



City of Douglas

MR COUNCILLOR S.R. CRELLIN, JP
MAYOR

City Hall,
Douglas,
5th June 2025

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, 11th JUNE, 2025, 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 be 'A. B. O.' followed by a flourish.

p.p. 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 Special Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 7th May, 2025 and the Annual Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 14th May, 2025.

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 29th May, 2025.

Members Present: Mr Councillor D R Watson (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Mrs N A Byron-Teare, Councillor Ms F T E Logan, Mr Councillor F Horning, Mr Councillor P J Washington.

In Attendance: Chief Executive (Miss K J Rice), Director of Finance (Mr A J T Boyd), Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D Eynon), Director of Housing and Property (Mr D Looney), Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) (Mrs L Radcliffe) (Clauses A9 to A13), Council Advocate (Mrs L Rothwell) (Clause A9), Head of Digital and Information Services (Mr D Yates) (Clause A9), Human Resources Officer (Mrs T Quilliam) (Clause A9), 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

There were no apologies for absence.

A2. Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved, “That it be unanimously agreed that Councillor Mrs N A Byron-Teare be appointed as Vice Chair of the Committee for the municipal term 2025 to 2027.”

A3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A4. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27th March 2025 were approved and signed.

A5. Matters Arising From Previous Minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

A6. Referrals from the Environmental Services Committee

There were no referrals from the minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025.

A7. Referrals from the Regeneration and Community Committee

The Committee considered the following referral from the minutes of the rescheduled Regeneration and Community Committee meeting held on Thursday 22nd May 2025:

Clause B3 – Tree Replacement at Willaston: the Committee had considered a report by the Head of Parks seeking funding for the replacement of 39 pine trees in Willaston. In January 2025, Storm Eowyn had caused extensive damage, including the loss of numerous trees and, specifically, the uprooting of two large pine trees in Willaston had resulted in significant damage to properties. The loss of the fallen trees had left the remaining pine trees vulnerable to storm damage and the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture had advised that the remaining 39 trees should be removed because of their height and proximity to residential properties. The proposal was to replace the trees with a mix of 39 smaller native trees that were more ecologically robust and better prepared for future environmental challenges.

The Executive Committee discussed the proposal at length, including whether there would have been merit in planting smaller less-established trees, therefore reducing the overall cost; and whether the fallen trees might have any value if they could be sold or re-purposed (although it was noted that they would be chopped down to be removed, limiting what they could then be used for).

Resolved, “(i) That particulars of the referral be noted on the minutes;

- (ii) That funding in the sum of up to £35,000 be approved from the General Revenue Reserve for the replacement of 39 pine trees (which must be felled) with 39 native trees in the vicinity of Baldwin Road, Willaston; and
- (iii) That the above approval be subject to options being explored for the use of the wood once the trees had been felled.”

[Members voted 4 For; 1 Against. Mr Councillor F Horning requested his vote against resolution (ii) to be noted on the minutes.]

A8. Referrals from the Housing and Property Committee

There were no referrals from the minutes of the Housing and Property Committee meeting held on Wednesday 21st May 2025.

A9. Chief Executive’s Department’s Service Plan Performance Report

The Committee considered a written report by the Chief Executive providing an update on performance compared against measures outlined in the Chief Executive’s Department’s Service Plans for 2024 - 2026.

Following the Council’s adoption of a new Corporate Plan for the years 2022 – 2026, each Service had its own Service Plan to run for the financial years 2022 – 2024 and 2024 – 2026.

Service Plans were an important part of the process to ensure that performance and standards were addressed and delivered; and Members accordingly noted the actions from the Service Plans, together with an update on performance for the first six months to the end of April 2025.

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

- (ii) That the progress against planned actions and performance indicators also be noted;
- (iii) That thanks be extended to the Human Resources and Finance Teams for progressing back-pay due to relevant employees following the recent implementation of Single Status and also the 2024 / 2025 pay award;
- (iv) That a report be submitted to the Committee in due course on the outcome of the 2025 Staff Survey;
- (v) That the actions in respect of response times for answering telephone calls and the automatic number place recognition intercom be removed from Appendix 3 as they could not be accurately measured by the present telephone system;
- (vi) That a Briefing Note be circulated to all Members, setting out the feedback (compliments / complaints) received by the Council from January to December 2024; and
- (vii) That the Chief Executive and Council Advocate submit a report to the Committee setting out the benefits for the Council of increasing resources within the in-house legal service, earlier than the suggested timeline in the Plan.”

