

**RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS**  
**[ PUBLIC ]**

The Monthly Board Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held in the Boardroom of the Town Hall, Ramsey, on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. F. B. R. Williams, Miss L. L. Craine, Messrs. A. R. Beighton, G. S. Court, Revd. Canon N. D. Greenwood (remotely), S. R. Kelly, J. McGuinness, A. J. Oldham, L. Parker and W. G. Young.

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs. R. D. Cowell and L. I. Singer.

The Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Finance Officer, Technical Services Manager, Housing and Property Manager, and Minute Clerk were in attendance.

**(2022/23:285) Minutes:**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, [rescheduled from 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2022] be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**(2022/23:286) Matters Arising:**

No matters were raised.

**Matters for Information:**

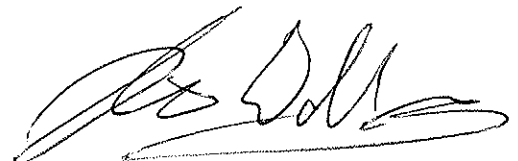
**(2022/23:287) Action Tracker January, 2023:**

Resolved: To note the "Action Tracker" to 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

*Seagulls in Mooragh Park* – it was proposed by Mr. Beighton, seconded by Mr. Oldham and agreed by 8 votes to 1, Mr. McGuinness voting against, that the Commission use cost effective bunting in the Mooragh Park as a possible deterrent against seagulls. Canon's Greenwood's vote was not able to be determined at the time of voting.

**(2022/23:288) Action Tracker Budget Approved Projects:**

Resolved: To note the Action Tracker of Budget Approved projects at 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.



**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2022/23:289) Deputy Town Clerk’s Report – Street Trader’s Licence Manx Whippy:**

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed that Manx Whippy Limited be granted a Street Trader’s Licence for two vehicles for one year, as detailed in the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

**(2022/23:290) Deputy Town Clerk’s Report – Street Trader’s Licence “The Rumblin Tum”:**

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed that “The Rumblin Tum” be granted a Street Trader’s Licence for trade at an event being part of the Isle of Man Festival of Motoring, on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2023, as detailed in the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

**(2022/23:291) Finance Officer’s General Report:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer’s general report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, subject to the following:-

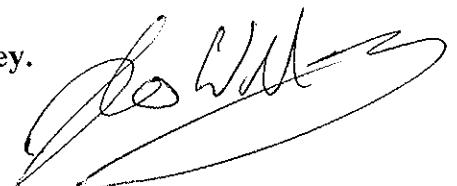
**Summary of Revenue Income and Expenditure:** - Mr. Young referred to the acquisition of new vehicles and queried if any were electric. He questioned the purchase of electric vehicles because of the lack of “scrap value” and also difficulties in disposal of batteries and asked how Government was acting in these matters. The Town Clerk undertook to seek further information from Government.

**Works and Development:**

**(2022/23:292) Technical Services Manager’s Report - Planning Applications:**

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager’s Report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, detailing planning applications received from the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, under the planning consultation procedures, be noted subject to the following: -

REF NO:	4026	<b>ADDITIONAL INFO/AMENDED PLANS</b>
P.A. NO.:	<u>22/01212/A</u>	
PROPOSED:	Approval in principle for proposed residential development, addressing means of access and number of plots	
NOTES:	Approval in Principle	
SITE:	<b>The Auburns, 19, Lezayre Road, Ramsey.</b>	



**(2022/23:292) Technical Services Manager’s Report - Planning Applications Continued:**

It was proposed by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Miss Craine that the Commission object to the application as was the case in the original application. Mr. Beighton queried if the Commission was voting on the amendments and asked if any recent approach had been made by the applicant. The Technical Services Manager informed members that the additional information had been made available on-line.

A vote was taken and carried by 6 votes to 4 Messrs. Beighton, McGuinness, Parker and Williams voting against.

