

**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, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2024, at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mr. R. D. Cowell, Miss L. L. Craine, Messrs. A. R. Beighton, Revd Canon N. D. Greenwood, J. McGuinness, F. B. R. Williams and W. G. Young.

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs. A. J. Oldham, G. S. Court, S. R. Kelly and L. Parker.

A vacancy exists in South Ward.

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

**Mrs. Edwina Carlile.** Members kept a period of silence in memory of Mrs. Carlile who passed away on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2024. Tribute was paid to Edwina's contribution to the Town as a prominent business woman and for her membership of the Commission over eight years. Her contribution to the community as an incredibly talented musician and church organist was also recognised.

Members extended a welcome to Mr. Andrew Feeney, the new Housing and Property Manager.

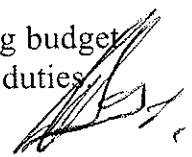
**(2023/24:308) Minutes:**

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. Young and agreed without division, the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on be 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2024, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**(2023/24:309) Matters Arising:**

Miss Craine referred to a request made that the Commission include social media to promote recycling and anti-littering and also advertising room hire availability at the Town Hall and queried progress on these matters.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that he had been awaiting budget confirmation of information required and focus had been on election duties



**Matters for Information:**

**(2023/24:310) Action Tracker February, 2024:**

Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker” to 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, subject to the following and accepting that some matters may be referred to within other Clauses of these minutes:-

***Ramsey North Promenade Changing Huts*** – Mr. McGuinness referred to the purpose of the “Action Tracker” and its importance as an aide memoire for members to keep up to date and commented on the Commission’s actions in adding to it – using the Changing Huts Planning as an example.

Miss Craine raised 3 points:-

- North Promenade Changing Huts - Planning renewal – has it been done?
- Letter to tenants (to be copied to members) about proposal for Cronk Elfin circle when will this be done?
- Cloughbane Open Space – siting of base for recycling node – welcomed the proposal.

The Town Clerk responded:-

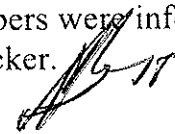
- Planning renewal – the planning does not expire until May – the application for renewal will be undertaken nearer that date.
- Circular letter – has not gone out yet – it will be sent when it is known if funding is in place to enable the proposals to progress.

***Ramsey South Promenade Changing Hut*** - Mr. Beighton referred to the Hut and queried who would make the Lottery Grant application – members were informed that the application would be in the Commissioners’ name and would be submitted in time for the next meeting at which the Lottery Trust would consider grant requests.

**(2023/24:311) Action Tracker Budget Approved and Proposed Projects:**

Resolved: To note the Action Tracker of Budget Approved projects at 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, and that for proposals for 2023/24, subject to the following:-

***Beach Raft*** - Mr. Cowell referred to the Budget Provision for the raft and indicated his wish to have this included on the Action Tracker – Members were informed that this would be included in the 2024/25 Budget proposals Tracker.



**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2023/24:312) Finance Officer's General Report:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Finance Officer's general report dated 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, subject to the following:-

The Finance Officer explained some of the larger items of expenditure, qualified the nature of some of the items of expenditure. He referred to balances on accounts being subject to the timing of receipts. He also commented that the expenditure for Decorative lighting reflected a grant received.

The Finance Officer informed members that, at a recent meeting of local authority finance officers, discussions have taken place with regard to the Department of Infrastructure actions in having recently commenced a review into Housing Capital Projects and thereby Housing Deficiency Payments. Because of this approval of our capital projects and receipt of our Housing Deficiency payment had been delayed.

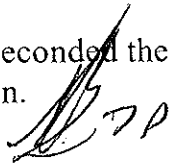
Mr. McGuinness queried if the Department's actions were across all local authorities and was informed it was - £154,000 in capital loan requests are being delayed, the Department has a duty to make up any housing deficiency difference, but now needs to assess the ability of a local authority to meet any capital borrowing repayments.

A proposal by Mr. McGuinness, that the Commission write to the Ministers of the Department of Infrastructure and the Treasury, to highlight our dilemma, explain that the Commission is trying to be progressive and are trying to progress housing capital projects and these delays are unhelpful, at best.

The Town Clerk advised that he and the Housing and Property Manager had confirmed that some of our projects are included in the Government's 2024 Budget "Pink Book".

