The Monthly Board Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held in Town Hall, Parliament Square, Ramsey, on Wednesday, 15th August, 2018, at 7.00 p.m.


Apologies: Messrs’ N. P. Howard and A. J. Oldham

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

(2016/17:118) Bye-Election North Ward:

The Chairman, in his capacity as Returning Officer, referred to the Election of Mr. Nigel Peter Howard for South Ward and Mr. George Monk for North Ward on 19th July, 2018, for the unexpired term ending 30th April, 2020. The Bye-Elections having occurred due to the resignations of Mr. P. S. Ayres and Mr. E. R. Corkish, in the respective wards. Mr. Howard and Mr. Monk have signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Mr. Monk was presented with the Returning Officer’s Certificate of Election.

Members and staff were afforded the opportunity to introduce themselves to Mr. Monk, and he to them.

(2018/19:119) Minutes:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 18th July, 2018, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman, subject to correction of the date in the introduction to the meeting and the following:-

Clause 094 Planning RTC 3592 Queen’s Pier - the wording of the final paragraph pertaining to this application was amended to reflect that an observation be submitted that the Commission believe the use of “plastic paint” will be problematic.

(2018/19:210) Matters Arising:

No matters were raised.
Finance and General Purposes:


Members considered the Town Clerk’s tabled report dated, 14th August, 2018, concerning the responses provided by members to the Consultation on Criminal Justice.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Cowie, and agreed, that as it is unlikely that consensus will be obtained Members respond individually to this consultation as they consider appropriate.


Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 9th August, 2018, to which was appended details of the hiring policy for halls, sports halls and playing fields coming under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, Sport and Culture.

Resolved: That following, a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mrs. Wedgewood, that the Department of Education, Sport and Culture, be written to advising of the Commission’s view that whilst letting of their facilities is paramount they should not look at the bottom line, but to the benefits for young people and the health benefits for adults, and offer sports clubs use at a peppercorn rents. The proposal was carried without division.

(2018/19:214) Town Clerk’s Report – Ramsey Town Commissioners’ Bye Elections:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 9th August, 2018, presented following recent Bye-Elections. General discussion ensued. Mr. Williams queried what had happened to the Commission’s thoughts on merging the wards and was reminded that it had been decided not to proceed on that matter. Mr. Cowie referred to the postal charges and encouraged electronic voting, including “electronic issue of poll cards”.

Mr. McGuinness put forward a three part proposal to bring this matter back into the public agenda:-

- To write to the Department of Infrastructure requesting that the introduction of on-line voting be re-investigated and advising that the Ramsey Town Commissioners would be in support of and willing to assist in trialling such;
- To look into a public policy, formalised process and publicity profile for future Commissioners’ Bye-elections to maximise awareness;
- To write to the Department of Infrastructure to request that election legislation be amended with regard to the 42 day timescale for bye-elections.
Discussion continued - Mrs. Wedgwood queried the effectiveness and impact of social media publicity. Mr. McGuinness stated that there was a duty on all members to make the electorate aware of “the Commission” over the full time of their terms of office and not just at the time of elections. Mr. Hankin commented that low polls did not only occur in Ramsey - there seems to be a general apathy. Mrs. Quayle stated that the biggest problem was that voters did not know the candidates or what they were standing for.

The Chairman sought seconders to Mr. McGuinness’s proposal, resulting:-
- Department to explore electronic voting – seconded Mr. Cowie and agreed without division
- Byelaw public policy, formalised process…seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed without division
- Amend 42 day timescale - seconded by Mr. Williams - carried by 6 votes to 5 - Messrs’ McGuinness, Williams, Hankin, Greenwood, Parker and Young voting in favour.

The Chairman advised that the issue of poll cards should have acted as a reminder. Mr Monk queried the timing of applications for absent voters and was advised that Notice to absent voters is included in the Notice of Election (and not Notice of Poll) and under the current timescale anyone wishing to apply for an absent vote could do so well in advance of the date of any subsequent poll. (Notice of Election is given 7/14 days before last day for the delivery of nomination papers, such date being 21/28 days before the day of Election).

Mr. Williams asked if any hand-out was available on how to campaign. The Town Clerk responded not specifically but a guide to Local Authorities is available on the Government website.