A10. Consultation Document – Introduction of Fees and Cost Limits for Freedom of Information Requests

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) in relation to a consultation document issued under Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1985.

The ability for the public to make Freedom of Information requests to public authorities was a recognised and important established right for the people of the Isle of Man, and the Cabinet Office was seeking views on the introduction of fees and cost limits for Freedom of Information requests. The policy proposal outlined in the consultation was not intended as a barrier to that access – rather, it sought to strike a careful balance of the right to information alongside effective government and value for the taxpayer.

The consultation had opened on 17th March and closed on 9th May 2025. Due to the timing of the recent Local Authority Elections, the previous Consultation Working Group had not met to discuss the draft response prepared by officers, and membership of the new Working Group had still to be determined.

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

- (ii) That the proposed response, as appended to the report, be endorsed as the Council’s response.”

A11. Consultation Document – Jury Eligibility Criteria

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) in relation to a consultation document issued under Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1985.

The Cabinet Office was seeking views on the eligibility criteria for jury service. There were many professions currently automatically exempt from being eligible to serve as jurors, and the focus of the amendments was to review and potentially revise that list (some of which may come under the remit of the Council).

The consultation had opened on 3rd April and closed on 23rd May 2025. Due to the timing of the recent Local Authority Elections, the previous Consultation Working Group had not met to discuss the draft response prepared by officers, and membership of the new Working Group had still to be determined.

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

- (ii) That the proposed response, as appended to the report, be endorsed as the Council’s response, subject to clarity being obtained in respect of point 5 of Question 9 to ensure that persons who suffer or have suffered from a mental disorder would not be excluded by virtue of still requiring to see a General Practitioner for their condition.”

A12. Consultation Document – Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 2003

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) in relation to a consultation document issued under Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1985.

The Isle of Man Government was seeking feedback on proposed amendments to the Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 2003. This followed a recent review of the Regulations by the Health and Safety At Work Inspectorate, which had identified several necessary changes and aimed to align the Regulations with current best practices.

The consultation had opened on 9th April and was scheduled to close on 4th June 2025. The Consultation Working Group had not met to discuss the draft response prepared by officers, which was now presented for further consideration by the Committee.

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

- (ii) That the proposed response, as appended to the report, be approved for submission as the Council’s response.”

A13. Members’ Attendances and Allowances 2024 / 2025

The Committee considered a written report by the Member Services Officer on the number of meetings of the Council and its Committees that had been held during the 2024 / 2025 municipal year, including details of the attendance of Members at those meetings and the total allowances paid to Members.

The Council was required under Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act 1985 to publish this information annually; with an obligation to send a copy of the report to the Department of Infrastructure with a certificate issued by the Council’s auditors.

A query was raised as to whether attendance at the Isle of Man Municipal Association was included, to which officers would seek clarification.

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

- (ii) That the schedule setting out Members’ attendances at meetings and the allowances paid during the year ended 31st March 2025 be noted;
- (iii) That approval be given for the submission of the schedule to the Council’s auditors with the annual accounts, and to the Department of Infrastructure; and
- (iv) That the schedule be made available to the public through the Council’s website and at the City Hall Reception desk.”

A14. Annual Financial Review – 2024 / 2025 (Year-End)

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance setting out the year-end position in respect of the various financial items and key performance indicators for Finance that had been received during the 2024 / 2025 financial year.

The report was required to monitor progress against the Finance Department’s Service Plan actions, and to meet the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2022 – 2026. It also provided the Committee with key income collection performance data for the financial year.

Resolved, “(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including specifically:-

- The rates collection figure of 99.5%, compared with the target figure of 99.5% for the financial year;
- The sundry debtors collection figure of 99.6% for the year, compared with the target figure of 99%;

- The total gross Housing rent arrears position of £393,718, compared with the figure of £172,209 for 2023 / 2024 (which was due to timing differences); and
 - The sundry debt write-off during the year of £8,259.57 and the former tenant write-off during the year of £20,586.12, making a total of £28,845.69;
- (ii) That the Director of Finance be requested to submit a report to the Committee for noting in relation to all finalised Internal Audit reports for the 2025 / 2026 Audit Plan; and
- (iii) That the item relating to the feasibility of Island-wide rates collection by the Council be removed from the schedule.”