**Parks and Leisure:**

**(2022/23:293) Deputy Town Clerk’s Report – Great Manx Run:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, advising of the request made by The Children’s Centre to stage a “Great Manx Run” event based at the Mooragh Park on Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2023.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Court seconded by Miss Craine and agreed, permission be granted.

Mr. Beighton queried the parking arrangements for the event. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that the Fireworks display attracted considerably more attendees than envisaged at the Run without problems, but that he would raise the matter with the Children’s Centre.

**Any Other Business:**

**(2022/23:294) Sundry Matters:**

**294a) Pharmacy Services.** Mr. Young informed members that Mrs. Stella Moss is organising a Petition with regard to the pharmaceutical services in the Town.

**294b) Fill-a-Fish.** Mr. Kelly informed members that in the absence of any suggestions to the contrary he, in discussion with the Technical Services Manager, had agreed to keep the Fill-a-Fish in its existing location on the Mooragh Promenade, but that parts would be sealed in an attempt to alleviate littering problems.

**294c) Invitation Malew Civic Sunday** - the Town Clerk conveyed the invitation from Malew Parish Commissioners to attend their Civic Sunday service on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2023. (A copy of the invitation will be sent to members.)

**294d) Closure Mountain Road** – the Town Clerk informed member of the intention of the Department of Infrastructure to close the Mountain Road for maintenance between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> April and 11<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.

**(2022/23:294) Sundry Matters Continued:**

**294e) Holocaust Service** – the Town Clerk conveyed details of the Annual Holocaust Service to be held on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2023. Mr. Court, as Deputy Chairman will officially represent the Commission at the Service.

**294f) HSBC Branch Closure** – the Town Clerk advised members of his discussion with officials of HSBC and confirmed that there was no likelihood of the decision to close Ramsey Branch being reversed.

**294g) Swimming Pools** – the Town Clerk confirmed he had written to the Minister concerning the future of Swimming Pools; and that he had met with Mrs. D. Caine, M.H.K.. Mr. McGuinness informed members that he had also written to M.H.K.s. asking them to vote not to proceed with the proposal to transfer function to the Department and to reconsider the future operation. Mr. McGuinness also referred to an open letter issued by the Western Swimming Pool who wished to keep the rate contribution at 2 ½ p with no rise – members were reminded that the Northern Board did not oppose the rise to 6p. Mr. McGuinness took the opportunity to thank the Pool Staff who provide a good facility in the Town.

The Chairman thanked the media for attending and also those watching via the live-streaming service and closed the public session at 7.25 p.m.

The following items were considered in private the detail of which, having regard to data protection, matters affecting persons who cannot be named, etc., is not as extensive as that contained in minutes of matters discussed in public.

**(2022/23:295) Minutes:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 [meeting having been rescheduled from 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2022], and the Special Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023.

**Matters for Information:**

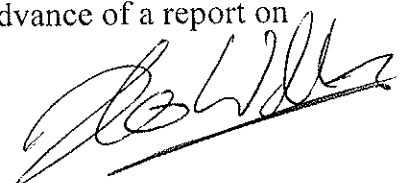
**(2022/23:296) Minutes Northern Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee:**

Resolved: To note the minutes of the meeting of the NCAS Joint Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2022, subject to the following:-

Mr. Parker asked if problems with the disposal of plasterboard had been resolved – Members were informed that it is still possible to deposit plasterboard at Wright's Pit and Government is still looking into the future disposal of this material.

Mr. Parker also referred to the disposal of batteries, particularly from electric-vehicles – the Technical Services Manager advised that some small batteries are accepted.

The Town Clerk undertook to seek advice from Government in advance of a report on the matter being presented to the Commission in the near future.



**(2022/23:297) On-Going Matters “Action Tracker” :**

Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker” to 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, subject to the following:-

*Town Branding* – in response to a query from Mr. Beighton the Deputy Town Clerk undertook to provide members with details of the Town Branding.

