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, 21st September, 2022, at 7.00 p.m.

Mr. F. B. R. Williams, Miss L. L. Craine, Messrs. A. R. Beighton, G. S. Present:

Court, S. R. Kelly, J. McGuinness, A. J. Oldham, L. I. Singer and W. G.

Young.

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs. R. D. Cowell, Canon N. D. Greenwood and L. Parker.

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

A Minute's Silence was observed in respect of Her late Majesty The Queen Elizabeth II.

(2022/23:154) Minutes:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on 10th August, 2022, and the monthly Board Meeting held on 17th August, 2022, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following:-

Clause 108-7) Mr. Singer asked that the Clause reflect his comments that each section should have affordable housing. [Officers' note - affordable housing, under a Section 23 agreement is based on 25% of a whole development.] Clause 124 - Mr. Singer wished the words "could not" to be included in the second paragraph of page 16, in that the car park was in private ownership.

(2022/23:155) Matters Arising:

The following matters were raised by members:-

Area Plan ... Chapter 13 Open Space, Recreation... Mr. Singer informed members that he had been in contact with the Department of Infrastructure concerning the "Safe Routes to School" campaign initiated by him when he was a Member of the House of Keys, and that a response is awaited.

Bicycle Shelters - Mr. McGuinness drew attention to his understanding that the Department, whilst unwilling to install bicycle shelters in Ramsey or other areas, are installing them at primary schools as part of the "Active Travel".

Special Board Meeting 31st August - Mr. McGuinness asked why the matter had been recorded in private. Members were advised that the matter was sensitive but could Mohlle be brought into public when agreements are in place.

(2022/23:155) Matters Arising Continued:

Jurby Road Accessibility: Mr. Beighton sought progress on this matter and members were informed that no response has yet been received from the Department of Infrastructure concerning either Jurby Road or Neptune Street.

Seagull Nuisance Mooragh Park - Mr. Beighton sought progress in alleviating this nuisance and members were informed that discussions are ongoing with DEFA to determine what deterrents could be introduced next year. Miss Craine asked what deterrents are being considered and was advised that was not known at the present time.

Matters for Information:

(2022/23:156) Action Tracker September, 2022:

Resolved: To note the "Action Tracker" to 15th September, 2022, subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

Recycling Conference - Mr. Beighton asked if it is worth discussing "recycling" with other authorities. The Town Clerk advised that officers have met and corresponded with Douglas Corporation. Discussions will be ongoing across the Island before any decision is taken to attend a conference in the UK.

(2022/23:157) Action Tracker Budget Approved Projects:

Resolved: To note the Action Tracker of Budget Approved projects at 15th September, 2022.

(2022/23:158) Project Meeting – Ramsey Quayside:

Resolved: To note the minutes of the meeting held on 5th September, 2022, between interested parties of Ramsey Quayside redevelopment project, subject to the following:-

Mr. Singer referred to parking spaces and stated that large vans should not be permitted to park as they cause danger; he also referred to the proposed height of the wall, 1.4 metres, which he felt was too high and would detract from the aesthetics of the harbour; he felt that any ladders scaling the walls would also be dangerous and felt that a lower wall should be provided.

Mr. Beighton advised that there was no expectation of ladders and that gates will be sited along the wall. Mr. Singer also commented on the restrictions of attendance at the meetings.

The Chairman advised that Mr. Singer's comments would be conveyed at the next As Will project meeting.

2

(2022/23:159) Chairman's Report - September, 2022:

The Chairman apologised for the delay in presenting his report, which had been owing to his attendance at the Proclamation of King Charles III as Lord on Mann on 16th September.

Resolved: To note the Chairman's Report tabled report dated 20th September, 2022, subject to the following:-

HMS Ramsey – it was proposed by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Beighton and agreed that a letter be addressed to the First Sea Lord requesting that the Town be honoured by having another ship named HMS Ramsey.

Finance and General Purposes:

(2022/23:160) Town Clerk's Report - Consultation... Draft Economic Strategy

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 13th September, 2022, suggesting responses to the above-titled Consultation issued by The Treasury. Mr. McGuinness suggested that the scoring system was flawed as matters were all important, the matters are subjective and individual members will have differing views.

Mr. McGuinness proposed that a general supportive response be submitted with emphasis that if the strategy goes through the town receive proportional investment and any member wishing to do so submit a private response to the consultation.

