City of Douglas

MR COUNCILLOR S.R. CRELLIN, JP
MAYOR

City Hall,
Douglas,
7th November, 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 NOVEMBER, 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

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, 8th October, 2025.

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 23rd October, 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 A12), Head of Fleet Services & Stores (Mr S. Kelly) (Clause A8), Executive Officer (Mrs J.M. Keig) (taking minutes).

REPORT

PART A –

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

A1. **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

A2. **Declarations of Interest**

Mr Councillor F. Horning declared an interest in Clause A10.

A3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25th September 2025 were approved and signed.

A4. **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

A5. **Referrals from the Environmental Services Committee**

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on Monday 13th October 2025.

A6. **Referrals from the Regeneration and Community Committee**

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Regeneration and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14th October 2025.

A7. **Referrals from the Housing and Property Committee**

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Housing and Property Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15th October 2025.

A8. **Fleet Services – Disposal of Equipment**

The Committee considered a written report by the Head of Fleet Services and Stores detailing a number of used items of plant and equipment that had been sold in the second quarter of the 2025 / 2026 financial year in accordance with Standing Order 161, 'Disposal of Surplus Property, Materials, etc.'

The items sold on behalf of the Council had been included in three separate auctions on 19th July, 26th July, and 2nd August 2025.

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

(ii) That the Schedule of Vehicles and Plant sold, and the income achieved at auction in the sum of £17,250.00 excluding VAT and less auctioneer's commission in the sum of £866.30, giving net income from the three auctions of £16,383.70, also be noted."

A9. **Consultation Document – Isle of Man Strategic Plan Review Preliminary Publicity 2025**

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

The Cabinet Office was seeking views on the Strategic Plan Review Preliminary Publicity. This built on an earlier consultation on which the Council had responded to in 2023.

The Strategic Plan provided the overarching, high-level planning framework for the development and other use of land on the Isle of Man; and it was taken into consideration in the drafting of Area Plans and other pieces of planning policy, as well as in the determination of planning applications.

The Strategic Plan Review provided an opportunity for stakeholders to give input into the Plan's development and to make representations on topics such as Climate Change Policy, the Island Spatial Strategy, and how the Strategic Plan could reflect the aims of 'Our Island Plan.'

The consultation had opened on 4th August 2025, with a closing date of 27th October 2025. A draft response, prepared by nominated Chief Officers and Assistant Chief Officers, had been reviewed by the Consultation Working Group, and was before the Committee for further review. It was agreed that the response be strengthened to include: -

- Opposition to building on greenfield sites;
- Welcoming Douglas as having a dominant role in respect of building opportunities; and strengthening the language around the Community Infrastructure Levy to ensure infrastructure is improved - such as active travel;
- Greater reference to public sector housing in respect of housing needs;
- Additional comment in relation to urban planning, to create viable accessible alternatives to car ownership;
- Diversity of types of properties in low-density neighbourhoods, including upzoning.

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

(ii) That the proposed response, as appended to the written report and as amended, be approved for submission to the Cabinet Office accordingly."

A10. **Consultation Document – Mooir Vannin Offshore Windfarm Project**

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1985, Mr Councillor F Horning declared an interest in this item.

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

Ørsted was proposing to develop the Isle of Man's first offshore windfarm, and the Mooir Vannin Project would be the first large scale development in the Island's territorial waters - approximately six to twelve nautical miles off the east coast of the Island, near Maughold Head. A Marine Infrastructure Consent was accordingly being sought under the Marine Infrastructure Management Act 2016.

It was noted that the Council was registered as an interested party due to the potentially preferred option of landfall at Port Skillion Beach, which was owned by the Council.

The consultation had opened on 26th August 2025, with a closing date of 18th November 2025. A draft response, prepared by the Director of Environment and Regeneration and the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) had been reviewed by the Consultation Working Group, and was before the Committee for further review.

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

(ii) That the proposed response, as appended to the written report, be approved as the Council's response and submitted accordingly."

A11. **Consultation Document – Health and Safety At Work (Amendment) Order 2025**

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

The Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture was reviewing and updating legislation to align to the UK Offshore Health and Safety Executive legislation and standards. The offshore standards would also cover onshore work activities (as was the case in the UK) and the feedback was being sought to ensure internationally recognised safety regulations were in place for future offshore developments, to avoid different health and safety standards applying to the same work on the Island and in its territorial waters.

The consultation had opened on 5th September 2025, with a closing date of 31st October 2025. A draft response, prepared by the Council's Health and Safety Officers, had been reviewed by the Consultation Working Group and was before the Committee for further review.