A15. Monthly Financial Review – April 2025

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 monthly report was required to monitor progress against the Finance Department’s Service Plan actions and to meet objectives set out in the 2022 – 2026 Corporate Plan.

Members were advised that the Council currently did not have an auditor for its main accounts. The Tynwald Auditor General was due to commence the procurement process imminently, however, the delay could impact the Council’s ability to meet the statutory accounts audit deadline of 31st October 2025.

Resolved, “(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including specifically:-

- The rates collection figure of 12.3% for the first month of the financial year, compared with the target figure of 11.8%; and
 - That the Council was currently without an external audit appointment and that the Tynwald Auditor General was due to commence the procurement process imminently;
- (ii) That the Director of Finance write to the Tynwald Auditor General expressing the Committee’s concerns that the delay in appointing an external auditor could impact on the Council’s statutory obligation to have its accounts certified by 31st October 2025; and
- (iii) That the situation with the external audit and the zero-rating of properties be raised by the Leader of the Council at a future meeting of the Isle of Man Municipal Association.”

A16. Capital Out-turn Report 2024 / 2025

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) in relation to the financial year-end out-turn position on the Capital Programme.

Members noted the values spent on all Capital schemes in 2024 / 2025, and the variances to the revised estimates. In respect of the amounts recommended to be carried forward, formal approval of this expenditure was sought where schemes had progressed more quickly than budgeted for.

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

- (ii) That the 2024 / 2025 Capital spend of £7,984,000 - made up of public sector housing spend of £6,753,000 and General Rate Funded spend of £1,232,000 (representing 43% of the Original Estimate) - be noted;
- (iii) That the window and floor replacement project for the 13 Church Street premises (PH00174) be funded initially through the General Revenue Reserve, with that Reserve being reimbursed after Section 25 petition approval had been gained;
- (iv) That approval be given to carry forward £3,049,000 of all unspent balances to 2025 / 2026 on projects where work was on-going or where retentions were payable; and
- (v) That early expenditure of £405,000 also be approved.”

A17. Urgent Business Procedure – Planning Application (PA 25/90278/C) for the Temporary Use of the Bottleneck Car Park for a Manx Produce Food and Drink Market (21st May to 8th June 2025)

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Environment and Regeneration on the use of the Council’s Urgent Business Procedure under Standing Order 125.

A planning application had been received while the Council was in its April recess for the temporary use of the Bottleneck Car Park as a Manx Produce Food and Drink Market from 21st May to 8th June 2025, 12 noon until 10.00pm daily.

As it related to the 2025 TT event, the then-Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Environmental Services Committee had considered the application and, on the basis that the Environmental Services

Committee had considered the matter in December 2024 with no objections being raised by Committee Members, had accordingly approved supporting the application.

It was envisaged that the event would improve the entertainment and hospitality offering during the TT Festival for both visitors and local residents; and also benefit other established businesses within the City Centre.

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

- (ii) That the resolution under the Urgent Business Procedure – to approve supporting a planning application for the temporary use of the Bottleneck Car Park as a Manx Produce Food and Drink Market from 21st May to 8th June 2025 - be noted and endorsed accordingly.”

A18. Urgent Business Procedure – Purchase of Two Electric LDV Vans

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Environment and Regeneration on the use of the Council’s Urgent Business Procedure under Standing Order 125.

In December 2024, the Executive Committee had approved the purchase of two small second-hand vans for the new painters, to be bought at a cost of approximately £30,000 for both. Two vans, which were pre-registered, had become immediately available. They were essentially new and already on the Island (eliminating delivery charges) and would come with a four-year warranty on all parts and labour, which would reduce maintenance and repair costs.

It was crucial for Fleet Services to initiate the process to purchase the vans rather than go through the tender process and, as the Council had been in its April recess, the then-Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Environmental Services Committee had agreed the suspension of Standing Order 146(a)(iii) (where no genuine competition existed) in order to secure the best price and benefit from immediate delivery.