Mr. Singer queried if Government had the knowledge, competence or enthusiasm to push through a strategy that needed dynamism and leadership to progress not looking to how expenses can be kept down or how we can be greener; but how the economy can grow in practical ways. Skilled officers are needed to attract investment. He felt the strategy to be vague and unsupportable and predicted it would end up "on the back-burner".

Miss Craine queried Mr. Singer's comments about costs for electric vehicles. Mr. Singer replied that his comments were based on documents he had read having regard to increasing electricity costs.

Mr. McGuinness felt matters were getting personal and again presented his proposal which was seconded by Mr. Court and agreed without division.

(2022/23:161) Finance Officer's General Report:

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer's general report dated 14th September, 2022.

Works and Development:

(2022/23:162) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Queen's Promenade Changing Hut:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 14th September, 2022, presenting options available to provide changing hut / shelter provisions on the Queen's Promenade.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed by 6 votes to 3, Messrs. Beighton, Court and Singer voting against, that delegated authority be granted to the Lead Member in liaison with the Deputy Town Clerk to decide on the most suited hut. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that he will submit further report on costings but needed the Commission's instruction on how to proceed.

Mr. Court informed members that some of the sea-swimming groups had expressed a preference for the wave design. He stated that the groups were looking for privacy and shelter and asked if the Deputy Town Clerk could liaise with Mezeron concerning the possible use of a container during the forthcoming autumn/winter months.

(2022/23:163) Technical Services Manager's Report - Planning Applications:

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager's Report dated 7th September, 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:

3934

Amended Plan Additional Info

/blul

P.A. NO.:

21/01223/REM

PROPOSED:

Reserved matters application in association with PA 20/01401/A

for the erection of a 3 storey dwelling and associated access

NOTES:

Reserved Matters

SITE:

Land to the rear of 6, Summerland, Ramsey.

Members noted that time factors did not allow any further appeal process in respect of this application and, as such agreed no further action be taken.

No comments were made on the Appendix.

(2022/23:164) Technical Services Manager's Report – Bollard Lighting:

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager's report dated 6th September, 2022, advising that the bollard lighting in place along the former railway line has finally been programmed and commissioned.

Parks and Leisure:

(2022/23:165) Deputy Town Clerk's Report - Mooragh Park Shelters:

Resolved: To note the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 14th September, 2022, advising of progress in identifying artists to decorate the shelters in the Mooragh Park.

Members were informed that a short-list had been selected from 28 submissions and the Lead Member thanked everyone who had put their name forward and felt that inspiration had been forthcoming from the art work of the Mooragh Promenade shelters.

Mr. McGuinness echoed Mr. Court's comments added that the shelters were something for which the town could have massive pride.

(2022/23:166) Deputy Town Clerk's Report - RNLI Chilly Dip 2023

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 14th September, 2022, advising of the request made by Ramsey Branch RNLI to stage the 2023 Chilly Dip on 1st January.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed, permission be granted.

(2022/23:167) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Sprintfest 2023:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 14th September, 2022, providing an interim update on progress with regard to the organisation of Sprintfest 2023. The report seeks confirmation on the duration of the event.

A proposal was put by Mr. Court and seconded by Mr. McGuinness that the event be held over 4 days – the Saturday to Tuesday.

Mr. Beighton queried road closures asking if all the roads are closed for the full 4 days. Members were informed that the roads are closed proportionately and are open in the daytime if possible and that access to West Quay only fully closed when the music is on; access routes are maintained as far as possible and the organisers work with businesses. The only area fully closed is the car parking area on Market Square.

The proposal to hold Sprintfest 2023 over 4 days was put to the vote and carried by 6 10 Will votes to 3 Messrs. Kelly, Oldham and Young voting against.

(2022/23:168) Public Correspondence:

Resolved: To note those items of Public Correspondence at 14th September, 2022, brought to members' attention, subject to any additional comments as hereunder:-

- Tree Planting Royal British Legion after discussion with the Head Gardener the sapling will be planted on the Mooragh Brooughs and two rose bushes planted in the memorial garden in the Mooragh Park.
- Jubilee Street Party Royal British Legion noted.
- Ramsey Tram Station and Transport Services the Town Clerk indicated that he felt the response concerning the tram station to be positive.
- Ramsey Bus Station Department of Infrastructure noted.