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

(ii) That the proposed response, as appended to the written report, be approved for submission to the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture accordingly."

A12. **Consultation Document – Rating and Valuation (Amendment) Bill: Proposed Amendments to the Rating and Valuation Act 1953 – Resubmission of Consultation Response**

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance in relation to a consultation document issued under Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1985 and the proposed re-submission of the Council's response in light of revised information being provided by the Isle of Man Treasury.

The consultation had been due to close on 17th October 2025 and the Committee had accordingly agreed a response at its meeting on 25th September 2025. However, in a press release issued on 10th October 2025, the Isle of Man Treasury had announced that the impact assessments contained within the original consultation document had been updated and the consultation period had therefore been extended for a further two weeks, to close on 31st October 2025.

The changes related to the impact assessments at Appendix A and Appendix B to the consultation document, and consultees had been advised that if they had responded before 10th October and wished to revise their answers after reviewing the updated information, then responses could be re-submitted.

The Treasury had explained that detail focussed on the impact to each local authority - rather than on ratepayers. Given the importance that any changes to the Act might have on the Council's rate income position, it was recommended that the Council re-submit its response. The Committee accordingly considered the revised submission, with Members' attention being particularly drawn to:

<u>Proposal 1 - removing rate exemptions for dangerous or ruinous buildings</u>: the impact was disproportionately significant for the Council because of the number of properties in Douglas that had been zero rated by The Treasury due to their dangerous or ruinous state. This number represented one-third of the total number of zero rated properties on the Island as a whole, and the financial impact on the Council's income was as high as 58% of all local authorities' impact. It was therefore especially important and in the Council's interests that this particular Proposal be implemented, and this needed to be emphasised in the submission.

<u>Proposal 2 - removing the requirement that rebate schemes could be funded by Treasury in all cases:</u> the Treasury Minister had provided some further clarification and it was suggested that it would be worthwhile adding the Council's more definitive support to this aspect of the proposals.

<u>Proposal 3 - introducing a discount and potentially a cap on the rateable value of quarries</u>: there was no relevance to the Council as this related to the rateable value of quarries, and no change was therefore required in respect of the submission response.

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

(ii) That the proposed revised response, as appended to the written report, be approved for submission to the Isle of Man Treasury as the Council's response."

A13. **Monthly Financial Review**

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.

It was noted that the 3% Public Service Commission (PSC) pay offer for the current 2025 / 2026 financial year had been rejected by workers of the Unite Union. With the budget for the current 2025 / 2026 financial year assuming a pay award increase of 3%, any amount agreed over that figure would generate a budget shortfall. The dispute would also impact the 2026 / 2027 budget.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including in particular -

(i) the rates collection figure of 86.2% for the first six months of the financial year, compared with the target figure of 87.6%; and

(ii) Unite the Union's rejection of the Public Service Commission's pay offer of 3% for the 2025 / 2026 financial year, which was now likely to lead to a budget shortfall requiring consolidation into the 2026 / 2027 Rate."

A14. **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."

A15. **Vacancy on the Regeneration and Community Committee**

As a result of a Member resigning from the Regeneration and Community Committee, a vacancy had accordingly arisen.

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

(ii) That in line with Standing Order 86, Councillor Ms C. Traynor be appointed as a Member of the Regeneration and Community Committee for the remainder of the two-year term to April 2027."

A16. **Time and Date of Next Meeting**

The time and date of the next meeting were confirmed as 2.00pm on Thursday 27th November 2025.

The Committee rose at 5.00pm.

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, 15th October, 2025.

Members Present: Mr Councillor P.J. Washington (Chair), the Mayor (until 11.10am), Mr Councillor D.C. Cretney, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny.

In Attendance: Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney), Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) (Mr V. Zivave), Housing and Property Operations Manager (Mr J. Chatwood), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle) (Items A1 to A4), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Mrs C. Maddocks).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Mr Councillor K.W.F. Ver Elst.

A2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. **Minutes – 17th September, 2025**

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

A4. **Matters Arising**

No matters were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A5. **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 outlining the number of properties returned in each month, details of the category repair type for each property and the number of void properties in each estate. In addition, trend data was provided illustrating the overall void patterns for 2024/25 and 2025/26, including a comparison of voids received against voids allocated.

The Housing and Property Operations Manager advised that there were currently 51 vacant properties, noting that this equates to 2.1% of the Council's total social housing stock.

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

A6. **Items for Future Consideration**

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

The Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) advised that a report would be forthcoming in relation to the Willaston External Refurbishment project for phases 13 and 14.

