

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, 17th May, 2023, at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. A. J. Oldham, Miss L. L. Craine, Messrs. A. R. Beighton, G. S. Court, R. D. Cowell (remotely), S. R. Kelly, J. McGuinness, L. Parker, L. I. Singer and W. G. Young.

Apologies for absence were received from Rev'd Canon Greenwood and Mr. F. B. R Williams.

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

(2023/24:015) Minutes:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 19th April, 2023, and the Annual Meeting held on 2nd May, 2023, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following:-

Clause 427 (19.04) ...Ramsey Sprint and Sprintfest – Mr. McGuinness queried why comments made by Mr. Cowell about Sprintfest had not been recorded within the Minutes and requested that the minutes be amended to reflect Mr. Cowell's stated objection to the road closure proposals, his having met with officers and his having received advice from officers. -

(2023/24.016:) Matters Arising:

Mr. McGuinness referred to the proposal to amend parking charges at Ronaldsway Airport which were being further considered. He proposed that should the outcome of further consideration be made known, before the June, 2023, meeting of the Board, and such reconsideration impose a shorter free parking time than one hour, the Commission reiterate their objections. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed.

Matters for Information:

(2023/24:017) Action Tracker May, 2023:

Resolved: To note the "Action Tracker" to 10th May, 2023, subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

(2023/24:017) Action Tracker May, 2023 Continued:

Bus Services - Mr. McGuinness referred to the pending removal of the item and, following his proposal, which was seconded by Mr. Parker and agreed, the matter will remain on the Action Tracker and the Commission will write again to attempt to achieve an improved bus service.

Adoption of Land Auldyn Walk – Mr. Parker asked how far off the playground was from completion. The Town Clerk informed members that he understood that there were still some works to be undertaken, but he anticipated these could be completed within 2 or 3 weeks.

Ramsey Bags for Life – Mr. Singer asked about the new bags for life – Mr. McGuinness was able to show the new design, which in addition to the original design will be available from the public library at a cost of £5 per bag.

(2023/24:018) Action Tracker Budget Approved and Proposed Projects:

Resolved: To note the Action Tracker of Budget Approved projects at 10th May, 2023 and that for proposals for 2023/24, subject to the following:-

2. Solar Panels -Miss Craine queried the availability of grant support – the Town Clerk informed members that he has been informed that grant is available but no process has been defined as to how a claim from a local authority can be considered – he has put that question to the Department of Infrastructure.

12. South Promenade Changing Facility – Mr. McGuinness queried the time factor in the provision of the changing facility. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that he was awaiting confirmation from the Planning Committee, after which he will have a clearer idea; it is understood that the planners are supportive of the principle of the provision of changing facilities, subject to caveats.

Finance and General Purposes:

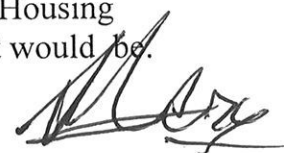
(2023/24:019) Finance Officer's General Report:

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer's general report dated 10th May, 2023, subject to the following:-

Accounts – the Finance Officer provided further information with regard to several of the payments listed within appendix 1.

Rates – the Finance Officer commented that the figures reflected some progress in rate debt recovery.

Mr. McGuinness referred to staffing costs for other bodies and queried what costs are recovered. Members were informed that all costs are charged in respect of the CA site and that administration costs are charged to Ramsey and Northern Districts Housing Committee. Mr. McGuinness queried pension costs for the Housing Committee – members were informed that these were not charged but would be.



(2023/24:019) Finance Officer's General Report Continued:

Mr. Singer queried the cost for the provision of scaffolding. Members were informed that any scaffolding is hired on a pre-agreed contract and no additional costs are incurred.

Works and Development:

(2023/24:020) Town Clerk's Report – Fast Charger Station Road Car Park:

Members considered the Town Clerk's report dated 21st April, 2023, advising of the request made by Manx Utilities Authority to replace the electric vehicle charge point in Station Road Car Park with a fast charge unit, or to site the charger at an alternative location. Members queried whether or not it would be more expensive to use a fast-charging unit and why the authority was not expanding use of general chargers. Concern was also expressed about the loss of parking spaces.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Miss Craine and agreed, the MUA be informed of the Commissioners support of the provision of a fast charger point at Station Road Car Park but enquiry be made as to why the authority is not expanding use of other chargers.

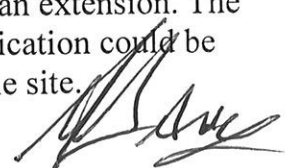
(2023/24:021) Technical Services Manager's Report - Planning Applications:

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager's Report dated 9th May, 2023, detailing planning applications received from the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, under the planning consultation procedures, subject to the following:-

REF NO:	4069
P.A. NO.:	<u>23/00446/B</u>
PROPOSED:	Variation of condition 1 of PA21/00232/B (Original application PA18/01234/B) for the approval in principle for the erection of a four storey apartment block, to extend the period of approval for a further 2 years
NOTES:	P.A. in Detail
SITE:	21 - 22, West Quay, Ramsey

It was proposed by Mr. Singer, seconded by Mr. Kelly and agreed by 8 votes to 2, Messrs' Cowell and McGuinness voting against, that the Commission object to a further extension being granted and the applicant be instructed by the Planning Committee to submit a detailed application and indicate a construction time with completion date.

