



City of Douglas

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

City Hall,
Douglas,
7th March 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, 12th MARCH, 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 read 'Kathleen', written in a cursive style.

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, 12th February, 2025.

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 27th February, 2025.

Members Present: Councillor Mrs C.L. Wells (Chair), the Mayor (until 5.00pm), Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley, Mr Councillor I.J.G. Clague, 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 (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) (Mrs L. Radcliffe) (Clause A9), Human Resources Officer (Mrs T. Quilliam) (Clause A11), 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 D.R. Watson, and the Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D Eynon).

A2. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on the following dates were approved and signed:-

- Thursday 16th January 2025 (Special Budget Meeting);
- Thursday 23rd January 2025;
- Tuesday 28th January 2025 (Special Joint Meeting with the Housing and Property Committee).

A3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

A4. Referrals from the Environmental Services Committee

There were no referrals from the minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on Monday 17th February 2025.

A5. Referrals from the Regeneration and Community Committee

The Committee considered the following referral from the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 18th February 2025:

Clause B1 - Spring Valley / Pulrose Pavilion Changing Rooms (Funding of Expended Fees): the Committee had considered a report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking approval to refer a request to the Executive Committee for expended fees associated with the Spring Valley / Pulrose Pavilion Changing Rooms scheme to be funded from Reserves.

In May 2022, the Executive Committee had ratified an Urgent Business Procedure decision, which authorised that £30,500 of fees for the design of the Spring Valley / Pulrose Pavilion Changing Rooms scheme would be guaranteed from Reserves if the capital scheme did not go ahead for whatever reason. It had been noted, as part of the 2025 / 2026 budget, that the project would now be revenue funded and would not therefore be subject to a petition for capital costs. Accordingly, the expended fees to date (to cover design fees and other project-related fees) would need to be funded from Reserves.

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

- (ii) That approval be given for the expended fees associated with the Spring Valley / Pulrose Pavilion Changing Rooms scheme, at a total cost of £40,161.25, to be funded from Reserves.”

A6. Referrals from the Housing and Property Committee

There were no referrals from the minutes of the Housing and Property Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19th February 2025, the item that had been included on the agenda having been withdrawn at the meeting.

A7. Procurement of Specialist Display Case

The Committee considered a written report by the Chief Executive in relation to the procurement of the specialist display case for the Letters Patent, as requested at the January 2025 meeting.

The Letters Patent was a significant asset of the Council and a historically important document. Public display of the Letters Patent in the City Hall reinforced its cultural and historical value, and advice had been obtained from Manx National Heritage as to the most appropriate way to keep and safeguard the asset, as any damage or degradation would signify a failure for the Council to protect it and could negate any insurance cover.

Because of the specialist nature of the case required to safeguard the Letters Patent, only one supplier had been identified and, as this would be a long-term asset of the Council, the view taken at the time by officers was that the appropriate budget from which to fund the procurement of the display case was the Town Hall Property Management budget as it was considered a piece of specialist furniture. That view had since been reconsidered; and the cost had instead been moved to the City Status account. However, as the City Status account had a nil balance, a virement of £13,000 had been approved in accordance with Financial Regulation F18 from a budget that would be underspent this year.

Following discussion, it was agreed that it would be appropriate to fund the purchase of the display case from the General Revenue Reserve, rather than from a virement.

Resolved, “(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including the information regarding the procurement of the specialist display case; and

- (ii) That approval be given for the procurement of the display case to be funded from the General Revenue Reserve.”

A8. Monthly Financial Review – January 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 Isle of Man Government Budget 2025 had been approved by Tynwald at its sitting on 18th February, and the main items of relevance for the Council were noted accordingly.

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

- (a) The rates collection figure of 98% for the April 2024 to February 2025 period, which compared well with the target figure of 97% and was almost in line with the previous year’s equivalent of 97.9%;
- (b) The Treasury’s creation of a new £9,500,000 Housing Deficiency Fund as part of the Isle of Man Government Budget 2025 (now separate from the Department of Infrastructure’s revenue budget); and
- (c) The Treasury’s announcement, as part of the Treasury Minister’s Tynwald Budget speech, of plans to amend rating legislation to give new powers to local authorities to help address the issue of empty and derelict properties.”

A9. Isle of Man Municipal Association

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

The Council had been made aware of correspondence from various local authorities in relation to amendments recently proposed to the Local Government (Amendment) Bill 2023. The Bill had been in draft form for the previous seven years and, in January 2025, three additional clauses had been included during the Bill’s second reading in Tynwald. There had been no consultation with local authorities prior to the inclusion of the proposed additional clauses, which would impose a requirement on local authorities to perform specified functions (delegated by Government) either themselves or by making a financial contribution to a third party to perform that function.

The extent of what local authorities would be required to mandate was unknown, which could have serious financial implications and substantial increases in costs for ratepayers. It was proposed that a

letter be sent from the Council, expressing concern about elements of the additional clauses and stating that the Government must have agreement from all local authorities to pass on these responsibilities.

Resolved, “(i) That particulars of the documents received from the Isle of Man Municipal Association be noted on the minutes; and

- (ii) That the Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) be requested to draft a letter to the Department of Infrastructure Minister expressing the Council’s concern at the inclusion of the additional clauses within the Local Government (Amendment) Bill 2023, with an additional comment that the process of their inclusion was considered undemocratic, as there had been no consultation with local authorities and also despite specific requests from the Council seeking updates from the Department of Infrastructure on the Bill’s progress.”

A10. Planning Application – PA 25/90050/C, Change of Use from Butchers’ Shop to Launderette (Unit 30D, Alder Road, Douglas)

The Committee considered a written report by the Dilapidation Enforcement Officer seeking approval of a response from the Council to the Planning Committee in relation to Planning Application PA 25/90050/C.

The planning application, submitted by the future tenant, was for a change of use of the Council-owned unit at 30D Alder Road, Douglas, from a butchers’ shop to a self-service launderette. The property had been vacant since February 2024 and officers were of the opinion that a self-service launderette would provide a useful community facility.

The proposed work would include the installation of an external flue for the clothes dryers, which was to be undertaken by the applicant at no cost to the Council. As the proposals had already been considered and supported by the Housing and Property Committee on two previous occasions and as there had been no changes to the proposals since they were last considered, it was recommended that the application be supported.

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

- (ii) That approval be given for a response to be submitted to the Planning Committee in support of Planning Application PA 25/90050/C, for the change of use from a butchers’ shop to a self-service launderette at Unit 30D, Alder Road, Douglas.”