(2018/19:215)  Finance Officer’s Report:

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer’s General Report dated 9th August, 2018, subject to the following:

Mr. Cowie queried income allocated as “office expenses” and was advised that this was included registry office fees.

(2018/19:216)  Technical Assistant’s Report - Commemoration of Loss:

Resolved: To note and approve the Technical Assistant’s Report dated 8th August, 2018, detailing the losses during the Great War to be commemorated in the next few weeks.

Mr. Hankin commented on the impact of the commemorations and that he had been approached by the family who had learned so much about their relative from the information provided and had seen a photograph of that relative for the first time.
Works and Development:

(2018/19:217) Town Clerk’s Report - Consultation Area Plan for the East:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s tabled report dated 14th August, 2018, concerning the Consultation with regard to the Area Plan for the East, and detailing responses made by members to various sections thereof. The Chairman asked if members wished to consider the report on “an exception basis”. Mr. Parker commented on the importance of the document in that a Northern area plan would follow that will affect the Town.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mr. Hankin and agreed, the Town Clerk frame a suitable reply to the consultation incorporating such responses.

(2018/19:218) Chief Technical Officer’s Report - Planning Applications:

Resolved: That Chief Technical Officer’s Report dated 9th August, 2018, detailing planning applications received from the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, under the planning consultation procedures, be noted and approved, subject to the following:-

REF NO: 3598
P.A. NO.: 18/00786/B
APPLICANT: Sure IOM Limited
PROPOSED: Erection of 12 metre lattice tower and equipment cabin for telecommunications purposes
NOTES: P.A. in Detail
SITE: Ramsey and District Cottage Hospital, Cumberland Road, Ramsey.

Mr. Parker queried the need for the equipment and Mr. Hankin expressed concern with regard to the closeness of transmitters. Mr. Williams advised that a declaration of conformity had been received.

It was proposed by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Cowie voting against, to make no objection to the application.

REF NO: 3599
P.A. NO.: 18/00793/C
APPLICANT: Department of Infrastructure, Transport Services
PROPOSED: Additional use of part of station for parking of up to 10 minibuses
NOTES: P.A. - Change of Use
SITE: Tram Station, Albert Street, Ramsey.

Mr. Cowie and Mr. Williams declared interests in this application.
(2018/19:218) Chief Technical Officer’s Report - Planning Applications Cont:

It was noted that the vehicles are subject to Road Traffic Licensing Committee licensing provisions.

Discussion ensued during which members queried why the Bus Station was not being used to accommodate the mini-buses. Mr. Hankin stated that residents in the area had expressed concerns which he had raised with the Department of Infrastructure. Such worries included that residents had not been made aware of the proposals, the mini-buses having just appeared in 2017, they are parked close to boundary walls and used for climbing, access by emergency services is compromised; noise and danger, and where the drivers would park their private vehicles.

Mr. Young suggested it was an attempt to “make the Tram Station the Bus Station”. Concern was also expressed that the tram-tracks would be damaged.

Mr. Parker advised he would like more information - Mrs. Quayle agreed and were advised they could ask the Planning Committee to defer consideration of the application and seek an update on the transport inter-change at the same time.

The Town Clerk read a letter of explanation which was available on the Government’s web site, that had not been included with the copy of the application supplied to the Commission, advising of the uses of the mini-buses:- Home to school transport (for various reasons); home to Town Centre service, inter-school transfers, patient transfers, excursions and commercial hire and on-demand services.

Mr. Parker proposed that the Commission make no objection but submit an observation.

Mr. Hankin proposed an amendment to proceed with Mr. Parker’s first proposal to seek more information. This was seconded by Mr. Young and put to the vote with only Mr. Monk voting in support. Mr. Cowie and Mr. Williams did not vote.

Mr. Parker’s proposal to make no objection was seconded by Canon Greenwood and agreed. Mr. Cowie and Mr. Williams again not voting.

