

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, 19th January, 2022, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. A. J. Oldham, Ms L. L. Craine, Messrs' A. R. Beighton, G. S. Court, R. D. Cowell, S. R. Kelly, J. McGuinness, L. Parker, F. B. R. Williams and W. G. Young.

Apologies: Messrs Rev Canon N. D. Greenwood 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.

The Town Clerk took the opportunity, having particular regard to an item further within the Agenda and in terms of Standing Orders of the need to clearly declare interests and also of rising to speak, also in terms of Standing Orders and which is beneficial because of the poor acoustics in the Boardroom exacerbated by "social distancing" .

Mr. Cowell declared an interest in one of the Planning Applications to be considered.

(2021/22:276) Minutes:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 15th December, 2021, and the Special Board Meeting held on 21st December, 2021, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

(2021/22:277) Matters Arising:

No matters were raised.

Matters for Information:

(2021/22:278) Action Tracker January, 2022:

Resolved: To note the "Action Tracker" to 13th January, 2022, subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

Ramsey North Beach – Mr. McGuinness asked that the matter be updated within the "tracker". The Deputy Town Clerk advised he would pursue the provision of distance markers.

Shelter Public Art – Mr. Parker asked if the theme of the third shelter to be decorated could be made known and further publicity be given. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that he would discuss the matter with the parties involved to determine their wishes.



(2021/22:278) Action Tracker January 2022 Continued:

Changing Huts Mooragh Promenade – The Deputy Town Clerk advised, in response to a query from Mr. Kelly, that bathing water quality monitoring was ongoing over a period of time and not dependent on one test.

Empty Pubs – the Deputy Town Clerk advised, in response to a query from Mr. Williams, that he would soon be able to report on one specific public house and that plans for others might be forthcoming when licences are considered at the Triennial Licensing Court to be held in the near future.

Finance and General Purposes:

(2021/22:279) Town Clerk’s Report – Abolition of Town Wards:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 6th January, 2022, concerning the suggestion that the Town Wards be abolished. Discussion ensued during which Mr. Cowell expressed his understanding that the matter was to be considered at a special meeting. Ms Craine proposed the matter be deferred pending finalisation of the boundary extension. Mr. Kelly seconded the proposal.

Mr. Williams proposed that the matter be progressed immediately in view of the perceived barrier between the wards. This was seconded by Mr. Young. General discussion ensued which included the low poll percentages and the possibility that delay could allow progression of electronic voting, suggestion that the Commission instigate a public inquiry prior to submission of a scheme; the views of Douglas Corporation following their recent change to ward boundaries, the need to ensure fuller democracy throughout the town. The original proposal was then put to the vote.

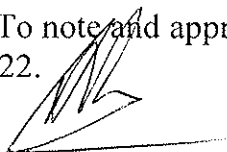
Resolved: That the matter be deferred until finalization of the boundary extension. This was carried by 6 votes to 4. Messrs. Beighton, Cowell, Williams and Young voting against.

(2021/22:280) Town Clerk’s Report – Sale of Land - Mayfield:

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk’s report dated 6th January, 2022, concerning the covenant applied to the sale of land at Mayfield by the Ramsey Town Commissioners to the Ramsey and Northern Districts Housing Committee. Having met the conditions of the original agreement the covenant that would see the land revert to the Ramsey Town Commissioners is no longer enforceable.

(2021/22:281) Finance Officer’s General Report:

Resolved: To note and approved the Finance Officer’s general report dated 12th January, 2022.



Works and Development:

(2021/22:282) Town Clerk’s Report – Additional Electric Vehicle Charging Points Market Square:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 16th December, 2021, concerning the request made by the Manx Utilities Authority to install additional electric vehicle charging points at the Market Square. Members queried the possible loss of regular parking spaces, whether the situation could be monitored, whether the spaces could be used by non-electric vehicles for parking, the advantages of attracting drivers of EV to the Town and noted the increasing number of EV’s being driven.

Mr. McGuinness advised members of his understanding that, in statute, the spaces are not restricted to electric cars and in so doing proposed that the request be approved. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Williams and carried by 9 votes to 1, Mr. Young voting against.

(2021/22:283) Town Clerk’s Report – Ramsey Quay Planning Application:

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk’s report dated 10th January, 2022, confirming that the Department of Infrastructure has withdrawn the current planning application in respect of their proposals to redevelop the Ramsey Quayside.