A11. Employee Survey 2025

The Committee considered a written report by the Human Resources Officer seeking funding to undertake the 2025 employee survey.

The last employee survey had been undertaken in September 2021 and, although the next had been due to take place in 2024, there had been a delay in commencing the survey due to the ongoing negotiations relating to the implementation of Single Status. Companies both on and off Island had been approached to undertake the survey, with two local companies submitting quotations. The lowest quote deemed value-for-money had been received from SmartHR, who had undertaken the previous survey in 2021 and so were familiar with the Council and its services.

It was noted that the costs of the survey would be met from the General Revenue Reserve, as no funding had been built into the 2025 / 2026 budget. Members proposed that an employee survey should be undertaken on a regular basis, every two years, and that funding should be provided going forward so that the costs were properly budgeted for in the future.

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

- (ii) That approval be given to appoint SmartHR to undertake the 2025 employee survey, including post-survey workshops;
- (iii) That the cost of the 2025 employee survey be met from the General Revenue Reserve; and
- (iv) That an employee survey be undertaken every two years and that funding be budgeted for in the future.”

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.”

A13. Time and Date of Next Meetings

The time and date of the next meeting was confirmed as 2.30pm on Thursday 27th March 2025 (at the conclusion of the Special Council Meeting).

PART C –

Matters subject to Council approval

C14. Referrals from the Regeneration and Community Committee

The Committee considered the following referral from the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 18th February 2025:

Clause C2 – Cremator Replacement and Greenhouse Gas Reduction: the Committee had considered a report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking approval to replace the 300/2 cremator and ancillary equipment at the Crematorium.

While officers had been researching options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the older of the two cremators (the 300/2, which was over 30 years old and beyond its life expectancy) had suffered a breakdown and, although it had been repaired using parts from a decommissioned facility elsewhere, the incident had highlighted the risk of continuing to operate such an old cremator.

Both the current cremators were supplied and maintained by Facultatieve Technologies, and a cost had been provided by them for two types of replacement cremator - the FTIII and a hybrid cremator. Officers had undertaken analysis of the specifications and range of options for both models, it being recommended to proceed with the FTIII cremator. The FTIII could be assembled on site and Facultatieve Technologies had recommended that the flue liners and the aged compact coolers also be replaced as part of the works to replace the 300/2 cremator, as to do so at a later date would involve the removal of one of the cremators to gain access, which would incur additional cost and have operational implications.

The Crematorium was a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, and the report to the Regeneration and Community Committee had been to consider how the Crematorium could be decarbonised. However, the breakdown of the 300/2 cremator had fundamentally changed the direction of that research and until reliable, cost-effective, and sustainably-generated electricity could be secured, it was considered that fully electric cremations were not yet feasible. Therefore, as the business case for a replacement with an electric cremator could not be justified at this time, it had been recommended that DeNox equipment be installed as part of the project.

The total cost of the scheme amounted to £671,600. This included the replacement cremator with gas modifications, the replacement pilot gas burner on the existing cremator, the installation of the DeNox units, and the replacement of the flue liners and the compact coolers. The report had recommended funding the capital project through loan over a fifteen-year period. The annual loan repayments would initially be funded from the Cremator Renewals Fund in 2025 / 2026, with the subsequent years' annual loan charges being funded through an increase in cremation fees from 2026 / 2027 onwards (although this would be subject to approval from the Department of Environment, Food, and Agriculture after consultation with the Department of Infrastructure).

It had been noted that once petition funding was approved, there was a twenty-week lead-in time for installation. Although minor service disruptions may occur during installation, measures to minimise these disruptions were already being considered.

The Executive Committee discussed at length the proposed funding source for the project. Rather than the entire amount being funded through petition borrowing, it was suggested that a portion of the costs be funded from the Cremator Renewal Fund.

It was acknowledged that the Cremator Renewal Fund was in place to ensure there were sufficient monies available to cover urgent works or unforeseen circumstances, however, it was proposed that £180,000 be drawn down from the Fund, with the balance of the cost of the works being petitioned for. It was noted that there would still be further draw down on the Fund for the loan repayments, although these would be less than if the entire amount was petitioned for. Members were advised that there was an element of risk in reducing the Cremator Renewal Fund down by such a significant amount, however, if necessary, that risk could be funded in the short-term from the General Revenue Reserve.

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

- (ii) That the resolution of the Regeneration and Community Committee be endorsed and that it be recommended to Council -
 - (a) That the replacement of the 300/2 cremator with a modified FTIII cremator be approved, along with the installation of DeNox equipment for both cremators, and the replacement of pilot gas burners, flues, and compact coolers, at a total estimated cost of £671,600

(including a 15% client contingency to cover unforeseen costs and petition delays resulting in price increases);

- (b) That the proposal to purchase the equipment as proprietary articles from Facultatieve Technologies be approved in accordance with Standing Order 146(a)(i);
- (c) That the sum of £180,000 be drawn down from the Cremator Renewal Fund to part fund the project;

[On a vote being taken in relation to resolution (ii)(c), Members voted 2 For; 2 Against. The Chair exercised her right to a casting vote and the resolution was carried. Mr Councillor I.J.G. Clague and Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley requested their vote against to be recorded on the minutes]

- (d) That the Chief Executive be authorised to petition the Department of Infrastructure for borrowing powers in the sum of £491,600, being the balance of the amount required to defray the costs of the works; and
- (e) That given the impact the proposals were likely to have on gas consumption and emissions, any further operational options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions be held in abeyance until the new cremator was in operation.”

C15. Proposal for Civic Relationship with Dublin City Council

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance detailing the implications of entering into a twinning agreement with Dublin City Council, and how it could be used for the benefit of the Council and be maintained.

The suggestion had first been considered in December 2023, with the resolution proposal from the Executive Committee at that time being for a formal twinning agreement with Dublin. While this was confirmed at the Committee’s meeting in June 2024, Full Council in July 2024 had moved for a ‘relationship’ – so not specifying or committing the Council to a twinning or less formal type of agreement.

While not legally binding, a twinning agreement implied the setting up of a ‘long-term trusting relationship’ - on the other hand, an informal agreement could be useful where partner cities identified areas of interest for a proposed collaboration over a specific timeframe. Entering into a civic relationship with Dublin City Council would offer opportunities, such as mutual learning, collaborative working, and benchmarking comparisons. Outside of the Council, the potential benefits for the wider community could be commercial, economic, educational, cultural, sporting, and environmental.