REF NO: 3603
P.A. NO.: 18/00817/C
APPLICANT: Department of Infrastructure, Transport Services
PROPOSED: Additional use of part of car park within school grounds for parking of up to 5 minibuses (retrospective)
NOTES: P.A. - Change of Use
SITE: Ramsey Grammar School, West Building, Lezayre Road, Ramsey.
(2018/19:218) Chief Technical Officer’s Report - Planning Applications Cont:

Members were informed that these mini-buses were previously not subject to RTLC Licensing, but that this now applied due to the transfer of school minibus operations from the school to the Department of Infrastructure. It was proposed by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed that no objection be made. Mr. Williams declared an interest and did not vote.


Members considered the Chief Technical Officer’s report dated 9th August, 2018, concerning the use and ultimate disposal of mercury street light fittings. Mr. Parker queried if we had to use the services of Manx Utilities and were reminded that was with whom the maintenance contract for street lighting is placed. It was noted that 11 fittings required to be replaced at an approximate cost of £550 per unit plus any disposal costs but also noted that there is no budget allowance for the work. Members were informed that the Civic Amenity Site is not licensed for the disposal of mercury.

It was proposed by Mr. Parker seconded by Mrs. Quayle that Manx Utilities be authorised to proceed.

It was further proposed by Mr. Cowie seconded by Mr. Hankin that Manx Utilities be asked to provide a fixed price quotation for the work, upon receipt of which further consideration will be given to the matter. The proposal was carried by 10 votes to 1, Canon Greenwood voting against.

Parks and Leisure:

(2018/19:220) Deputy Town Clerk’s Report - Festival of Trees:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 10th August, 2018, in which enquiry is made if the Commission would wish to stage a “Festival of Trees” from 1st December until “Twelfth Night”, at the Town Hall. Canon Greenwood queried how many trees could be accommodated. Members were advised that it is hoped that 15/20 trees might fit comfortably and that exhibitors would provide their own trees.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mrs. Quayle, seconded by Mr. Hankin and agreed, the Festival of Trees be held in the Town Hall.
(2018/19:221) Chief Technical Officer’s Report - Actions taken following Hosepipe Ban:

Members considered the Chief Technical Officer’s report dated 9th August, 2018, advising of actions taken following the implementation on 1st August of a hosepipe ban.

Resolved: To note the Chief Technical Officer’s report dated 9th August, 2018, advising of measures taken and proposed to be taken in view of the implementation of a hosepipe ban the following was agreed with regard to the points included:-

- To reduce the hours of operation of the water play area in the Mooragh Park to a suggested period of between 12 noon and 4 pm. - agreed to adjust the timer to allow a trigger by first use - it was felt that this would in some way compensate residents who are not permitted use hosepipes.
- To discontinue the watering of the hanging baskets and remove them - agreed - noted also that other planters are not being watered.
- To operate reduced irrigation of the bowling green until the 18th September when the North Ramsey Bowling Club has its last scheduled game - agreed no change to existing routine of watering.
- To continue to implement other initiatives to reduce the use of water until the hosepipe ban has been removed and levels of usable water return to satisfactory levels. It was agreed to investigate using water from the Sulby River to fill water bowsers.

(2018/19:222) Chief Technical Officer’s Report - Mooragh Park Woodland Management Agreement:

Members considered the Chief Technical Officer’s report dated 7th August, 2018, advising of the Woodland Management Agreement for the Mooragh Park areas prepared by the Head Gardener and agreed by Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Hankin, seconded by Mrs. Quayle, and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Cowie voting against, that members be provided with a copy of the Agreement upon receipt of which the matter will be further considered.
Any Other Business:

(2018/19:223) Demolition former Barry Curran Motors site:

The Chief Technical Officer advised that Manx Demolition has indicated that demolition works to the former Barry Curran Site will commence on 27th August and is expected to take up to 10 weeks, disruption will be kept to a minimum hours of work will be 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday and 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Adjacent parking on the quay side will be suspended along with the closure of the pavement outside the property. Part of Christian Street will be closed between 10th and 24th September, but pedestrian access to apartments and the hairdresser’s will remain.

The Chief Technical Officer explained that this site is no longer subject to a planning application because it is not connected to any other building.

Mr. Williams asked if the terms suggested by the Commission with regard to the type of fencing, etc., can be enforced. The Town Clerk advised that the owners could be asked if they would consider doing so.

(2018/19:224) Cycle Path Lezayre Road:

Mr. McGuinness referred to the formation of the cycle path on part of the reconstructed Lezayre Road and asked if members wished to discuss it.

