

# RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS

[ PUBLIC ]

A Special Meeting of the Ramsey Town Commissioners was held in the Board Room, Ramsey Town Hall, Ramsey on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2021, at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. A. G. Cowie, and Mesdames M. B. Quayle and J. Wedgwood, Messrs' Rev Canon N. D. Greenwood, J. McGuinness, L. Parker and W. G. Young.

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence had been received from Messrs. A. J. Oldham and F. B. R. Williams.

The Town Clerk, and Deputy Town Clerk were in attendance.

## **(2020/21:266) Local Government Amendment Bill**

Members discussed the consultation document received regarding the proposed Local Government (Amendment) Bill, noting the following matters: -

Clauses 6 & 9 - Boundaries and alterations to wards – the Commission noted the proposals and felt that the Act should include a timescale within which the Department would be required to provide a decision on such applications. A period of 12 months was suggested to avoid conflict with any period during which Tynwald would not be sitting.

Clause 12 – relating to Members' Interests. Members noted the proposed amendment and agreed that the provision should only be included if they were able to be demonstrated as being relevant to local authority members and were proportionate in comparison to those provisions applied to Members of Tynwald.

Clause 13 – In regard to the proposed Section 17(4C) Members question also why this should be included when the provision exists already in Section 7 of the Act. It was felt that this inclusion could deter authorities from investigating means of co-working for fear that any initiative might result in the Department removing powers from those authorities.

Mr McGuinness expressed concern that the provision paved the way for an increase in the number of local authorities, it was felt that this would reduce the flexibility and ability of larger authorities to react to circumstance. It was felt that there is economy of scale in larger and a lesser number of authorities. Concern was also raised to the effect that where joint Boards are created Town and larger authorities are having to meet the majority of costs whilst being directed by policy directed by parish authorities due to the one authority on vote position.



**(2020/21:266) Local Government Amendment Bill continued:**

Clause 17 – Members questioned the need to introduce a requirement for Standing Orders to receive Departmental approval. It was felt the proposal removes responsibility noting that authorities are accountable to the electorate. Members felt a provision requiring authorities to notify - rather than seek approval – would provide a better balance and would still provide the Department with the capacity to discuss any concerns with authorities in a collaborative fashion, rather than removing autonomy and local accountability. Members were concerned that the provision was leading towards micromanagement of local authorities and diminution of local government accountability.

Clause 21 – Inspection of Minutes, etc. Members were supportive of encouraging greater openness, and noted that the Commission already published agendas, supporting papers and minutes. Members noted that the proposed 5-day publication conflicted with the period for summons i.e., 3 days and felt that the period should be reduced to 3 days, this would ensure that Members were afforded the courtesy of receiving papers before they were made public and avoid a lengthy period between papers being prepared and meetings taking place. Members were concerned that the provision might conflict also with any matters brought forward as “any other business”.

Clause 27 – revised Schedule 2. Members noted the revised proposals however expressed a preference for attendance rates to be set on an Island wide basis. Members felt introducing the potential for different rates to be applied across authorities introduced potential for unnecessary conflict or comparison of a fairly innocuous matter.

**(2020/21:267) Crock Elfin - Select Tender List**

Members noted the Housing and Property Managers reported detailing the response to the invitation for expressions of interest and the select list of tenderers as recommended by the design team.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr Cowie, seconded by Mr McGuinness and agreed unanimously to approve the select tender list as recommended.

**2020/21:268) Auldyn Walk – Proposed Public Open Space**

Members considered the Town Clerk’s Report into potential options for the provision of a new play facility in conjunction with the proposed development of land at Auldyn Walk, Gardeners Lane. Members commented on the need to include accessible equipment and equipment suitable for wheelchair users. Members noted advice from the Police Crime Prevention Practitioner as to location of any facility.

Resolved. Proposed by Mr. Young, seconded by Mrs. Wedgwood and agreed by 6 votes to 1 to recommend that if proceeded the facility should be sited at Auldyn Meadow Drive, Mr. Cowie voted against.



**(2020/21:269) Authorised Officers**

Members considered a report tabled by the Deputy Town Clerk in relation to authorised officers.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. Cowie, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed unanimously that the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk/Town Centre Manager, Technical Services Manager, Technical Assistant and Town Warden be approved as authorised officers for the purpose of enforcement of Town Byelaws, Amenity Byelaws, Dog Byelaws, Road Traffic Act and Litter Act.

**(2020/21:270) North Ramsey Bowling Club**

Members noted and debated a report submitted by the Deputy Town Clerk, outlining proposals submitted by the North Ramsey Bowling Club in relation to future use and management of the Mooragh Bowling Green. Members considered the question of equipment maintenance and the installation of a storage facility along with a contribution towards material costs. It was previously reported that the agreement would be for a period of 5 years and would commence ahead of the season this year.

Resolved: Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, and seconded by Mr. Cowie and agreed by 6 votes to 1 that the Commission would make a contribution of £600 in year one and £300 in year two towards consumable materials, that NRBC could at its own expense erect the storage container outlined in the report, that RTC would loan to NRBC the equipment to be used to maintain the green during the period of the agreement which NRBC would service and maintain and that utilities would continue to be provided by the Commission providing the costs do not exceed current levels. Mrs. Wedgwood voted against.

The meeting ended at 8:30 pm giving a time for attendance of 1½ hours.



Chairman