

# ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Hawthorn Villa,  
Main Road, Onchan.

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## IN PUBLIC

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*13<sup>th</sup> January 2005*

Sir/Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend an ORDINARY meeting of the Authority to be held in the boardroom at the offices of the Board to transact the undernoted business at:

**7.00 p.m. on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

which will be followed by a meeting of the Board in Committee.

Yours faithfully,

**J.E.S. SMITH**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE/CLERK**

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## AGENDA

*The order of business at every meeting of the authority shall be in accordance with that laid down in Standing Order No 4 unless varied by the Chairman at his discretion or by a resolution duly moved and seconded and passed on a motion which shall be moved and put without discussion.*

1. To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the:-
  - 1.1 Ordinary meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2004 *(Minutes - APPENDIX 2)*

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2. To dispose of business (if any) remaining or arising from the above said meeting
  - 2.1 C04/12/01/02(1) Local Government Reform (Minister's Statement circulated 10/12/04)
  - 2.2 Any other business arising.

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3. To dispose of business (if any) remaining or arising from meetings held prior to the last ordinary meeting.

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4. Attendance and Travelling Allowances – for year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 – Resolution required under provisions of Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act 1985.

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5. Chairman's Announcements

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6. Questions - As may be asked by members under the provisions of Standing Order No 7(2) after due notice in writing.

7. To receive and consider reports, minutes and recommendations of committees. The chairman of the respective committees to report.
- 7.1 Housing Committee  
- Meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> December 2004 *(Minutes – APPENDIX 3)*
  - 7.2 Works and Cleansing Committee  
- Meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> December 2004 *(Minutes – APPENDIX 4)*
  - 7.3 Leisure and Amenities Committee  
- Meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> January 2005 *(Minutes – APPENDIX 5)*
  - 7.4 Policy and Finance Committee  
- Meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> January 2005 *(Minutes – APPENDIX 6)*
  - 7.5 Rural Committee  
- Meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> December 2004 *(Minutes – APPENDIX 7)*
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**Note:**

Standing Order No 7(1) provides that “A member of the Authority may ask the chairman of a committee any question upon an item of the minutes, report or recommendations of a committee when that item is under consideration by the Authority.”

Other questions may be asked, after due notice in writing under the provisions of Standing Order No 7(2).

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8. To consider letters, petitions, memorials and other communications.
- 8.1 Planning decisions/communications from the D.L.G.E. Planning Committee  
*(Schedule - APPENDIX 8)*
  - 8.2 DOLGE re: Modernising the Planning System (circulated)
  - 8.3 DHA re: Criminal Justice (Misc. Prov) Bill 2005 (Circulated 05/01/05)
  - 8.4 IOM Gambling Control Commissioners re: Application (circulated)
  - 8.5 Office of the Clerk of Tynwald re: Select Committee of Tynwald on Health and Safety (circulated)
  - 8.6 Any Other Communication
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9. To consider any report from the Clerk, Surveyor or other Officer of the Authority
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10. To consider Motions in the order in which notice has been received. *(ref Standing Order No 5)*

None.

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the **ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS** held in the Boardroom, at Hawthorn Villa, Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2004 at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Mr M.J. Kennaugh, J.P. (Chairman)  
Mr G.K. Astill  
Mr S.T. Black  
Mr D. Crellin  
Mr E.D.R. Killey  
Mrs W.E. Megson  
Mr A.T.W. Norton  
Mr D.J. Quirk  
Mr B. Stowell  
Mr J.K. Watterson

**In Attendance:** Mr M.J. Williams (Deputy Clerk)  
Mr E.K. Convery (District Surveyor)

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### **C04/12/01/01** **MINUTES**

The minutes of the public section of the ordinary meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered.

Mr Watterson questioned the content of minute C04/11/01/02(1), commenting that the content of the minute did not directly relate to the title thereof. The Deputy Clerk explained that it was his practice to retain a minute title during consideration of the whole matter, in order that the matter could be fully researched if required so to do. Whilst the title of the minute did not directly reflect the content thereof, it was arising out of that topic.

It was agreed that the minutes were a correct record of proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

### **C04/12/01/02** **BUSINESS ARISING**

#### **1. C04/11/01/16(2) – Isle of Man Municipal Association – Meeting Held 25<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Municipal Association held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2004, had been circulated with the agenda.

