



City of Douglas

**COUNCILLOR MRS NATALIE BYRON-TEARE, JP
MAYOR**

City Hall,
Douglas,
3rd November, 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a MEETING OF THE COUNCIL of the CITY OF DOUGLAS to be held on WEDNESDAY, 8th NOVEMBER, 2023, at 2.30 o'clock in the afternoon, in the COUNCIL CHAMBER within the CITY HALL, DOUGLAS for the transaction of the hereinafter mentioned business.

I am,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katherine'.

Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Order of Agenda

I - Election of a person to preside (if the Mayor is absent).

II - Any statutory business.

III - Approval as a correct record of the minutes of the last regular and any intermediate Meetings of the Council.

IV - Questions of which Notice has been given by Members of the Council, pursuant to Standing Order No. 39.

V - Consideration of the minutes of proceedings of the Council in Committee.

VI - Consideration of the minutes of proceedings of Committees of the Council in the following order:

- (i) The Executive Committee;
- (ii) The Housing and Property Committee;
- (iii) The Pensions Committee;
- (iv) The Standards Committee;
- (v) The Eastern District Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee;
- (vi) Any other Joint Committee;
- (vii) The Regeneration and Community Committee;
- (viii) The Environmental Services Committee;

VIII - Consideration of such communications or petitions and memorials as the Mayor or Chief Executive may desire to lay before Council.

IX - Notices of Motion submitted by Members of the Council in order of their receipt by the Chief Executive.

X - Any Miscellaneous Business of which Notice has been given pursuant to Standing Orders.

The above Order of Agenda is in accordance with Standing Order No. 16(1); under Standing Order No. 16(2) it may be varied by the Council to give precedence to any business of a special urgency, but such variation shall not displace business under I and II.

AGENDA

III – Chief Executive to read minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 11th October, 2023.

VI(i) - The proceedings of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE as follows:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 25th October, 2023.

Members Present: Mrs C.L. Wells (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley, Mr Councillor D.R. Watson, Mr Councillor F. Horning.

In Attendance: Chief Executive (Miss K.J. Rice), Director of Finance (Mr A.J.T. Boyd), Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney), Assistant Chief Officer (Environment) (Mr I. Jackson), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle) (Clauses A6 to A8), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman) (Clauses A6 to A8), Executive Officer (Mrs J.M. Keig) (taking minutes).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Executive Committee’s delegated authority

A1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr Councillor I.J.G. Clague and the Director of Environment and Regeneration.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28th September 2023 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising From Previous Minutes

There were no matters arising from the public minutes of the previous meeting.

A5. Isle of Man Municipal Association

The Committee had been circulated with a number of documents received from the Isle of Man Municipal Association.

Resolved, “That particulars of the documents be noted on the minutes.”

A6. Referrals from the Environmental Services Committee

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on Monday 16th October 2023.

A7. Referrals from the Regeneration and Community Committee

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Regeneration and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 17th October 2023.

A8. Referrals from the Housing and Property Committee

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Housing and Property Committee meeting held on Wednesday 18th October 2023.

A9. Consultation on the Isle of Man Strategic Plan Review – Preliminary Publicity

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) in relation to a consultation document issued by the Isle of Man Government’s Cabinet Office.

The Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016 provided the high-level planning policy framework for the future sustainable development of the Island, and aimed to ensure that the land use needs and other spatial planning requirements (which may relate to economic, social, and environmental matters) were adequately met.

In undertaking the 'Preliminary Publicity' stage, the Cabinet Office was signalling the start of the review process into the Strategic Plan. The review would cover a wide range of topic areas, and would set out the over-arching planning policy direction to guide the production of Area Plans and the determination of planning application decisions. Once completed, this comprehensive review process would replace the existing Plan in its entirety, and the new Plan would embed policies on climate change and other national policy areas - such as design quality; landscape protection; heritage and conservation; and renewable energy.