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

- (ii) That the resolution under the Urgent Business Procedure – to suspend Standing Orders to enable the immediate purchase of the two vans, resulting in savings to the Council - be noted and endorsed accordingly.”

A19. Marine Gardens Flood Protection Scheme

The Committee considered a written report by the Head of Electrical Services and Projects seeking approval for temporary funding to be made available through the General Revenue Reserve for the Marine Gardens Flood Protection Scheme design fees.

As part of the wider regeneration scheme on Douglas Promenade, the Committee had approved flood protection for Loch Promenade. Initial funding of £12,000 had been made available to further investigate the development of proposed improvements to the Marine Gardens flood protection, and the Committee had subsequently accepted the proposed design of high-strength structural glass panels with slot-in aluminium barriers to replace the current wooden storm boards.

A further allocation of funding was now required to cover the appointment of the selected design consultants. This would allow for the detailed design of the project and the production of specifications and drawings for tender documentation, to enable the project to proceed to planning. These fees had to be incurred prior to submitting a Section 25 petition approval request and it was therefore proposed that they be guaranteed from the General Revenue Reserve.

The project was contained in the Capital Programme with a budget of £350,000 (at current prices). If approved, a total sum of £44,000 would be guaranteed from the General Revenue Reserve for the pre-petition design fees, which would be reimbursed to that Reserve after Section 25 petition approval had been gained.

The Marine Gardens were created in the early 1930’s and they had been deliberately constructed at a lower level to the Promenade Walkway (i.e., ‘sunken’) in order that walls would provide protection from the prevailing sea winds. Members discussed the proposed design of the new flood protection scheme and, in response to a suggestion that the current wooden storm boards be replaced with like-for-like in order to reduce costs, it was noted that a great deal of investment had taken place on Douglas Promenade and that the use of modern materials would be in-keeping with the improvements already made.

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

- (ii) That an additional £32,000 in funding for design fees for the proposed Marine Gardens Flood Protection scheme be approved from the General Revenue Reserve, bringing the total pre-petition design fees for the project to £44,000.”

[Members voted 4 For; 1 Against. Councillor Mrs N A Byron-Teare requested her vote against the resolution to be noted on the minutes.]

A20. Fleet Services – Disposal of Equipment

The Committee considered a written report by the Head of Fleet Services and Stores detailing a number of small used items of plant and equipment that had been sold in the fourth quarter of the 2024 / 2025 financial year in accordance with Standing Order 161, 'Disposal of Surplus Property, Materials, etc'.

It was noted that the items sold on behalf of the Council had been included in three separate auctions - on 18th January, 8th February, and 1st March 2025.

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

- (ii) That the Schedule of Vehicles and Plant sold, and the income achieved at auction in the sum of £40,541.97 excluding VAT and less auctioneer's commission in the sum of £1,826.17, giving net income from the three auctions of £38,715.80, also be noted; and
- (iii) That the income received in respect of the pews removed from the Crematorium be reinvested in the Cremator Renewals Fund."

A21. 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."

A22. Time and Date of Next Meetings

The time and date of the next meeting were confirmed as 2.00pm on Thursday 26th June 2025.

The Committee rose at 5.20pm.

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, 21st May, 2025.

Members Present: Mr Councillor P.J. Washington (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor K.W.F. Ver Elst, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny.

In Attendance: Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney), Director of Finance (Mr A.J.T. Boyd) Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) (Mr V. Zivave), Housing & Property Operations Manager (Mr J. Chatwood), Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) (Mrs L. Radcliffe), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Mrs C. Maddocks).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received by Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Appointment of Vice-Chair for 2025 – 2027

The Chair invited nominations for the election of a Vice-Chair to act in the illness or absence of the Chair for the municipal term 2025 to 2027.

Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney was nominated by Councillor Ms J. Thommeny, seconded by Mr Councillor K.W.F. Ver Elst.

Resolved unanimously, “That Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney be elected Committee Vice-Chair for the municipal term 2025 to 2027.”

A4. Minutes – 19th March, 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 19th March, 2025 were approved and signed.

