

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, 20th April, 2022, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. A. J. Oldham, Ms L. L. Craine, Messrs' A. R. Beighton, R. D. Cowell, Revd Canon N. D. Greenwood, J. McGuinness, L. Parker, L. I. Singer and W. G. Young.

Apologies: Messrs' G. S. Court and S. R. Kelly.

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

(2021/22:397) Minutes:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 16th March, and the Special Meeting held on 24th March, 2022, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

(2021/22:398) Matters Arising:

Mr. Singer referred to Clause 391, 16th March, 2022, (Ramsey Marina Development) and queried if any further correspondence had been received. The Town Clerk advised that, other than a phone call in acknowledgement of his communication that any further correspondence from Mr. Bromley-Martin will be reported to the Commission and considered in public, nothing further had been received.

Matters for Information:

(2021/22:399) Action Tracker April, 2022:

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

Ramsey South Promenade Changing Huts – in response to a query from Ms Craine the Deputy Town Clerk advised that he has spoken with the Director of Harbours; RNLI; a meeting with bathers will be arranged and further interested parties will be identified.



(2021/22:400) Action Tracker Budget Approved Projects:

Resolved: To note the Action Tracker of Budget Approved projects at 13th April, 2022, subject to the following:-

Mooragh Car Park / Poyll Dooey Car Park – Mr. McGuinness queried how works had been completed prior to Petition approval. The Town Clerk advised that it had been exuberance on his part but he did not envisage any problems with the application for borrowing powers.

Finance and General Purposes:

(2021/22:401) Town Clerk's Report – Annual Meeting 2022:

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk's report dated 1st April, 2022, advising of the date of the Commissioners' Annual Meeting on 3rd May, 2022, and for which a draft agenda was provided.

Members were reminded that it had been agreed in August 2021, that the same representative serve on the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Traffic Management Liaison Group and the agenda will be amended accordingly.

Mr. Williams referred to membership of the Isle of Man Municipal Association and proposed that the Commission do not have representatives on this Association as, whilst the meetings are on occasions informative, such meetings dilute inter-action with members of the House of Keys, et al. Mr. McGuinness seconded the proposal citing that the Association never achieve anything and membership is of no value.

Mr. Singer suggested that membership was beneficial and it offers a further arena where questions can be asked.

The proposal was put to the vote and carried by 7 votes to 3 – Ms. Craine and Messrs. Singer and Young voting against.

(2021/22:402) Town Clerk's Report – Consultation Northern Swimming Pool (Amendment) Order 2022:

Discussion ensued concerning the Town Clerk's report dated 4th April, 2022, concerning the proposed amendment to the Swimming Pool Order. Members were reminded that an increase in the contribution from authorities comprising membership of the Pool Board to 6p had been deferred for one year and thereafter it is proposed to introduce phased increased to bring the contribution by 2045/46 to 8p.

It was noted that the product of a 1p rate is approximate £7,000; £35,000 is received in total from the Parishes of which Ramsey pays approximately £17,000 by way of 2 ½ p rate contributions.



(2021/22:402) Town Clerk’s Report – Consultation Northern Swimming Pool (Amendment) Order 2022 Continued:

Mr. Singer proposed that the new rate contribution be set at 4p, this was seconded by Mr. Young. Mr. Cowell queried if was possible. Mr. McGuinness said the amendment Order is set, but the Commission could suggest it as part of the consultation process. Mr. Oldham queried if a 4p contribution was sufficient and was informed that rate contributions did not meet funds needed.

Mr. Singer pointed out wording in Clause 5(3) or the proposed order that “a rated levied... shall not exceed 6p in the pound”

Mr. McGuinness pointed out wording in Clause 5(5) that the Swimming Pool Board may... request constituent authorities at any time .. to make a payment in addition...” and recommended that the Commission be wary of this

Mr. Parker emphasised the importance of the pool for physical and mental health but suggested funding needs to be centralised through the Department of Education Sport and Children.

Member were reminded that if the Order goes through there is a legal obligation to act in accordance therewith.

A proposal was put by Ms Craine that the Commission do not support the Order and consider funding should be fully by the DESC. This was seconded by Mr. Young and carried by 8 votes to 2. Messrs. Revd Canon Greenwood and Singer voting against.

Mr. Singer referred to his proposal concerning a 4p rate contribution and was advised that Ms Craine’s proposal was effectively an amendment and carried as it was put to the vote first.

