A Special Board Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held in Town Hall, Parliament Square, Ramsey, on Monday, 20th March, 2017, at 7.00 p.m. in addition to which the Board Meeting suspended due to time factors from 15th March, 2017, was reconvened.


Apologies for absence were received from Mr. F. B. R. Williams.

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

The Members of the House of Keys for Ramsey, Dr. A. J. Allinson and Mr. L. L. Hooper attended the meeting by invitation.

The Chairman welcomed Dr. A. Allinson and Mr. L. Hooper, MHK’s for the constituency of Ramsey, and thanked them for the opportunity to maintain dialogue with the elected representatives on matters related to Ramsey and the North.

The following matters were raised by Members, discussed and noted:–

- Relocation of Government Departments – Government is presently seeking to occupy property in its own ownership and to avoid entering into rental agreements, it is unlikely therefore that a Department would locate in Ramsey;
- There is likelihood of additional manufacturing opportunity in the north, particularly in the Jurby Industrial Estate area;
- The Ramsey Shipyard had been subject to an expressions of interest process and Government is presently in discussion with the preferred bidder, the new tenant would continue the operation of a shipwright at the shipyard;
- A review of rates is included within the programme for Government, an initial report expected to be prepared by October 2017, the views of the Commission to be sought to enable the MHK’s to respond in light thereof. Members expressed a concern that rates continue to be an indiscriminate and stealth tax and there is no willingness on Government to address income tax levels to meet Government expenditure. There is little doubt that Government will have to reduce services and that Local Authorities will be requested to take on greater responsibility at the expense of the rates accounts;
- There is an imperative within Government to address the public sector pension liability however also a need to continue to move forward in terms of employment and other initiatives;
Meeting with Members of the House of Keys for Ramsey Continued:

- Changes to the process to elect to Legislative Council are expected to be implemented before the current vacancy is filled. There is a view that ex-former Members of the House of Keys should not be brought back having not presented or failed to be successful at the polls;
- Meetings are to be held at political level between the Departments of Infrastructure, and Education and Children to reach agreement as to the works necessary to enable the Lezayre Road scheme to proceed;
- The proposed Register of Beneficial Ownership is currently in Legislative Council and expected to be implemented by 30th June 2017;
- Detail about the ongoing Regeneration Fund is awaited however it is understood that funds remain available and further bids may be possible.
- Government’s Save Initiative is seeking to identify real savings and not increases of income. A consultation exercise is to take place in April/May and a roadshow event will be held. The Town Hall was noted as a venue to host the roadshow in the north of the Island.

The meeting expressed a wish to ensure that dialogue between the Commission and the town’s elected MHK’s continues both on a formal and ad hoc basis and future meetings will be scheduled.

The Chairman thanked Dr. Allinson and Mr. Hooper for their attendance and support and they left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

The meeting suspended from 15th March, 2017, was reconvened:


Members noted and discussed the Technical Assistant’s report dated 8th March 2017, the following matters being decided:-

**Fixed Penalty Notices number 540 and 672.**

FPN 540 failing to pick up dog faeces in the Courthouse Grounds, and FPN 672 – allowing a dog to be at large in the Courthouse Grounds and in Parliament Street.

Commission noted that despite commencing payment of FPN 540, a sum of £30 remains outstanding and that no payment had been received in regard to FPN 672.

Resolved – unanimously to proceed to prosecute for both offences.
(2016/17:372) Technical Assistant’s Report - Fixed Penalty Notices Continued:

**Fixed Penalty Notice number 545.**


Commission noted that no communication has been received since the Town Warden issued the FPN.

Resolved – unanimously to proceed to prosecute for the offence

**Fixed Penalty Notice number 522.**

FPN 0522 issued on 10th February 2017 for throwing a cigarette end in Parliament Street.

Commission noted that no communication has been received since the Town Warden issued the FPN.

Resolved – unanimously to proceed to prosecute for the offence

Commission considered appeals submitted against the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Members noted that where the recipient feels a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued incorrectly, they may appeal in writing within 14 days of the issue of the Notice.

If the appeal is rejected, a further period of 14 days will be allowed for payment of the penalty sum. If payment is not made within the 14 days the matter will be referred for prosecution.