Miss Craine queried the process if the applicant was not granted an extension. The Technical Services Manager informed members that a fresh application could be submitted which would further delay any proposals to develop the site.



Housing and Property:

(2023/24:022) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Housing Performance and Statistics 2022/2023:

Resolved: To note and approve the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 10th May, 2023, to which was appended the Statistics for 2022/23 for the 4th Quarter, namely to 31st March, 2023.

The Lead Member took the opportunity to refer to rent arrears and to remind any tenant struggling with rental payments for whatever reason to contact officers. Mr. Parker also expressed his thanks and congratulations to the Housing staff, especially those involved with repairs and maintenance.

Parks and Leisure:

(2023/24:023) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – British Enduro:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 10th May, 2023, concerning the request made by the Ramsey Motorcycle Club regarding a proposal to hold a stage of the British Enduro on 8th – 10th September, 2023,

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. Kelly and agreed logistical support be provided and the requests for road closures be progressed as detailed within the report. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members of his understanding that the Chamber of Commerce, at their meeting in February, 2023, were supportive of the event.

Any Other Business:

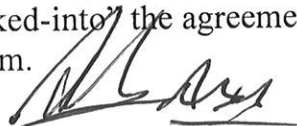
(2023/24:024) Town Clerk's Report – Wayleave Fibre Poles:

Members considered the Town Clerk's tabled report dated 17th May, 2023, concerning the request made by Manx Telecom to vary the terms of a wayleave agreement approved in May 2022, by way of the inclusion of an additional pole to facilitate the installation of fibre cabling.

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

2023/24:025) Sundry Matters:

025a) Sale of Ice Cream Mooragh Park – Mr. Kelly queried the sale of ice cream in the Mooragh Park for the imminent season. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that the new tenant of the "Boathouse" Café will open in the next few days and it is their intention to sell ice cream; it is not "locked-into" the agreement with other catering tenant in the Park that they sell ice cream.



It was proposed by Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Beighton and agreed that, subject to discussion with tenants, the Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to investigate the possibility of mobile vendors retailing ice cream in the park.

Mr. Cowell's remote connection broke down at 7.30 p.m. and he took no further part in the meeting.

025b) Steps leading to Foreshore – Mr. Kelly referred to the dangerous state of steps leading to the foreshore off the Queen's Promenade. The Town Clerk informed members that he had previously raised the matter with the Department of Infrastructure but would raise it again. Mr. Beighton informed members that it had been raised with the Minister at a meeting held on 9th May.

025c) South Beach: Mr. Young again drew attention to the condition of South Beach which he contended needs cleaning and clearing. The Technical Services Manager informed members that the Commission has been advised not to clean the beach at the present time because of nesting birds.

025d) Deckchairs at Courthouse: Mr. McGuinness asked when the deckchairs would be put out at the Courthouse. Mr. Oldham replied that he, on behalf of The Hub would be responsible for putting them out hopefully from the end of the week if ground conditions permit.

025e) Consultation removal of Coinage: The Town Clerk drew attention to a consultation with regard to the removal of low value coinage – 1p 2p and 5p from circulation and informed members that he would bring the matter to the June 2023 Board meeting. Mr. Singer felt there was no reason the matter could not be considered immediately and proposed the removal of coins be rejected, the action would result in increased prices and further that Government progress matters of greater priority. Mr. Young seconded the proposal. Mr. McGuinness felt he would like to read the consultation document to enable him to make an informed decision.

The proposal was put to the vote but failed by 7 votes to 2 – the proposer and seconder receiving no further support.

025f) Resurfacing Cumberland Road – the Town Clerk drew attention to the proposals of the Department of Infrastructure to resurface Cumberland Road. He informed members that pedestrian facilities be reviewed and improved as part of the works.

025g) Parsonage Road Tram Crossing – the Town Clerk informed members that the Department of Infrastructure is continuing work at Parsonage Road to facilitate Manx Electric Railway trams being able to continue to the Tram Station.

025h) Canon Greenwood Leave of Absence – the Town Clerk drew attention to a request made by Canon Greenwood for leave of absence. It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Oldham and agreed to consider the matter in private.

The Chairman thanked the media for attending and also those watching via live-streaming and closed the public session at 7.52 p.m.

RTC Board Meeting – 17th May, 2023, Continued:

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.

(2023/24:026) Minutes:

Resolved: To note and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th April, 2023, subject to the following:-

Clause 430 Notice of Motion – the Town Clerk informed members that the voting recorded within the Clause had been queried and asked members to recall their voting. No comments were made and the voting as recorded stood as a correct record.

Matters for Information:

(2023/24:027) On-Going Matters “Action Tracker”:

Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker” to 10th May, 2023, subject to the following:-

Town Branding - the Deputy Town Clerk undertook to share a video with members about Town Branding.

(2023/24:028) On-Going Matters - Register of Ruinous Property, Unsightly Land and Buildings:

Resolved: To note the “Register of Ruinous Property ..” to 10th May, 2023.

