of some States owned assets (land) by the States Trading Board and a reduction of almost £5 million in grant (as a one off) to Social Security.          Cuts would amount to 3% in 2017, 5% in 2018 and 5% in 2019.          Departments would find it very difficult to achieve these savings without significant reductions to services, and SL does not believe that the public have understood the significance of the cuts that will be necessary to achieve these savings.          SL explained that in addition to increases to excise duties there would be a continuing year on year rise in Tax on Real Property and changes to the upper earnings limits for Social Security payments.          MM asked how a Department like Social Security could be asked to make cuts (savings) when it was not known how much would be required to pay sickness and unemployment (and other such) benefits.          SL agreed with this view, adding that it might be easier to cut maintenance of cliff paths, buildings and other similar activities but that eventually reductions to maintenance budgets would be likely to cost more in the long run.          MT said that he understood that the 2017 tourism budget for advertising amounted to only £250,000 – similar to the salary of 2 high earning civil servants. He suggested that this sort of budget would be insignificant in attracting increased numbers of visitors to the island and that the answer would surely be to reduce the numbers of highly paid civil servants. With the UK decision to leave the UK and sterling falling in value Guernsey should be booming and reducing the advertising budget was (in his opinion) folly.          SL said that it was a misconception that the civil service was bloated and overpaid. He considers most civil servants to be hard working for (in the main) modest salaries. However, he agreed with MT, that civil servants at the very top of the salary scale have yet to prove their value to the island and that he will be monitoring the position in the coming months in an effort to ensure value for money from these members of staff.          JB said that the electorate were expecting Deputies to be addressing this matter with some urgency and determination and not just monitoring the position.</p>	

KF said that she was surprised to see that a tax of up to 15% should be applied to advocates and accountants fees, as had been suggested by one Deputy.

SL said that he agreed with KF and did not believe it would fin favour with the Assembly, - adding that he considered that balancing the budget for next year was 'on a knife's edge' – it could very easily fall into deficit.

KdIM said that he believed the legal aid budget was excessive and often abused by people who know their way around the system.

SL agreed with this view saying that the legal aid system was easy to abuse and difficult to control.

MT suggested that increases in Tax on Real Property and excise duties would disproportionately affect those on lower incomes and has no relationship on the 'ability to pay' of these people.

MM said that Guernsey people have to appreciate how low property taxes are compared to other areas and quoted as an example paying in one year (in Guernsey) what would be required in one month (in the UK).

RdG attended the meeting at 7.20pm.

#### **Island Development Plan.**

SL commented that the States has yet to approve the Island Development Plan – this is left over from the last meeting – and will be the subject of further debate at the next meeting.

#### **Minimum Wage.**

SL outlined the reasons for Social Security recommending a rise in the minimum wage to £7.20 per hour. Broadly, when compared with other areas and allowing for employer's offsetting wages against food and accommodation, Guernsey was at the lower end of earnings potential for employees. He added that the Committee had received criticism from proprietors of hospitality businesses for this suggested increase but that the Committee believed it was correct, a view supported by the Douzaine.

#### **Social Security Contributions and Benefits for 2017.**

SL explained that many benefits would increase in line with decisions made by the previous Assembly.

JB asked why some benefits were paid universally when it might be more efficient to pay them in a more targeted way.

SL said that this was being considered but that it would likely involve means testing of benefits which would mean more administrative staff to ensure the benefits were appropriate, but he accepted that such schemes might be more efficient at targeting those in need instead of making payments to those who did not need financial assistance.

#### **Reciprocal Health Agreement with UK.**

SL said that progress on proposals for new arrangements would be presented to the States in the near future. It would be based on an insurance scheme paid for by the States but would only provide basic cover, - those travelling would still be encouraged to take out private cover but the new scheme would provide basic cover for those who could not obtain private insurance cover.

JB suggested that this would mean that many people would be paying twice, and asked what would happen to people travelling to places other than the UK.