There would be a cost element arising from any form of civic agreement with Dublin, but there should be no additional rateborne costs as a result of outside bodies developing their own links with their Dublin counterparts – the fostering of such links would be a matter entirely for those outside bodies. That way, schools, sporting associations, cultural organisations, and businesses may wish to embark on exchange visits, but should not look to the Council for funding - the Council’s role being merely to enable such relationships to develop on the back of a civic agreement.

Members were in agreement that a formal twinning agreement with Dublin City Council should be pursued. Currently there were no resources identified as being available for the Council to directly support a programme of activities or the hosting of additional community events that may arise out of a civic relationship with Dublin, however, Members were of the opinion that funding and resources should be made available, but recognised that the level of such could only be determined once it was known what type of civic relationship Dublin was agreeable to entering into with Douglas.

While there would be potential benefits, it would be impossible to place a tangible or financial value on such an agreement before it was entered into – only after a period of time would it be possible to properly evaluate its success. Ultimately, the form of agreement would evolve as the process developed - Dublin City Council’s Protocol Committee would consider the proposal for a formal twinning agreement with Douglas and either approve, recommend not to proceed, or ask for further information. If approved, the decision of the Protocol Committee would still remain subject to formal ratification by a full meeting of Dublin City Council.

Members were also advised that any relationship agreement with Dublin need not impair the twinning agreement already in place with Ballymoney, Northern Ireland, as it was not unusual for towns or cities to have more than one twinning agreement in place.

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

- (ii) That the Committee re-affirms its wish to submit a request for a civic relationship with Dublin City Council, with a preference towards a twinning agreement;

- (iii) That further to resolution (ii) above, it be recommended to Council that Douglas enters into a civic relationship with Dublin City Council, the preferred type of relationship being in the form of a twinning agreement; and
- (iv) That subject to approval of resolution (iii) above and thereafter formal ratification by Dublin City Council, a further report be put before the Committee to give consideration to resourcing for this, to foster the relationship between the Council and Dublin City Council.”

The Committee rose at 5.10pm.

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, 19th February, 2025.

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

In Attendance: Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) (Mr V. Zivave), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman), 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 submitted on behalf of the Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney).

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 15th January, 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 15th January, 2025 were approved and signed.

A4. Minutes – 28th February 2025

The private minutes of the special joint meeting of the Executive Committee and Housing and Property Committee, held on Tuesday 28th January 2025, were noted.

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 report advised that there are currently fifty-seven vacant properties, of which twenty-one are active. The remaining thirty-six properties are deferred as they require refurbishment works.

Members were pleased to note that seventeen of the twenty-one active void properties, had been allocated to the void contractor for immediate refurbishment using funds from the approved capital petition.

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 Three Performance Monitoring 2024/25

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

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

Of note for quarter three:

- 94.9% of emergency repairs had been completed within the target time of twenty-four hours;

- 70.2% of urgent repairs were completed within the target period of 7 working days;
- 100% 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 three 2024/25 be noted.”

A8. Biomass boiler at Hazel Court Sheltered Housing Complex

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Housing and Property Operations Manager, seeking approval to temporarily turn off the biomass boiler at the Hazel Court Sheltered Housing complex.

Members were advised that Hazel Court is heated by two systems; two commercial gas boilers and a biomass boiler, which burns organic material, typically wood chips, to generate heat. The biomass system operates during the winter months (September to March), while the gas system is used in the summer (April to August).

At the time of installation, the biomass system was considered a more cost-effective and energy-efficient alternative to oil or gas. However, in 2017, the Council commissioned March Consultants Limited to conduct an energy review. Their findings indicated that, within just three years of operation, the biomass system had incurred maintenance costs exceeding those of a comparable gas system by £7,000. Despite this, they recommended its continued use due to its potential energy efficiency.

Over the past four years, the biomass boiler has experienced frequent breakdowns, placing a significant strain on the housing maintenance budget. The system requires regular maintenance, and major replacement parts often need to be sourced from outside the United Kingdom, leading to delays and additional costs.

Given the high maintenance costs and diminishing benefits, it is recommended that the biomass boiler be temporarily turned off whilst officers explore alternative energy solutions.

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

- (i) That the Biomass Boiler at Hazel Court Sheltered Housing Complex be temporarily turned off; and
- (ii) Officers be authorised to explore alternative energy efficient and ‘green’ solutions.”

A9. Willaston Apartment Complex Naming Proposal

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Director of Housing and Property in relation to the naming of the new Willaston Apartment Complex.

At the Housing and Property Committee meeting in January 2025, Members tasked officers with verifying the historical significance of Samuel Webb and James Brown; the two proposed names. The officer’s report included historical research on both individuals and Housing Committee minutes from 1944, which confirmed that Alderman Samuel Webb had not donated the land at Willaston or the former Manor House to the Council.

Members thoroughly discussed both proposals, recognising the significant contributions of both individuals to Douglas. Given that a public house in the city centre is already named after Samuel Webb, raising potential confusion, particularly for emergency services, the Mayor suggested naming the complex Alderman Webb Apartments.

Upon a vote being taken, Members unanimously agreed to name the apartments after James Brown.

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

- (i) That the apartments currently under construction at Willaston be named James Brown Apartments in recognition of James Brown’s significant contributions to Douglas and the Council.”

A10. 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.”

A11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next monthly meeting was scheduled to take place at 10.00am on Wednesday, 19th March 2025.

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

PART C –

Matters requiring Council approval

C13. 13 Church Street – Remedial Works

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Property Manager (Assets) seeking approval to proceed with remedial works at 13 Church Street.

Members were reminded that the Council had purchased 13 Church Street in 2015 to accommodate members of staff that had been occupying leased premises. A refurbishment scheme was undertaken to suit the Councils requirements as office accommodation along with shared facilities with Douglas City Hall.

During recent remedial works to address water ingress damage, it was identified that the floor joists require replacement to restore the shop area to a usable condition. As the entrance structure and adjacent timber windows must be removed for these repairs, it is proposed to replace them with double-glazed units to improve energy efficiency.

The proposed works will include:

- Waterproofing the basement meeting room
- Replacing joists, floorboards, carpet tiles, and skirting boards
- Redecorating office spaces
- Improving ventilation in the basement meeting room

Members were advised that as the building is within the Douglas Promenade Conservation Area, planning permission for replacing the shop windows was sought and approved.

Following the procurement process, two tenders were received by the closing date of 24th January 2025. The tender submitted by Brendan Downey Construction Limited was evaluated, arithmetically checked, and considered to offer value for money and is therefore recommended for acceptance.

The contract will be awarded on a firm price basis, ensuring fixed costs for the contract duration. Provisional and contingency sums are included to cover unforeseen works.