Finance and General Purposes:

(2023/24:029) Finance Officer’s Report:

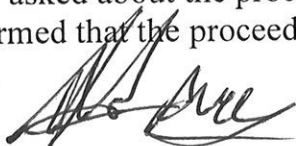
Resolved: To note Finance Officer’s report dated 10th May, 2023, subject to the following:-

Bank Balances - the Finance Officer informed members that the Housing Reserve Account now included proceeds from the sale of Albert Street Flats which could be used for future development.

Rent Arrears – reference was made to the debtor listed at position 2 on the list. The Finance Officer informed members that action to recover the arrears are progressing and the tenant could be issued with a Notice to Quit.

Aged Debtors – the Finance Officer informed members that several of the debts listed had been paid and also that some of the debtors have entered into payment plan agreements.

Mr. Kelly asked about the proceeds from the recent sale of a refuse wagon – members were informed that the proceeds go into our central funds but could be used to off-set loan debt.



(2023/24:030) Technical Assistant’s Report – Fixed Penalty Notices - Appeals:

Members considered the Technical Assistant’s report dated 9th May, 2023, advising of failure of a person issued with a fixed penalty, an appeal for which was not successful, to pay the imposed fine.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. Singer, seconded by Miss Craine and agreed, the matter be referred for prosecution. Mr. McGuinness declared an interest and did not vote.

Works and Development:

(2023/24:031) Town Clerk’s Report - Green Waste:

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report dated 9th May, 2023, regarding a wish to provide a kerbside green waste collection in Ramsey. Miss Craine welcomed the initiative, commending support of it and also that the Commission request further information about the proposals. Mr. McGuinness proposed an amendment that the Commission take the same stance taken when a similar approach was made some time ago. Mr. Singer suggested that the Commission should not support a specific proposal but take a neutral stance.

Mr. Beighton seconded the amendment which was put to the vote was put to the vote and carried by 5 votes to 4, Miss Craine and Messrs. Court, Singer and Young voting against.

Housing and Property:

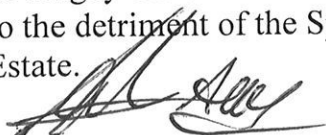
(2023/24:032) Housing and Property Manager’s Report – Cronk Elfin Refurbishment Update:

Resolved: to note the Housing and Property Manager’s report dated 10th May, 2023, providing an update on the refurbishment works progressing at Cronk Elfin.

Parks and Leisure:

(2023/24:033) Deputy Town Clerk’s Report – Mooragh Camping:

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 11th May, 2023, advising of a request that “pop-up” camping be permitted on part of the Mooragh Estate during T.T. and M.G.P., from 2024. Discussion ensued during which members noted that specific permission would need to be granted in terms of Byelaws to allow tents to be placed; the Commission would make no financial gain from the proposals; and the views of the Rugby Club were unknown. Concern was expressed that the proposal would be to the detriment of the Sprint / Sprintfest and to the general aesthetics of the Mooragh Estate.



(2023/24:033) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Mooragh Camping Continued:

Miss Craine withdrew from the meeting during discussion on this clause, at 8.50 p.m.

A proposal was put by Mr. Court, seconded by Mr. Beighton that the Commission support the proposals subject to further details and the stance of the Rugby Club being obtained.

The proposal was carried by 7 votes to 1, Mr. Singer voting against insofar as he felt the Commission should take a neutral stance at this stage with regard to arrangements between other parties.

Any Other Business:

(2023/24:034) Raft South Foreshore:

Members considered a tabled report, dated 17th May, 2023, submitted by the Deputy Housing and Property Manager, concerning the damage caused by inclement weather to the raft placed on the south foreshore. The report details costs for the replacement of the existing raft and costs for the provision of a swimming platform, which it is believed will better suit weather conditions.

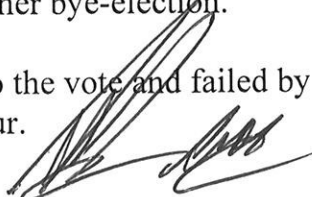
Resolved: That following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Kelly that the Commission do not proceed with replacement of the raft at this stage and the matter be referred to the 2024/25 budget process. The proposal was carried by 7 votes to 1, Mr. Parker voting against.

(2023/24:035) Leave of Absence Canon Greenwood:

Members considered Canon Greenwood's request to be granted leave of absence subsequent to his return to the Island in August. Members were informed that Canon Greenwood was compliant with the attendance requirements but that should he not be granted leave such action could result in a bye-election.

It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Young that leave of absence be not granted. Mr. Singer referred to his current health status and stated that should his health deteriorate to the point where he was unable to continue as a member it might be necessary to hold a further bye-election.

The proposition was put to the vote and failed by 5 votes to 3 – Messrs. Court, Kelly and Young voting in favour.



Matters of Establishment:

(2023/24:036) Minutes Establishment Committee:

Resolved: To note and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Establishment Committee held on 12th April, 2023.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m. giving a time of 2 ½ hours for the payment of attendance allowances.

Chairman.