Mr. Hankin referred to and commended the Chairman on a recent radio interview about these works - but in doing so expressed concern that, due to the Chairman’s employment with the Department of Infrastructure - interviews of this type should be done by Mr. McGuinness or Mr. Parker as it might be construed that the Chairman’s comment might seem a bit one-sided. Mr. Young commented that it was impossible for two trucks to pass at that point without crossing the white-line of the cycle path. Mr. Cowie advised that the white line was advisory and it is permissible to cross it.

Mr. McGuinness stated that it was not the cycle path itself - but that it had been created with no communication to the Commission or residents in the vicinity and he was sure that complaints about it will be made.

Mr. McGuinness proposed that the Department be informed of the Commission’s disappointment again at the continued poor communication to them and others about the Lezayre Road reconstruction works and especially about the cycle lane. The proposal was seconded by Mrs. Quayle and agreed.

(2018/19:225) Sheltered Cycle Racks:

Mr. Hankin, on behalf of Mr. Oldham asked about the provision of sheltered cycle racks. It was agreed to investigate cost implication for these for consideration as part of the budget process and such investigation extend to including shelter for disability scooters.
(2018/19:226) Former Laundry Site - Gladstone Avenue:

Mr. Parker was informed that the owner’s property manager is looking into queries raised about the condition of these premises.

(2018/19:227) Resurfacing of Highways:

Mr. Parker referred to recent road resurfacing works undertaken by or on behalf of the Highways Division of the Department of Infrastructure and to the differing quality of such works which appear unfinished. The Town Clerk advised that the Department had issued a statement about the methods used which he agreed to circulate to members. Mr. Cowie asked if it was members’ wish that our officers contact the Department of Infrastructure. Mr. McGuinness asked if a statement about Lezayre Road could be added. Mr. Cowie asked if the Commission would like to invite the Director of Highways to a future meeting. Mr. McGuinness stated he had no problem with that but we need to have the public aware that we are not happy.

Mr. Hankin seconded the proposal of Mr. Cowie to invite the Director of Highways to meet the Commission, which was agreed.

(2018/19:228) Representative Report:

Resolved: To note the Representative Report concerning the meeting of the Northern Local Authorities Swimming Pool Board. Mr. McGuinness advised that a further meeting had taken place since the submission of his report.

Mr. McGuinness also referred to a report of a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, to be considered in private and advised that it was not his wish but he wished that he had been consulted before such action had been agreed.

The Chairman thanked the public and media representatives for attending and closed the public session at 8.50 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.

(2018/19:229) Minutes:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on 12th July, 2018, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman, subject to minor typographical corrections.

It was further resolved to note that no minutes from the Board Meetings held on 18th July, 2018, were recorded in Private.
Matters for Information:

(2018/19:230) Housing Committee:

Resolved: To note, for record purposes, that the Housing Committee did not meet in August, 2018.


Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker”, to 15th August, 2018, included within the agenda and the following comments made thereon, and accepting that some matters may be referred to in other sections of these minutes:-

- **Town Monument** - works now completed - remove from list;
- **Bleak House** - the Town Clerk advised that a valuation opinion had been received from the Government Valuer and that the interested parties will be written to concerning their intentions with regard to disposal of the premises;


- **Decorative and Festive Lighting** - information awaited from Manx Utilities. Officers attended a presentation arising from which they will meet and discuss this matter with Douglas Corporation Engineers;
- **Water Street Boundary Wall** - the Chief Technical Officer is awaiting receipt of suggestions from the Structural Engineers;
- **Shoprite Group - Station Road** - the company is in discussion with their Advocates - the options with regard to the public conveniences will need to be discussed;
- **Website** - the Deputy Town Clerk hopes it will finalised by the end of September;
- **IPad for Members** - the Deputy Town Clerk to report on this matter at the September Board Meeting;
- **War Memorial** - the War Memorial Committee met in July and have suggested that the Chief Technical Officer meet with Mr. Keith Dalrymple, from that Committee;
- **Ramsey North Beach** - the Deputy Town Clerk advised that 4 responses have been received and he will report in September, prior to the Commission’s budget consideration;
- **Slow Down in Town** - Mr. Parker commended a photographic launch with members displaying a banner to promote a campaign for safer driving in the Town centre.
Finance and General Purposes:


Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 9th August, 2018, with Appended “Cycle to Work Policy” prepared in response a Government initiative to help to improve the fitness and health of Island residents.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Hankin and agreed to adopt the Cycle to Work Policy.