Mr Quirk thanked the Officers of the Municipal Association for producing the minutes so quickly. He commented that during the debate, the Minister for Local Government and the Environment had stood his ground in relation to Local Government Reform. He suggested that it was still necessary for Authorities to liaise with each other and discuss the reform proposals. Mr Quirk suggested that representation would have to be on a pro-rata basis.

Mr Watterson felt that there was a lot of misunderstanding in relation to the principle of Local Government Reform and that many of the Authorities were looking for a detailed answer to questions before the principle had been agreed. He considered that the principle was becoming clouded in detail, and that it was important that there was a clearer and better understanding of the principle before proceeding.

Mr Stowell, however, suggested that the concerns of smaller Authorities had not been appreciated. Mr Stowell understood that the smaller Authorities were concerned that Tynwald approval to the principle of Local Government Reform as proposed by the Department of Local Government and the Environment would “provide the Department with a stick to beat Local Authorities with”. Mr Stowell, therefore, had some sympathy with the concerns of smaller Authorities.

Mr Killey was pleased that all of the Authorities had been provided with the opportunity to express concerns.

Mr Black reiterated that the Onchan District Commissioners continued to agree with the proposals of the Department of Local Government and the Environment, and with the stance of the Minister, in relation to Local Government Reform.

Mr Stowell considered that the reservations of the smaller Authorities were well founded and expressed sympathies for their view. He considered, however, that proposals to reform the rating system were more important than the Local Government Reform proposals. Mr Quirk enquired whether there was any further information in relation to the proposed rating system reform. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that he had not seen anything in that regard.

It was noted that the report of the Department of Local Government and the Environment on the effectiveness of the present Local Government Structure on the Island and the Department's supervisory powers was to be considered by Tynwald at its forthcoming meeting, for the report to be received and to the approval to the recommendations to be granted.

**C04/12/01/03**  
**BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

None.

**C04/12/01/04**  
**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:-

1. **Onchan Library – Diamond Jubilee**

The Chairman confirmed that the Onchan Library had recently celebrated its Diamond Jubilee with events held within the Library its self.

2. **Christmas Lights**

The Chairman confirmed that the Christmas Lights in Onchan had been erected and were operational. He congratulated the staff for their work in this regard.

3. **Torch Light Procession – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2004**

The Chairman reminded Members that the Onchan Torchlight Procession would be held the following day, commencing at Coutts Bank and processing through to Springfield Court Elderly Persons Complex. The procession would be joined by Rudolph and Father Christmas.

4. **Seasonal Events**

The Chairman confirmed that he would be representing the Local Authority at a number of seasonal church services and carol services over the forthcoming weeks prior to Christmas.

**C04/12/01/05**  
**QUESTIONS**

None.

**C04/12/01/06**  
**HOUSING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the public section of the Housing Committee meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered. There were no matters arising therefrom.

**C04/12/01/07**  
**RECEIVING OF MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the public section of the Housing Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2004, be and are hereby received. There were no resolutions contained therein requiring the consent of the Board.

**C04/12/01/08**  
**WORKS AND CLEANSING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the public section of the Works and Cleansing Committee meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered. Arising therefrom:-

**1. WC04/11/05(a)(iii) – Replacement Bollard Lighting – Heywood Park**

In answer to enquiry from Mr Crellin, Mr Quirk confirmed that the Works and Cleansing Committee were endeavouring to address the problem with the bollard lighting at Heywood Park. The District Surveyor indicated that it was hoped that a quotation for the replacement of the lighting would be presented to the next meeting of the Works and Cleansing Committee.

**2. WC04/11/04(a)(ii) – Fly Tipping**

Reference was made to a number of car tyres which apparently had been fly tipped. Mr Crellin enquired as to how many incidents of fly tipping had been recorded. The District Surveyor confirmed that at the last Works and Cleansing Committee meeting, it was reported that there had been a total of eight incidents. In answer to further enquiry, the District Surveyor confirmed that this was an increase on previous incidents.

Mr Stowell referred to incidents of which he was aware where fly tipping had taken place on private land, that the incidents had not been reported and that the items had been disposed of personally by the landowner.

Mr Quirk reminded the public that the Snugborough Civic Amenity Site was available for use by those in the east region.

In answer to enquiry from Mr Black, it was confirmed that the disposal of oil through the Civic Amenity Site was a service which was provided free of charge.

**3. WC04/11/05(a)(i) – Church Road**

In answer to enquiry from Mr Black, it was confirmed that the District Surveyor still awaited a response from the Manx Electricity Authority in relation to these works.