Members were advised that, in compliance with the Asbestos Regulations 2022 (IOM), an Asbestos Survey is required as best practice. An asbestos consultant has been engaged to conduct a Refurbishment Asbestos Survey.

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

- (i) That the Capital Design Stage I3 Report at Appendix A be approved;
- (ii) That Brendan Downey Construction Limited be appointed as the main Contractor for the remedial works to be undertaken at 13 Church Street and their tender be accepted;
- (iii) The professional fee for the appointment of an Asbestos Surveyor to undertake a refurbishment and demolition asbestos survey prior to commencing the works on site be approved;
- (iv) That the matter be referred to the Executive Committee seeking funding approval for the total project cost of £79,558.00 inclusive of the above, to be capital funded with a 15-year loan to enable the project to commence on site; and
- (v) That the Chief Executive be authorised to submit a petition to the Department of Infrastructure for funding in the sum of £79,558.00 being the total capital borrowing required for the project.”

The meeting ended at 11.32am.

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

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

PENSIONS COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 26th February, 2025.

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

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, Mr A. Lawrence and Mr M. Hooper (UK Property Fund Managers) (Item A9).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Committee’s delegated authority

A1. Apologies

The Mayor and Mr Councillor I.J.G. Clague submitted apologies for the meeting.

A2. Minutes – 27th November, 2024

The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday, 27th November, 2024 were approved and signed.

A3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

A4. Training: Common and Alternative Assets

The Committee received a training presentation delivered by Hymans Robertson about the different types of assets that a Pensions Scheme can invest in.

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

A5. Quarterly Review of Investment Managers’ Performance

The Committee considered a report submitted by Hymans Robertson to review the investment managers’ performance during the fourth quarter of 2024.

The Scheme achieved a return of -0.4% over the quarter, underperforming the benchmark by 0.3%. Returns over 5 years remain positive albeit behind the overall benchmark. The largest relative outperformer was the Canaccord Global Equities ETF, and the largest relative underperformers were the Capital Absolute Return and property allocation managed by BlackRock, both of which underperformed their respective benchmarks across all time periods shown. Following a conversation at a previous Committee Meeting, Mr Glasgow agreed to review the benchmark for the UK Property Fund to analyse if it remains an appropriate comparative to the fund.

Mr Glasgow advised that all funds are still within their rebalancing ranges at the end of the quarter; however, the Scheme is 3.2% overweight in growth versus protection. It was noted there was a report recommending a rebalancing exercise for consideration later in the meeting.

Mr Glasgow provided a market background and finished with the presentation of individual manager analysis during the quarter. It was noted that there are no changes recommended to the current manager appointments.

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

A6. Re-balancing of the Fund

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) to consider disinvesting some funds to re-balance the fund range.

Members were reminded that the strategy had been agreed to annually review the strategic allocation of all assets in comparison with their agreed control ranges. Funds are valued against the strategic allocation and surplus contributions top up the most underweight fund. This approach had been generally effective, however, over a long period of time it was noted that this will not necessarily be adequate to maintain the balance close to target.

The report explained that the recent changes in interest rates had led to a significant decrease in the value of the pension scheme’s government and corporate bond holdings. Growth assets are above their target allocation, with global equities almost at its upper limit. It was noted there are no surplus

contributions available at this time to add to the exercise as doing so would affect the scheme's cash flow position and ability to meet its liabilities as they arise.

The investments and disinvestments recommended would restore all income asset classes to their target strategic allocations excluding the absolute return and property assets. It was noted the property fund has a target of 12% and currently stands at 11.6%. As this is within an acceptable range, and there is currently a restriction on withdrawals to the fund, it was recommended not to make any further investment due to liquidity issues. The absolute return asset class is 0.4% above the target allocation of 20%. As this is within the target range between 23% and 17% and only marginally above the target, it was proposed not to disinvest due to the recommendation not to reinvest in the UK Property Fund.

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

- (i) The following values be disinvested;
 - (a) £600,000 from UK equities;
 - (b) £2,600,000 from global equities; and
- (ii) The following values be invested;
 - (a) £200,000 in corporate bonds;
 - (b) £1,650,000 in fixed interest gilts;
 - (c) £1,350,000 in index-linked gilts."

A7. 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."

A8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the date and time of the next meeting is Wednesday, 26th March, 2025 at 10.00am.

A9. Manager Reporting: UK Property Fund (through Canaccord) Presentation

Representatives from UK Property fund managers (facilitated by Canaccord) joined the meeting via video-link for discussion of the item.

The Committee received a presentation from the UK property fund managers on the property fund, as facilitated by Canaccord.

Mr Hooper began by providing a market background, discussing, in particular, the interest rates, which remain elevated but are easing, which is beneficial to the fund. Comparative charts were provided for each of the properties real estate sectors (retail, office, industrial and residential) to demonstrate how the investments are performing in the current market.

Mr Hooper presented the fund summary for the quarter followed by the transactional activity and explained the strategic sector positioning. He advised that the fund is undergoing a strategic reduction in office spaces and expanding on alternatives, retail and industrial assets. In response to a question on net yield returns, Mr Hooper agreed to provide the Committee with the yield returns on the net proceeds of sold assets.

Mr Hooper moved on to the performance of the scheme during the year, which has continued to experience growth. A Member queried if the current benchmark, which the fund continues to lag, is the appropriate comparative. Mr Hooper explained that the MSCI benchmark is the industry standard for property funds but accepted that the benchmark is broad and diverse. He advised that there are no alternatives in the UK, and offered to provide a comparative to similar funds in that universe to give the Committee a better sense of how the fund is performing in line with peers.

Mr Hooper finished with an update on how the fund is dealing with the redemptions. He confirmed there is £400m of redemptions outstanding, £225m is due to be paid in the coming year, with the remainder to be paid by the end of 2026. Mr Hooper explained that the fund is managing redemptions whilst also ensuring the protection of investors in the fund. He assured the scheme is stable and liquidity is manageable.

Resolved, "That particulars of the UK Property Fund (as facilitated through Canaccord) presentation be noted on the minutes."

The meeting ended at 1.00pm.

VI(v) - The proceedings of the EASTERN DISTRICT CIVIC AMENITY SITE JOINT COMMITTEE as follows:

EASTERN DISTRICT CIVIC AMENITY SITE JOINT COMMITTEE

EASTERN DISTRICT CIVIC AMENITY SITE JOINT COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday, 18th February, 2025.

Members Present: Mr D. Quirk (Onchan) (Chair), Councillor Ms J. Thommeny (Douglas), Mr T. Kenyon (Garff), Mrs A. Davidson (Santon).