SL said that it had never been the case that the UK reciprocal health cover had provided cover for places outside the UK. He added that there have been many instances where local people with pre-existing health conditions could either not afford (or could not purchase at any cost) private travel insurance and were, therefore, prevented from leaving

	<p>Guernsey. This new arrangement would provide basic cover for such people. He suggested that when the details of the proposed scheme were announce the position would become much clearer and suggested that it would be welcomed by most people.</p> <p>MT said that he believed that the basic level of cover would address the needs of those who could not obtain private travel insurance and supported the initiative.</p> <p><b>Motor Tax.</b></p> <p>AF asked SL what his view was on the suggestion that the States should consider the re-introduction of motor tax.</p> <p>SL said that he supported the abolition of this tax and was against its re-introduction.</p> <p>JB said that he believed there should be a tax for electric cars because they did not contribute to the tax take in the same way as petrol and diesel fuelled cars but used the same roads.</p> <p>SL said that should this be the case Guernsey would be at odds with perceived wisdom because it was generally accepted that electric cars are more environmentally friendly that petrol and diesel cars.</p> <p>JB said that in his view electric powered cars are going to cause accidents because they are so quiet no one can hear them approaching.</p> <p>SL left the meeting at 7.40pm.</p>	
<p>Minutes of Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016</p>	<p>The minutes were agreed with correction to 2 spelling mistakes and signed by AT.</p>	
<p>Matters Arising</p>	<p><b>Rates.</b></p> <p>AT explained that 2 more accounts had been paid since the last meeting, leaving just 2 outstanding at a combined value of £976. He hoped that one more would be paid soon which would leave a sum of £857 as owed. He hopes that when the property concerned is eventually sold the debt will be paid, but this might be some way off at present.</p> <p>MT asked if this would be shown on the accounts as a debt and AT confirmed that it was his understanding that this would be the case.</p> <p><b>St Saviour's Tunnels.</b></p> <p>AT said that he had received another enquiry suggesting that the tunnels under the Church could be opened up to visitors and that he had replied in a similar vein to previous enquiries.</p> <p><b>Annual Inspection.</b></p> <p>AT reported that the annual inspection had been completed on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and whilst the parish owned tunnels were showing no signs of deterioration the steel barrier between the parish owned tunnel and that owned privately was showing signs of deterioration and there was evidence suggesting that someone may have forced an entry into the parish side of the tunnels.</p> <p>AT said that the steel barrier is showing signs that the structure is starting to fail and recommended that a new structure should be built.</p> <p>JB suggested that a concrete wall should be built rather than a steel structure.</p> <p>KdIM said that in other tunnels where such walls had been built it was often quite easy to open up a gap sufficiently wide to allow access.</p> <p>AT said that he has received one quote for the work in the sum of approximately £4,500 and was in the process of obtaining 2 more quotes.</p> <p>The Douzaine agreed that now that it has been identified that the steel structure is failing it is necessary to take steps to replace it with one that</p>	<p>AT</p>

