

**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, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Messrs. A. J. Oldham, G. S. Court, Revd Canon N. D. Greenwood, S. R. Kelly, J. McGuinness, L. I. Singer, F. B. R. Williams and W. G. Young.

**Apologies:** Mr. R. D. Cowell

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

**(2021/22:172) Minutes:**

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, and those of the Special Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**(2021/22:173) Matters Arising:**

No matters were raised.

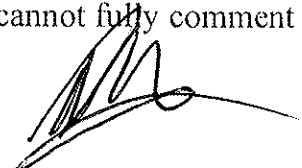
**Matters for Information:**

**(2021/22:174) Action Tracker October 2021:**

Resolved: To note the "Action Tracker" to 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

**Ramsey North Beach** – Mr. Young asked if the Commission paid rental for the foreshore, as he understood it had not been paid for many years. It was confirmed that the rental of £20 per year is paid each year as required.

**Parking** – Mr. McGuinness inferred that the Department of Infrastructure may not have shared the parking strategy consultation with the Commission in reply to which the Town Clerk suggested this was a matter that could be queried. Mr. Singer asked if the consultation included "private" areas at St. Paul's Square or adjacent to the Coop, permitted to be used by the public and suggested these should not be taken into consideration. The Town Clerk advised that no parking study has been produced, the matter requires consultation and therefore the Commission cannot fully comment on the impact of parking.



**(2021/22:174) Action Tracker October 2021 Continued:**

**Shelter Public Art** – Mr. Kelly queried if the art work at the public shelters would be protected. Mr. McGuinness advised that one artist has indicated that no protection will be necessary because of the type of paint used and in respect of which paint work can be “touched-up”; and that the Commission will provide a protective coating for the other completed shelter as requested by the artist and in terms of the agreement with the Arts Council, who assisted in funding the project on a 50:50 basis.

**Toilet Art** – reference was made to the recent planning application submitted to enable a business in the town to paint a wall. Mr. McGuinness expressed concern that this action would create a precedent and if the Commission submitted a planning application it would enhance this. It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed unanimously that the Commission do not make planning application for the art work proposed.

**Ramsey Quayside** – it was agreed to hold a special public board meeting in the near future to discuss the matter further.

**Planning Enforcement** – the Town Clerk will seek an up-date from the Planning Authority.

**Boundary Extension** – a Board Meeting has been called to discuss the matter further.

**Empty Pubs** – the meeting scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> October has been rescheduled by Messrs Heron and Brearley to 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Local Authority Vacancies** – if contested an election will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> November.

**(2021/22:175) Chairman’s Report:**

Resolved: To note the Chairman’s report dated 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, subject to the following:-

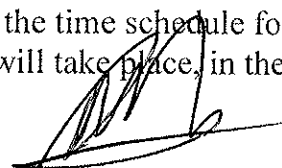
**House of Keys General Election** – Mr. McGuinness asked if arrangements could be made to meet the Town’s MHK’s on at least a 6 monthly basis – the Town Clerk informed members that he understood both Mr. Hooper and Dr. Allinson are agreeable to regular meetings with the Commission.

**Annual Civic Service of Remembrance** – the Chairman advised that there will also be attendance at the Ramsey War Memorial on 11<sup>th</sup> November, Remembrance Day.

**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2021/22:176) Town Clerk’s Report – Local Authority Vacancies:**

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk’s report dated 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, concerning the filling of vacancies within the Commission and detailing the time schedule for close of nominations and absent voter applications. The Poll will take place, in the case of a contested election on Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2021.



**(2021/22:177) Finance Officer's General Report:**

Resolved: To note and approved the Finance Officer's general report dated 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, subject to the following:-

***Audit and Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021:***

It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed unanimously to approve the draft financial statements and authorise the Chairman and Responsible Finance Officer to sign them and the associated Letter of Representation on completion of the audit process.

**(2021/22:178) Technical Assistant's Report – Advertising Boards and Street Furniture:**

Members considered the Technical Assistant's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, concerning the request made by the owner of the business "Good Stuff" to place an advertising board further away from their premises than permitted and also drawing attention to the placement of street furniture for which retrospective application has been made.