In Attendance: Mrs D. Eynon (Douglas), Mr J.C. Whiteway (Braddan), Mr A. Crook (Contractor, Item A4 only), Mr E. Skinner, (Finance Manager, Douglas), Mrs L. Radcliffe (Douglas, taking notes).

Apologies: Mr N. Mellon (Braddan), Mr R. Phillips (Onchan).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters dealt with under delegated authority

A1. Minutes – 19th November 2024

Approved unanimously and signed.

A2. Matters Arising

A2.1 Isle of Man Creamery Update

Following a request by Committee that the Vice-Chair and an officer meet with the Managing Director, Isle of Man Creameries, which took place on 15th January 2025 it was reported by the Director Environment and Regeneration that the Isle of Man Creamery are reluctant to move the tetrapak collection point from Tesco's to the Eastern Civic Amenity Site as Tesco is keen to keep it insitu. The Managing Director suggested the Committee contact Tesco Superstore direct to request if they are amenable for the tetrapak carton collection to be moved back to the Eastern Civic Amenity Site.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration further advised that the current arrangement is creating an inequality in that residents served by the Eastern Civic Amenity Site are having to pay £3,000 / year for a facility that all other residents do not have to pay for and that the Eastern site serves more than half the Island's population.

It was agreed:

That the Contract Administrator write to Tesco Superstore to request that the tetrapak collection point is moved from Tesco's Lake Road store to the Eastern Civic Amenity Site and in addition, the Committee would be willing to have a wider discussion around how the Eastern Civic Amenity Site and Tesco could work more closely together in their recycling offerings, especially given their proximity.

A2.2 Men in Sheds (Douglas)

The Douglas representative informed Committee that she has now found a contact to liaise with. The Contractor was requested by Committee at the last meeting to consider an alternative provider for Men in Sheds (Douglas) by expressions of interest. The Contractor has proposed a Repair shop procurement strategy for consideration as part of his report at Appendix C.

It was agreed:

1. That the Douglas representative continue discussion with Men in Sheds (Douglas) and
2. That the relevant Authorities have approved the request for a Repair shop concept and that the Committee Administrator advertises for Expressions of Interest;

A2.3 Replacement Skip Programme

It was confirmed by the Contract Administrator that the relevant Authorities have approved the request for the uplifted replacement skip programme ahead of the 2024/25 budget round.

A2.4 Civic Amenity Site Paper Bring Bank to Local Authority and Civic Amenity Site Boards

Following the Government's decision to cease collecting paper as part of the Bring Bank Contract, Douglas City Council is now collecting and processing the material at its Waste Transfer Station in the Isle of Man Business Park.

It was agreed:

That all Local Authorities approve that the paper recycling services continue and is funded.

A2.5 Draft Revenue Budget – approval from each Local Authority

It was noted that confirmation and approval has been received from each Local Authority.

A3. Minutes of Special Meeting – 8th January 2025

Approved unanimously and signed.

A4. Matters Arising

A4.1 WEEE Contract Letter to Government

The Director of Environment and Regeneration requested that Committee consider sending a letter of disappointment outlining the impact of the timeline of awarding the WEEE contract and the need for an executive decision on charging being made without Committee approval to the Chief Executive, Department of Infrastructure.

It was agreed:

That the Contract Administrator write to the Chief Executive, Department of Infrastructure to share the Committee's disappointment and appeal to them to consider the time of announcements going forward.

A5. Declarations of Interest

None

A6. Operational Contractors Report

Mr Crook joined the meeting to present the February operational contractor's report.

1.2 WEEE contract – The report was noted, and that Members of the public have had a mixed response to the additional charges, with the staff having to deal with a number of irate customers on occasions. Several customers have refused to pay and left the site, only to return later and attempt to put the dismantled items into skips. These partly dis-assembled items have been refused as they are not permitted in the metal or burnable skips, nor can they be sent as WEEE as the UK supplier does not accept part dis-assembled items.

It is worth noting that the charges levied by the Eastern District Civic Amenity Site are being replicated at the Southern site, whereas the Western site has retained the charges reported in late December. At the last meeting of the four sites, the Northern representative, suggested their Committee would likely be following the Western Sites charges.

A detailed report will be presented to Committee on completion of the trial of an additional member of staff who is employed on a 3-month trial basis to dis-assemble items in order to reduce weight and the associated costs of shipping to the UK.

1.7 Request from Ramsey Town Commissioners to provide a cost for the Northern Parishes to use the Eastern Civic Amenity Site. The Contractor, together with the Council's Finance Department has evaluated the request and has concluded that the Eastern Site does not have the capacity to open up the site to the Northern Parishes, which has more than 6800 households excluding Bride and would represent a 35% increase in vehicular traffic and the associated material streams.

Whilst parishes on the northwest are just as likely to attempt to use the western site, it is equally just as likely that the western site would seek to restrict this. The effect of an increase of this proportion is likely to lead to long queues at the entrance, up to ¼ mile long in some instances, an increased risk in commercial operators attempting to access the site and reduced capacity for Eastern household residents particularly at weekends when the Energy from Waste Plant is closed, resulting in the site needing to shut early.

Whilst there is nothing currently preventing households from the northern parishes using the site, making it their 'de facto' outlet, the contractor believes officially agreeing use of the site would be at the detriment to those households in the east who are also paying the capital costs of owning the site.

As an additional note, it was reported previously that the re-use shed had experienced some increased activity following the Northern site's decision to close their re-use facility. Staff have been monitoring the situation and have reported that there's been no noticeable changes in usage over the past few

months, nor has any resident from Bride used the site to the best of their knowledge, albeit this would only be revealed if they were bringing in excessive amounts.

It is therefore the Contractors recommendation not to facilitate the request from Ramsey.

It was agreed:

1. That the report and statistics be noted.
2. That a further media release is issued to the public explaining the increase in WEEE charges; and
3. That Committee does not allow other parishes to join and contribute to Eastern Civic Amenity Site.

A5. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 20th May 2025 at 2.30pm.

The meeting ended at 3.26pm.

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 Tuesday, 18th February, 2025.

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

In Attendance: Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) (Mrs L. Radcliffe), Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) (Mr V. Zivave) (Item A2 only), Head of Parks (Mrs S. Parkinson), Finance Manager (Mr E. Skinner), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs D. Atkinson).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

Mr Councillor F. Schuengel submitted apologies for absence.

A2. Willaston External Refurbishment – New Site Compound

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) to request the use of a site along Ballanard Road and Barule Road as a site compound for the Willaston external refurbishment from Phase 13 onwards.