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

A7. **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 November 2025.

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

The meeting ended at 12.15pm.

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

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

PENSIONS COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 22nd October, 2025.

Members Present: Mr Councillor F. Horning (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Mrs N.A. Byron-Teare, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny, Mr Councillor K. Ver Elst, Ms A Christian (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). Ms K. Gore and Mr Z. Cuerden (Capita).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Committee's delegated authority

A1. **Apologies**

The Mayor submitted apologies for absence.

A2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. **Minutes – 10th September, 2025**

The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday, 10th September, 2025 were approved and signed.

A4. **Training – Isle of Man Local Government Superannuation Scheme**

The Committee received a training presentation from Capita providing an overview of Capita's role as the administrator of the Isle of Man Local Government Superannuation Scheme (the Scheme).

Ms Gore started with an overview of Capita and the various teams involved in the administration of the Scheme.

Ms Gore then presented a Scheme update on membership movements and casework during the last four quarters. Of particular note was the 12-month average service level agreement (SLA) performance which had improved to 98.95%. Ms Gore explained that new internal working practices have significantly improved the processes for handling SLAs, resulting in performance exceeding the organisation's expected response time.

The presentation also highlighted that one employer had made late contribution payments in both July and August. A written reminder had been circulated to the authority. In response to question, the Director of Finance confirmed that authorities can be charged interest for late payments. It was noted that payment had since been made on time in October. The Committee thanked Capita for proactively engaging with the authority and requested a copy of the correspondence.

Mr Cuerden then discussed the membership of the scheme and the benefits offered, emphasising how advantageous it is for eligible employees to join.

He concluded with an update on scheme data management, explaining that data naturally degrades over time. To maintain accuracy, Capita recommended conducting a member tracing exercise every few years, at an estimated cost of £1,400. In response to question, it was confirmed that up to date data is beneficial for the scheme and valuation – particularly when a member may have died and this information is not known – as it ensures that any dependents can be traced and receive entitled benefits. Mr Cuerder confirmed Capita can offer an online portal to members and agreed to provide a demonstration of the system at a future meeting.

Resolved, "That particulars of the presentation be noted on the minutes and the Committee support the tracing exercise in principle, subject to final costings being provided as part of the budget report in November."

A5. **Capita Quarterly Administration Report**

The Committee received Capita's administration reports for quarter two and three of 2025.

The Committee noted that the contents of the report had been considered as part of the training presentation.

Appended to the report was a letter from Capita advising of a settlement with the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) following an investigation into the 2023 cyber-attack. Ms Gore provided a background into the attack and what support was offered to data subjects that were impacted.

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

A6. **Administering Authority Policy on Isle of Man Local Government Scheme Discretions**

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

The policies were published in 2012 and previously reviewed in 2023. A review had been undertaken, and no material changes were recommended, however some clerical and grammatical amendments had been suggested.

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

A7. **Superannuation Scheme Performance Monitoring**

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

Members had in front of them the actions from the service plan together with an outcome on each. A red, amber and green status had been applied to determine progress in comparison to the action.

Members noted that there remained a delay on the 2023/24 Pension fund annual report; this was a direct result of the late completion of the 2022/23 accounts audit. The report confirmed that the audit is now underway. Capita assured that new working practices will ensure the same delays will not reoccur.

The Director of Finance provided an update on scheme reform. The Committee's recommendations were shared with the Policy Review Group, and whilst the Review Group supported the progression of the legislation and intend to commence before the end of the calendar year, the view was April 2027 for project completion is unrealistic. The Committee asked that a proposed timetable be provided to the Committee in order to make a decision regarding part funding the drafting costs.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and progress made against the planned actions in the Superannuation Service Plan be noted and;

(i) The ongoing delay to the finalisation and audit of the 2023/24 annual report be noted;

(ii) The delay to the finalisation of the 2024/25 annual report be noted;

(iii) The update from the Department of Infrastructure on the drafting of the legislative instructions to enable Scheme reform to commence before the end of the calendar year be noted."

A8. **Pension Fund Annual Report**

The final version of the accounts was not yet ready for publication. It was noted that, in March 2025, the Pensions Committee of the previous administration had approved the draft accounts in principle. The Director of Finance advised that any subsequent changes to the draft should be reviewed to determine whether they are material enough to warrant further presentation to the Committee when finalised.

A9. **Plan of Administration Activities for 2025**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) to plan the administration matters to be considered by the Committee during 2026.

Members had in front of them the activity schedules submitted by Capita setting out the proposed subjects to be covered in the 2026 Committee meetings.