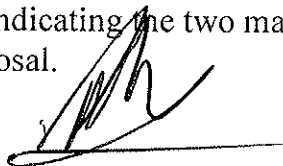
Mr. McGuinness expressed concern about setting a precedent contrary to the Commission's policy and Mr. Williams queried when the Commission's policy on this matter was subject to review. The Town Clerk reminded members that this Policy is based on the requirements of Section 78 of the Highways Act 1986 and accordingly the Commission would need to refer to the act and seek permission from the Department of Infrastructure to change the policies.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed unanimously that the Commission reject the appeal to allow the A board to be sited contrary to the permitted policy.

**Works and Development:**

It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness and agreed by the Chairman, that in terms of Standing Order 14 the Notice of Motion dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, be considered in conjunction with the following Clause.

Although indicating the two matters were differed slightly Mr. Singer was agreeable to the proposal.



**(2021/22:179) Town Clerk’s Report – Area Plan for the North and West – Ramsey Marina:**

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2021, concerning notification from Cabinet Office about the inclusion of Ramsey South Shore from the South Breakwater to the Queen’s Pier as an additional site for mixed use development in terms of the Area Plan for the North and West.

Mr. Singer advised that the Cabinet Office was acting ultra-vires and queried on whose instruction officers were acting. Cabinet Office should not be able to make a submission 19 months after the closing date.

**(2021/22:180) Notice of Motion – Mr. L. I. Singer “ South Ramsey Beach”:**

Mr. Singer moved his Notice of Motion dated 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2021;

*“Ramsey Town Commissioners oppose commercial development, including housing, of a permanent nature on South Beach Ramsey and are of the opinion that South Beach should remain a public area for the future.”*

The motion was seconded by Mr. Young.

Mr. Singer explained that opposition to the commercial and housing development in Ramsey bay was evident during the House of Keys “hustings” across the Island and also from outside the Island and proposed opposition to any commercial development including housing of a permanent nature on the South Beach.

It was reported that Mr. Hooper had requested Tynwald to instruct the Department of Infrastructure to reject the Ramsey Marina proposals.

Mr. Court referred to the 2016 Strategic Plan and permitted use of the foreshore for amenity purposes. Mr. Williams inferred that some people were in favour and, whilst noting that any planning applications would be presented to the Commission for consideration, suggested that a blanket ban on any development might not be the best option.

Mr. Singer explained he was trying to obtain the Board’s view and commented that the beach should remain – he had no objection to the possibility of siting beach huts or similar structures.

Mr. Young commented that he had no objection to the development on the promenade itself, and then took the opportunity to refer to the recent clearing of materials from the south foreshore, for which the Commission had engaged a contractor.

Mr. Young had been permitted in September to remove more gravel from the foreshore and had been advised “that the area between the high and low water marks is registered as an Area of Special Scientific Interest, but anything above the high-water mark could be removed but could not be sold on to a third party”.

**(2021/22:180) Notice of Motion – Mr. L. I. Singer “ South Ramsey Beach” Cont:**

Mr. Young was concerned that the persons removing the gravel had been instructed to stop. The Town Clerk explained that this was because of the quantity being removed and any liability that might fall on the Commission as a result thereof and informed Mr. Young that he wished to take the matter up with the Harbours Division of the Department of Infrastructure.

Mr. Young was informed that the matter was not pertinent to the resolutions under debate in respect of which the following resolution was put.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Singer, seconded by Mr. Young the Commission reply no to the inclusion of the site and the matter be referred to the Attorney General for investigation, with copy correspondence being addressed to the Chief Minister in addition to the Minister at the Cabinet Office and the Minister for the Department of the Environment Food and Agriculture.

The resolution was carried by 7 votes to 1, Mr. Williams voting against.

Mr. Singer's Notice of Motion was not put to a formal vote in view of the agreement, by majority as above.

**(2021/22:181) Town Clerk's Report – Cycle Path Lighting:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, concerning the delay in the installation of lighting bollards on the newly constructed cycle path along the former railway line Poyll Dooey Road and Gardeners Lane. It was noted that the Department has asked if the Commission would be agreeable to the installation of lighting columns rather than bollards.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Kelly and agreed unanimously the Department be informed that the Commission wish to wait for the availability of bollard lighting.

**(2021/22:182) Town Clerk's Report – Electric Vehicle Charging Points:**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, advising of correspondence received from Douglas Councillor Schuengel with regard to electric vehicles charging points.