(2021/22:403) Town Clerk’s Report – Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) Local Authorities Regulations:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 1st April, 2022, concerning the above titled Regulations which the Department propose to introduce in terms of the Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) Act 2020, and for which an Appointed Day Order is awaited.

Mr. Singer suggested that the election process is weak and need to be fair and seen to be seen as being fair. He also suggested area of weakness as being

- Checking process for Postal Votes
- Checking process for ballot papers ordered and received at Polling Stations
- Selection of Election Staff by Returning Officers
- Length of Appointment of Deputy Returning Officers – that it should be for not more than 2 years.



**(2021/22:403) Town Clerk’s Report – Elections (Keys and Local Authorities)
Local Authorities Regulations:**

Mr. Singer was advised that Polling or Counting Agents would be able to witness processes and that the Returning Officer is the Chief Secretary at the Cabinet Office. Mr. McGuinness commented that the process needs to be more forward thinking with regard to electronic voting, etc., and this need to be considered now.

It was agreed that the comments included within the Town Clerk’s report and the above comments be referred to the Cabinet Office.

(2021/22:404) Finance Officer’s General Report:

Resolved: To note and approved the Finance Officer’s general report dated 12th April, 2022, subject to the following:

Accounts - Mr. Oldham queried the payments to “Play Solutions” and “Worldpay” and was informed that these were for playground maintenance and bank card services respectively. Mr. Singer queried the use of Kirby Park Garden Centre and asked if town-based suppliers are used. Members were informed that town-based suppliers were used where possible, then Island based and then UK depending upon what was being purchased and trying to ensure the best possible price.

Mr. McGuinness suggested that it might be prudent to have a definitive Purchasing Policy.

(2021/22:405) Technical Assistant’s Report – Advertising Boards and Street Furniture:

Resolved: To note the Technical Assistant’s report dated 12th April, 2022, advising of applications submitted by Studio Umami to place advertising boards and street furniture on the public highway adjacent to their business premises.

It was noted that comments, etc., should be received on or before 5.00 p.m. on 10th May, 2022.

Members were informed that a neighbouring business had already had a similar application approved. Ms Craine welcomed use of the pavements to enhance businesses and Mr. Cowell commented on the need to support local businesses.



Works and Development:

(2021/22:406) Town Clerk's Report – Consultation Highway Maintenance Charter:

Mr. Williams declared an interest due to employment with the Department.

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 11th April, 2022, advising of the initial version of the Highway Maintenance Charter which the Department of Infrastructure propose to introduce in terms of "The Island Plan – Building a Secure Vibrant and Sustainable Future for our Island.

The Town Clerk asked if members had any additional points to add to the recommended comments included within the report. Mr. Singer referred to the current practice of the Department in carrying out inadequate repairs, particularly for pot holes, which are not cost effective nor do such repairs last.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed that the comments, with the addition of that referred to by Mr. Singer be conveyed to the Department. Mr. Williams did not vote.

(2021/22:407) Technical Services Manager's Report - Planning Applications:

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager's Report dated 13th April, 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:-

REF NO: 3966
P.A. NO.: 22/00266/C
PROPOSED: Proposed temporary change of use of land for 12 months to increase display area, including erection of enclosure fencing
NOTES: P.A. - Change of Use
SITE: **Land to the east of Co-op, Albert Road, Ramsey.**

This application was brought to the attention of the Board because of previous requests to use it as car parking. It was agreed to make no objection to the application.

REF NO: 3967
P.A. NO.: 22/00275/B
PROPOSED: External insulation and render system with external aperture alterations and internal alterations
NOTES: P.A. in Detail
SITE: **The Warehouse, 15, Mona Street, Ramsey.**



This application was brought to the attention of the Board because of its location in a Conservation Area. It was agreed to make no objection to the application.

(2021/22:407) Technical Services Manager's Report - Planning Applications Continued:

The two applications were discussed in tandem.

REF NO: 3968
P.A. NO.: 22/00306/B
PROPOSED: Creation of an outside seating area with associated landscaping
NOTES: P.A. in Detail
SITE: **Land south of MER Stop, Parsonage Road, Ramsey**

It was noted that the land is owned by the Department of Infrastructure. Concern was expressed that works had been commenced in that land has been dug out. It was noted there is to be a 7.00 p.m. curfew for the use of the land during the Winter and 10.00 p.m. in Summer. Concern was expressed about dangers in crossing the road when carrying / consuming alcohol and that the site overlooked nearby properties.