Mr. Parker declared an interest.

(2018/19:233) Town Clerk’s Report – Ramsey Courthouse:

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk’s report dated 9th August, 2018, concerning progress on the declarations of interest received in respect of the Courthouse and await a further report.

(2018/19:234) Finance Officer’s General Report:

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer’s Report dated 9th August, 2018, subject to the following:

*Estimates and Revenue Expenditure* - a query with regard to a drop in income was explained.

*Rent Arrears* - queries with regard to tenants listed at Nos. 10 and 14 on the list were answered.

*2019-20 Budget Meetings* - Mr. McGuinness emphasised the importance of the budget process and suggested that all Lead and Deputy Lead Members meet with the himself and Finance Officer during the weeks ahead.

Housing and Property:

(2018/19:235) Housing and Property Manager’s Report - Cronk Elfin Refurbishment Business Case:

Members considered the Housing and Property Manager’s report dated 10th August, 2018, with appended Business Case Report concerning proposals to refurbish properties at Cronk Elfin.

Mr. Monk queried if the costs were based on those involved with the trial undertaken on two properties at Cronk Elfin, and was advised this was the case. The Housing and Property Manager explained the preference for Option B, to refurbish the existing dwellings, rather than Option A (repair and patch up render and roofing) or Option C (Demolish and Rebuild). The Town Clerk explained the borrowing and funding process in terms of Capital Projects and Housing Deficiency Payments and that there are no rate implications involved in the scheme.

In response to a query from Mr. Cowie, it was noted that refurbishment of bathrooms would not take place in properties where tenants had upgraded their own bathrooms. Mr. Parker asked if the rationale for recommending Option B could be included in the Business Case Report and was advised by the Housing and Property Manager that he had spoken with the Department about this and it was felt that there was no need to include further information.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Hankin, seconded by Mrs. Wedgwood and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Young voting against, that the Business Case be approved and the Housing and Property Manager be authorised to present it to progress this scheme with the Department and Treasury.

Parks and Leisure:


Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 9th August, 2018, advising of options for the Switch On of Christmas Light, in view of the Chamber of Commerce’s decision to withdraw from providing entertainment for the event. Two options were presented, a simple switch-on or a full afternoon of events. Members queried costs and the Deputy Town Clerk advised that it is hoped to get sponsorship to meet most of them. There will be logistical costs to the Commission. Mr. Hankin emphasised the need to progress organisation of the event.

It was proposed by Mrs. Quayle, seconded by Mr. Hankin that the Commission support a full afternoon of events. Mr. McGuinness advised that he was uncomfortable in this matter and would prefer proposals with maximum costs being detailed.

Mr. Parker commented that the Deputy Town Clerk needed to be aware of a budget to organise the event and therefore proposed an amendment that the afternoon of events be organised with a budget not exceeding £1,500 from the Town Centre Management expenditure code, and that the Deputy Town Clerk present an update to the September, 2018, meeting of the Board.

Mr. Parker’s proposal was seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed by 10 votes to 1, Mr. Hankin voting against.

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk’s Report dated 9th August, 2018, advising of a meeting held with the Director of Motorsport and Head of Tourism. Members queried if the proposals presented could be achieved in time for the 2019 T.T. and following a proposal by Mr. Cowie seconded by Mr. Williams, the Deputy Town Clerk was instructed to progress the matter and present a report to the September, 2018, meeting of the Commission.

It was further proposed by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. McGuinness that the Commission seek a budget from a professional event organiser with regard to T.T. Events.

Mr. Parker moved that the two tabled propositions be merged - this was seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed.

The meeting closed at 10.00 p.m. giving a time of 3.00 hours for payment of attendance allowances, and will be reconvened at 7.00 p.m. on Thursday, 16th August, 2018. Mr. Hankin, Mr. Williams, the Deputy Town Clerk and Minute Clerk advised that they would be unable to attend on 16th August.

Chairman.