Members considered at length the proposed response, led by the Director of Housing and Property, which incorporated comments following review of the document by the Members' Consultation Working Party. The Executive Committee's specific comments were:

- Question 8: it was proposed and seconded that the Council's preferred option should be 'Policy Option 2' (rather than 'Policy Option 1').
- Question 9: additional narrative to be included that future development should be focused on the Capital of the Island, which should be a hub for living, working, and pleasure; creating more opportunity for economic growth due to the number of people living and working in the Capital, with the additional benefit of more localised travel.
- Question 33: additional narrative to be included to cover more general concerns in relation to waste collection; planning for new buildings; encouraging green-field development; and encouraging the use of sustainable transport (details to be forwarded to the Director of Housing and Property for inclusion in the consultation response).

Resolved, "(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes;

- (ii) That the response to Question 8 be changed to support Policy Option 2 (instead of Policy Option 1);

[On a vote being taken in respect of resolution (ii), Members voted 3 For; 1 Against. Councillor Mrs C.L. Wells requested her vote against to be noted on the minutes.] and

- (iii) That the proposed response (as amended) be approved for submission to the Cabinet Office as the Council's response."

A10. Monthly Financial Review – September 2023

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance setting out details of progress made against Key Performance Indicators for Finance and other related key financial monitoring information.

The report was required in order to monitor progress against the Finance Department's Service Plan actions and to meet objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2022 - 2026.

Resolved, "(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including particularly -

- The rates collection figure of 88.2%, compared to the target figure of 84.5% for the period April to September 2023."

A11. Fleet Services – Disposal of Equipment

The Committee considered a written report by the Head of Fleet Services and Stores detailing items that had been sold in the second quarter of the 2023 / 2024 financial year in accordance with Standing Order 161, 'Disposal of Surplus Property, Materials, etc'.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes; and

- (ii) That the Schedule of Vehicles and Plant sold and the income achieved at auction in the sum of £12,865.00 (excluding VAT and less auctioneer commission in the sum of £643.25) giving net income on the day of £12,221.75, also be noted."

A12. Items for Future Report

The Committee considered a written report by the Chief Executive identifying those issues on which further reports had been requested or which were outstanding, so that Members and officers were aware of them and could monitor progress.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that it be considered and monitored at each meeting of the Executive Committee."

PART C –

Matters subject to Council approval

C13. Notice of Motion

The Committee considered a written report by the Democratic Services Officer in relation to a Notice of Motion submitted to Council in August 2023 under Standing Order 26.

The Motion, by Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin, had been referred to the Executive Committee for consideration as follows -

- 1. That the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress be recognised for their service at the end of their term by issuing badges the same way the Mayor and Consort are recognised.*
- 2. All previous Deputy Mayor and Mayoresses are recognised by issuing badges in the same way.*
- 3. All Deputy Mayors and Mayoresses have their names entered onto a scroll the same as previous Mayors and Consorts.'*

Members noted that the appointment of a Mayor was mandatory under The Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) Act 2020; and, whilst under that legislation the Mayor may appoint a Councillor to act as a Deputy Mayor during the illness or the absence of the Mayor, this was a discretionary appointment and, as stipulated in the Act, had only a civic and legal status in the absence of the Mayor.

The three individual elements of the proposed Motion were then considered, together with the respective cost implications of each. Although a detailed analysis on the number of former Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoresses had not been undertaken, based on the Council's date of incorporation and if every Mayor had appointed a different Deputy Mayor, it was estimated there could be 94 former Deputy appointments.

It was noted that, generally, at the end of their year in office, the Mayor presented a personal gift of thanks to the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress for their support. While it was acknowledged that the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress were extremely valued roles, to offer both positions the same gift as presented to Mayors and Mayoresses / Consorts as they retired from their term of office, could, inadvertently, diminish the significance of the Mayor's position as First Citizen of the City. For this reason, and because of the very significant potential costs to the Council if the Motion was accepted, it was recommended that it be not supported.