**4. WC04/11/05 – Street Lighting/Street Furniture**

In answer to enquiry from Mr Crellin, the District Surveyor confirmed that a list of lighting problems was maintained in the Works Department, and that there were still one or two ongoing issues which required attendance. Specifically, the District Surveyor confirmed that certain parts were being sourced in an effort to resolve those problems. In addition, there appeared to be a switching problem in relation to certain lights in Turnberry Avenue. Mr Quirk encouraged the public to notify the Commissioners of any difficulties with lighting which they were experiencing.

In answer to enquiry from Mr Watterson, the District Surveyor confirmed that the Street Lighting Maintenance Contract required that the Contractor tour the District at least once each month to identify any problems and this was carried out in the evening time. It was further confirmed that if a problem was noted, the Contractor was encouraged to repair same as soon as possible. Mr Stowell enquired as to how many street lights were situate in the Rural Ward and it was confirmed that there was approximately 15 Rural Ward lights together with those situate in the areas of Tromode which fell within the Onchan boundary.

**5. WC04/11/09(c) – Ballachurry Park**

The Deputy Clerk drew attention to the reference in the minutes to this matter, specifically relating to ramps in Wybourn Drive. It had been confirmed that the content of the discussion was to be referred to the Board for information. *Noted.*

## **6. WC04/11/04(b) – Waste Disposal Charges**

The Deputy Clerk reminded Members of the motion before Tynwald, which would be voted upon at the December Sitting. The Minister for Local Government and the Environment was to move that Tynwald:-

- (a) request the Department of Local Government and the Environment to reduce the previously agreed subsidy of 90% of the cost of disposing of domestic wastes to 70% with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005; and
- (b) expects that the additional cost to be passed on to households by the Island's Waste Collection Authorities should not exceed the equivalent of an extra £20 per annum (on average) per domestic property from that date.

Mr Quirk expressed a personal comment that the imposition of waste disposal charges and in particular the reduction of the subsidy was unfair. He commented that the collection Authorities had incurred significant expense to try to achieve the wishes of the Department in terms of fitting specific weighing equipment on to the refuse collection wagons and micro chipping of bins. Furthermore, there were staffing and other cost implications associated with this.

## **C04/12/01/09** **RECEIVING OF MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the public section of the Works and Cleansing Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2004 be and are hereby received. It was further **RESOLVED** that the resolution contained therein requiring the consent of the Board be approved as follows:-

1. ***to accept the lowest tender, that of John Cain Limited, for the resurfacing of the car parks in front of Beech House and Elm Tree House on Elm Tree Road at a cost of £2,079.***

## **C04/12/01/10** **LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the public section of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered. Arising therefrom:-

### **1. LA04/11/06(a)(ii) – Diamond Jubilee**

Reference was made to the successful celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the Library on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004. It was noted that, due to ill health, the former Member of the Commissioners who was in fact of a Member of the Board 60 years previously when the Library had first opened, had been unable to attend. Mr Norton thanked Mr Chris Caine for his assistance in the Harry Potter reading during the celebrations.

### **2. LA04/11/04(a) – Amenities Officer's Report – Village Christmas Trees**

Mr Norton reiterated the comments made previously by the Chairman with regard to the Christmas Trees and lights within the village and commented that the display looked very good indeed.

Mr Norton also made reference to the Christmas Lights Competition which was to be held in the build up to the 2004 Christmas Season. He confirmed that the competition would be judged on 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> December 2004 and that entry forms were available from the Onchan District Commissioners' Offices. In answer to enquiry from Mr Black it was confirmed that Members could provide copies of application forms to households in their area whom may be interested in participating.

### **3. LA04/11/03(b)(i) – Nivison Stadium – Fire Panels**

It was noted that the quotations which it had been hoped had been presented to the Board were still awaited. Mr Watterson enquired whether a survey had been undertaken as to whether there was any asbestos present prior to any works being undertaken.

### **4. LA04/11/03(c) – Park Foreman's Report**

It was noted that the Parks Foreman was absent due to ill health and that the Amenities Officer would continue to report to the Leisure and Amenities Committee in this regard.

### **5. LA04/11/06(c) – Any other Library Business**

The consideration of the Leisure and Amenities Committee in relation to the provision of a post box in the vicinity of the Onchan Library was noted. On the proposal of Mr Stowell, seconded by Mr Crellin, it was **RESOLVED** that a formal approach should be made to Isle of Man Post offering the area outside the Onchan Library for the provision of a Post Box should Isle of Man Post wish to avail themselves of this site.