**Appeal against Fixed Penalty Notice number 548.**

FPN 548 issued on 18th February 2017 for allowing a dog within the Mooragh Park.

Commission noted that an appeal had been submitted the appellant stating that there were no children around and that the dog was not in the play area. Following issue of the FPN, and having been requested to leave the area by the Town Warden, the appellant had reportedly continued to exercise their dog within the park.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. McGuinness and seconded by Mr. Ayres, agreed unanimously, to reject the appeal.
Appeal against Fixed Penalty Notice number 525.

FPN 525 issued on 24th February 2017 for throwing litter onto Tower Street Car Park.

Commission noted the appellants claim that she did not realise it was an offence; she offered to pick up and had no prior offence. Commission noted also that the recipient had provided an incorrect address and had driven away before the Warden could issue the FPN, and that the FPN had been posted to the correct address as the party had been subsequently identified.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr McGuinness and seconded by Mr Ayres, agreed unanimously, to reject the appeal.

Appeal against Fixed Penalty Notice number 526.

FPN 526 issued on 6th March 2017 for throwing litter onto the Mooragh Estate Road.

Mr McGuinness declared an interest and took no part in the discussion.

Committee noted the Wardens Statement and the claim that the wind blew the fork from the dashboard, together with the Technical Assistants comments regarding the weather.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr Ayres and seconded by Mr Hankin, agreed unanimously (Mr McGuiness not voting), to reject the appeal.

Appeal against Fixed Penalty Notice number 673.

FPN 526 issued on 6th March 2017 for failing to pick up dog faeces on the North Beach following a report from a third party.

Committee noted the appellant’s submission and that the party was clearly distressed and upset by the accusation.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. Ayres and seconded by Mr. Corkish, agreed 10 votes to two to accept the appeal.

Offence Tuesday 7th March Bunscoill Rhumsaa

Commission considered a report of two witness statements regarding the offences of exercising a dog in the grounds of Bunscoill Rhumsaa and failing to pick up deposited faeces. The matter was referred to the Commission to consider prosecution or the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. McGuinness and seconded by Mr. Ayres, agreed unanimously, to issue a fixed penalty notice for each offence.
Works and Development:

(2016/17:373) Boundary Wall, Water Street Car Park

Mr. Young declared an interest however sought and was granted permission to speak to the item.

Resolved: proposed by Mr Ayres, seconded by Mr Oldham, and agreed unanimously to engage MacOwan Collett Structural Engineers to further assess the stability of the wall and to approach the land owner to explore the possibility of reducing the overall height of the wall.

(2016/17:374) Public Toilet Cleaning Contract

The Commission noted the successful contractor had been interviewed and that the requirements of the contract had been confirmed and agreed.

Resolved: the Chairman to sign the formal contract for cleaning of public toilets in Ramsey with 2Clean, 18 Close Corlett, Ballaquane Park, Peel for a five year period commencing on 1st April 2017, on behalf of the Commission.

(2016/17:375) Vollan Pumping Station and Associated Works

Commission noted the Chief Technical Officer’s Report dated 8th March 2017.

Resolved: to accept the contractor’s proposed remediation of the existing estate road and the reinstatement of the hardstanding adjacent thereto and to the north of the Skatepark.

Housing and Property:


The Commission noted a report from the Housing and Property Manager. Commission discussed the eligibility criteria and agreed to respond the various matters contained therein as follows:-

General

Eligible Applicant
The Board agree with the proposal to update and modernised the definition of an applicant with regard to couples living together, married or in a Civil Partnership.

Residential Qualification
The Board agree with the proposed criteria to keep the Island residency at 10 years and would support Option 1 in reducing the number of local residency years from 5 to 3.
Financial Qualification
The Board is in agreement in lowering the maximum equity and/or savings calculated as part of the total allowance for an applicant to meet the financial criteria from £50,000 to £30,000.

Pointing
Days on List
Members commented that persons on the 1 bedroom list will most likely be on the list for over 5 years and some applicants could potentially be held on the same number of points when they have reached the capped points and be overtaken on points by other applicants gaining points in other areas who haven't been waiting as long.

The Board feel that the points for 'Days on List' should remain as it is with 1 point being awarded for each 3 months on the list and the points accrued not to be capped.