Members were advised that Willaston estate is undergoing a ten-year capital housing project aimed at essential external refurbishment. As part of the works, there are currently two site compounds located in the middle of the estate. The Council intends to build dwellings on one of the sites and therefore requires a new location for the site compound from phase 13 onwards for approximately 4 to 5 years. The current compound locations have led to increased site traffic movements which poses an inconvenience to residents.

A new site along Ballanard Road and Barule Road, currently zoned as recreational ground, has been identified as a suitable location for a new combined site location. The site is not heavily used and its repurposing for the compound would not be detrimental to the community. The current compound sites can be reinstated and the public open space near the shops can be utilised as intended.

The report explained that the relocation of the compound to Ballanard Road and Barule Road will enhance safety, efficiency and community wellbeing. The Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) confirmed that the compound would be reinstated, and the area improved on completion of the project.

Members asked that consideration be given to appropriate hoarding or fencing for the area, and that the footpath remains closed for the duration to ensure there is no risk to pedestrians and moving site vehicles.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and the use of the site along Ballanard Road and Barule Road be used as a site compound for the Willaston External Refurbishment from Phase 13 onwards.”

For: 2 Against: 1

Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner requested that his name be recorded as voting against the resolution.

A3. Douglas Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2025-2035

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Parks to seek approval for the adoption of a Parks Strategy.

The strategy, which was appended to the report, set out the vision for Douglas City Council Park’s Service, and the actions that will be undertaken to deliver that vision over the next ten years. The strategy set out the vision and ten priorities which included quality, climate change, accessibility, active travel, culture and events, play and education, working with the community, financial sustainability,

health and wellbeing. The strategy discussed each priority in detail together with the goals and actions required to deliver them.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the priorities within the Parks Strategy be agreed.”

A4. Renaming Douglas Cemeteries

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Head of Parks (Services) to consider renaming both cemeteries to include reference to City Status. The report has come forward as new signage is required, due to wear and tear, for both cemeteries and the new signage should reflect a change in name to include City status.

Members were presented with photographs of the current signage at the cemeteries. The report proposed changing the Douglas Borough Cemetery and Crematorium to the Douglas City Cemetery and Crematorium and renaming Douglas Borough Lawn Cemetery as Douglas City Lawn Cemetery.

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

- (i) The Douglas Borough Cemetery be renamed Douglas City Cemetery and Crematorium in accordance with the agreed approach for the celebration of City Status;
- (ii) The Douglas Borough Lawn Cemetery be renamed Douglas City Lawn Cemetery in accordance with the agreed approach for the celebration of City Status.”

A5. Road Closure for North Quay

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) to update on a meeting with the Department of Infrastructure’s Highway Services regarding the pedestrianisation of North Quay, and to seek approval to apply for a road closure notice for 2025/26 until the Traffic Regulation Order comes into effect.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) advised that the Council’s previous resolution to permanently prohibit traffic from the section of North Quay between Ridgeway Street and Market Hill, to create two disabled parking spaces, and to remove resident disc zone exemption from the eastern side of lower Ridgeway Street was discussed at a meeting with the Department of Infrastructure.

The Department was not opposed to the pedestrianisation, however the Council will need to engage with stakeholders before the Department undertakes a formal consultation required by the Road Traffic Regulation Act, and this process takes approximately 3 months. This would not leave sufficient time to implement the Traffic Regulation Order on North Quay for summer 2025. The report recommended seeking a road closure notice identical to the 2024/25 closure in the meantime and that it be implemented in accordance with the Operational Procedure approved in March 2024.

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

- (i) The conclusion reached at a meeting with the Department of Infrastructure Highways Services be noted;
- (ii) Officers seek a road closure notice for 2025/26 on identical terms as the one for 2024/25 to facilitate the summer pedestrianisation until the Traffic Regulation Order required for permanent pedestrianisation comes into effect;
- (iii) Officers be instructed to implement the road closure in accordance with the operational procedure agreed in March 2024.”

For: 2 Against: 1

Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner requested that his name be recorded as voting against the resolution.

A6. Potential Drone Show

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Democratic Services Officer to seek approval to organise a drone show to mark the first ‘City Day’.

The Council has been offered a drone show by Sky Symphony Drone Shows. The show itself will be provided to the Council free of charge, however there are nominal costs associated with the transportation of the equipment and staff. A sound system will also be required for the event. Officers have approached the Department for Enterprise (DfE) to seek funding assistance towards the event, which will be the first drone show on the Island. Initial conversations with the DfE were positive. Funding is also available within existing budgets to cover the event costs.

It was proposed that the event take place on Thursday, 20th March, 2025, to mark the Council’s first City Day (the anniversary of the Queen Camilla’s visit to the Island to bestow City status upon Douglas). The event will take place on Loch Promenade at 7.30pm.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the organisation of a drone display on Thursday, 20th March, 2025, to mark the first ‘City Day’ be supported and funded through existing budgets and/or the Domestic Event Fund.”

A7. 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 third 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.

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.”

A8. Quarter Three Service Plan Performance Monitoring – 2024/25

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 three of 2024/25. A red, amber, green and black status had been applied to each measure.

It was noted that within Parks Services, three measures were complete, and one has been pushed back to 2026/27, one measure is behind target awaiting input from others, and three measures are slightly behind target. All other measures were on target. Within City Centre Management, two measures were behind target due to officer time spent supporting North Quay events, all other measures were on target.

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 three of 2024/25 be noted on the minutes.”

PART B –

Matters requiring Executive Committee approval

B9. Spring Valley Changing Rooms – Funding of Expended Fees

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) to seek approval to refer a request to the Executive Committee for the expended fees for the Spring Valley/Pulrose Changing Rooms to be funded from Reserves.

Members were reminded that in May 2022 the Executive Committee ratified an Urgent Business Procedure decision that £30,500 of fees for the design of the Spring Valley/Pulrose Pavilion Changing Rooms be guaranteed from Reserves if the capital scheme did not go ahead for whatever reason.

The project, as agreed as part of the 2025/26 budget, will now be revenue funded and will therefore not be subject to a petition for capital costs. Consequently, the expended fees to date will need to be suitably funded. In addition to the sum agreed to cover design fees, the project has incurred other project related fees normal for this size of project which will need to be funded from Reserves. The total amount to be funded from Reserves is £40,161.25.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the matter be referred to the Executive Committee to seek approval to fund the expended fees for the Spring Valley/Pulrose Changing Rooms at a total cost of £40,161.25 from Reserves.”

For: 2 Against: 1

Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner requested that his name be recorded as voting against the resolution.