6. **LA04/11/09 – Outstanding Matters -Consider twinning at a future date.**

The possibility of the District of Onchan twinning with a village, town, or city elsewhere was considered. Mr Quirk believed that Onchan District Commissioners should progress this matter as a twinning arrangement would bring opportunities for the benefit of the District, including the exchange of information and cultural exchanges.

Mr Stowell, however, suggested that the Commissioners should not proceed with this matter for the time being since there were other more pressing issues which needed to be addressed. On his proposal, therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that the consideration of twinning of Onchan with another village, town or city be adjourned sine die.

**C04/12/01/11**  
**RECEIVING OF MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the public section of the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2004 be and are hereby received. There were no resolutions contained therein requiring the consent of the Board.

**C04/12/01/12**  
**POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the public section of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered. Arising therefrom:-

1. **PF04/11/02(1) – Member/Officer Protocol**

Mr Quirk requested the consideration of the Commissioners' Member/Officer Protocol be considered in private. *Agreed.*

**C04/12/01/13**  
**RECEIVING OF MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the public section of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2004, be and are hereby received. It was further **RESOLVED** that the resolutions contained therein requiring the consent of the Board be approved as follows:-

1. ***That the said payments from revenue account as detailed on the list attached to the minutes be endorsed.***
2. ***That application be made to the Director of Highways, Department of Transport, requesting that this Authority be permitted to continue to act as an agent on behalf of the Department of Transport for vehicle registration renewals.***

It was further **RESOLVED** that the following resolution contained in the minutes which required the consent of the Board should be discussed in private:-

3. ***That the detailed Commissioner/Officer Protocol document as circulated be approved for submission to the staff of Onchan District Commissioners through Unison with a view to the Protocol being adopted by this Authority.***

**C04/12/01/14**  
**RURAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the public section of the Rural Committee meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered. Arising therefrom:-

1. **R04/11/02(a) – T.T. Rubbish**

Mr Watterson drew attention to the discussions which had taken place at Committee in this regard.

2. **R04/11/02(c)(iii) – Hedge Trimming Policy**

Mr Watterson drew attention to the discussion which had taken place with regard to the hedge trimming policy of the Department of Transport, adding that the Department should be commended for taking into account issues relating to fauna and flora on the Island. However, the policy of cutting hedges late in the year did not fit with the difficulties drivers experienced with growing hedges and so forth during the growing months. Mr Watterson urged any residents within the District who had issues relating to overgrown hedges to notify the Onchan District Commissioners who would then refer the matter to the Department of Transport.

In answer to enquiry from Mr Black, it was confirmed that the Department of Transport Hedge Trimming Policy did not cover Rural footpaths.

3. **R04/11/07(d) – Future of Local Government**

It was noted that the Rural Committee held the view that insufficient publicity had been given to the public meeting which was held in the Youth and Community Centre when the Minister for Local Government and the Environment, the Honourable J. Rimmington, MHK, gave a presentation in relation to the future of Local Government. The publicised reaction from the meeting within the East Region had provided additional notice for meetings in the other areas which may have been better attended. *Noted.*

**C04/12/01/15**  
**RECEIVING OF MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the public section of the Rural Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004, be and are hereby received. There were no resolutions contained therein requiring the consent of the Board.

**LETTERS, PETITIONS, MEMORIALS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS****1. Planning Decisions/Communications From The Department Of Local Government And The Environment Planning Committee**

The following planning communications were considered:-

<b>P A NUMBER</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
03/1437	New Secondary School, Land at Bemahague with access of Heywood Drive	ODC recommendation - Observation Planning decision – On Review - Approval – Review decision lodged. Submissions to be made by 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2004. ODC not objecting to application but commenting with relation to traffic access
04/1148	Amendments to approved PA98/1278(b) to include installation of Oil Tanks and Access Steps, removal of additional tree, internal alterations to side and rear elevations and inclusion of an ATM machine, former Nursery Hotel Site	ODC recommendation - Approval Initial planning decision - Approval A review of decision requested. Observations submitted
04/1573	Amended window type to PA04/0325 – 34 Eskdale Road	ODC recommendation - Refusal (overlooking neighbours) Initial planning decision - Approval Application reviewed and approval confirmed. Additional condition attached to address concerns relating to overlooking neighbouring properties.
04/1862	Conversion of Existing Garage to form Chiropody Treatment and Therapy Room with associated parking, 17 Eskdale Road	ODC recommendation – Refusal (loss of car parking – commercial concern in residential area) Initial planning decision – Approval
04/2168	Variation of condition 8 of new retail store, former Nursery Hotel Site	ODC recommendation - Approval Initial planning decision – Approval Decision noted.