	<p>is fit for purpose. The funds for this work have not been budgeted for and the Constables will look at possible sources for funding the work when the cost is known. JB suggested that if there was no other source perhaps the amelioration fund would be appropriate.</p> <p><b>St Saviour's Community Centre – Neighbours Association.</b> AT reported to the Douzaine that he had received a letter advising that neighbours in the Mont Varouf area have formed an association to 'monitor the activities of St Saviour's Community Centre'. It was agreed that the concerns of neighbours had been thoroughly discussed at the last meeting and that the Dean should respond in line with the decisions made.</p> <p><b>Referral to the Data Protection Office.</b> AT confirmed that he had asked (via email) the Data Protection Office whether the leaking of details contained in the lease between the Constables and St Saviour's Community Centre LBG breaches any data protection legislation, but as yet there has been no reply.</p>	<p>AT/KdIM</p> <p>RdG</p> <p>AT/KdIM</p>
<p>Environment Department.</p>	<p>The Douzaine requested the Constables to obtain one set of plans relating to a recent planning application.</p>	<p>AT/KdIM</p>
<p>Finance Sub-Committee Report</p>	<p>AT reported that the Finance Sub-Committee had recently held a meeting and were satisfied with the state of the Parishes finances. 2016's expenditure against the secular Remede was within budget. However, in April it was noted that the first 3 months of 2016 had each shown an increase in the tonnage (compared with 2015 and 2014) of residual waste being disposed of at the States' Waste Facility. At that time the Constables spoke to the contractor and he could offer no explanation for the increase, saying that he only collects what is put at the roadside.</p> <p>AT reminded the Douzaine that the refuse figures included an allowance for an additional 20 tonnes of residual waste so that in the event that kerbside collections of recyclable waste was not continued beyond September there would be provision to dispose of additional residual waste. In the event kerbside collection of recyclable waste will continue until the end of 2017.</p> <p>The monthly residual waste tonnages have continued to be higher. Enquiries with other parishes have established that their residual waste tonnages have remained similar to previous years.</p> <p>If the current trend continues until the end of the year, St Saviour will collect about 30 tonnes more residual waste than in recent years – some 6% more than each of the previous 2 years.</p> <p>The Constables are at a loss to explain the increased residual waste only in St Saviour – if it was an island wide trend it could be accepted.</p> <p>AT asked the Douzaine for guidance, asking if there were any possible reasons for this increase that he had overlooked.</p> <p>MM asked if the increase was every month or were there some months that showed significant increases.</p> <p>AT said that when allowance was made for the number of collections each month (most months there are 4 collections, with others having 5) there seems to be a constant increase of about 2 tonnes.</p> <p>The Douzaine was unable to identify any reason for the increased tonnage.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Constables should arrange another meeting with the contractor to discuss the matter.</p>	<p>AT/KdIM</p>



	<p>recycling, re-use sector (to replace scavenger site), and a bailing plant. Waste will be sent daily via Portsmouth, food waste will go separately, on to Tilbury then Sweden. The Jersey option was more expensive, lacked continuity and needed a change to Jersey law. It is hoped that the transfer station will be complete by 2018. They are currently working on a strategy to extend Mont Cuet's life till 2021.</p> <p>Households will have re-useable bag for glass and a suitable container for food.</p> <p><u>Charges</u> have not been decided – can be by bag, parish collection or fixed cost, but will amount to about £7 per week per household (all inclusive).</p> <p><u>Waste Disposal Charges for 2017.</u></p> <p>Proposed increase in gate fee of 10% for 2017</p> <p><u>Parish Complaint Procedure</u></p> <p>There is not a procedure in place to deal with this. It will be discussed at the next Guernsey Douzaine Council meeting. The States will circulate some examples of complaint procedures.</p> <p><u>Policy and Resources - Island Plan</u></p> <p>Phase 1 – where we want to be in 20 years, what to do in next 5 years.</p> <p>Phase 2 – committees come up with strategy for future and how to implement it under headings</p> <p>It is hoped that Douzaines will buy into community plan.</p> <p><u>Japanese knotweed</u> – it is unclear who is the responsible official since Terry Brokenshire retired – Dave Way to find out and inform parishes, - it is agreed that the plant should be designated as a noxious weed,</p> <p><u>Change of occupier to owner on hedges legislation.</u></p> <p>The official responsible for implementing this has been on sabbatical but will complete the on return to work. The new high hedges legislation will make provision to include owners as responsible persons.</p> <p><u>New system of States agenda publication.</u> Douzaines generally consider that the new system is difficult to access and to know what was being discussed.</p> <p><u>Roadside Structures.</u> Parishes are responsible for ensuring that roadside structures are safe.</p>	
Douzaine Christmas Meal	KdIM confirmed that the Douzaine Christmas meal would take place on Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2016, at L'Auberge du Val Restaurant.	
	There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm	
	The next meeting is to be held at the Douzaine Room at 7.00pm on Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2016.	