A5. Matters Arising

No matters were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A6. Vacant Properties 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 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.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) advised that there are currently sixty-one vacant properties. Seven properties will be ready for allocation in the forthcoming two weeks; seven properties had been returned since 1st April 2025 and a further seven properties had been allocated during the last allocations meeting.

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

A7. Quarter four performance monitoring 2024/25

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Housing and Property Operations Manager to update on the quarter four performance indicators for 2024/25.

Appended to the report was the quarterly performance figures for quarter four, and the statistical trend analysis data for rent arrears for the quarter.

Of note for quarter four:

- 94.1% of emergency repairs had been completed within the target time of twenty-four hours;
- 69.6% of urgent repairs were completed within the target period of 7 working days;
- 93.3% of standard voids were completed within the target time of five weeks and 100% of major voids were completed within the target time of twelve weeks.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that the progress made against the performance indicators in the Service Plans for quarter four 2024/25 be noted.”

A8. 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.”

A9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next monthly meeting was scheduled to take place at 10.00am on Wednesday, 18th June 2025.

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

The meeting ended at 12.02pm

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

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

PENSIONS COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 28th May, 2025.

Members Present: Mr Councillor F. Horning (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Mrs N.A. Byron-Teare J.P., Councillor Ms J. Thommeny, Mr Councillor K. Ver Elst.

In Attendance: Director of Finance (Mr A.J.T Boyd), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs D. Atkinson), Mr J. Glasgow, Hymans Robertson (Items A1 to A12), Ms C. Hove, Hymans Robertson (virtual attendance, Items A1 to A7), Mr J. Penn (Item A8).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Committee's delegated authority

A1. Apologies

Ms Alexa Christian, Independent Member, submitted apologies for the meeting.

A2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were submitted.

A3. Election of Vice-Chair

Mr Councillor K. Ver Elst was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair to the Pensions Committee for the municipal years 2025-2027.

A4. Minutes – 26th March, 2025

The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday, 26th March, 2025 were approved and signed.

A5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

A6. Training: Investment Training for New Committee Members

Hymans Robertson provided an overview of the Isle of Man Local Government Superannuation Scheme investment strategy and how the scheme sets long term objectives to ensure it can pay members' benefits.

Resolved, "That the training presentation be noted on the minutes."

A7. Quarterly Review of Investment Managers' Performance

The Committee considered a report submitted by Hymans Robertson to review the investment managers' performance during the first quarter of 2025.

The Scheme achieved a return of negative 0.5% over the quarter, underperforming the benchmark by 0.7%. Returns over 5 years remain positive albeit behind the overall benchmark. The largest relative outperformer was the Canaccord Global Equities ESG Fixed Income, and the largest relative underperformers were the Capital Absolute Return (which underperformed against the benchmark by 2.6%) and Canaccord RLAM UK equities.

It was noted that a rebalancing exercise had been undertaken during the quarter, and all funds were within their rebalancing ranges.

Ms Hove provided a market background and finished with the presentation of individual manager analysis during the quarter. It was noted that there were no changes recommended to the current manager appointments, however the property fund continues to be monitored in relation to the management of redemption requests. In response to question, Mr Glasgow explained the purpose of the Absolute Return Fund and suggested the Committee ask the manager how they are currently positioned to outperform a downturn in the market.

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

A8. Manager Reporting: Capital International

Mr J. Penn joined the meeting to present the Capital absolute returns and ESG Fixed income corporate bonds funds.

Mr Penn commenced the presentation with the Absolute Return Fund returns for the first quarter of 2025 which underperformed the benchmark by 2.3% (ignoring fee deductions) during what was a challenging quarter which witnessed some unsettling policy announcements and reduced confidence.

Mr Penn provided a market background, referencing particularly the Trump “Liberation Day” announcement and the impact on the global markets. He moved on to the strategy comments for the quarter, the strategy outlook, asset allocation and attribution and finished with the top and bottom contributors and activity during the quarter.

Mr Penn moved onto the ESG bond portfolio performance during the quarter which outperformed the benchmark by 0.6%. He provided the strategy comments on the portfolio.