**2. North Quay and Douglas Inner Harbour Improvement Scheme**

A letter received from the Project Manager at the Department of Transport with regard to the North Quay and Douglas Inner Harbour Improvement Scheme dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2004, had been circulated with the agenda. It was confirmed that the proposed presentation had been entered into the diary of the Chief Executive/Clerk to attend, and Messrs Astill, Black, Crellin and Watterson also indicated their intention to attend the seminar which was to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

**3. Onchan Youth Club**

A letter received dated 4<sup>th</sup> November 2004 with regard to the Onchan Youth Club from the Youth and Community Adviser of the Department of Education, had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that the Onchan Youth Club Management Committee had agreed to formally disband and allow the young people to manage the Youth Club, with continuing support from the Youth Workers. The Chairman and Members of the Onchan District Commissioners were thanked for the work on the Committee which had been very much appreciated by the Department.

The Commissioners recorded their continued good wishes for success to the young people in the management of the Youth Club.

**4. Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy**

A letter received from the Assistant Secretary of the Civil Service Commission, dated 5<sup>th</sup> November 2004, enclosing a copy of a draft Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy, had been circulated with the

agenda. In addition, a copy of a memorandum received from the Deputy Clerk was also circulated, which recommended:-

- (a) that a response be issued to Personnel Office confirming that the Onchan District Commissioners noted and concurred with the content of the Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy enclosed with the letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> November 2004; and
- (b) subject to any major amendments to the draft Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy being further considered by the Board, that the Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy as adopted by the Isle of Man Government be so adopted by the Onchan District Commissioners.

On the proposal of Mr Watterson, it was **RESOLVED** that the recommendation of the Deputy Clerk with respect to the Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy of the Isle of Man Government be adopted.

Mr Norton suggested that consultation documents such as this should be circulated to the Members upon receipt rather than waiting for circulation with the agenda for the next Board meeting.

5. **The Road Safety Initiative 2004 to 2007 – The Department of Transport's Response to the Public Consultation, Initial Report**

It was noted that the Honourable J.P. Shimmin, MHK, Minister for Transport, had written to the Commissioners on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2004, to enclose the results of the public consultation on the Road Safety Initiative. The enclosures with the letter comprised the initial report from October 2004, summary chart and the results from the Consultation Document.

It was commented that the Road Safety Initiative was to be welcomed, but that the results would not occur overnight. *Noted.*

6. **Report on the Structure of Local Government - Foreword**

An email received from the Department of Local Government and the Environment, together with an enclosure dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004 was circulated with the agenda. The email confirmed that the Minister for Local Government and the Environment had inserted a Foreword within the Departmental Report which was to be considered at the December 2004 Sitting of Tynwald. The enclosure was a copy of the Foreword for the information of the Commissioners.

Mr Quirk was content to note that the Minister appeared to have taken in to account some of the comments which had been made at the recent public meetings in this regard.

7. **Proposed Joint Civic Amenity Site Committee Meeting – 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2004**

An email received from the Business Manager at the Department of Local Government and the Environment, dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004, had been circulated with the agenda. The email noted that the proposed joint meeting of Civic Amenity Site Committees to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2004 on the provision of management of the C.A. sites had been deferred as the Department had yet to consider the content of a paper in this regard. *Noted.*

8. **Strategic Review of Countryside Recreational Provision**

An email received from the Access and Recreation Officer at the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, dated 25<sup>th</sup> November 2004, together with the enclosure therewith, had been circulated with the agenda. The document was detailed and sought to carry out a strategic review of countryside recreational provision. The document sought responses to be submitted to the Department no later than 17<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

It was suggested that this was a matter that which ought properly to be considered by the Leisure and Amenities Committee and that, as the next meeting of the Leisure and Amenities Committee did not take place until 5<sup>th</sup> January 2004, a response within the timescale suggested would not be possible. It was agreed to request an extension of time to allow the Onchan District Commissioners to consider the matter properly and submit its views upon the strategic review document.

**C04/12/01/17**  
**CLERKS REPORT**

None.