Members were advised that if it was the wish of the Council that the Deputy role be recognised more formally, then consideration could be given to the awarding of a 'Letter under Seal' in recognition of service. It was, however, strongly recommended that if the Council chose to opt for this, then it only be awarded going forward, and not be back-dated to previous Deputies.

Resolved, "(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes;

- (ii) That it be recommended to Council that the Motion be not supported at this time, due to the effect it could have on the significance of the Mayor's position and the significant costs associated with the proposal; and
- (iii) That it be further recommended that, going forward, the role of Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress be recognised formally by the presentation of a 'Letter under Seal.'"

The Committee rose at 5.40pm.

VI(ii) – The proceedings of the HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE as follows:

HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 18th October, 2023.

Members Present: Mr Councillor D.R. Watson (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny, Mr Councillor P.J. Washington.

In Attendance: Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney), Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) (Mr V. Zivave), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle), Housing and Property Operations Manager (Mr J. Chatwood), Assistant Property Manager (Assets) (Mrs S. Cain), Assistant Property Manager (Capital) (Mr R. Green) (Items A5 to A7), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Miss C. Cullen).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 20th September, 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 20th September, 2023, were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising

Clause B13 – Loch Promenade Kiosk Roof Replacement; in response to question, the Director of Housing and Property clarified that the design of the kiosk / café area would be incorporated into the proposals for the replacement of the children’s playground (located in Marine Gardens) but that works to replace the roof would be deferred until after the playground had been completed.

A5. Vacant Property Update

The Committee considered the monthly report submitted by the Assistant Housing Manager (Maintenance) to update on the number of vacant social housing properties.

Appended to the officer’s report was the void properties schedule, which showed that as at the end of September 2023, there were thirty-eight vacant properties receiving attention.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) advised that since the time of writing the report, six properties had been allocated and a further three would be allocated in the forthcoming weeks.

Members were presented with a summary chart showing the number of properties returned in each month, details of the category repair type for each property, together with the number of void properties in each estate.

Resolved, “That particulars of the discussion and the number of void properties be noted on the minutes.”

A6. Items for Future Consideration

The Committee noted the monthly report and schedule setting out items which will be brought forward for consideration to future meetings.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and schedule be noted on the minutes.”

A7. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next scheduled meeting was due to take place at 10.00am on Wednesday, 15th November, 2023.

Resolved, “That the date and time of the next meeting be noted on the minutes.”

The meeting ended at 12.06pm.

VI(iii) – The proceedings of the PENSIONS COMMITTEE as follows:

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

PENSIONS COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 25th October, 2023.

Members Present: Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin, Mr Councillor F. Horning.

In Attendance: Director of Finance (Mr A. Boyd), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs D. Atkinson), Scheme Administrator - Mr A. Beedall (Capita), Mr I. Murray – Chief Executive of the Public Sector Pensions Authority (Item A8 only).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Committee's delegated authority

A1. Apologies

Mr Councillor I.J.G. Clague and Mr A Thomas, Independent Member submitted their apologies for the meeting.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 13th September 2023

The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday, 13th September, 2023, were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

A5. Training: Scheme Specific Regulations

The Committee received a training presentation on the IOMLGSS scheme specific regulations. The training covered eligible employers, admission agreements, contributions and Member benefits.

Resolved, “That the training be noted on the minutes.”

A6. Superannuation Scheme Performance Monitoring

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Director of Finance to update on the performance against measures outlined in the Superannuation Scheme Service Plan.

Members had in front of them the actions from the service plan together with an outcome on each. A red, amber and green status had been applied to determine progress in comparison to the action. Members noted that all objectives are on schedule or completed with the exception of the completion of the Pension Fund Annual Report. The Director of Finance advised that, disappointingly, Capita did not provide the accounts to the auditors within the specified time to review in order for the Committee to approve by the statutory deadline of 31st October. The Director of Finance advised of his intention to write to the relevant Director at Capita expressing the Council's dissatisfaction and requesting assurances that the matter will not be repeated in future years. It was noted that the Treasury has the powers to impose sanctions on Council.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and the progress against the planned actions in the Service Plan be noted.”