In response to question, Mr Penn explained that the Absolute Return benchmark, which is set at the Bank of England base rate plus 3%, is difficult to achieve with the current high base rates. Mr Penn also confirmed the fund’s reason for holding a large amount of cash (15%), which he advised is conservatively positioned ready for investment when the opportunity arises.

At the conclusion of the manager presentation, Members discussed the fund and requested a review of the Scheme’s allocation to absolute return to determine if it was still appropriate or if there are other options, with lower fees, that could be better suited. It would in any case be appropriate to review the investment strategy once the statutory valuation results are received later this year.

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

A9. Update on Responsible Investment Beliefs

The Committee considered a report submitted by Hymans Robertson, to present the results of a questionnaire circulated to employers and active Scheme members to capture their views on responsible investment.

Members were advised that the questionnaire had been drafted following a Committee request in November 2024 to seek the views of employers and Scheme members to ensure their views are reflected in the drafting of a stand-alone responsible investment policy. The report presented the response to each question; 84 responses were received and were a mix of employer and Scheme members.

The general populace of responses believed that the Scheme should prioritise investment returns first and address ESG issues where they do not detract from optimising returns. Equality, diversity and inclusion was ranked the most important ESG issue to scheme members, closely followed by climate change. Executive pay was the ranked least important.

Members requested that the questionnaire results, together with the November Committee Member responses, be circulated to all Council Members ahead of the next Council Meeting.

Mr Glasgow confirmed the next step is to draft the Responsible Investment Policy based on the results of both questionnaires, for presentation to the Committee in September 2025.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, and an updated Responsible Investment Policy, based on the results of the questionnaires to Committee Members, Scheme members and employers, be forthcoming to the September 2025 meeting.”

A10. Review of Statement of Investment Principles

The Committee considered a report submitted by Hymans Robertson to review the Statement of Investment Principles (the statement). The report explained that the statement, which has been adopted by the Pensions Committee, is required under the regulations and in line with best practice and should be periodically reviewed.

The statement explained the scheme objective, the investment strategy, the types and balance of investment to be held, the risk exposure, expected returns, realisation of investments, the portfolio turnover, consideration of financially material factors in investment arrangements, stock lending and additional voluntary contributions. Mr Glasgow confirmed there were no material changes proposed to the statement, and the document will be reviewed again following the valuation results later in the year.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and the Statement of Investment Principles update be accepted and signed by the Chair of the Committee for publication.”

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.

A report on the ongoing benefits of retaining the Absolute Return Fund element of the portfolio with its higher level of fees was added to the schedule.

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

A12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the date and time of the next meeting is Wednesday, 10th September, 2025 at 10.00am.

The Committee rose at 1.30pm

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

REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 22nd May, 2025.

Members Present: Councillor Mrs N.A. Byron-Teare, J.P. (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor M. Wheeler, Councillor Miss S. Kewin, Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney.

In Attendance: Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman), Head of Parks (Mrs S. Parkinson), City Centre Manager (Mr O. Cheshire), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs D. Atkinson).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence submitted.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

A3. Election of Vice-Chair

Councillor Miss S. Kewin was elected as Vice-Chair of the Committee for the municipal years 2025-2027.

A4. Quarterly Monitoring Report – Department of Environment and Regeneration

Members considered a report submitted by the Director of Environment and Regeneration to update on the performance made against measures outlined in the Environment and Regeneration Department Service Plans, as relevant to the Regeneration and Community Committee.

Appended to the report were the measures as outlined for the Parks Service, and Douglas City Centre Management as at the end of quarter four of 2024/25. A red, amber, green and black status had been applied to each measure.

The Committee considered the report in detail, discussing ongoing and upcoming matters for consideration. Officers provided details of the actions contained within the plans.

It was noted that in Parks Services two measures were not completed within the original timeframe due to awaiting input from others or competing urgent priorities. All other measures were completed or on target for completion in 2026. In City Centre Management, four measures were not met due to competing priorities, all other measures were either met or on target for 2026.

During discussion, Members requested that a report be forthcoming on the potential to open the Noble's Park splash zone and Dave's Maze at the beginning of May.

It was noted that a report on Douglas playgrounds, following an external independent review, commissioned by the Council, will be forthcoming to the July meeting of the Committee.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and the progress made against performance indicators in the Environment and Regeneration Department Service Plans as relevant to the Regeneration and Community Committee for quarter four of 2024/25 be noted on the minutes."