**(2022/23:298) On-Going Matters - Register of Ruinous Property, Unsightly Land and Buildings:**

Resolved: To note the “Register of Ruinous Property ..” to 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, subject to the following and accepting that matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

*10/11 West Quay* – the Technical Services Manager informed members that no response has been received to correspondence sent to the new owners, it was proposed by Miss Craine seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed that Notice be served.

*67, Parliament Street* – Members were informed that the works have been done and the Notice can be cancelled. Mr. Beighton referred to damage to the pavement and was informed that this has been rectified.

**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2022/23:299) Deputy Town Clerk’s Report – North Ramsey Bowling Club:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2022, concerning the request made by North Ramsey Bowling Club to be provided with an amended lease to enable the Club to make application to the Manx Lottery Trust for grant aid.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Parker that the Deputy Town Clerk work with the Club towards providing an amended lease to support the Club in achieving their wish to apply for Lottery Trust aid.

The proposal was carried, Mr. Kelly did not vote due to his membership of the Club. Members agreed that the financial arrangements and loan and replacement of equipment needed attention in discussions with the Club.



**(2022/23:300) Finance Officer's General Report:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer's general report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, subject to the following:-

*Aged Debtors* – the Finance Officer informed members that various of the debts had now been paid. Reference was made to one particular outstanding account and it was agreed that the Commission follow its policy in the recovery of this debt for removal of commercial refuse.

**(2022/23:301) Technical Assistant's Report – Fixed Penalty Notices - Appeals:**

Members considered the Technical Assistant's report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, advising of appeals submitted in respect of fixed penalties issued for littering offences.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Beighton and agreed by 9 votes to 1 that Fixed Penalty 0697 be upheld. Miss Craine voted against.

A proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Beighton to uphold the penalty in respect of 0124 failed by 7 votes to 3, Canon Greenwood voting with the proposition.

A further proposal was put by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. Young to rescind the penalty and look at signing in the vicinity of the offence was carried by 8 votes to 1, Canon Greenwood's vote was unable to be determined at the time of voting.

Mr. Williams queried what training the Town Warden had and was advised that the Warden operates only within the law which does not allow discretion.

**Works and Development:**

**(2022/23:302) Technical Services Manager's Report – Steps onto Railway Line:**

Members considered the Technical Services Manager's report dated 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, advising of the placement of steps onto the former Railway Line without permission of the Commissioners as landowners.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed that the owner of the steps be given 21 days in which to remove the steps, failing which the Commission will remove them and charge the owners for the costs involved in so doing. Mr. Beighton asked that the owners be again reminded of their option to purchase the land, at the value provided by the Government Valuer, and subject to them paying the Commissioners' costs.



**(2022/23:303) Technical Services Manager’s Report – Christmas Lights:**

In presenting this report the Lead Member took the opportunity to comment on the positive response to the new canopy lights provided at the Courthouse.

Members considered the Technical Services Manager’s report dated 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, advising of her wish to provide additional new lighting using either additional funding or part of the existing budgeted figure for decorative lighting.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Kelly and agreed that no change to the 2023/24 budget provision for decorative lighting be made but the Technical Services Manager seek tenders for the provision of decorative lighting and maintenance thereof.

**(2022/23:303) Technical Services Manager’s Report – Highway Maintenance Service Level Agreement:**

Mr. Williams, as an employee of the Department left the room prior to discussion on this Clause.