A7. Capita Quarterly Report

The Committee received Capita's quarterly report on the administration of the IOMLGSS. The report covered information on membership movements and casework during the period 1st July 2023 to 30th September 2023.

Mr Beedall agreed to provide further information on the service level agreement key performance indicators that were not met during the period.

Mr Beedall was also asked to review the list of authorities that had been late with their payment of contributions into the Scheme during the quarter, and to consider the application of penalties for repeat offenders.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes.”

A8. Scheme Reform: Informal Consultation

Mr I. Murray, CEO of the Public Sector Pensions Authority, joined the meeting for this item.

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) to inform of the feedback from the informal consultation exercise.

In line with the agreed timeline for scheme reform, an informal consultation was undertaken. Employee members of the scheme, unions and scheme employers were invited to attend presentations during July in which the scheme reform proposal was explained. The Committee had in front of them the notes from each meeting.

In addition, a mailing was sent to all employees members after the presentations including a copy of the slides, a two-page summary of the proposed changes, a table illustrating the impact on take-home pay of the proposed 1% increase in employee contributions, and for those that had been employed at the date preceding the annual benefit statement (31st March 2022) an illustration of what their retirement benefits would be under the proposed scheme rules.

The Director of Finance advised that feedback was invited by the 30th September by e-mail or letter (an initial deadline of the end of August was extended by a month). No letters were received, six e-mails were received seeking further clarification of individual entitlements, a request was received from one union and no e-mails were received from employees or unions in relation to the proposal. Three local authorities responded, one in favour, two were non-committal either way. One local authority had previously commented on their support for reform, but did not submit an official response.

The Director of Finance advised that as there was very little feedback received from the informal consultation, he recommends that the scheme reform progress as initially planned. The next phase would be the legislative drafting stage, which was a highly technical, specialist and would inevitably be a lengthy process which would require input from consultants also.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the reform initiative continue as planned."

A9. Review: Administering Authority Policy on the IOMLGSS Discretions

The Committee considered a report submitted by Capita to review the discretionary policies for the administering authority. Members were reminded that under the 2012 Scheme regulations, the Administering Authority and Scheme employers are required to formulate, publish and keep under review a Statement of Policy on certain discretions.

The policies were published in 2012 and previously reviewed in 2016 and 2019. The regulations state that the mandatory policies must be kept under review. A review has therefore been undertaken and no material changes were recommended, however some changes to clarify or clerically amend had been suggested.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that the discretionary policy as presented to the Committee be approved and published."

A10. Plan of Administration Activities for 2024

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Director of Finance to plan the administration matters to be considered by the Committee during the coming year.

Members had in front of them the activity schedule for Capita that sets out proposed subjects to be covered by way of reports from Capita in the 2024 Committee meetings.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the two year administration training plan be approved."

A11. Items For Future Report

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Democratic Services Officer setting out items that are to be considered at future meetings and to review any future training requirements.

Resolved, "That particulars of the items for future report be noted on the minutes."

A12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting was due to take place at 10.00am on Wednesday, 22nd November, 2023.

The Committee rose at 11.47am.

I(vii) – The proceedings of the REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE as follows:

REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday, 17th October, 2023.

Members Present: Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin, Mr Councillor F. Schuengel.

In Attendance: Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman) (Items A1 to A7), Borough Librarian (Mrs J. Macartney) (Item A7), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs D. Atkinson).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted by Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner and the Director of Environment and Regeneration.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 19th September, 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 19th September, 2023 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters arising

No issues were raised as arising from the previous meeting.

A5. Department for Enterprise – Winner Enclosure Proposal

Following a request from the Committee at the September meeting, two representatives from the Department for Enterprise (DfE), Mr A. Spiers and Mr C. Owen, joined the meeting to discuss plans for the TT winner enclosure at Noble's Park.