A5. Quarterly Monitoring Report – Douglas City Library

The Committee considered a report submitted by the City 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 fourth quarter of 2024/25. A red, amber, green, or black status had been

applied to each measure. All measures had been applied green (not yet due to start, in progress or on target to complete).

Members also received and noted the user statistics during the quarter which had generally increased.

The Family Library situation was discussed, and the Committee concurred that the facility was a popular service to many Douglas residents, in particular families, however, the Council does not have the vires or the funds available to financially assist the Family Library.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the increase in the use of the library apps to download books, audiobooks, magazines, and newspapers be noted."

A6. 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."

A7. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting was due to take place on Tuesday, 17th June, 2025

PART B –

Matters requiring Executive Committee approval

B8. Tree Replacement at Willaston

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Parks seeking approval to request reserve funding from the Executive Committee to replace 39 pine trees in Willaston.

The report explained that in January 2025, Storm Eowyn struck the Island and caused extensive damage, including the loss of numerous trees. Notably, two large pine trees in Willaston were uprooted and landed on a semi-detached property in the area. The incident resulted in significant damage to the properties.

Following a site review conducted by the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) together with the Council's arborist team, it was concluded that the loss of those trees has left the remaining pine trees vulnerable to storm damage. DEFA has advised that given the height and proximity to residential properties, the remaining 39 trees should be removed. Replacement of the trees would be a required element of the felling licence.

The report proposed replacing the trees with a mix of 39 smaller native trees that are safer, more ecologically robust and better prepared for future environmental challenges.

In response to question, the Director of Environment and Regeneration confirmed the replacement of the trees had no connection with the proposed compound for the Willaston external improvement project.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the matter be referred to the Executive Committee to seek approval for funding of £35,000 from Reserves to replace 39 pine trees that must be felled with 39 native trees in the vicinity of Baldwin Road, Willaston."

The meeting ended at 11.40am

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

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 19th May, 2025.

Members Present: Mr Councillor F. Horning (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor M.R. Wheeler, Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny.

In Attendance: Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Environment) (Mr I. Jackson), Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) (Mrs L. Radcliffe), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle) (Items A1 to A6), Community and Enforcement Manager (Mr A. Gordon) (Items A7 to A10), Dilapidation Enforcement Officer (Mr S. Salter) (Items A7 to A10), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Mrs C. Maddocks).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

A2. Declarations of Interest

Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney declared an interest in item A7.

A3. Appointment of Vice-Chair 2025 – 2027

The Chair invited nominations for the election of a Vice-Chair to act in the illness or absence of the Chair for the municipal term 2025 to 2027.

Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney was nominated by Mr Councillor M.R. Wheeler, seconded by Councillor Ms J. Thommeny.

Councillor Ms J. Thommeny was nominated by Mr Councillor F. Horning, seconded by Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney.

On a vote being taken the votes were cast as follows.

Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney 2

Councillor Ms J. Thommeny 2

The Chair exercised his casting vote in favour of Councillor Ms J. Thommeny.

Resolved, “That Councillor Ms J. Thommeny be elected Committee Vice-Chair for the municipal term 2025 to 2027.”

A4. Minutes – 17th March, 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 17th March, 2025 were approved and signed.

A5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

No matters were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A6. Quarter four service plan performance monitoring 2024 – 2026

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Director of Environment and Regeneration to update on the performance made against measures as outlined in the Environment and Regeneration Service Plans as relevant to the Environmental Services Committee.

Appended to the officer’s report were the measures as outlined in each Service Plan together with an update on the performance as at the end of quarter four 2024/25. A red, amber, green and black status had been applied to each measure.