A proposal was put by Mr. Singer that the Commission defer consideration of this matter by at least 24 months as he felt people are being rushed into making ill-informed decisions.

An amendment was put by Mr. Court that the Commission note the report and defer consideration on the matter, without a time constraint. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed by 7 votes to 1, Mr. Singer voting against.

*AW*

**(2021/22:183) Technical Services Manager’s Report - Planning Applications:**

Members agreed that the Technical Services Manager’s Report dated 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, detailing planning applications received from the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, under the planning consultation procedures, be noted and no objections be made to such applications, subject to the following:-

REF NO: 3913 **AMENDED PLANS**  
P.A. NO.: 21/00810/C  
PROPOSED: Change of use from motorbike workshop to leisure facility and kart repair workshop  
NOTES: P.A. - Change of Use  
SITE: **Unit 1B, Gladstone Park Industrial Estate, Ramsey.**

Members noted that the applicant has addressed the hour of operating which complies with the Board’s recommendation of opening no later than 10 p.m. and agreed to raise no objection to the amended plans.

SITE: **Ye Old Royal Oak, 14 - 16, Market Place East, Ramsey**

REF NO: 3930  
P.A. NO.: 21/01217/A  
PROPOSED: Approval in principle for the creation of ten town houses  
NOTES: P.A. – In Principle  
SITE: **Manninagh / Dalveen Bircham Avenue Ramsey.**

Mr. Singer referred to the suitability of the size of site for development and inferred that a smaller site in Douglas had received approval for development. Mr. Kelly drew attention to the site not complying with General Policy 2(b) of the Strategic Plan. Mr. McGuinness queried whether an application in detail would require to be submitted and was advised that this was the case.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Williams seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed that no comment be made on this application.

**Appendix:**

No comments were made on the Appendices to the Technical Services Manager’s report.

**(2021/22:184) Technical Services Manager’s Report – All Island Weight Limit Order:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Technical Services Manager’s report dated 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, advising of the draft Order All Island Traffic Weight Limit and recommending that no objection be made thereto.

**(2021/22:185) Technical Services Manager’s Report – Queen’s Pier – Storage of Timber:**

Members considered the Technical Services Manager’s dated 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, advising of the request made by the Friends of the Queen’s Pier with regard to the storage of timber for the next section of works on the pier.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Kelly seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed that the Commission agree to store timber at the Riverside facilities.

**(2021/22:186) Notice of Motion – Mr. J. McGuinness “Live Streaming”**

It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed that in terms of Standing Order 14 the matter be considered, with the Chairman’s permission at this meeting.

Members were informed that there were cost implication of approximately £2,000. Mr. Court expressed the view that such action would be beneficial to transparency of the Commission’s business and of their engagement with the public. Mr. Singer asked that any speakers needed be expanded for general use.

The Motion was put and agreed unanimously.

**Any other business:**

**(2021/22:187) Matter Raised from the Public – Parking of Camper Vans on Public Highway:**

Members considered the request made by a ratepaying member of the public and presented by the Town Clerk concerning the number of camper vans being parked on Old River Road and Park Road. Discussion ensued during which members agreed they understood the irritation caused and appreciated the matter being brought to their attention.

The Town Clerk reminded members that it was contrary to Section 12 of the Ramsey Town General Byelaws 2020 to “maintain, or reside in, a moveable dwelling in a public place without prior written permission from the local authority” and that “‘moveable dwelling’ means a tent, living van, motor caravan, shed, van or other conveyance or similar structure, whether or not capable of being used on roads, which is made, adapted or used for human habitation”. The matter is enforceable by the Police or a Town Warden.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed without division that the ratepayer be thanked and informed that the Commission will await the introduction of revised legislation before considering the matter further. Mr. Oldham declared an interest, as the owner of a motorhome, and did not vote.

*ATI*

**(2021/22:187) Matter Raised from the Public – Parking of Camper Vans on Public Highway continued:**

Mr. Williams asked members to let the Town Clerk know if they could suggest any suitable sites that could facilitate off-street parking of motorhomes. Mr. Oldham expressed concerns that the owners of motorhomes would be unwilling to pay fees for off-street parking when they are already paying expensive road-tax.