The Chair explained that the Committee are supportive of the request in principle, but would like the Department to think of other improvements that could be made to the area. The Committee felt that the area has the potential to enhance the experience of visiting the grandstand both during the racing and for the remainder of the view as a backdrop for photographs.

The representatives thanked the Committee for their support and agreed to explore other options including the potential for a phased approach, subject to available budgets and any external approvals required, and report back to the Council with a further proposal.

Resolved, "That particulars of the discussion be noted on the minutes."

A6. Tarmacking of TT Paddock Area

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Head of Parks (Services), following a proposal from the Department for Enterprise, to tarmac an area of the TT paddock.

Mr Speirs and Mr Owen were in attendance for the discussion of the item, and explained that the request had been submitted due to the current stone surface not being suitable for motorcycles and other associated vehicles.

It was noted the proposed area is not utilised for leisure facilities due to the condition of the area being loose stone and surfacing the area could enable it to be used for events.

In response to question, the representatives confirmed that the Manx Utilities Authority will calculate the drainage requirements as part of the works to ensure there is no impact on the park.

The representatives were thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and;

- (i) The proposal from the Department for Enterprise to tarmac an area of the TT paddock area, subject to all relevant permissions, be approved;
- (ii) The Council's Engineers be consulted about the types of surface to be laid."

A7. HBN Library Quarterly Monitoring Report

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Borough Librarian to update on the performance against measures outlined in the Library Service Plan.

Appended to the report were the actions as outlined in the Library's Service Plan, together with an update on performance as at the end of quarter two 2023/24. A red, amber, green or black status had been applied to each measure. All measures were either on target or not applicable to this quarter. Members were also provided with the user statistics during the quarter. It was noted that book loans, digital downloads and the number of library users had increased in comparison to quarter two of the 2022/23 year. The Borough Librarian provided an overview of the events organised during the quarter including the Summer Reading Challenge.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and the progress made against performance indicators in the Library Service Plan be noted on the minutes."

A8. Review of Pollinator Plan

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) proposing updates to the Council's pollinator plan.

Members were reminded that the Council first published a pollinator plan in 2017 and reviewed it in 2021. Implementation of the action plan was delayed in part due to the Covid 19 pandemic but 2022 and 2023 had seen it develop as intended. During this period officers have gained useful insight and experience as to the types of areas that work well and generate compliments from the public and those that are unlikely to be successful or have been poorly received by the public. The current plan expires in 2023 and so officers have proposed updates to cover the period 2024 to 2027. Also proposed were some amendments to the management prescriptions for some of the sites covered by the Plan Bee Action Plan with some sites being proposed for removal and replacement with others. The report listed the proposed changes, removals and replacements.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the proposed revisions to the Council's Pollinator Plan and Management Prescriptions be approved."

A9. North Quay Pedestrianisation Update

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) to update on the pedestrianisation of North Quay over the summer of 2023 and to seek authority in relation to further developments.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) advised that discussions are still ongoing with the Department of Infrastructure (DoI) regarding a permanent solution to the Traffic Regulation Order for the section of North Quay between Ridgeway Street and Market Hill.

During the summer, the Manx Food Market Traders Association (Manx FMTA) was established and has been holding fortnightly food markets on Saturdays utilising the road closure. The markets have been very well received by the public and local food producers.

The Manx FMTA has secured an agreement with St Matthew's Church for the markets to be held inside the church on occasions when the weather is particularly poor, however the overriding preference is to hold the markets outdoors when possible. In order to continue the markets in the winter months there will need to be a road closure in place on market days. Officers discussed the potential of the Manx FMTA applying for these closures but it is not practical due to the structure of the trade association not being formally incorporated and therefore any liabilities would fall to individual traders. The report therefore recommended that the Council applies for the closures for market days. The closure would apply to Saturdays only, and Manx FMTA would be responsible for the implementation of the closure. Appended to the report were letters of support from the traders. It was noted that St Matthew's Church and one business in the area continue to oppose the pedestrianisation, and a recent letter from St Matthew's was appended to the report.