The Finance Officer also informed members that the Department had set the 2024/25 rent increase level at 7 ½ % in attempt to bring down deficiency payments which is considered to be effectively pushing their problem onto tenants of social housing..

Mr. Beighton seconded the proposal put by Mr. McGuinness which was carried without division.



**Works and Development:**

**(2023/24:313) Technical Services Manager's Report - Planning Applications:**

Resolved: To note the Technical Services Manager's Report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, detailing planning applications received from the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture, under the planning consultation procedures, subject to the following:

REF NO: 4119  
P.A. NO.: 23/01433/B  
PROPOSED: Use of the site for the installation and operation of a mobile sauna  
NOTES: P.A. in Detail  
SITE: **Site of former Ben My Chree, Queen's Promenade, Ramsey.**

A proposal was put by Mr. Williams that an observation be submitted that parking in the area could be an issue and that access for the lifeboat crew is required at all times. Mr. McGuinness queried why – stating that the applicant could be made aware of the lack of parking facilities.

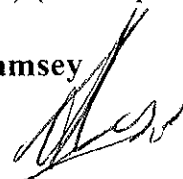
Miss Craine proposed an amendment that the Commission submit an observation that the proposal is a positive for Ramsey and not to highlight parking problems – if people park illegally they will be dealt with under existing regulations. Mr. Cowell agreed the Commission should be supportive.

Mr. Beighton queried if there is room on the site for customer parking? Mr. Williams said there would appear to be some. Mr. Beighton proposed a further amendment that the applicant be encouraged to use on-sight parking. This amendment did not receive a seconder.

Mr. Williams withdrew his original proposal and seconded the amendment put by Miss Craine, which was put to the vote and carried by 6 votes to 1, Mr. Beighton voting against.

Mr. Williams suggestion that Plans 4120 and 4130 be considered in tandem with each other was agreed.

REF NO: 4120  
P.A. NO.: 23/01502/C  
PROPOSED: Additional use from Class 2.2 (Light Industry) to Classes 2.2 (Light Industry), 2.1 (Office) and 1.1 (Shops) (Retrospective)  
NOTES: P.A. - Change of Use  
SITE: **Unit 5, The Shipyard, Shipyard Road, Ramsey**



**(2023/24:313) Technical Services Manager's Report - Planning Applications Continued:**

REF NO: 4130  
P.A. NO.: 24/00146/C  
PROPOSED: Additional use of light industrial unit to include the assemblage, storage and display of large furniture items with a small element of sales usage  
NOTES: P.A. - Change of Use  
SITE: **Unit 24, Gladstone Park Industrial Estate, Ramsey**

Mr. Williams referred to areas across the Island where light industrial zoning has resulted in the inclusion of retail sales and proposed that as Zoning is a matter for the Planning Committee the Commission make no comment on the proposals. The proposal was seconded by Mr. McGuinness and carried without division.

REF NO: 4126  
P.A. NO.: 24/00033/B  
PROPOSED: Creation of Public Open Space and footpath  
NOTES: P.A. in Detail  
SITE: **Land at junction of Fairway Drive and Cloughbane Drive, Ramsey.**

Members' attention was drawn to the submission to the Planning Committee of 10 objections to the proposals citing noise, vermin, excess vehicles. The Town Clerk advised members that technically this proposal fell under permitted development, a trial recycling node is to be held on the Mooragh Promenade, and the opportunity is being taken to have the base inserted at no cost to the Commission.

Mr. Cowell commented that the objections submitted were strong, various nearby properties were not shown on the map and that there is no budgetary inclusion for the recycling hub.

Proposed by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed by 6 votes to 1, Mr. Cowell voting against that no objection be submitted.

REF NO: 4128  
P.A. NO.: 24/00058/A  
PROPOSED: Approval in Principle for the erection of a detached dwelling, addressing means of access, located east of the existing dwelling  
NOTES: P.A. in Detail  
SITE: **1, Ballure Grove, Ramsey.**

Members were informed that the application is contrary to General Policies within the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016 and those within the Ramsey Local Plan. It was proposed by Mr. Willimas, seconded by Mr. Cowell and agreed by 5 votes to 2, to object to the proposals as they are contrary to the foregoing and considered over-intensive. Mr. Beighton and Mr. Young voted against.