**C04/12/01/18**  
**DISTRICT SURVEYORS REPORT**

**1. The Isle of Man Strategic Plan – Towards Sustainable Island – Modified Draft, November 2004**

The District Surveyor had prepared a memorandum for consideration by the Onchan District Commissioners, which commented upon the Isle of Man Strategic Plan Document entitled "Toward a Sustainable Island", produced in November 2004. It was noted that the document itself was a large document, requiring a response by 10<sup>th</sup> December.

The memorandum drew attention to the differences between the latest draft of the proposed plan to that which had been issued in 2001 upon which the Commissioners had previously commented. The District Surveyor acknowledged that there had been some changes but that the aims of the document were fairly consistent.

The District Surveyor confirmed that in any issue where there was a conflict between the content of an existing Local Plan and the proposed new Island Strategic Plan, the later document would take priority. An example of one of the changes where the proposed Strategic Plan would take precedent over the Onchan Local Plan 2000 would be in the car parking requirement for residential properties. The Onchan Local Plan 2000 required the provision of three car parking spaces per property. The Isle of Man Strategic Plan required only two.

The District Surveyor also referred to Chapter 4 of the proposed Isle of Man Strategic Plan which stated that new development would be located primarily within existing towns and villages, or where appropriate, in sustainable urban extensions to these towns and villages. It may be, for instance, that such a provision would have an effect on the outskirts of Onchan, and specific reference was made to the Ballachrink Farm Land.

Mr Quirk enquired as to the next step in the procedure. The District Surveyor understood that the proposals, together with the responses would be collated and forwarded to a public enquiry. Mr Quirk thanked the District Surveyor in his work in relation to the document and noted that the Commissioners would have a further opportunity to comment at any subsequent public enquiry.

The District Surveyor commented that one of the changes contained within the current draft of the document would see a widening of scope for development within the Countryside. It was noted that reference was made within the report to widen the scope in relation for applications for replacement dwellings by introducing a more flexible approach. This is in response to the changing agricultural economy over the last 20 years which had affected the Rural Sector. Mr Watterson advised of his understanding that presently abandoned properties may well be available for redevelopment under the terms of the new plan, applications being considered on an individual basis. The report also appeared to favour use of the main sewer system rather than the traditional septic tank arrangements. It was understood that agricultural dwellings would continue to be linked to agricultural activity, with the owner/resident being involved in agricultural work for a minimum of 20 hours per week. It was unclear as to how retirement would affect this position. Mr Watterson reiterated the thanks to the District Surveyor for the preparation of his report.

C04/12/01/19  
MOTIONS

None.

*There being no further business the meeting terminated at 8.20p.m.*

Minutes of a meeting of the **HOUSING COMMITTEE** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, Main Road, Onchan, on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2004 commencing at 7.00 p.m.

<b>Present:</b>	Mr J.K.Watterson	(Chairman)
	S.T. Black	
	Mr M.J. Kennaugh, J.P.	
	Mrs W.E. Megson	
	Mr B. Stowell	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mr M.J. Williams	(Deputy Clerk)
	Mr A.B. Sutherland	(Housing Maintenance Manager)
	Mrs S. Dougherty	(Administrative Assistant/Housing Officer)

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#### **H04/12/01/01** **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered, agreed as a correct record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

#### **H04/12/01/02** **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The following matters were arising from the minutes, being items which had not been referred to elsewhere on the agenda:-

1. **Administrative Report**

None.

2. **H04/11/01/17(3) – Public Sector Housing Discussion Document**

Letters had been received from the Director of Estates and Housing at the Department of Local Government and the Environment, both dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 2004, which confirmed that following the meeting of the Public Housing Consultative Committee which had taken place on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2004, it had been proposed to have a further meeting to report on the responses to the Public Sector Housing Discussion Document. The letter confirmed that the report on the analysis had now been completed and was currently at the printers. A copy would be sent to the Commissioners within the following few days.

The Director asked that Members be advised that the Villa Marina had been booked for a meeting, initially on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005, but subsequently amended this date to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2004. It confirmed that an agenda for the day would be enclosed with the analysis report. It asked that confirmation be provided of the names of members and officers who would be attending the meeting and whilst the Department did not wish to be too prescriptive about how many should attend from each Authority, it was suggested that numbers should be no more than four or five per Authority.

It was confirmed that the Commissioners had appointed representatives for the Housing Consultative Committee being the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Housing Committee. In addition, it was usual for the Deputy Clerk to attend such a meeting. Mr Stowell expressed an interest in attending the meeting if it would be possible so to do.