PART B/C –

Matters requiring Executive Committee and Council approval

B/C10. Greenhouse Gas Reduction and the Crematorium including Cremator Replacement

The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking approval to replace the 300/2 cremator and ancillary equipment at the Crematorium.

Members were reminded that in May 2024, a report considering options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions was presented to the Committee, with a recommendation to install DeNox to reduce nitrogen

oxide emissions from the current gas cremators and for officers to consider other service and operational proposals to help reduce emissions. While officers were undertaking research in relation to these resolutions, the older of the two cremators suffered a breakdown which has fundamentally changed the direction of the research. The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) reminded that both cremators are supplied and maintained by Facultatieve Technologies (FT). The older of the cremators, the 300/2, is now over 30 years old and well beyond its life expectancy. FT were initially unable to repair it because the parts required are no longer available. FT were subsequently able to source a replacement part from a decommissioned facility elsewhere, but the incident brought into focus the risk of continuing to run such an old cremator until the business case for a replacement with an electric cremator can be justified.

Officers had been hoping to keep the 300/2 cremator running until the Council was able to move to a more environmentally sustainable means of cremation. Fully electric cremations, as reported in May 2024, are not yet feasible until a reliable and cost-effective source of sustainably generated electricity can be sourced. Until this time, a new electric cremation facility at the Lawn Cemetery could not be justified.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) advised that FT provided estimated costs to replace the cremator on 20th December, which allowed for the inclusion of the project in the capital programme at the Special Executive Committee budget meeting. FT provided a cost for two types of cremator models, the FTIII and the hybrid cremator. Officers undertook analysis of both options, the FTIII is the same basic model as the Council's newer cremator and has a range of options that increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The hybrid cremator still uses gas as the energy source for the main burner but employs a fully electric or an electric/gas hybrid afterburner. The electric afterburner requires an upgrade to the electrical infrastructure at the crematorium, and the cost of the hybrid is likely to be double that of operating a FTIII with gas modifications and only achieves a similar level of CO2 emission. The report therefore recommended proceeding with the FTIII cremator.

The FTIII can be supplied and assembled on site avoiding the need for any building works at the crematorium. However, the current building has a very restricted working area with the compact cooler equipment sitting on the mezzanine floor above the cremators. FT has recommended that the flue liners and two aged compact coolers are replaced as part of the works at a cost of £45,000 and £200,000 respectively. The report recommended replacing these parts as part of the cremator replacement because to do so at a later date would involve removing one of the cremators to gain access at substantial additional cost and would have operational implications.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) also advised that the DeNox equipment previously supported by the Committee can be installed to both cremators as part of the project at a cost of £44,000. The report recommended the installation as the crematorium currently emits a carbon-equivalent of 103 tonnes as Nitrogen Oxide annually so it is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The total cost of the scheme, which includes the replacement cremator with gas modifications, the replacement pilot gas burner on the existing cremator, the installation of DeNox units, replacement of the flue liners and compact coolers totals £671,600. The report recommended funding the capital project through loan over a 15-year period. The annual loan repayments would initially be funded from the Cremator Renewals Fund in 2025/26 with the subsequent years' annual loan charges funded through an increase in cremation fees from 2026/27 onwards subject to DEFA approval after consultation with the Department of Infrastructure.

It was noted that, once petition funding is approved, there is a 20-week lead time for installation. Although minor service disruptions may occur for a few days during installation, measures to minimise these disruptions are already being considered.

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

- (i) The replacement of the 300/2 cremator with a modified FTIII cremator, along with the DeNox equipment for both cremators and replacement pilot gas burners, flues and compact coolers at a total estimated cost of £671,600 including a 15% client contingency (to cover unforeseen costs and petition delays resulting in price increases) be approved;
- (ii) The proposal to purchase the equipment as proprietary articles from the Facultatieve Technologies be referred to the Executive Committee in accordance with Standing Order 146(a)(i);
- (iii) The Chief Executive be authorised to petition the Department of Infrastructure for borrowing powers in the sum of £671,600 being the amount required to defray the costs of the works;
- (iv) The impact the proposals are likely to have on gas consumption and emissions be noted, and any further operational options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions be held in abeyance until the new cremator is in operation."

PART C –

Matters requiring Housing and Property and Council approval

C11. Lester’s Yard Building Replacement

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Parks to consider a proposal from Isle of Play to replace the existing timber lodge with a new modular single storey building at Ballaughton Park, and a request to use the adjacent paddock during Isle of Play opening hours.

Members were reminded that Isle of Play opened Lester’s Yard Adventure Playground in 2019 through a partnership with the Council, at Ballaughton Park. The initiative has been a resounding success for Douglas South children, and families further afield. As part of the partnership, the Council provided Isle of Play with a small timber lodge. The lodge is now starting to show wear and tear and is no longer fit for use or meets the requirements of the community.

Isle of Play has secured funding to construct a new indoor facility, and a local housing developer has offered to cover the planning and build costs. Isle of Play would like to extend the footprint of the new indoor facility to use around 16m² of the neighbouring paddock, and to extend the lease to incorporate use of the existing paddock during operational hours. The use of the paddock would be used for traditional types of activities such as games and picnics and would not be utilised for the Isle of Play building activities that take place in Lester’s Yard.

It was noted that the paddock would remain available for the Council to use as an outdoor event space as and when required.

The report recommended supporting a twenty-one-year lease to provide security for Isle of Play and the Council as the building is a more permanent and costly structure. A twenty-one-year lease will require petition approval from the Department of Infrastructure. Members were asked to approve the twenty-one-year lease in principle, a further report on the final lease agreement will be submitted following petition approval.

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

- (i) Officers work in principle with Isle of Play to progress options for development of a new modular single storey building protruding 4 metres into the paddock;
- (ii) The matter be referred to the Housing and Property Committee in March for lease approval;
- (iii) A twenty-one-year lease to Isle of Play be supported (which extends to the additional area required for the building development, and the use of the paddocks during operational hours of the charity) and that the Chief Executive be authorised to petition the Department of Infrastructure for a twenty-one-year lease under Section 25 of the Local Government Act;
- (iv) That heads of terms for the lease be granted.”

C12. Noble’s Park – Padel Tennis Proposal Update Proposed Heads of Terms

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Parks to update on the Padel Tennis proposal and seek agreement to enter into a lease agreement with the proposed tenant.

