

**RAMSEY TOWN COMMISSIONERS
TECHNICAL SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT
RUINOUS PROPERTIES
JULY 2023 – PRIVATE**

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have been requested to write this report as questions have been raised over ruinous properties.

At the end of 2022 myself and Alan Gordon from Douglas Borough Council did a presentation to the Board on ruinous buildings. A copy of this presentation was emailed out to all members prior to the meeting with a copy of the booklet that we use as guidance from DEFA. During the presentation we spoke about our legal powers under the different legislation - Section 24 of The Building Control Act 1991 and Section 14 of the Local Government Act 1985 and the classifications and how we currently assess buildings. We also spoke about the approach to owners and the fact that people may end up with criminal convictions as a result of the process and each case needed to be individually assessed.

Government has recognised that the Local Authorities (LA's) have limited powers under the legislation and are currently undertaking a piece of work to update legislation to make it easy to deal with ruinous properties. It should also be noted that different LA's have different classifications and budgets compared to others (towns vs rural areas). We have no idea how that is going to look going forward.

Ruinous buildings are a small part of the TSM's role and tends to be reactive to reports and updates from neighbours of the affected property. Calendar reminders are set where possible but especially where a notice is issued.

The Board needs to give an direction on the level of importance that they want placing on ruinous buildings, so the TSM can allocate time accordingly and put a budget together for when people default on notices. Consideration also needs to be given to delegated authority for the Town Clerk and TSM, and at what stage approval needs to be sought to undertake works.

Whatever the Board decides, they need to remember that we have to satisfy a number of legal criteria when dealing with any ruinous buildings to get to be able to claim money back and show that the process we have been through is fair and that we haven't railroaded anyone, and they haven't ultimately lost out as part of the process.

Recommendation: For discussion

B. Wallace.

Technical Services Manager

10th July 2023.