One of the issues highlighted by the market was the shortage of public seating on North Quay. A trial had been undertaken over the summer using wooden picnic benches as a means of providing seating while the roads are closed to traffic. Although potential permanent sites for seats have been identified at the junction with Ridgeway Street and within the harbour side area there remains no more public seating of any kind when the road is opened. A preliminary discussion between officers and the DoI has suggested that the DoI would be open to consider the potential to reroute or extinguish the cycle lane/shared space from North Quay if there was reason to do so. The report recommended that officers

pursue this conversation with the DoI with the aim to create more opportunity for public seating and pavement cafes when the road is open to traffic.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and;

- (i) The situation in relation to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order be noted;
- (ii) The establishment of the North Quay Foodies Market on alternate Saturdays over the summer be noted;
- (iii) The feedback from a range of organisations be noted;
- (iv) Officers be authorised to seek road closures every alternate Saturday over the winter in order to allow the North Quay Foodie Market to continue to operate year round;
- (v) Officers be authorised to seek the view of Department of Infrastructure to redirect the cycleway from North Quay and the implications of doing so in relation to street furniture, public seating and use of the Quay.”

A10. Items for Future Report

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Democratic Services Officer regarding reports for future consideration by the Committee.

Resolved, “That particulars of the matters for future consideration and discussions be noted on the minutes.”

A11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next scheduled meeting was due to take place on Tuesday, 14th November, 2023.

Resolved, “That the date and time of the next meeting be noted on the minutes.”

The meeting ended at 12.40pm.

VI(viii) – The proceedings of the ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 16th October, 2023.

Members Present: Mr Councillor F. Horning (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny, Mr Councillor P.J. Washington.

In Attendance: Assistant Chief Officer (Environment) (Mr I. Jackson), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle) (Items A1 to A6), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman) (Items A1 to A4), Dilapidation Enforcement Officer (Mr S. Salter) (Items A7 to A9), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Miss C. Cullen).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted by Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner and the Director of Environment and Regeneration.

A2. Declarations of Interest

The Worshipful the Mayor declared an interest in item A8.

Mr Councillor P.J. Washington declared an interest in item A6.

A3. Minutes –18th September, 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 18th September, 2023 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Item A5 – Electric Vehicle Charging in the Bottleneck Car Park; following question raised at the October 2023 Council meeting, the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) undertook to ask Manx Utilities Authority what is the expected design life of electric vehicle charging points.

A5. Highways Service Level Agreement

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Director of Environment and Regeneration seeking approval of the proposed Highways Service Level Agreement.

Members were advised that in November 2022, Committee Members and officers had been invited by the Department of Infrastructure (DoI) to attend an evening workshop to discuss the contents of a draft Highways Services Level Agreement (SLA). The workshop was held at the Onchan Hub and was attended by several authorities in the East, including representatives from Douglas City Council.

In advance of the workshop, a draft Highways SLA was circulated for comment in March 2022 and officers of the Council had provided feedback accordingly, which was shared with Members. The feedback comprised of minor amendments and points of clarity. In the main, officers had no concerns with the standards being proposed within the SLA as the tasks requested were already being performed by the Council and had been since the transfer of functions in 2015. It was noted that a further SLA was circulated by the DoI and all of the Council's previous comments had been accepted.

A further workshop/meeting was held in July 2023 at Keyll Darree Lecture Theatre and was attended by several Local Authorities. Whilst Douglas City Council had no issue with the proposed standards, several authorities had been responding to issues as they arose. The proposed SLA therefore caused some concern for these authorities who had neither the workforce, skill, equipment nor budget provision to undertake the tasks required.