The documentation would be circulated when available.

#### **H04/12/01/03** **BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

1. **Administrative Report**

None.

2. **Use of Gas Fires**

It was reported that the Housing Maintenance Manager and Deputy Clerk had recently met with a Senior Health and Safety Inspector with the Department of Local Government and the Environment, such inspector having responsibility for gas safety matters.

The discussions were wide ranging, and included comment about the newly formed Commissioners' policy in relation to the use of gas fires within the Commissioners' Public Sector housing units.

Whilst appreciating the arguments in favour of the policy change which the Commissioners had introduced, the Health and Safety Inspector suggested that a viable alternative for the Commissioners would be for the introduction of annual testing programme for the gas fires to be carried out on behalf of the Commissioners themselves. A number of questions were posed which the Officers suggested that the Commissioners might wish to consider which included:-

- (a) Did the landlord provide pipe work to allow for a gas fire to be easily connected?
- (b) At what stage did a gas fire become a fixture and therefore, at what stage did the responsibility for the gas fire transfer to the landlord?
- (c) Should the chimney of a property be tested regularly anyway to ensure its safety, even if it were to be used for a coal fire?
- (d) Which option would carry the greatest risk – a properly maintained gas fire or an untested coal fire?
- (e) Does the Authority ensure that the maintenance contractor does carry out a visual inspection of all gas installations within the Commissioners' housing stock, as part of the gas boiler service contract, as would be required under regulation?
- (f) Is it necessary to carry out a pressure test on a chimney flue and would a flow test be sufficient to ensure that the flue is sound?
- (g) Has an assessment been made as to the additional cost which might be incurred for adding a gas fire service to the gas boiler service contract?

The attention of the officers had been drawn to a publication issued by the Health and Safety Executive which gave advice with regard to the United Kingdom legislation and its application. It was acknowledged that the Isle of Man legislation was not precisely the same, but the main elements of the Manx Law had replicated those standards which were in place in the U.K.. The Health and Safety Inspector believed the document to be a good guide and arrangements had been made to purchase copies of that document.

It was suggested that the recent testing of gas appliances by Manx Gas, as part of the audit undertaken following the conversion programme, had been very thorough indeed. The Inspector regarded the information from that Audit to be very good and that this provided the Authority with a very strong basis upon which to set future policy. It was believed that if Manx Gas had passed a gas fire as safe, it would be in full compliance with the regulations.

It was confirmed that the proposed letter to the tenants advising of the change in policy had been held back, pending the opportunity for the Housing Committee to consider the questions which had been raised.

It was confirmed that, as part of the gas installation programme which had taken place over a number of years, where appropriate, a gas pipe had been provided at the appropriate point for a gas fire to be fitted. It was acknowledged that an argument could be made that once a gas fire had been installed, that gas fire became a fixture and as such, would become the responsibility of the landlord to maintain. However, this was not the view of the Commissioners to date, and would require further consideration. It was acknowledged that there may be other implications in relation to this principle for the Commissioners.

A lengthy discussion took place with regard to the use of the chimney flue to a property for the venting of gases from a gas fire. It was, however, considered that a requirement to fit a flue liner, suitable for use with a gas fire was an appropriate step to take to ensure the continuing security of the property, the safety of the tenants of the property and of surrounding properties.

It was suggested that a routine testing programme should be devised in relation to all chimneys to ensure the stability of the flue, particularly when used with a coal fire. The necessity for such testing was discussed.

The Central Heating boiler servicing arrangements had been discussed and the Officers had expressed satisfaction in this regard. The inspector had, however, suggested that in the event of an incident, an inquiry might seek the provision of evidence to support this position. He advised that CORGI did offer a facility to landlords to carry out a confirmatory inspection of a service completed by a contractor.

Whilst Officers were content with the present arrangements, it was considered that it may be in the interests of the Authority to be able to refer to the confirmatory inspection, should there be an incident in the future.

Officers sought the views of the Committee in relation to the necessity to retain a coal fire provision within certain properties, particularly in bungalows, should the gas fire be removed and whether, as a consequence, the Commissioners wished to see the removal of the coal fire provision by the closing up of the chimney. A discussion took place with differing views being expressed. It was noted that, at one time, departmental policy was to retain a coal fire but there was also an environmental argument against the continuation of coal fire provision. It was understood that there were other landlords who, on the provision of gas fired central heating, had removed open fire places by closing the fire place.