(2022/23:169) Station Road Car Park:

Mr. Singer proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to again allow discussion with regard to Station Road Car Park, the proposal was seconded by Mr. Young and agreed by 6 votes to 3 Miss Craine and Messrs. Kelly and Oldham voting against.

Mr. Singer stated that the Commission had been assured by the contractor that by September there would not be a problem. Mr. Singer inferred that is not the case and contented that the Mooragh car park was in a worse condition. He felt the contractor to be challenged again confirming the right specification was used, they needed to come back and do the works properly. He would like the matter to be taken further with the contractor to get the assurances needed that the works would be made right and this formed a proposal which after comment by the Chairman was rephrased to write to the contractor and invite him back to give assurances / explanations; this was seconded by Mr. Beighton.

Mr. McGuinness reminded members that the contractor had stated to wait until September and the contractor would over the 2-year warranty period correct any matters and accordingly Mr. McGuinness could not see the point in another meeting taking place as long as officers are keeping the guarantee in force. He felt that the contractor would only repeat what he said at the first meeting.

Mr. Kelly suggested that the Technical Services Manager and himself, as Lead Member, meet with the contractor. This was put as a formal amendment and was seconded by Mr. McGuinness. Mr. Young suggested that the company who recently completed works on Jurby Road be invited to comment on the works on the car park. Mr. Kelly reminded members that the works undertaken were those agreed with the budget process and other options were many times more expensive, he felt the problems could be rectified in time.

The amendment was put to the vote and carried by 5 votes to 4, Miss Craine and 1641 Messrs. Court and Oldham voting with the proposer and seconder.

(2022/23:170) Matters Raised by Members of the Public:

Town Warden Services – the Chairman advised members that information has been sought from other parties with regard to a specific complaint raised and therefore proposed the matter be deferred pending receipt thereof. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Beighton and carried by 8 votes to 1, Mr. McGuinness voting against.

Any Other Business:

(2022/23:171) Sundry Matters:

171a) Ramsey Scouts – the Town Clerk advised that First Ramsey Scouts are inviting members of the Commission onto their Committee and noted that Miss Craine has indicate an interest in volunteering. Mr. Williams queried if the post should be voted upon at the Commissioners' annual meeting. It was uncertain whether the appointment was specifically for a member of the Commission or a more personal appointment; it was felt that the appointment was less formal. The Town Clerk advised that the Scouts were looking for a number of volunteers and Commission membership was not a deciding criterion; it was agreed not to include the matter on the agenda for the annual meeting.

171b) Housing and Community Road Show – the meeting to be held at Jurby, about which the Housing and Property Manager had advised members has been postponed and will now take place on 27th October.

171c) Community Fridges - the Town Clerk advised that the Coop have indicate their wish to donate one of three fridges for community use in Ramsey. It was agreed that members let the Town Clerk know of any locations in the town. Some concerns were expressed about management of the fridge and its contents.

171d) North Ramsey Bowling Club – Mr. Kelly informed members that the Club's B Team were division 3 league champions and asked that a letter of congratulation be sent to the Club. This was proposed by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and carried.

The Chairman thanked those watching via the streaming service and closed the public session at 8.02 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.

(2022/23:172) Minutes:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Special Board Meetings held on 10th, 22nd and 31st August, 2022, be approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following:-

Clause 152 - Members were reminded that Mr. Cowell had suggested 5 years.

As Soll-3

Matters for Information:

(2022/23:173) Minutes NCAS Committee Meetings:

Resolved: To note the minutes of the meetings of the NCAS Committee held on 4th November, 2021, 13th December, 2021, 24th February, 2022 and 12th May, 2022.

(2022/23:174) Reports Meeting with Lezayre and Garff with Policy Committee:

Resolved: To note the reports of meetings with Lezayre Parish and Garff District Commissioners, subject to the following:-

Mr. Singer queried why only the Policy Committee had attended these meetings – he felt that because the Parishes were fully represented the Ramsey Town Commissioners should equally have been fully represented as well. Mr. Young agreed with Mr. Singer's comments.

The Chairman informed members that it was understood where Mr. Singer was coming from, but it was confirmed that the invitations had been to the Commission's Policy Committee, who had listened to the Parishes and whose only input was to reiterate Board decisions.