The Committee asked that the training presentation received at the October 2025 meeting be presented to all Council Members. Officers agreed to co-ordinate suitable dates and times.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the 2025 plan of investment and administration activities be approved."

A10. **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."

A11. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The Committee noted that the date and time of the next meeting is Wednesday, 26th November, 2025.

The Committee rose at 12 noon.

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, 14th October, 2025.

Members Present: Councillor Mrs N.A. Byron-Teare (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor A. Hall (from 11.10am), 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 (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle), Head of Parks (Mrs S. Parkinson), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs D. Atkinson), City Librarian (Mrs J. Macartney) (Item A9 only).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Committee's delegated authority

A1. **Apologies**

There were no apologies submitted for the meeting.

A2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

A3. **Minutes – Tuesday, 16th September, 2025**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16th September, 2025, were approved and signed.

A4. **Matters Arising**

Item A4 – Matters Arising – City Day and Civic Sunday.

The Committee further discussed the suggestion raised at the previous Council Meeting to review Civic Sunday and City Day. At the October Council Meeting, a Member clarified that their suggestion was to discontinue Civic Sunday services and place greater emphasis on the City Day celebrations. Members agreed that the decision to hold a Civic Sunday service should be at the discretion of the Mayor for that year. It was noted that changes to Civic Sunday would require the approval of the Executive Committee.

A5. **Installation of a Peace Plaque in Hutchinson Square**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Parks to progress the installation of a Peace Plaque in Hutchinson Square.

The Head of Parks explained that a member of the public had approached the Council with a proposal to install a peace bell in Hutchinson Square. Officers explored the suggestion however concluded that due to the residential nature of the area the bell could be disruptive to nearby residents.

The report suggested as an alternative that a peace plaque be installed in the gardens inscribed with Article 1 of the United Nations Declarations of Human Rights. The estimated cost of installation was £750. It was recommended that an application be made to Manx Lottery Trust for funding in the first instance, with the Council covering the cost should the application be unsuccessful.

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

(i) The installation of a peace plaque in Hutchinson Square, inscribed with Article 1 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and a symbol of peace be approved;

(ii) Officers be authorised to seek Manx Lottery Funding towards the project estimated at £750."

A6. **Noble's Park Splash Park**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Parks following a request to open the splash park annually on 1st May, rather than on the Friday before the end of May bank holiday as currently scheduled.

The report explained that the splash park operates as a summer seasonal facility due to its use of unheated water and its appeal as a warm-weather attraction. The current operating period runs from 23rd May to 1st October, from 10am to 7pm, seven days a week.

The Head of Parks advised that the existing schedule allows sufficient time to complete all necessary operational and safety preparations required before opening to the public. These preparations include a full inspection of all equipment and the attendance of a UK-based contractor to carry out commissioning. Once commissioned, the facility is subject to twice-daily water testing every day of the week, regardless of weather conditions or usage levels.

Operation of the facility relies on staff working weekend overtime, as it is not covered by regular contracted hours. Parks staff are currently committed to the four-month operating period; extending this by an additional month would require further staff commitment. The estimated cost of such an extension is £1,500 in overtime and operational expenses. As there is no existing budget to cover this, any additional expenditure would need to be met through a growth bid.

Consideration had also been given to opening in May and closing on 1st September; however, a review of temperature data over a five-year period indicated that temperatures are generally higher in September than in early May. The Noble's Park team has also observed consistent use of the facility during September.

The report therefore recommended maintaining the current operational schedule. Members accepted this recommendation, based on the weather data presented, but requested that both usage and weather continue to be monitored so that the Committee can review the decision again in 2026. Members also requested that a press release be issued on the matter.

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

(i) The current operation dates be retained due to operational constraints, the financial impact and the limited benefit of an early opening given seasonal weather patterns; and

(ii) That it be noted that the current schedule remains the most practical and cost-effective approach, ensuring a safe, compliant and efficient start to the summer season; and

(iii) That the Committee review the decision in twelve-months' time."

A7. **Christmas City Lights – Symphony Tree**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking approval to switch on the lights of the Symphony Tree in Regent Street earlier on the evening of the Christmas City Lights event.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) explained that the current format of the Christmas City Lights event comprises a series of smaller activities held throughout the City Centre, from the Cultural Area to North Quay. This format is intended to encourage attendees to move around the wider area rather than gather in a single location.

However, despite no entertainment being programmed in the Regent Street area, the location has continued to experience significant congestion during the event. The situation has been closely monitored each year and raised at post-event debriefs by both Council officers and the police.