Members were advised that at the culmination of the meeting, it was agreed that the DoI would respond to several of the concerns raised. That response came in the form of an email seeking agreement to a final version of the SLA, which was appended to the officer's report together with a covering letter from the DoI.

It is recommended that the proposed Highways SLA be approved, as all of the tasks requested are already being performed by the Council.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that the Highways Service Level Agreement as attached at appendix one of the report be approved.”

A6. RNLI Flags on the Promenade

A report had been submitted in relation to a request from the RNLI to install RNLI flags on Douglas Promenade as part of the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the organisation.

Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1985, Mr Councillor P.J. Washington declared an interest in the item, resulting in the meeting being inquorate. The item was therefore deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Environmental Services Committee to be held on Monday, 13th November, 2023.

A7. Planning Application 23/00616/B former Citadel Building – Appeal Statement

The Committee considered an appeal statement which had been lodged against a development previously supported by the Committee, and to determine whether the Council should continue to support the development by way of written submissions to be considered by the independent planning inspector and/or by attending any subsequent appeal hearing.

Members were reminded that planning application 23/00616/B, for demolition of the existing former Citadel building and erection of a forty-four bedroom hotel at the former Salvation Army Citadel, Lord Street, Douglas, had been considered by the Committee at the meeting held on Monday, 19th June, 2023 when it was resolved that support be given to the application. Subsequently, planning approval was permitted for the proposed development.

Members were advised that the Council had been notified that the owner of a number of properties along Church Street, adjacent to the former Citadel building, had lodged an appeal against the proposed development. Council officers have reviewed the appellant’s statement, a copy of which was appended to the report, and consider that the points raised by the appellant have all been previously considered by the Planning Committee and dismissed.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that the Council continue to support the proposed development by way of both written submissions and by attending any subsequent appeal hearing.”

A8. Planning Application 23/01119/C – Unit 4 Strand Shopping Centre

Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1985, the Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Mrs N.A. Byron-Teare declared an interest in the item and retired whilst it was considered.

Members considered an appraisal of planning application 23/01119/C for change of use from Class 1.1 (Shops) to Class 4.4 (Assembly and Leisure), at Unit 4 Strand Shopping Centre, Douglas.

Members were advised that Unit 4 within the Strand Centre had been vacant for several years and if approved, the application would make good use of an existing vacant retail unit that may help to increase footfall within the Strand Centre as well as contributing to increased footfall along this part of Strand Street and Castle Street.

It is considered that the proposed leisure facility would be a welcome addition to the high street and would contribute to the vitality of Douglas as well as the night time economy through the extended opening hours of the business.

Members were advised that there are no material planning concerns and that the application appears to comply with all the planning policies considered within the appraisal, as appended to the report.

Members noted that in line with the Council’s Planning Scheme of Delegation, the planning application had been presented to the Committee due to the involvement of a Douglas Member.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that support be given to planning application 23/001119/C, change of use from Class 1.1 (Shops) to Class 4.4 (Assembly and Leisure). The business is a virtual reality games arena and arcade at Unit 4 Strand Shopping Centre, Douglas.”

A9. Schedule of Dilapidated, Ruinous or Dangerous Properties

The Committee considered a schedule of properties in a state of dilapidation or disrepair. Members noted that three properties had been added to the schedule since the last meeting; no properties had been removed because work had been completed; and a total of sixty properties remained on the list.

Resolved, “That the schedule of dilapidated properties be noted and approved and that the Director of Environment and Regeneration be authorised to progress improvements to the properties, by service of Notice and legal action where necessary.”

A10. Items for Future Report

The Committee noted a report submitted by the Assistant Democratic Services Officer with an appendix setting out a number of reports that would be brought forward for consideration by the Committee in due course.

Resolved, “That particulars of the matters for future consideration be noted on the minutes.”

A11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next scheduled meeting of the Environmental Services Committee was due to take place at 10.00am on Monday, 13th November, 2023.

Resolved, “That the date and time of the next meeting be noted.”

The meeting ended at 10.57am.