(2021/22:284) Technical Services Manager’s Report - Planning Applications:

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager’s Report dated 12th January, 2022, detailing planning applications received from the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, under the planning consultation procedures, be noted subject to the following:-

Mr. R. Cowell declared an interest, as owner of the property and withdrew from the meeting during discussion of the following application:-

REF NO: 3946
P.A. NO.: 21/01561/B
PROPOSED: Installation of awning, disabled ramp access and new shop front
NOTES: P.A. in Detail
SITE: **1, Dale Street & 2, Market Place, Ramsey**

Discussion ensued during which members were informed of one letter of objection, suggesting that the neighbourly good-will was “being tested” because of the proposed ramp location. The comments made by the Department of Infrastructure concerning the location of the ramp was read, in that it is against their policy and should be contained within the curtilage of the property. Members queried whether the benefits outweighed the problems but expressed concern that a precedent might be set. Mr. Parker expressed concern that the awning should be sympathetic to neighbours. Ms Craine queried if views are sought from those of visual impairment and was advised that this was routinely considered by the Planning Committee.

(2021/22:284) Technical Services Manager’s Report - Planning Applications Continued:

A proposal was put by Mr. Williams that the application be supported as the benefits outweigh any perceived problems. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Court.

An amendment was put by Mr. McGuinness and seconded by Mr. Kelly that the Commission make no objection to the application was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Mr. Cowell returned to the meeting at this stage.

REF NO: 3947
P.A. NO.: 21/01571/B
PROPOSED: Erection of a detached garage and storage building (part retrospective)
NOTES: P.A. in Detail
SITE: **1, Kneale Court, Cloughbane Drive, Ramsey**

Members were informed that the description is considered misleading in that the garage does not meet sizing standards. It was noted that an objection, which was read, had been made by the Department of Infrastructure that the entrances are not in accordance with their existing policies. It was suggested that the matter be left with the Planners to take enforcement action.

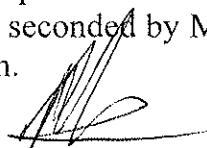
Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Cowell, seconded by Mr. Beighton and agreed that the Commission make no objection to the application and trust the Planners to take any necessary enforcement action.

RTC Application 3808 – Development Lower Milntown Farm

Attention was also drawn to RTC application 3808 for development at Lower Milntown Farm – Residential Development of 138 dwellings. Members were informed that the application seeks to reduce the number of dwellings and were informed that the development of the site would not accord with the phasing programme set out in the West Ramsey Development Framework [WRDF]. At present there is no extant planning approval for the development of Area 1 of the WRDF. Furthermore, the development approved on Areas 2, 3 and 4 of the WRDF is not substantially complete. In particular, the neighbourhood centre development provided as part of the consent for the existing Auldyn Walk development under PA03/01846/B has not been completed.

The development as proposed fails to comply with Paragraphs 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4 of the WRDF which provide for a new distributor road between Gardeners Lane and the development site, and for a new access road to be constructed linking Gardeners Lane to Poyll Dooey Road. Concerns were also raised that the sewage system would not cope with the additional volume of waste and lighting along the main road from the Town boundary to the entrance of estate was inadequate.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Kelly seconded by Mr. Cowell and agreed that an objection be made to the application.



Parks and Leisure:

(2021/22:285) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Gran Fondo:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 11th January, 2022, conveying the request made by the organisers of Gran Fondo to stage an event on 16th / 17th July 2022, and seeking logistical support.

Resolved: Following a proposal by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. McGuinness to approve the request and offer logistical support.

Members queried the clarity and ease of access of details provided by the organisers with regard to road closures and expressed concern at the loss of BMX facilities. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that the road closure affecting the BMX course is only for an early part of one day after which the BMX course is available, but he will convey the Commission's comments to the organisers.

(2021/22:286) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Mooragh Area Sporting Events:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 11th January, 2022, conveying the request made by the Manx Tri Club to stage events within the Mooragh Park during 2022 and seeking logistical support therefor, including support for a road closure application.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed to grant permission and provide the support requested.