A proposal was put by Mr. Singer, seconded by Mr. Young that the Commission object wholly to the application. An amendment was put by Mr. Beighton seconded by Mr. Cowell that the Commission submit an observation with regard to the curfew time. The amendment was put to the vote and failed by 8 votes to 2, Messrs. Beighton and Cowell voting in favour.

The original proposal was put which also failed by 7 votes to 3, Messrs. Oldam, Singer and Young voting in favour. No comments will therefore be made on this application.

REF NO: 3969
P.A. NO.: 22/00307/B
PROPOSED: Variation of condition 2 of PA 19/01440/B to change permitted hours of operation
NOTES: P.A. - Variation
SITE: **Fynoderce Distillery, Parsonage Road, Ramsey**

Members were advised that there were 7 objections to the application to vary the hours of operation and to noise levels.

It was suggested that that the company had agreed to specific hours and terms of operation which they now appear to be being varied. Having the premises trading from 8.00 a.m. until 12.30 a.m. the following day was considered unneighbourly.

Mr. Cowell felt that it was a matter for planning enforcement if conditions have been breached. Mr. McGuinness asked if the Licensing Court had considered the application. The Deputy Town Clerk advised not that he was aware but it would have to go before the Court and the Police will comment on safety and licensing.



(2021/22:407) Technical Services Manager’s Report - Planning Applications Continued:

A proposal was put by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Ms Craine that the Commission object to the proposed hours of operation. This was carried by 8 votes to 2 Messrs. Beighton and Cowell voting against.

REF NO: 3973
P.A. NO.: 22/00370/B
PROPOSED: Alterations, erection of extension and installation of a flue
NOTES: P.A. in Detail
SITE: **4, Ormly Grove, Ramsey**

Mr. Singer queried if any objections had been submitted in respect of this application and was told that none had been of which the Commission was aware.

REF NO: 3977
P.A. NO.: 22/00407/B
PROPOSED: Erection of a marquee over existing outside seating area
NOTES: P.A. in Detail
SITE: **Boathouse Café, Mooragh Promenade, Ramsey**

Members were reminded that the proposals also included provision of decking. Ms Craine queried the terms of the lease with regard to the ultimate removal of the decking should the lease be terminated. The Deputy Town Clerk undertook to check the lease agreement and make the tenants aware that they will be required to remove the decking.

Appendix:

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

Parks and Leisure Property:

(2021/22:408) Deputy Town Clerk’s Jubilee Events Funding:

Resolved: To note the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 11th April, 2022, advising of details of the funding available for events celebrating Platinum Jubilee and for which applications will be submitted for appropriate events.

Members were reminded that the closing date for submissions for grant aid is 31st May, 2022.



(2021/22:409) Deputy Town Clerk’s – Shelter Art:

Resolved: To note the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 11th April, 2022, advising of completion of the third shelter on the Mooragh Promenade kindly sponsored by Mr. Juan McGuinness and Mr. Chris Glaister.

Ms Craine appealed for anyone interested in either sponsoring or painting a shelter to come forward.

Any Other Business:

(2021/22:410) Sundry Matters:

Hearing Loop System – Mr. Young again raised the question of the provision of a hearing loop system, to assist those with hearing impairment. The Town Clerk advised that he would further investigate the matter but explained that it is proving difficult to find a suitable system and one that is compatible with the “live-streaming” equipment.

Horses Mooragh Promenade – Mr. Singer referred to horses being ridden on and therefore “fouling” the Mooragh Promenade “walkway”. He asked if the matter could be publicised and suitable signage put up. The Town Clerk undertook to determine if the promenade is classified as a footpath and whether or not horses were permitted to ride along it.

Deckchairs Courthouse – Mr. McGuinness asked if the deckchairs at the Courthouse could again be put out as a matter of routine. He commented that he had no objection to them remaining out over the weekends.

Public Transport Timetables – Mr. McGuinness asked if the Department of Infrastructure could again be requested to promote and improve the late bus service between Ramsey and Peel.

Public Grants – Mr. McGuinness queried if the Commission listed any public grants available, especially to any struggling businesses. The Town Clerk advised that he and the Deputy Town Clerk will organise a meeting with the Department of Enterprise to determine what is available and whether things can be expanded. Mr. Cowell referred to his membership of a Forum pertinent to bring awareness of this matter to others and asked to be included.

Promenade Distance Markers – Mr. McGuinness advised that the distance markers were now in place on the Mooragh Promenade.

CA Site – Mr. Cowell referred to items removed from the CA Site and be re-sold for profit in the Town and asked what could be done about the situation. It was suggested that ultra-violet markings be used to identify items and public awareness be given to prevent or deter this practice.