**(2023/24:314) Technical Assistant’s Report – Accessible Parking Bays – Mooragh Park:**

Members considered the Technical Assistant’s report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, concerning the suggestion that disabled parking bays be created in the Mooragh Park, in the vicinity of the “Costa in the Park” café. The report included extracts from the Town’s...Public Parks.. Byelaws 2020 and detailed guidelines for spaces for disabled parking bays. The report also showed illustrations of space available in relation to such guidelines.

Resolved: That, following a proposal by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Miss Craine, and agreed nem con, the Commission to not progress provision of disabled parking bays. Members appreciated the thoroughness of the report.

**Parks and Leisure:**

**(2023/24:315) Town Clerk’s Report – Library Quarter 4 - 2023:**

Resolved: To note and approve the Town Clerk’s report dated 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, detailing membership of and activity within the Town Library to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2023. (the fourth quarter of 2023).

**(2023/24:316) Deputy Town Clerk’s Report – 2024 Events Update:**

Resolved: To note the Deputy Town Clerk’s report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, providing updates on events planned to take place during 2024, subject to the following:-

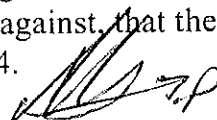
*Sprintfest* – noted.

*Ramsey National Week* – proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Mr. Williams that the matter be discussed with the Northern Chamber of Commerce to determine if further National Week events can be arranged.

*Ramsey Rocks* – noted.

*Ramsey Fireworks Display* – Mr. Beighton referred to the positive comments made by the Chamber of Commerce with regard to the Fireworks Display being held on a Saturday, and proposed that the 2024 Fireworks Display be moved to Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November; the proposal was seconded by Mr. Williams and carried by 6 votes to 1, Mr. McGuinness voting against.

*Christmas Lights Switch On* – proposed by Mr. Beighton, seconded by Miss Craine and carried by 6 votes to 1, Mr. McGuinness voting against, that the Christmas Lights Switch on be held on Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2024.



**(2023/24:317) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Lhergy Frissell Hill Climb:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, advising of the dates and times of road closures to facilitate Longton and District Motor Club's Hill Climbs between 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

A proposal was put by Mr. Beighton, seconded by Mr. Young that a request be made that the times of the road closure for the Lhergy Frissell event on 27<sup>th</sup> April be changed from 9.00 a.m. to 9.15 a.m. or 9.30 a.m. The proposal was put to the vote and defeated by 4 votes to 3, Mr. Cowell voting with the proposer and seconder.

Mr. McGuinness put a second proposal, that because the Lhergy Frissell event is on a Saturday no objection be made to the time of the road closure. This was seconded by Miss Craine and agreed nem-con.

**(2023/24:318) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – "Isle Listen" Sea Dip:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, conveying the request of "Isle Listen" for permission to stage a charitable "Sea Dip for Sanity" on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2024, using the North Beach.

Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Miss Craine that permission be granted. In seconding the proposal Miss Craine commented on the fact that the improved bathing water quality off this beach has been recognised.

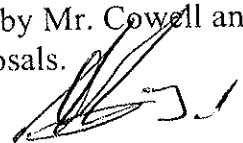
An amendment put by Mr. Beighton, that the Commission support the event and the Commission make application to enable parking on the Promenade area to avoid the need to cross a busy road, did not receive a seconder. Miss Craine proposed a further amendment, equally in support of the event but that the organisers make the necessary application for suspension of parking. This amendment was seconded by Mr. Beighton, put to the vote and carried by 6 votes to 1, Mr. Young voting against

Mr. Young wished to have recorded his total disassociation with the permission being granted.

**(2023/24:319) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Mountain Road Filming Closure:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, advising of the dates and times of road closures to facilitate filming between Ramsey Hairpin and The Creg-Na-Baa.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. Cowell and agreed nem-con, the Commission raise no objection to the proposals.



**(2023/24:320) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Wild Flower Garden and Nature Area:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, advising of the wish of Bunscoil Rhumsaa to develop a wild flower and nature area on a patch of land at the school. Members were made aware that ownership of the area of land has yet to be determined.

Resolved: That following a proposal by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. Williams and agreed nem-con the Commission commend the School and support their proposals.