(2022/23:175) Minutes Policy Committee:

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 31st August, 2022, subject to the following:-

Purchasing Policy – it was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Beighton and agreed that the Purchasing Policy be adopted.

(2022/23:176) Housing Committee:

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Committee held on 6th September, 2022,

(2022/23:177) On-Going Matters "Action Tracker":

Resolved: To note the "Action Tracker" to 15th September, 2022.

(2022/23:178) On-Going Matters - Register of Ruinous Property, Unsightly Land and Buildings:

Resolved: To note the "Register of Ruinous Property .." to 15th September, 2022, 2022, subject to the following and accepting that matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

The Holly Grove Mount – in response to a query from Miss Craine members were advised of the circumstances by which the Attorney General's department is involved in this matter.

Parliament Street – Mr. Singer queried if this item should remain on the Register – it was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Miss Craine and agreed that a preemptive general letter be circulated to properties along Parliament Street to check their buildings before inclement seasonal weather prevails.

Stanley Public House – in response to a query from Mr. Beighton members were informed that no response has been received to correspondence with the owners.

24, Grove Mount West – issues have been resolved – to be removed from this list.

Court Café – in response to a query, members were informed that it was not known if workmen had commenced work on the date indicated.

Miss Craine referred to the condition of the former "Dave's Delicious Dogs" in St. Paul's Square which is looking neglected and offensive wording has been written on the windows. It was agreed that the matter be drawn to the attention of the owner or an agent.

Finance and General Purposes:

(2022/23:179) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Christmas Event Concession:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's dated 14th September, 2022, concerning the request to have a "pop-up" licensed facility between 2nd and 4th December at the Courthouse grounds.

A proposal was put by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Miss Craine that the Commission support the request. Mr. Williams drew attention to the general policy not to permit "pop-ups" close to existing similar outlets, in this case a public house.

Mr. McGuinness then amended his proposal to allow liaison with the Mitre Hotel, Miss Craine seconded the proposal. The Deputy Town Clerk asked if the Mitre Hotel proprietors could be given a time-limit for their response to the request. Mr. Beighton felt this could become a dangerous precedent. Mr. McGuinness commented that the application would have to be presented to the Licensing Court at which time the Mitre Hotel could also object. The amended proposal was carried without division.

Mr. Court again appealed for any outside traders to come forward for events being promoted by the Commission.

To Management

(2022/23:180) Finance Officer's General Report:

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer's general report dated 14th September, 2022, subject to the following:-

Rent Arrears – Members again referred to increasing levels of rent arrears which the Finance Officer suggested was exacerbated by increases in gas prices. The Finance Officer again explained the policy with regard to recovery of rent debt and the emphasis put on tenants engaging with staff if they do get into difficulties with their rent. Mr. Williams asked if there was anything on the Commissioners' website and was advised that there are links to assist tenants.

Aged Debtors – in response to queries raised by Members the Finance Officer confirmed that some of the debts included at the time of the report have been paid.

Mr. McGuinness reminded members that they would have to take regard of the economic environment during the budget setting process.

(2022/23:181) Technical Services Manager's Report – Electric Bike – Warden:

Members considered the Technical Services Manager's report concerning the provision of an electric bicycle for use by the Town Warden.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Miss Craine, and carried by 7 votes to 2, Messrs. Beighton and Singer voting against, the matter be reconsidered during the budget setting process.

(2022/23:182) Technical Assistant's Report – Fixed Penalty Notices Appeals:

Members considered the Technical Assistant's report dated 14th September, 2022, advising of appeals submitted against fixed penalty notices issued for littering offences. It was agreed to consider the appeals on individual basis:

Penalty 0676 – Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Beighton and agreed that the penalty be upheld. Mr. Singer reminded members that legislation is in place with regard to littering outside shop premises.

Penalty 0693 – Proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Miss Craine and agreed that the appeal be upheld and the penalty reissued to the householder.

1 Collins

(2022/23:183) Technical Assistant's Report - Community Warden:

Resolved: To note the Technical Assistant's detailed report dated 15th September, 2022, detailing the multifarious duties of the Community Warden and indicating the number of warning notices and fixed penalty notices issued during August. Members were appreciative of the detail included but felt that something more suitable for reporting in public was required.

It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed that the Technical Assistant provide details to the Lead Members for Finance and Parks and Leisure who will defer to the Chairman to issue a public statement.