Members were informed that there were no legal restrictions in what was done with items taken from the site. It was felt that such action would be very hard to “police” and items being removed saved the CA Site Board from having to pay for ultimate disposal.



(2021/22:411) Northern Local Authorities Swimming Pool Board:

Mr. McGuinness gave a verbal report of a recent meeting of the Swimming Pool Board in that he felt a positive meeting had been held with the Department of Education, Sport and Children who will underwrite the pool funding for the current year and will commence a review of regional swimming pools. He also reported that meetings with the Department and Treasury are pending.

The Chairman thanked the public and media for attending and closed the public session at 8.28 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.

(2021/22:412) Minutes:

Resolved: To note, for record purposes, that no minutes from the Board meeting held on 16th March, nor the Special Meeting held on 24th March, 2022, were recorded in private.

Matters for Information:

(2021/22:413) Ramsey Quayside:

Resolved: To note the report of a meeting held with the officers from Department of Infrastructure, representatives from Chamber of Commerce and Manx Fish Producers and the Commissioners held on 6th April, 2022. Members were informed that the Chamber felt they had been listened to and it was felt that it was a positive meeting. Concerns were still raised about parking spaces. Mr. Young maintained that all members of the Commission should be in attendance.

It was noted that a further meeting will be held on 9th May and that all proposals will be presented to the Commission for ultimate discussion.

(2021/22:414) Housing Committee:

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms Craine and agreed to note and formally adopt the minutes of the inquorate meeting of the Housing Committee held on 12th April, 2022, subject to the following:

Mr. Singer referred to the meeting again being inquorate and queried if members could be deputised. It was hoped that membership to be decided at the Commission's Annual Meeting should resolve this problem.



(2021/22:414) Housing Committee Continued:

Clause 116f) Correspondence – it was proposed by Mr. Young seconded by Mr. Parker and carried by 9 votes to 1, to decline the request contained within the Clause. Mr. Beighton voted against.

Clause 116g) Correspondence Mutual Exchange – Mr. Singer queried policy on mutual tenancy exchanges and was advised that these were routine subject to the usual checks being made prior to the approval concerning arrears, anti-social behaviour, condition of property, etc.

Clause 120a) Residency Discretion – members expressed concern at perceived weakness in the discretionary proposals. The Town Clerk undertook to circulate the Guidance Document to members.

Clause 120b) Homes for Ukraine Scheme – members noted the Housing and Property Manager’s report advising of the response from the Department for the “Isle of Man Homes for Ukraine Scheme” advising that such scheme debars public sector housing being used.

(2021/22:415) On-Going Matters “Action Tracker” :

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

- **Close Woirrey** – the Town Clerk confirmed that the Commissioners’ offer to purchase the former Albert Road School site had not been accepted and the Close Woirrey redevelopment would now be revisited as a lone site.
- **Ramsey Courthouse** – the Deputy Town Clerk informed members that he would update the relevant party on the next stages required to progress the matter.
- **Cycle Shelters** – the Town Clerk informed members that the Department of Infrastructure were no longer able to proceed with the installation of Cycle Shelters – it was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Ms Craine and agreed that the Town Clerk submit the necessary planning applications and report further on the costs involved in the installations.

(2021/22:416) On-Going Matters - Register of Ruinous Property, Unsightly Land and Buildings:

Resolved: To note the “Register of Ruinous Property ..” to 13th April, 2022, , subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

- **10/11 West Quay** – the owners have applied for a demolition order.
- **Britannia Hotel** – a meeting is to be held with the owners on 21st April.
- **The Holly Grove Mount** – Members were informed that issues had arisen and the premises have required to be boarded-up.



(2021/22:416) On-Going Matters - Register of Ruinous Property, Unsightly Land and Buildings Continued:

- *5, College Street* – a Time and Place Meeting / Notice will be progressed after a possible sale is completed.
- *Seymour House* – advice is awaited from our Advocates on how best to proceed.
- *4 and 5 Hespera Terrace*
- *3, Cowell's Terrace*

Finance and General Purposes:

(2021/22:417) Town Clerk's Report – Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures:

Resolved: To note the Town Clerk's report dated 11th April, 2022, advising of the consultation being progressed by the Manx Industrial Relations Service on the Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

Mr. McGuinness informed members that the procedures were primarily concerning equality and commended that the Code of Practice when finalised comprise part of the Commission's existing policy.