(2021/22:287) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Shennaghys Jiu:

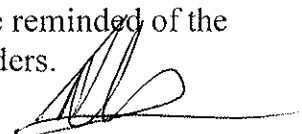
Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 11th January, 2022, conveying the request made by Shennaghys Jiu for support of the 2022 Festival by way of use of the Town Hall for their Opening and for staging an Exhibition, and for logistical support by way of a road closure to facilitate activities at the Courthouse Grounds.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed to provide the support requested.

Any Other Business:

(2021/22:288) Matters Raised by Public – Register of Members' Interests:

Members noted the request made from a member of the public with regard to "the implementation of a register of members' interests". Members were reminded that such register exists and a link thereto is on the website and were reminded of the requirement to declare interest in terms of existing Standing Orders.



(2021/22:288) Matters Raised by Public – Register of Members’ Interests Cont:

Mr. McGuinness expressed the view that the link is not too obvious and suggested that the information provided was not what was being sought, he queried what would be allowed under GDPR and proposed that the Commission bring the matter to the fore on the website and query, from Tynwald the extent of declarations. Ms Craine seconded the proposal.

Mr. Cowell was in support of a “live data-base” and would be happy to submit any information required. Mr. Williams, agreeing, moved an amendment that the Commission provide a “live data-base” on their website and move to update the information provided thereon. Mr. Cowell seconded the amendment.

The amendment was put to the vote and carried by 6 votes to 4 Ms Craine and Messrs. Court, McGuinness and Oldham voting against.

Mr. McGuinness expressed concern at what is recorded and queried whether the Commission should amend their Standing Orders.

Mr. Parker proposed that a Motion be presented to the February 2022 Board Meeting to amend Standing Orders. This proposal was seconded by Mr. Beighton and carried. Ms Craine queried what Tynwald members were required to declare and suggested an amendment to defer until such time as this is known. Mr. Parker advised that this comment did not constitute an amendment and the suggestion was neither seconded nor put to the vote.

(2021/22:289) Representative Report(s):

Members considered the representative Reports submitted by Mr. McGuinness. The report of the meeting of the Isle of Man Municipal Association was noted without further comment.

Mr. McGuinness opened his report on the meeting of the Northern Local Authorities Swimming Pool Board for debate, he had mixed view but in opening the matter for debate suggested the Commission should not be in favour of imposed rate contribution to fund the pool.

It was noted that the consultation with each authority had not taken place and the Swimming Pool Board had been rushed by Government in considering the matter of funding a budgetary deficit of £46,000 in respect of the operation of the pool. Members noted the proposed actions of the Board “With the options available considered and agreement from all members that the Pool should not reduce its hours and services to the community the Board resolved to write to the departments involved advising that the Board would request an amendment of the Northern Swimming Pool Board Order 2000 to increase the rate able to be raised from 2.5p to 6p in order to meet current operating costs but to express our dissatisfaction at the manner in which the Board feel they have been forced to take this choice without opportunity to consult with the affected Local Authorities. The Board members also resolved to revert to their respective authorities and obtain a response on this position to be communicated to the Pool and directly to the Departments.”

(2021/22:289) Representative Report(s) NLASPB Continued:

Members expressed concern that the NSC was totally Government funded and all other pools funded by those authorities comprising the respective regional boards. Members felt that the matter should be pushed to the DESC but recognised this might be futile action. Mr. McGuinness advised that recent pool costs could not be fully examined because of NSC closures and Covid and that regional pools were facing problems in their own ways.

Mr. Cowell proposed that the Commission oppose any enforced rate increase and again push to promote rate reform.

In seconding the proposal Mr. Parker proposed that the Commission convey their concerns to the DESC, suggest the NLASPB to contact local Members of the House of Keys; Government should fund any deficit and future funding be centralised. Mr. Parker did not however agree to the section of the proposal regarding rate reform.

Mr. Parker proposed an amendment that the Commission support the NLASPB and seek to have funding centralised. The amendment was seconded by Ms Craine and agreed. Mr. Williams asked that the matter be included on the agenda for the forthcoming meeting between the Commissioners and the Member of the House of Keys for Ramsey.

(2021/22:290) Mountain Road Closure:

Resolved: To note that the Department of Infrastructure has advised that the Mountain Road will be closed for reconstruction work between 28th February and 16th April 2022 (6 weeks). The first four week will be from Ramsey to The Bungalow and thereafter the entire Mountain Road. Members noted the closure and agreed to enquire whether some of the closure could be timed from 9 a.m. until 5.00 p.m. – the Town Clerk advised he understood it would be a full closure for 24 hours each day. Officers were asked to promote encouragement in working from home to reduce travel.