**(2021/22:188) Representative Report Northern Local Authorities Swimming Pool Board:**

Resolved: To note the representative report submitted by Mr. McGuinness with regard to a recent meeting of the Northern Local Authorities Swimming Pool Board. Members congratulated Mr. McGuinness on his election as Chairman of this Combination Authority.

**(2021/22:189) Sundry Matters:**

*Opening of Front Door* – it was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed that the front door be opened for 15 / 20 minutes prior to public board meetings.

*Ramsey Quayside* – it was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Oldham and agreed that the new Minister for the Department of Infrastructure, Mr. T. Crookall, be invited to meet the Commission to discuss the matter of the Ramsey Quayside.

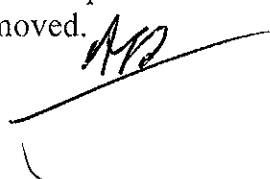
The Chairman thanked the public and media for attending and closed the public session at 8.26 p.m.

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.

**(2021/22:190) Ramsey Foreshore:**

Members continued discussion with Mr. Young about removal of gravel from the South Foreshore.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Oldham, seconded by Mr. Kelly and agreed, Mr. Young be requested to stop the removal of gravel and the Town Clerk discuss the matter with the Department of Infrastructure to determine how much more, if any, gravel can be removed.





**(2021/22:191) Minutes:**

Resolved: To note and approve the minute recorded in private from the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021.

**Matters for Information:**

**(2021/22:192) Housing Committee:**

Members were reminded that the meeting of the Housing Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, was inquorate and that the Minutes of such meeting would require a formal resolution of approval by the Board.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Court seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed the Minutes be approved, subject to the following:-

**Clause 58c) Vacant Properties** – the Housing and Property Manager confirmed that only 3 properties were vacant at the time of the Housing Meeting and since that date one property has been offered to a prospective tenant.

**Clause 59a) Housing Applications** - members were informed that the tenant to whom this clause refers is on the housing waiting list for both Commissioners and sheltered housing.

**(2021/22:193) On-Going Matters “Action Tracker”:**

Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker” to 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

- **Insurance Renewal** – the Finance Officer indicated that this matter was fully resolved and asked that it be removed from the Action Tracker.
- **Broadband Fibre Installation** – it was agreed to arrange a meeting with Manx Telecom after the forthcoming Bye-Election.
- **Close Woirrey** – members were reminded that progress is dependent upon progression of off-street parking.
- **Off-Street Parking** – the Town Clerk updated members that the Commissioners’ offer to acquire the former Albert Road School site is being considered although it is understood that the developer may be considering splitting the site. It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Oldham and agreed that the Commission do not revise the offer made for the whole site.

Members also considered the tabled schedule of Ruinous Buildings as presented by the Technical Services Manager, to 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, subject to the following:-

- **Bleak House** – it was agreed to invite the new owner to submit formal proposals in writing in respect of the future of the property.

**(2021/22:193) On-Going Matters “Ruinous Buildings”:**

- *10/11 West Quay* – it was agreed to serve Notice on the owner to enable the necessary report to be provided by a Structural Engineer – the cost of which is recoverable from the owner.
- *The Holly Grove Mount* – the Technical Services Manager reported that a letter will be sent to the owner advising that she is now in breach of notice previously served.
- *5, College Street* – the Town Clerk advised that a report is still awaited from Environmental Health.
- *Victoria Mall* – it was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed to commence action against the owners.
- *Seymour House* – the Technical Services Manager advised that receipt of legal advice is still needed.

**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2021/22:194) Finance Officer’s Report:**

Resolved: To note and approved the Finance Officer’s Report dated 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, subject to the following:-

*Estimates and Revenue Expenditure* – Mr. Singer referred to the imminent increases in gas / fuel prices and queried what effect these might have on the estimates. The Finance Officer advised that heating charges were already set for 2021/22 and that any gas installations are met by individual tenants, communal heating areas being oil-fired. The Town Clerk advised that road-fuel prices will be looked at during the forthcoming budget process.

*Rent Arrears* – Mr. Kelly expressed concern that increasing in heating charges could affect the availability of tenants to pay rent. The Town Clerk advised that Tynwald would make any announcements about variance in benefits entitlement.

The Finance Officer and Housing and Property Manager assured members that any tenants who may find themselves in difficulties in paying rent are encouraged to make and maintain contact with the Town Hall staff and make sustainable payment plans.