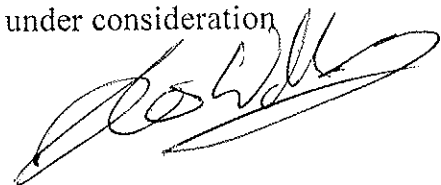
Members considered the Technical Services Manager’s report dated 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, in which was included a report of an open meeting with the Department of Infrastructure and the Northern Parishes to discuss the Highway Maintenance Charter, a copy of which had been provided to members of the Commission. Members noted that there were some areas within the agreement that the Commission undertake duties already and made comment against some headings:-

- 3.1 Inventory Management – needs further consideration
- 4.0 Inspections – not applicable
- 5.0 Sweeping – we already undertake this function
- 6.0 Gully Emptying – we already undertake cleaning “pots” to undertake jetting of lines will have a huge impact on local authority
- 7.0 Maintenance Trees, Hedges, Verges and Weeds – some functions undertaken by Government some by local authorities – we would be happy to hand all back
  - Hedges – we would seek to recover any costs
  - Grass Cutting – we undertake a greater service than specified

It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Court and agreed that the Department be informed that of the Commission’s wish to refer this matter back to Central Government, as they consider it inappropriate and hypercritical to force local service agreements, standards and demands onto Local Authorities when Government is unwilling and /or unable to undertake or meet their own responsibilities.

Mr. Williams returned to the room at this point.

Mr. Beighton referred to use of the Probation Service to help keep public rights of way clear. Mr. Williams informed members that this matter is under consideration within the Department.



**Housing and Property:**

**(2022/23:304) Housing Committee:**

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, which were tabled, subject to the following:-

*Clause 63a* – the Housing and Property Manager advised that the item referred to maintenance and servicing and not replacement as indicated by the Clause heading.

**(2022/23:305) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Close Woirrey / former Albert Road Site:**

Members considered the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, incorporating his report from 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2022, with regard to proposed redevelopment of the Close Woirrey / Albert Road Sites. Members noted that there would be no rate cost for the development and that the proposals were of similar design to the recently completed Mayfield apartments.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Oldham, seconded by Miss Craine and agreed application be made to the Department to increase the budget for Close Woirrey redevelopment to include the Albert Road site and to approve the recommended Design Team and proposed fees. The design on drawings enclosed with the report were also approved, although concern was expressed about the colour shown. The Housing and Property Manager confirmed that there could be some changes made.

**Any Other Business:**

The Town Clerk drew attention to the following matters:-

**(2022/23:306) Bathing Water Designation – Mooragh Beach:**

The Town Clerk provided members with a letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, received from the Environmental Protection Officer, DEFA, with regard to the approval of the Mooragh Beach as being suitable for sea bathing. Members noted that signs will require to be obtained.

The Town Clerk informed members that a Special Board Meeting has been arranged for Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2023, to meet MUA, DEFA and to which the Department of Infrastructure have been invited.





**(2022/23:307) Conservation Areas:**

The Town Clerk provided members with a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, received from the Hon. C. Barber, Minister, Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, responding to concerns raised by the Commission with regard to problems in redevelopment within Conservation Areas.

The Minister refers to a meeting to be arranged with her officers in the near future and conveys her apologies at being unable to be in attendance to avoid any possible future conflict of interests.

**(2022/23:308) Forthcoming Board Meetings:**

The Town Clerk took the opportunity to remind members of forthcoming meetings:-  
25<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 – Budget Meeting 7.00 p.m.  
30<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, - Meeting with Members of the House of Keys for Ramsey  
– subjects to include budget, conservation areas, dedicated telephone line  
cancellation of doctors' appointments.

**Matters of Establishment:**

**(2022/23:309) Minutes Establishment Committee:**

Resolved: To note and approve the minutes of a meeting of the Establishment Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, subject to the following:-

*Payment of wages on a monthly basis* – discussion ensued with regard to the proposal to pay all wages on a monthly basis. A proposal by Miss Craine that the Commission investigate if and how other authorities pay their employees on a monthly basis did not receive a seconder and was ultimately withdrawn.

It was proposed by Mr. Parker, seconded by Miss Craine and agreed that officers investigate how payment of wages on a monthly basis can be achieved.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m. giving a time of 2 ½ hours for the payment of attendance allowances.

Chairman.