Works and Development:

(2022/23:184) Technical Services Manager's Report - 11-12 West Quay:

Members considered the Technical Services Manager's report dated 9th September, 2022, advising of difficulties in communicating with the owners and prospective owners of 11-12 West Quay in attempts to progress works require to be undertaken in terms of the Building Control Act.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed that a further Notice under Section 24 of the Building Control Act, 1991, be served on the current owners. The Notice will give 90 days for works to be undertaken otherwise further action will be taken.

(2022/23:185) Technical Services Manager's Report – Binweigh Losses:

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager's report dated 12th September, 2022, advising of problems with the Binweigh system which has resulted in some additional costs being incurred by the Commission and has necessitated our refuse wagons being sent to the UK to have new weighing systems fitted in respect of which a Petition for borrowing powers was sought.

The Technical Services Manager advised members that the existing binweigh system was coming to the end of its life and could no longer be supported.

(2022/23:186) Technical Services Manager's Report – West Quay Lighting:

Members considered the Technical Services Manager's report dated 9th September, 2022, concerning the provision of street lighting as part of the West Quay redevelopment scheme. Members noted that in terms of Section 254 of the Local Government Act 1916 the Commissioners "may" enter into a contract for lighting of any streets or places.

(2022/23:186) Technical Services Manager's Report - West Quay Lighting Continued:

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed without division, that the Department of Infrastructure be informed that the Commission insist that the Department pays all installation costs including materials and enter into agreement with their Harbours Division for the shared ongoing costs. Usage costs will be separated between the Commission and the Harbours Division.

Housing and Property:

(2022/23:187) Housing and Property Manager's Report - Cronk Elfin Refurbishment Update:

Resolved: To note the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 9th September, 2022, updating members on the progress of the Cronk Elfin refurbishment project.

Members were informed that concerns remained about problems with chimney stacks which were affecting the contingency sums included within the contract.

(2022/23:188) Housing and Property Manager's Report - "The Elms" Lezayre Road:

Members considered the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 9th September, 2022, advising of the request made by the owners of "The Elms" to regularise a boundary line with regard to land sold in 2004.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. Court, and agreed, the Commission agree to the adjustment of the boundary line, to facilitate access to services, subject to confirmation as to whether or not Departmental approval is required and subject to no costs being incurred by the Commission.

(2022/23:189) Private Correspondence:

Resolved: To note those items of Private Correspondence at 14th September, 2022, brought to members' attention, subject to any additional comments as hereunder:-

Vollan Fields, Ramsey - noted that the developers are to object to the de-zoning of this land for development within the Draft Area Plan.

Shoprite Toilets - the Town Clerk informed members that the Shoprite Group have indicated they have plans for the redevelopment of the site of the public toilets.

Mr. Singer asked that parts 2 and 3 of his proposal put to the August, 2022, Board Meeting, namely:-

2. The Commission support putting funding in place for the 2023/24 financial

3. The Commission seek early planning consent and full costings be proyided to DAM allow the works to commence as soon as possible.

Mr. McGuinness indicated he was uncomfortable progressing discussions without a full report on the options available to the Commission. Mr. Kelly asked if the Commission is obliged to provide public conveniences. Members were informed that the Commission "may" make provision.

It was proposed by Mr. Singer, seconded by Mr. Young that the Commission support the provision of public conveniences.

Members after debate were in general agreement with this subject to further consideration of options available to them and to budgetary considerations. Having regard to this decision Mr. Singer agreed that no further consideration of his points raised was needed at the present time.

Any Other Business

(2022/23:190) Fireworks Display – Sale of "Glo-Sticks:

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Court seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed, Bunscooil Rhumsaa be again permitted to sell "glo-sticks" at the Fireworks Display on 5th November, 2022, in aid of their funds.

(2022/23:191) Pharmacies in Ramsey:

Mr. Beighton drew attention to correspondence received, by himself and other members, from a gentleman seeking a letter of support to his application to provide pharmaceutical services in the town.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed the Chief Executive Office of Manx Care be asked to support any applications that will result in the improved provision of pharmaceutical services in Ramsey.

Matters of Establishment:

(2022/23:192) Minutes Establishment Committee:

Resolved: To note and approve the minutes of a meeting of the Establishment Committee held on 15th August, 2022.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m. giving a time of 3 hours for the payment of attendance allowances.

Chairman.