Following approval in principle in January 2025, the applicant has confirmed they wish to proceed with the plans to create four uncovered, and two covered padel tennis courts in Noble’s Park, together with a kiosk to provide sports equipment and vending machines and an office for supervisory site staff. Members were asked to support progressing the initiative to lease agreement, and heads of terms were provided for consideration. It was noted that the applicant will have to seek planning consent, and as the applicant will be a new company, a guarantor for the lease will be required.

It was noted that the Council’s Finance Department will undertake due diligence checks on the applicant and guarantor, and if the checks return satisfactorily, a lease can be drawn up. It was noted as the lease was for seven years with an option to extend for an additional seven years, in line with the Local Government Act 1985, petition approval will be required.

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

- (i) The following Heads of Terms to form the lease agreement be agreed;
 - (a) The tenant is to be Padel IOM Limited, and a guarantor be required as part of the lease;
 - (b) The lease be for a term of seven years with the option to renew for a further seven years;
 - (c) The annual rent be £10,000 plus VAT per annum plus rates and insurance, and increased annually in line with inflation;
 - (d) The permitted use be padel tennis courts incorporating a sports retail and hire kiosk with an office;

- (e) The tenant be responsible for all associated costs with the design, construction, and operation of the padel courts including outgoing repair and maintenance and out-goings for the business;
 - (f) The tenant as part of the lease agreement, has the option to extend the Demised Premises to incorporate Phase 2 to expand and improve the facilities. To invoke this option, it would be subject to a lease addendum, rent review, and approval of the proposed tenants' alterations to the demised premises. Phase 2 would also require planning consent;
 - (g) No subletting be permitted;
 - (h) All terms and conditions be subject to the finalisation of the lease.
- (ii) The matter be referred to the Housing and Property Committee in March for lease approval;
- (iii) If resolution (ii) is approved by the Housing and Property Committee, the Chief Executive be authorised to petition the Department of Infrastructure for a seven-year lease plus the option to extend for a further seven years under Section 25 of the Local Government Act.”

The meeting ended at 12.30pm.

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

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 17th February, 2025.

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

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), Finance Manager (Mr E. Skinner) (Items A1 to A6), Dilapidation Enforcement Officer (Mr S. Salter) (Item A7), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Mrs C. Maddocks).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted by the Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Mrs N.A. Byron-Teare.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 13th January, 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 13th January, 2025 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

No matters were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A5. Bulk Refuse Collection – Fees and Charges

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Waste Services regarding recent changes to the collection, storage, and export of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).

It is proposed that a new charging structure be introduced for the Council's bulk waste collection service. Members were advised that, historically, charges for bulk waste collection were based on the required vehicle capacity for removal and the gate fee charge at the Energy from Waste Plant. Following the introduction of the WEEE Regulations 2013, the Department of Infrastructure appointed a local contractor to collect hazardous WEEE items, including fridges, freezers, televisions, laptops, and batteries. These items were sent to the UK for dismantling and processing by a licensed operator. Local authorities were informed that the cost of this service would be passed on to operators, who could then recover the cost from consumers. At that time, the Council re-evaluated its fees and charges to accommodate this additional cost.

The report outlined that in October 2024, the Department of Infrastructure issued a tender for the collection, storage, and export of WEEE and household batteries for recycling. The new contract, covering both hazardous and non-hazardous WEEE, will be in effect from 1st January 2025 to 31st October 2026.

It was noted that the UK is enforcing the 2013 regulations, requiring all WEEE to be separated from scrap metal during transportation. This means that all transported WEEE must be accompanied by a Waste Transfrontier Shipment of waste, and local waste processors must be licensed to store, process, and export WEEE according to their respective waste categories. Previously, this requirement applied only to hazardous WEEE. Waste that does not require off-Island transportation remains unaffected.

On 23rd December 2024, the Council was notified by the Department of Infrastructure of the newly appointed contractor and the applicable rates. As the operator of the Eastern Civic Amenity Site, the Council sought approval from the Eastern District Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee to introduce a revised schedule of charges for the disposal of all large WEEE at a meeting held on 8th January 2025.

It is proposed that the Council levy the same disposal costs for WEEE items collected through its bulk waste collection service. Additionally, a nominal collection charge would be introduced to cover vehicle deployment costs, excluding labour costs, as employee expenses are already accounted for within

existing roles. This proposal is based on current service usage, which averages between 20 to 30 collections per year. However, Members were advised that any significant increase in demand may necessitate a re-evaluation of labour resources in the future.

The officer's report included a table detailing:

- The current bulk waste charges for 2024/25;
- The proposed disposal costs, as approved by the Eastern District Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee; and
- The proposed collection cost.

Members were advised that there are no proposed changes to the existing charging structure for non-WEEE items, which are assessed based on vehicle capacity and charged in increments of quarter, half, and full lorry loads.

In response to a question, the Director of Environment and Regeneration agreed to seek clarification from the Head of Waste Services regarding the definition of *'removal of single or small items.'* The Director of Environment and Regeneration also advised that to date, there had been no increase in fly tipping of WEEE items in the Douglas area since the charges were introduced.

During discussions, it was suggested that the Council's bulk waste collection service should be promoted in the rates newsletter to increase public awareness.

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

- (i) That the disposal charges for all large hazardous and non-hazardous WEEE, as approved by the Eastern District Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee on 8th January 2025, be adopted, subject to clarification of *'removal of single or small items'*; and
- (ii) That a collection charge on service users for the vehicle element (running plant cost), at a cost of £12 per collection be approved."

A6. Quarter Three Service Plan Performance Monitoring 2024/25

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 three 2024/25. A red, amber, green and black status had been applied to each measure.

Members noted that for quarter three:

- Within Building Control, all measures are being met;
- Within Electrical Services, four measures out of 21 measures are complete, three are behind schedule due to recruitment issues or awaiting others, and all other measures are on track;
- In Fleet Services, one out of nine measures is slightly behind target due to factors beyond the Council's control, one is slightly behind and all remaining measures are on target;
- Within Community & Enforcement, eight out of 23 measures are behind target due to changes in advice, workload pressures from a depleted team and factors outside the control of the Council. All other measures are on target without issue. Two measures have been completed;
- In Waste Services, six out of 17 measures are behind schedule due to capacity within the team and factors outside the Council's control. All other measures are on target, three measures are complete.

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

A7. Schedule of Dilapidated, Ruinous or Dangerous Properties

The Committee considered a schedule of properties in a state of dilapidation or disrepair. Members noted that five properties had been added to the schedule since the last meeting; nine properties had been removed because work had been completed; and a total of forty-five properties remained on the list. This equates to 0.3% 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."

A8. 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.”

A9. 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, 17th March, 2025.

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

The meeting ended at 10.35am.