To alleviate this issue, officers considered several options, including a proposal to turn on the Symphony Tree lights at 5.00pm instead of 7.00pm. Under this proposal, the lights would be illuminated earlier but remain on a plain static display without music until 7.00pm. The report suggested that this adjustment could help reduce crowding in Regent Street by encouraging visitors to move on and view other light displays across the City Centre.

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

(i) The proposal to illuminate the symphony tree in Regent Street at 5.00pm instead of 7.00pm on the evening of the Christmas City Lights event be approved in the interest of crowd safety and comfort;

(ii) If the change results in improvement crowd safety, the approach be repeated in future years."

A8. **North Quay Closures for Christmas Events**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the City Centre Manager seeking approval to close North Quay on two occasions over the Christmas period to facilitate events.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) explained that the Department of Infrastructure has issued the Council with a road closure notice that authorises the closure of North Quay between 4th April 2025 and 30th March 2026 on the proviso that suitable signage is displayed. The Committee previously approved an operational procedure that permitted the closure of road for weekends and public holidays during the summer months and TT period but does not specifically include the Christmas period. Requests outside of these dates requires approval from the Committee.

The report requested the closure of North Quay on 20th November for the Christmas City Lights and on 11th December for the Christmas Live and Nativity.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the two closure requests over the Christmas period on North Quay be approved.”

A9. **Douglas City Library Service Plan Monitoring – Quarter Two 2025/26**

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 second quarter of 2025/26. 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 the user statistics during the quarter which had generally increased in comparison to the same quarter in 2024.

The City Librarian advised that the Library had joined the Eastern Wellbeing Meetings and, as a result, had introduced new wellbeing talks and initiatives. These developments continue to strengthen the Library’s role as a community hub and a safe, welcoming environment.

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

(i) The increase in the use of the library apps to download books, audiobooks, magazines, and newspapers be noted; and

(ii) The invitation for Committee to have a tour of the Library be accepted and arranged.”

A10**. Items for Future Report**

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

The Committee requested a report on the Spring Valley Changing Rooms to be brought to the November 2025 meeting setting out updated budget estimates and a timeline for the Council to deliver the project as a capital scheme without being tied the grant requirements of the Football Foundation.

A future report on the supply of memorial benches and the Promenade benches was added to the schedule.

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

A11. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting was due to take place on Tuesday, 18th November, 2025.

The meeting ended at 1.10pm.

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

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 13th October, 2025.

Members Present: Mr Councillor F. Horning (Chair), Mr Councillor A. Hall, 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 (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle) (Items A1 to A5 and A7), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman) (Items A1 to A5 and A7), Dilapidation Enforcement Officer (Mr S. Salter) (Item A6), 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, Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin.

A2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. **Minutes – 15th September, 2025**

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

A4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

No matters were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A5. **Attendance at Keep Britain Tidy Conference**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Waste Services seeking approval for a delegation to attend the Keep Britain Tidy Network Conference and Awards to be held in Manchester on 26th February 2026.

Members were advised that as part of the Council's exemplar membership, the Council receives a three-delegate package which comprises full attendance at the conference, including access to the exhibition, workshops and the Gala Network Awards Presentation, accommodation and meals.

Although the agenda is yet to be released, it is anticipated that there will be a significant focus on the recent national 'Bin Your Butts' campaign, in which the Council participated during the Manx Grand Prix. Early indications, both statistical and anecdotal, suggest that the campaign successfully achieved its objectives. Members were advised that the final campaign report from Keep Britain Tidy will be shared with them via a Briefing Note once received.

As a previous award winner, the Council was encouraged by Keep Britain Tidy to consider submitting an entry in one of the eight award categories, with the campaign results expected to inform the final decision. Members concurred that the Council should pursue an award and if an award was pursued, agreed that the Vice-Chair attend in place of the Chair as the event coincides with the February Executive Committee meeting. Should the award be not pursued, the Council send an officer only delegation as in previous years.

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

(i) That approval be given for the Vice-Chair plus a two-officer delegation to attend the Keep Britain Tidy Network Conference and Awards on 26th February 2026, as part of the Council's membership for 2025/26; and

(ii) That officers be authorised to submit an entry into one of the awards categories."

A6. **Schedule of Dilapidated, Ruinous or Dangerous Properties**

The Committee considered a schedule of properties in a state of dilapidation or disrepair. Members noted that three properties had been added to the schedule since the last meeting; three properties had been removed because work had been completed; and a total of forty properties remained on the list. This equates to 0.26% 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."

A7. **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."

A8. **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 November 2025.

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

The meeting ended at 11.20am.