(2021/22:418) Town Clerk's Report – Sale of Old Railway Line:

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 30th March 2022, concerning the possibility of the transfer of ownership of the former railway line from Poyll Dooey Road to Gardeners Lane to the Department of Infrastructure who have control of use of the area. Members were reminded that there are a few ongoing issues with some abutting properties the majority of owners having ignored correspondence from the Commissioners.

Proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Singer that the Commission progress the sale, at nominal consideration, to the Department. The proposal was carried by 7 votes to 2 Messrs. Beighton and Cowell voting against. Mr. Williams declared an interest due to his employment with the Department and did not vote on this section of the Clause. One property owner is in the process of purchasing a strip of land from the Commissioners.

A further proposal was put by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Cowell and carried by 6 votes to 4 that the property owners who have encroached upon the verges be afforded the opportunity to purchase the land. Ms Craine and Messrs Oldham, Parker and Williams voted against.



(2021/22:419) Finance Officer's Report:

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

Aged Debtors – in response to queries raised the Finance Officer confirmed that some of the debts had been paid since preparation of the appendix; one debt was owing because of a change in company procedure; and one was subject to an insurance claim by a third party.

Works and Development:

(2021/22:420) Town Clerk's Report – Ramsey Tram Station:

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 12th April, 2022, concerning the desire of the Department of Infrastructure to do something to enhance Ramsey Tram Station. Mr. Singer referred to proposals concerning the establishment of a "transport hub" which also included the site of the Ramey Bus Station. Members were reminded that the Commission had supported the principals but not the submitted proposals at that time.

Resolved: To engage with the Department and Members of the House of Keys for Ramsey to progress a possible scheme. In the meantime the Town Clerk was requested to ask the Department if the existing Tram Station and its environs could be tidied.

Canon Greenwood withdrew from the meeting at this point (9.45 p.m.)

(2021/22:421) Town Clerk's Report – Quay Harbour Toilets:

Members considered the Town Clerk's report concerning the alleged lack of public conveniences in the town since closure of those at "Shoprite". Members noted that "Portaloos" were being hired for TT fortnight and it has been suggested that Department of Infrastructure's toilets on the quayside, which it is understood can be accessed by a "key card" issued by the Department be opened to the general public.

It was agreed to ask the Department to facilitate this arrangement.

A proposal by Ms Craine that the Commission erect directional signs did not receive a seconder.



Housing and Property:

(2021/22:422) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Fancy a Coffee Lakeside Centre:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 11th April, 2022, conveying the request made by Fancy a Coffee Ltd., to repaint the hut at the Lakeside Centre from which Gelato style products will be sold.

A conditional approval put by Mr. Singer did not receive a seconder. A simple approval was moved by Mr. McGuinness and was seconded by Mr. Beighton.

Further discussion ensued following which it was agreed that to inform the Company that the Commission would wish to see the sale of gelato products being offered more regularly than suggested by the Company.

It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Mr. Cowell and agreed to suspend Standing orders to allow the meeting to continue to its conclusion.

(2021/22:423) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Cronk Elfin Refurbishment Update:

Resolved: To note the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 12th April, 2022, updating members on the progress of the Cronk Elfin refurbishment project.

Mr. Oldham declared an interest due to residence at Cronk Elfin.

(2021/22:424) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Provision of Inclusive Play Equipment – Mooragh Park:

Members considered the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 5th April, 2022, concerning a proposal to provide inclusive play equipment at the Mooragh Park, utilising Section 13 Agreement commuted sums, grant aid and lottery funding.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Ms Craine and agreed to progress the scheme accepting the quotation provided by Wicksteed Leisure Group.

It was noted that approximately £4,000 will remain available within Section 13 agreements and the Housing and Property Manager was authorised to discuss with Wicksteed if any additional play equipment could be acquired for this sum.



Matters of Establishment:

(2021/22:392) Minutes Meeting of Establishment Committee:

Resolved: To note and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Establishment Committee held on 11th April, 2022, subject to the following:-

NCAS Site Local Agreement – the Town Clerk’s report was noted, including that wage costs would be recoverable in part from the local authorities comprising the NCAS Board, the Commissioners being required to meet part.

Menopause Policy – Mr. Singer queried if a suitably interest general practitioner could be identified should this be necessary, but members felt the resources listed with Appendix 1 sufficient guidance. Ms Craine request was agreed to publicise the policy on the Commission’s website / Facebook page, not least as a public relations exercise.

The meeting closed at 10.15 p.m. giving a time of 3 ½ hours for the payment of attendance allowances.

Chairman.