*ACD*

**(2021/22:195) Technical Services Manager's Report – Purchase of Land...:**

Members considered the Technical Assistant's report dated 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, advising of the request received from a resident of land abutting the former railway line to purchase an area of land in preference to moving a hedge or fence back to the original property boundary. It was noted that the owner of the property has made an offer for the land which differs from the valuation per sqm quoted by the Government Valuer.

The Town Clerk advised members that any sale of land would require to be approved by the Department of Infrastructure, following submission of a Petition.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Court and agreed to inform the resident that the Commission decline the offer unless it meets with the government valuation for the land.

**(2021/22:196) Technical Assistant's Report – Fixed Penalty Appeals:**

Members considered the Technical Assistant's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, concerning appeals made against fixed penalty notices issued. The individual appeals were discussed resulting in the following resolutions:-

- That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Singer and agreed unanimously to uphold appeal referring to Notice 681.
- That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed unanimously to uphold appeal referring to Notice 682.
- That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Williams agreed unanimously to cancel Notice 685 and re-issue a retrospective Fixed Penalty Notice to the actual offender.

**Works and Development:**

**(2021/22:197) Technical Services Manager's Report – Bicycle Shelters:**

Members considered the Technical Services Manager's report dated 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, concerning the approach made by the Department of Infrastructure to supply and fit 3 bicycle shelters in the Town. The Technical Services Manager had provided the Department with sites previously considered by the Commission.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed, the Department be thanked for their offer and suggest the MER Tram Station as a third location, in addition to Station Road Car Park and the rear of the Town Hall.

**Housing and Property:**

**(2021/22:198) Town Clerk's Report – Cronk Elfin Refurbishment:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Town Clerk's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, advising of variance in the commencement date of the Cronk Elfin refurbishment programme.

The matter was brought to the attention of the Commission prior to the contract documents being sealed and signed by the Chairman and Town Clerk, in view of the Chairman's interest by way of residence.

**(2021/22:199) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Close Woirrey:**

Members considered the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, concerning the expiry in December 2021 of the planning approval in respect of redevelopment at Close Woirrey, originally granted in 2016.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Oldham and agreed that the Architect acting for the Commission be instructed to make application for a further extension.

**Parks and Leisure:**

**(2021/22:200) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Events:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, advising of some of the events scheduled for 2022 and seeking the Commission's views to enable early action and/or budget inclusion

Members considered the events individually as a result of which the following resolutions were put:

- ***Sprintfest***: – proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Court and agreed to the principle of expanding the event to take place over 4 days, with a preliminary maximum budget. Members were reminded that Government funding was available in the past for this event.
- ***Ramsey Rocks*** – it was proposed by Mr. Court seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed to include this event and expand its cultural interest as it will take place in National Week. A maximum preliminary budget was agreed and it was further agreed to seek "funding" by way of Government grant or sponsorship towards the event.
- ***Ramsey Sprint*** – Members were informed that the Deputy Town Clerk is schedule to meet with the organisers of Ramsey Spring on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. It was proposed by Mr. Court seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed that the Commission offer logistical support only by way of the provision of barriers and signage for the Sprint.
- ***Red Arrows*** – it was proposed by Mr. Court seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed that the Commission make application for a Red Arrows display in Ramey during TT 2022 basing the case on the expansion of the Town's events during TT 2022.

**(2021/22:201) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – The Big Splash Hospice Isle of Man:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's Report dated 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, concerning "The Big Splash" to be staged by Hospice Isle of Man between May and September 2022, and for which Hospice seek permission to stage a dolphin sculpture in the Mooragh Park.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Court seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed unanimously that permission be granted. Members expressed the hope that other sculptures could be sited at other locations around the Town, including the Courthouse grounds, such as was the case during the very successful "wallaby trail" previously organised by Hospice.

**Suspension of Standing Orders:**

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Singer and agreed, Standing Orders be suspended to allow the meeting to continue to its conclusion.

**Any Other Business:**

**(2021/22:202) Technical Services Manager's Report – Christmas Lights:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Technical Services Manager's tabled report dated 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2021, detailing the Christmas lighting to be provided this year and the cost therefor.

**Matters of Establishment:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Minutes of Meetings of the Establishment Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> September and 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

The meeting closed at 10.03 p.m. giving a time of 3 ½ hours for the payment of attendance allowances.



Chairman.