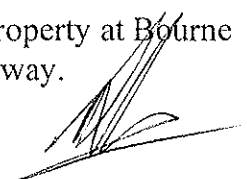
Members queried if there was a schedule of the proposed works – the Town Clerk advised not but he would forward the email to members. [Subsequent to the meeting the Department issued a media release advising of the work as below:-

The six-week schedule will require the following road closures:

- Monday 28 February, to no later than Friday 15 April: full closure between Ramsey and the Bungalow.
- Monday 4 April, to no later than Friday 15 April: daytime closures to facilitate commuter traffic; closures will be from 9.15am to 4pm Monday to Friday, between the Bungalow and Creg-ny-Baa.

(2021/22:291) Bourne Place:

Resolved: To note that emergency works have been required to a property at Bourne Place which has necessitated the closure of part of the adjacent roadway.



(2021/22:292) Festival of Motorcycling:

Resolved: To note that the Festival of Motorcycling for 2022 has been reduced from 14 to 9 days and will revert to the name of the Manx Grand Prix.

(2021/22:293) Invitation Civic Sunday Malew:

Resolved: To note receipt of the invitation from the Chairman of Malew Parish Commissioners to attend the Civic Service on Sunday, 6th March, 2022, at 3.00 p.m. Members were asked to advise Mrs. Chrystal if they wished to attend.

(2021/22:294) Isle of Man Municipal Association:

Mr. McGuinness referred to the possibility that the Municipal Association would be arranging a meeting with the Planners and queried whether the Commissioners would wish to attend such meeting or have a meeting on their own.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk arrange a meeting. [Subsequent to the meeting members were informed that the Planners are holding a series of road-show meetings around the Island and have a meeting scheduled to take place at the Town Hall Ramsey on 9th March 2022, in respect of which they are invited to suggest topics for discussion.]

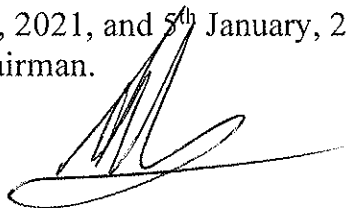
The Chairman thanked the public and media for attending and closed the public session at 8.47 p.m.

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.

(2021/22:295) Minutes:

Resolved: To note, for record purposes, that no minutes from the Board meeting held on 15th December, 2021, were recorded in private.

It was further resolved that the Minutes of the Special Board Meetings held on 8th December, 2021, and 5th January, 2022, recorded in private be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.



Matters for Information:

(2021/22:296) Housing Committee:

Members were advised that the meeting of the Housing Committee held on 11th January, 2022, was inquorate and resolved, following a proposal by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed to approve such minutes, subject to the following:-

Clause 84b) Tenant Issues – the letter sent to the tenant by Advocates has resulted in rental payments – members noted that legal costs have been incurred.

The Housing and Property Manager explained the process concerning rent arrears, particularly the engagement with tenants and any supporting agencies where permitted to do so.

Clause 85b) - Members were advised why offers of a tenancy had been rejected without points deduction and were informed that the property has now been allocated.

Mr. Parker queried the meeting being inquorate and was advised that the existing committee members were prepared to continue until the next Commissioners' Annual Meeting at which time would consider whether or not to accept appointment to this Committee, attendance at which is proving difficult for some at the present time.

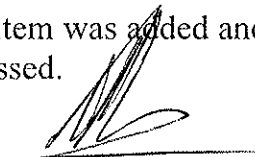
Members welcomed the inclusion of numbers on the shared housing waiting lists prepared in conjunction with the Department of Infrastructure.

Members asked about proposed development on the site of Cooil ny Marrey and were informed that this land was not in the ownership of the Commission and would be progressed between the DHSS and the Ramsey and Northern Districts Housing Committee.

(2021/22:297) On-Going Matters “Action Tracker”:

Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker” to 13th January, 2022, , subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

- **Town Branding** – the Deputy Town Clerk informed members that a new company is now involved and the matter hopefully completed later this month. Members asked if Town Branding could be “piggy-backed” to the TT.
- **Abated Sums S13 Agreements** – members requested this section be updated.
- **Ruinous Building Time and Place Notice** – this item was added and it was agreed that a Time and Place Notice / Meeting be progressed.