Members noted that for quarter four:

- Within Building Control, all annual measures were met albeit performance was severely impacted in quarter four due to long term sickness and an ongoing vacancy;
- Within Electrical Services, three measures out of 21 measures were not completed within their original timeframe due to recruitment issues or awaiting others. All other measures were completed;
- In Fleet Services, two out of nine measures were not completed within their original timeframe due to factors beyond the Council's control. All other measures were completed or are on target for completion in 2026;
- Within Community and Enforcement, 10 out of 23 measures were not completed within their original timeframe due to changes in advice, workload pressures from a depleted team and factors outside the control of the Council. All other measures were completed on time or are on target for completion in 2026. All main performance indicators were met;
- In Waste Services, seven out of 17 measures were not fully met or were slightly behind target due to capacity within the waste management team, and factors outside of the Council's control. All other measures were met and/or completed.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that the progress made against performance indicators in Service Plans for quarter four 2024/25 be noted."

A7. Planning Application 25/90361/B – Saddle Mews Nursing Home

The Committee considered an appraisal of planning application 25/90361/B for conversion of the existing former nursing home to six townhouses at former Saddle Mews Nursing home.

The report advised that the application complies with the planning policies considered within the appraisal and that the proposed development will make good use of a building that has been vacant for several years. The Dilapidation Enforcement officer advised that there had been no objections raised by the Department of Infrastructure or the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that planning application 25/90361/B be supported."

Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1985, Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney declared an interest in the item and retired whilst it was considered.

A8. Planning application 25/90365/C – 13 Empress Drive

The Committee considered an appraisal of planning application 25/90365/C for the change of use from a hotel to house in multiple occupation with twenty-seven bedrooms at Sea View, 13 Empress Drive, Douglas.

The report advised that the proposed plans lacked detail regarding bin and recycling storage. The Dilapidation Enforcement Officer advised that the Council had provided guidance to the applicant on waste and recycling requirements. The applicant acknowledged this and confirmed that amended plans would be submitted.

It was noted that no objections had been raised by the Department of Infrastructure regarding parking or bicycle storage.

Council officers considered the comments from Environmental Health, which required that the HMO be registered to ensure compliance with the Housing (Standards) Regulation 2017. It was also advised that the property be inspected and registered prior to occupation.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that planning application 25/9036/C be supported, subject to the following condition;

- (i) Prior to the property being occupied the bin and recycling storage arrangements must be approved by Douglas City Council's waste management team to ensure that sufficient storage for both residual waste and recyclable materials is available within the curtilage of the building and is easily accessible for collection."

A9. Planning application 25/90205/B – 25 South Quay

The Committee considered an appraisal of planning application 25/90205/B for the change of use to electric vehicle charging station with erection of solar panels, twelve charging bays, installation of storage containers and the creation of new vehicular access at 25 South Quay, Douglas.

Members were advised that the site situated on South Quay sits within the Douglas Central Quayside zone on the Area Plan for the East (TAPE) and is designated for mixed use development.

It was noted that the South Quay area had been subject to various planning applications for temporary and permanent car parking which the Council had objected to on the grounds that use of the sites would be contrary to various planning policies and guidance in relation to the development of brownfield sites.

Guidance for the development of brownfield sites is that they should be developed as opposed to becoming car parks, many of which have been considered to have a detrimental impact on the City of Douglas. The appraisal concluded that the works proposed to install EV infrastructure are not considered substantial enough to argue that the site is being developed and could result in a disincentive to the full redevelopment of the site.

It is considered that the proposals potentially conflict with land designation at this site as this application does not sit within the context of mixed-use zoning which had been defined as tourism, offices, food and drink, leisure, reception and functions, business hubs and residential uses at first floor and above.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and an objection be raised against planning application 25/90205/B."

3 For. 1 Against.

Mr Councillor M.R. Wheeler asked that his name be recorded as voting against the resolution.

A10. Schedule of Dilapidated, Ruinous or Dangerous Properties

The Committee considered a schedule of properties in a state of dilapidation or disrepair. Members noted that four properties had been added to the schedule since the last meeting; ten properties had been removed because work had been completed; and a total of forty-three properties remained on the list. This equates to 0.29% of the total number of properties in Douglas.

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, and report back to Committee if service of Notice and/or legal action is required."

A11. 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.

In response to a Member's request, the Director of Environment and Regeneration agreed to circulate a briefing note to the Committee. The note would include an explanation of the response to a written question submitted to Council on 9th April 2025, along with a copy of the Council's review of alternate weekly refuse collections.

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

A12. 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, 16th June, 2025.

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

The meeting ended at 11.40am