

MEDIA RELEASE



RATE INCREASE SET AT 9%

The Board of Port St Mary Commissioners have agreed a rate increase for the coming 2023/24 year of 9%, which equates to 386p (previously 354p).

The Board has again worked hard to minimise the impact on rates for Port St Mary residents. With early discussions starting in October 2022 and taking into account the projects to be faced in the coming year, the Board have aimed to produce a budget of practicality and to keep the rate as low as possible during what has been another difficult period for many financially. The Board will continue to scrutinise expenditure and apply sound financial planning to their decisions. The Board have identified several areas in which savings can be made and will continue to seek further savings where possible.

There are several budget increases from external sources which are beyond the control of the Board:

- The percentage increase in Government salaries for the coming year is unknown at this time, however, the previous year was set at 6%, when only 2% had been allowed for in the budget;
- A 10.1% increase in contributions to the Southern Civic Amenity Site (due to investment in the current site and an increase in waste costs);
- Disposal costs at the Energy From Waste Plant are due to rise by 7.2% in April;
- The Consumer Price Index ('CPI') rate was 7.4% in December 2022 and at the time of preparing this release statement (as per the IOM Government Isle of Man Inflation Report December 2022)

The Board intend to undertake several projects throughout the coming financial year which includes a street light replacement programme, replacing flooring at the playpark, installing lighting at Chapel Gate car park, increasing the cleaning of Chapel Beach, and Town Hall external maintenance with further investment in festive lights throughout the village. To minimise the effect on rates, these projects will be financed from reserves.

In the current year the Board will continue to work closer with the Rates Department within Treasury to recoup rates debts. As at 31st March 2022 there was a total of £13,721 in unpaid rates, which equates to 2.7% of last year's rateable income with £17,908 of historic arrears also outstanding. Those who are in arrears are urged to contact the Rates Department on 685661 or rates@gov.im to either agree a payment plan or settle their arrears in order to avoid further action being taken.

The cost of living crisis and unstable market forces continue to create challenges and this year's rate increase has been applied with the greatest reluctance. It was a decision the Board did not take lightly and much time and effort was expended to keep the increase as low as possible.

Please contact the office on 832101 or commissioners@portstmary.gov.im if you are struggling and have financial concerns. A member of our staff will be happy to provide details of Government Departments and organisations who may be able to assist.

B Williams MBE

Bernadette Williams MBE
Chair
30th January 2023

The table below sets out the predicted income and expenditure for the 2023/24 financial year:

Income	£	%
Rates	518,697	73%
Search Fees	6,400	1%
Admin tfrd from housing	36,855	5%
SSHJB admin	48,342	7%
Incidentals	104	0%
Lettings	63,011	9%
Commercial Refuse	36,138	5%
Memorial seats	2,115	0%
	711,662	100%

Expenditure	£	%
Salaries	-274,488	39%
Office Expenses	-49,542	7%
Professional Fees	-24,687	3%
Bank Charges	-3,608	1%
Travel Exp & Staff Training	-5,230	1%
Attendance Allowances	-2,730	0%
Civic Events, Advertising & Donations	-3,750	0%
Vehicles	-22,452	3%
Commissioners Buildings	-51,515	7%
Refuse Costs	-96,490	14%
SRC Contribution	-53,597	8%
Street Lighting	-11,815	2%
Street Cleaning & conveniences	-40,022	6%
Parks, Leisure & Public Areas	-44,118	6%
Public Amenities	-23,215	3%
	-707,259	100%

Predicted 2023/24 surplus **4,303**

Note:

Professional Fees includes audit, accountancy, consulting & legal fees.

Commissioners Buildings includes town hall costs, insurance and stores expenses.

Refuse Costs includes tipping costs at the EFW & the current refuse contract.

Public Amenities includes swimming pool contribution, playground maintenance and beach cleaning.