Island Born
The Board do not object to the proposed removal of these points, mainly due to the legal advice within the document indicating that Housing providers are to be mindful of complying with Human Rights and of the Equality Bill.

Years of Residency on Island and; Years of residency in Housing Authority Area
No proposed change and the Board is content to leave as is.

Joint Applicants
The Board has no objections with the proposal to remove the 5 points currently awarded for a joint application.

Size of Family
The Board would prefer to remain with the current criteria of 5 points being awarded for each dependent child to a maximum of 15 points. It is felt that a family could potentially be on the Island for a shorter period of time and because they have a large family be housed sooner than someone that has been on the Island all their life but have a smaller family.

Gross Income
The Board is in favour of priority points being awarded to applicants who earn less and who are in greater need of Public Sector Housing.

Financial/Property Assets
The Board do not agree with the proposal to introduce the reduction of points for the level of financial/property assets that applicants may have. It is felt that applicants could be being penalised rather than encouraged to save i.e. to purchase a property.
(2016/17:376) Public Sector Housing Access and Eligibility Criteria Continued:

**Adequacy of Present Accommodation**
The Board is in favour of this proposal as it illustrates priority for applicants in most need.

**Notice to Quit**
The Board has no objections with the proposal to increase the Court Order for possession to 25 points and to the removal of points for a Notice to Quit.

**Emergency Housing**
The Board has no objections with the proposal to remove these points as they are now considered to be captured within the ‘Adequacy of Present Accommodation’.

**Prior Unjustified Refusal**
No proposed change and the Board is content to leave as is.

**Accumulated Rent Arrears**
No proposed change and the Board is content to leave as is.

**Manx Housing Trust**
No proposed change and the Board is content to leave as is.

**Appeals Procedure**
No proposed change and the Board is content to leave as is.

Resolved: the Housing and Property Manager to respond to the consultation as discussed.

**Following a proposal by the Chairman Members agreed unanimously to suspend Standing Orders to permit the meeting to continue beyond 10:00pm**

(2016/17:377) Yew Tree Apartments

The Commission noted the Housing and Property Manager’s report dated 8\(^{th}\) March 2017, outlining a proposal to address defective render at the Commissions property Yew Tree Apartments, in accordance with the Structural Engineers recommendations, and the undertaking of additional works to provide a Permarock Render System to the all external elevations of the property at a total cost of £60,250.00. Members noted that the Permarock system provided maintenance benefits removing the need to undertake external decoration for at least 10 years.

Members noted that the proposal, if accepted, would comprise a single tender action. Members also noted that the option of engaging separate contractors to undertake works outside the remedial works would require careful management to ensure that appropriate guarantees existed in respect of any completed works, and that there are only two licensed contractors on the Island for the system.
(2016/17:377) Yew Tree Apartments Continued:

Mr. Oldham proposed, seconded by Mrs. Quayle, that the Commission appoint Auldyn Construction, through a single tender action, to complete remedial works and the installation of a Permarock render system to all elevations.

Mr Parker proposed, seconded by Mr McGuinness, an amendment that the Commission seek alternative prices for the installation of the external render system after rectification of defects by Auldyn Construction.

The amendment was put to the vote and defeated five in favour and six votes against.

Resolved: by eight votes to three, Messrs McGuinness, Parker and Young voting against that Auldyn Construction be appointed under single action tender to complete remedial works and the installation of a Permarock Render System to Yew Tree Apartments.


The Town Clerk drew attention to an application for off-licence for the Ellan Vannin Fuels Service Station, Lezayre Road.

Resolved: seven votes in favour and four against, Mrs Quayle and Messrs Corkish, McGuinness, and Young voting against, that the Commission should object to the application on the primary basis that there is adequate provision of off-licence facilities within the town.

(2016/17:379) Matters of Establishment

The minutes of the meeting of the Establishment Committee held on 6th March 2017 were noted and approved.

(2016/17:380) Ramsey Courthouse

Discussions in relation to Ramsey Courthouse have been recorded as a private whilst negotiations in relation thereto continue.

The Chairmen thanked Members and Officers for their extended attendance and support and closed the meeting at 10:55 p.m., giving a period for attendance of 4 hours.

Chairman.