**Any Other Business:**

**(2023/24:321) Private Petition – Development at Poyll Dooley:**

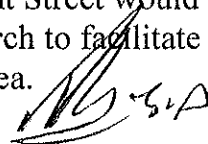
Miss Craine took the opportunity to draw attention to her private petition, circulating via social media, opposing development at Poyll Dooley, which is to be heard by the Planning Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Mr. Beighton commented that Miss Craine's petition was misleading in that it referred to "Poyll Dooley Nature Reserve". Miss Craine stated that it was unfortunate if anyone read into the petition that it was the Nature Reserve; the map shown in her petition was that used within the planning application and was adjacent to the nature reserve. No vote was necessary – the matter having been brought forward for information.

**(2023/24:322) Northern Local Authorities Swimming Pool Board Report:**

Mr. McGuinness verbally reported on the January, 2024, meeting of the Swimming Pool Board – he had several meetings with the now ex-Minister for Education and the Department to discuss funding; the Board is facing difficulties in accessing climate change funding which would be a massive boon. Mr. McGuinness also referred to media coverage of increase in the Swimming Pool rate contribution from the Town's budget picked up by the press reflected on £700 additional funding for the Commission – 0.35% of the rate increase. He emphasized that funding for regional pools is Government led.

**(2023/24:323) Road Closure Parliament Street:**

The Town Clerk informed members that part of Parliament Street would be closed from 6.00 a.m. on 26<sup>th</sup> February until 6.00 p.m. on 8<sup>th</sup> March to facilitate repairs to the "table-top ramps" of roadway within the Regeneration Area.





**(2023/24:324) Reprofilng and Regrading Beach:**

The Town Clerk informed members that he, as requested, investigated the feasibility of reprofiling and regrading the South beach, having been in touch with the Department of Infrastructure's Harbours Division. The Town Clerk confirmed from an email received dates that permission to remove maters cannot be granted under part of Section 56 of the Harbour Byelaws until Department and Harbour engineers can investigate the impact on slipways and steps. Also of concern to the Department were the arrangements for use and end use of materials which is public property and any arrangements will have to meet government financial regulations. Harbours suggest a meeting with Highway Services, prior to any further meeting with the Town Clerk.

**(2023/24:325) Public Conveniences Millennium Garden:**

The Town Clerk updated members on discussions – no response has been received from Tesco; whilst Isle of Man Enterprises have responded that they will try and make calls to enable some progress.

**(2023/24:326) Government "Pink Book" Budget Inclusions:**

The Town Clerk referred to Government's Budget and expressed disappointment that there was nothing specifically listed for Ramsey Quayside, but he hoped that something might be included in climate change mitigation and initiatives. The Town Clerk indicated he will be writing to the Department about this. The Housing and Property Manager and the Town Clerk will be discussing the schemes listed in the Budget with the Department.

The Deputy Chairman closed the public meeting at 8.12 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.

**(2023/24:327) Minutes Recorded in Private:**

Resolved: That the Minutes, recorded in private, of Board Meetings be adopted and approved as hereunder:-

**Special Board Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2024** – proposed by Miss Craine, seconded Mr. Beighton and approved nem-con.

**Monthly Board Meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2024**, proposed by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed that the Minutes be adopted subject to the following:-



**RTC Board Meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2024, Continued:**

**Clause 295(h) – Budget Brownfield Sites** – proposed by Miss Craine, seconded by Mr. McGuinness and agreed nem-con that the sub-clause be amended to read... “consideration at the Special Board Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2024.”

**Special Board Minutes – 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2024** – Proposed by Mr. McGuinness, seconded by Miss Craine and agreed nem-con, that the following be added after the sub-section headed “Beach Raft”:-

**“Brownfield Sites**

The proposal to include £20,000 for the potential development of RTC brownfield sites was discussed. A proposal that this money was not included in the 2024-25 budget was suitably proposed and seconded. The proposal was resolved Mr. Cowell voting against.”

**Special Board Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2024** – proposed by Mr. Beighton, seconded by Mr. Young and approved nem-con.

**Matters for Information:**

**(2023/24:328) On-Going Matters “Action Tracker”:**

Resolved: To note the “Action Tracker” to 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, subject to the following:-

**Town Branding** – the Deputy Town Clerk informed members that he hoped to be in a position to present an “update” by the date of the March Board Meeting.

Mr. Williams informed members of his concern at the number of items within the “Action Tracker” particularly in public, showing “red flag status”. The Town Clerk assured members that every effort is made to resolve the matters, but in many cases the delays are not within the control of the Commission.