Finance and General Purposes:

(2021/22:298) Town Clerk’s Report – Feedback Offer to Purchase Albert Road Site:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 17th December, 2021, advising of the feedback received with regard to the Commission’s offer for the acquisition of land comprising the former Albert Road School site from which it was noted that proposals made by the developer would reduce the area of land to be made available to the Commission and thereby reduce their options for redevelopment in the area.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed without division that the Commission make no alteration to their existing offer for the whole site.

(2021/22:299) Town Clerk’s Report – Lease of Coroner’s Office:

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed, the lease between the Ramsey Town Commissioners and the Coroner for the Sheadings of Ayre and Garff for use of office space within the Town Hall, Ramsey, be extended as detailed within the Town Clerk’s Report dated 12th January, 2022, until 30th September, 2024.

(2021/22:300) Town Clerk’s Report – Public Open Space Gibbs Park and Gibbs Grove:

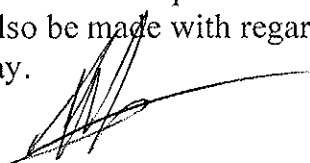
Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 6th January, 2022, updating the Commission on the delay in progressing adoption of public open space at Gibbs Park and Gibbs Grove.

Resolved: To note the report but take no action in progressing the adoption of public open space until such time as flooding and drainage problems have been resolved.

(2021/22:301) Finance Officer’s Report:

Resolved: To note and approved the Finance Officer’s Report dated 12th January, 2022, subject to the following:-

Aged Debtors: Members referred to some larger debts and were advised that investigation would be made to expedite recovery via the Small Claims Court. Investigation would also be made with regard to a debt where it is understood the debtor has passed away.



(2021/22:302) Technical Services Manager’s Report – Probation Services:

Members considered the Technical Services Manager’s report dated 23rd December, 2021, concerning the assistance provided to the Town by the Probation Service and a request made by the Service for some assistance towards their costs.

A proposal was put by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. McGuinness that the Commission offer equipment to a value of £1,000 and training also to a value of £1,000.

An amendment was put by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Craine that equipment only be provided because the training offered does not suit the Probation Service’s “Train the Trainer” policy.

The amendment was put to the vote and received 5 votes – Ms Craine and Messrs. Parker, Young, Cowell and Kelly voting for. Being a split vote the Chairman used his casting vote in favour of the amendment.

Works and Development:

(2021/22:303) Town Clerk’s Report – Queen’s Pier Lighting:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 11th January, 2022, provided further detail concerning the request made in December, 2021, by the Queen’s Pier Restoration Trust for assistance with regard to the provision of financial support for electricity for lighting at the Pier.

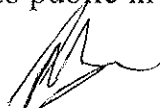
Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed unanimously the Commission enter into an agreement with the QPRT for a period of 3 years in that the Commission will provide electricity to a value equal to 1 KWh per 24 hours and not exceeding £62.50 per annum

The agreement is subject to the Commission having no responsibility for any equipment and being absolved from any claim or liability arising by way of the provision of electricity to the lighting.

(2021/22:304) Town Clerk’s Report – Removal of Sand and Gravel South Promenade...

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk’s report dated 11th January, 2022, advising of concerns raised as a result of the removal of sand and gravel from the foreshore abutting the South Promenade, in the vicinity of the Lifeboat Slip.

Mr. Young queried why the matter had been raised in Private and wished it to be brought into public in February and queried the authenticity of the correspondence received.

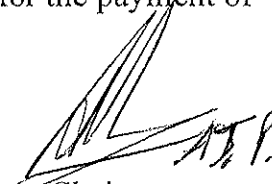


R.T.C. Board Meeting – 19th January, 2022, Continued:

Mr. McGuinness referred to the final two items on the agenda, suggesting that as they could be considered budgetary they be debated at the Special Board meeting to be held on 24th January, 2022.

It was proposed by Mr. Oldham, seconded by Mr. Kelly and agreed by 6 votes to 4 to defer the final items on the Agenda to the Special Board Meeting to further consider the budget and Town Rate for the year 2022/2023. Messrs. Beighton, Cowell, McGuinness and Parker voted against.

The meeting closed at 10.00 p.m. giving a time of 3 hours for the payment of attendance allowances.



Chairman.