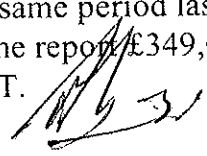
**Finance and General Purposes:**

**(2023/24:329) Finance Officer’s Report:**

Resolved: To note Finance Officer’s report dated 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, subject to the following:-

**Estimates and Revenue Expenditure:** The Finance Officer invited questions on the figures presented – none were put.

**Bank Balances** – the Finance Officer explained that the lesser balance on the General Revenue Account, as compared to the same period last year, was because of timing of receipts and that since preparation of the report £349,000 had been received by way of further rate income and refunded V.A.T.



**(2023/24:329) Finance Officer's Report Continued:**

**Rent Arrears** – the arrears list is settling, after the Christmas rise, more tenants are engaging with officers if they are experiencing difficulties which is encouraging. A Notice to Quit is being progressed in respect of the tenant listed at No. 2 on the arrears list; and since preparation of list some significant payments had been made. Miss Craine asked if the presentation of the arrears list could be adapted to reflect payments made in a month, as many tenants pay their rent on a monthly basis. The Finance Officer explained that as rent is due on a weekly basis and as the date of monthly payments varied so much it would be difficult to adapt the list to reflect such payments..

Mr. McGuinness queried if the rent due at No. 16 on the list could be “written-off” for accounting purposes. The Finance Officer advised that he will be presenting a report as to debts he would recommend be written off at the March monthly meeting..

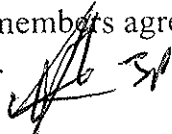
Miss Craine queried if there was a policy for rental payments when a tenancy is terminated. Members were informed that there are leaflets available advising “what to do” for many housing matters including termination of tenancy in cases of bereavement.

**Aged Debtors** – Members were informed that the Department of Infrastructure has agreed to act as Arbitrator in relation to a particular debt, and indicated that a further invoice had been sent to the debtor. Mr. McGuinness referred to a specific debt written-off, queried if it might be possible to again chase that debt; and proposed that options be explored to determine how that might be progressed; the proposal was seconded by Mr. Cowell and carried nem-con.

**(2023/24:330) Technical Services Manager's Report – 10 – 11 West Quay Update:**

Members considered the Technical Services Manager's tabled report dated 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2024, providing an update with regard to the property 10-11, West Quay, Ramsey, following the request made for an extension in time to progress works. It was noted that the owner had met the Town Clerk and Technical Services Manager and had indicated a willingness to meet with members. The owner had also been informed to keep the Commission apprised of his traffic suspension plans, which included needing slightly more time to undertake works. In response to a question from Mr. McGuinness members were informed that the property is in personal rather than a company ownership.

A proposal was put by Mr. McGuinness that the owner be given a further 2 weeks and in the absence of any action application be made to the Courts to enable works to be undertaken in default. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Beighton and carried nem-con members agreed that the option to come and talk to the Commission remains open.



Discussion progress with regard to existing legislation with regard to ruinous property Mr. Williams felt that the options are not conducive to helping local authorities get things done and accordingly proposed that DEFA be asked to review legislation. This proposal was seconded by Mr. Beighton and carried nem-con.

**Housing and Property:**

**(2023/24:331) Deputy Town Clerk's Report – Gym in Property Store:**

Members considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report dated 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, advising of the request made by the Northern Neighbourhood Police Team proposing a change of use for part of the roof space currently used by the Police as a property store, to provide gymnasium facilities for use by the Police and the Town Hall staff, should they so wish. The police seek assistance in conducting a health and safety/fire risk assessment because of the location.

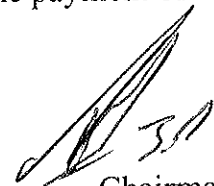
It was proposed by Mr. McGuinness seconded by Miss Craine that permission be granted –Miss Craine so doing expressing concern at the load-bearing / weight allowances.

A query was put as to necessary insurance and a further proposal was put by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Beighton that checks on insurance cover be made. This was agreed nem-con.

**(2023/24:332) Housing and Property Manager's Report – Cronk Elfin Refurbishment Update:**

Resolved: To note the Housing and Property Manager's report dated 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2024, providing an update on the refurbishment works progressing at Cronk Elfin.

The meeting closed at 9.50 p.m. giving a time of 3 hours for the payment of attendance allowances.



Chairman.