After a lengthy discussion, on the proposal of Mr Stowell, it was **RESOLVED**\*:-

***That the matters considered following the meeting of Officers with the Health and Safety Inspector be noted and that the Commissioners were content with the existing policy of seeking to require the attachment of suitable gas box, flue liner and appropriate terminal prior to permitting the continued use of a gas fire.***

#### **H04/12/01/04**

#### **HOUSING AND OTHER ESTATES BUSINESS**

##### **1. Maintenance Report**

The report, dated 10<sup>th</sup> December 2004, had been circulated with the agenda. Arising therefrom:-

##### **(a) The Park Houses (Scheme 4 – 12 units)**

It was noted that rear gates had been fitted to all properties which comprised housing scheme 4, The Park Houses.

##### **2. Administrative Report**

None.

##### **3. H04/11/01/04(3) - School Road, Car Parking**

It was noted that it would be necessary to produce drawings and submit a planning application for these works, and that this matter would be progressed within the new year.

##### **4. H04/11/01/04(3) - Ballachrink Flats – Frontage**

It was noted that drawings would be required, together with the submission of a planning application, in order to progress this matter and that the project would be progressed in the new year.

A discussion took place as to what should be provided in place of the existing frontage, given the falls from the road to the properties. It had been envisaged that a retaining wall would be required to counteract the falls.

It was suggested that care would have to be taken in relation to the works to ensure that appropriate allowance was made for the area to the front of the houses to be appropriately positioned for the damp proof course to the properties, whilst ensuring that any necessary subterranean pipe work and so forth was taken account of in the design.

A suggestion was made that the tenants might be approached with regard to the proposals for the area to obtain their views.

#### **H04/12/01/05**

#### **SPRINGFIELD COURT MATTERS**

##### **1. Maintenance Report**

None.

2. **Administrative Report**

None.

3. **“Window Pull”**

Attention was drawn to the fact that, particularly at flats 1 to 30 at Springfield Court, some residents experienced difficulty in using the kitchen window to the flats due to the siting of the sink unit in front of the window. Documentation had been received which advertised a unit known as the “Window Pull” which, effectively, was a handle extension designed to be used with a window handle. This would allow residents who were experiencing difficulty to be able to utilise the kitchen window.

It was subsequently **RESOLVED**\*:-

***That authority be given to purchase a box of ten of the “Window Pull” devices, at a total cost of £174.50 plus V.A.T., such units to remain within the ownership of Onchan District Commissioners but to be loaned to residents at Springfield Court by the Wardens as and when considered appropriate.***

**H04/12/01/06**

**HEYWOOD COURT MATTERS**

1. **Maintenance Report**

None.

2. **Administrative Report**

None.

3. **Baths>Showers**

Correspondence both received and issued in relation to the question of the provision of showers at Heywood Court had been circulated with the agenda. The enquiry had been made by Mr P. Karran MHK, who advised that he had received complaints regarding the issue of some of the more disabled residents at Heywood Park who were not able to use the bathing facilities within their units. Mr Karran enquired whether it would be possible for the Commissioners to look into replacing the baths for showers for those residents who had a severe disability as it was affecting their quality of life.

The letter had been acknowledged and also made reference to a number of comments which had been made to the Warden of the facility at Heywood Court in that regard. It confirmed that no specific written requests had been received at the Commissioners Office and that the Onchan District Commissioners were supportive of the need to provide disabled facilities where necessary. It pointed out, however, that since this was expenditure which would be taken from the maintenance allowance of the Authority, the policy of the Department of the Local Government and the Environment in such matters must be followed. It was a requirement that any request for the provision of disabled facilities, which may include the provision of showering facilities was supported by written medical evidence. It was suggested that Mr Karran advise any complainants of this requirement, or alternatively to advise the officers of the names of anyone in difficulty where the appropriate liaison could take place.

The response went on to point out that the complex had been fitted with low level baths with shower above to go some way to meet the needs of tenants while taking in to account the general belief that the elderly would prefer to utilise a bath than a showering facility. It was appreciated that the health and well being of individual tenants may be affected over time, but it was the understanding of the Commissioners that residents were generally satisfied with the provision of bath with shower over at the time of allocation.

The correspondence received was noted and the response issued endorsed.

**H04/12/01/07**

**GARAGE MATTERS**

None.

**H04/12/01/08**  
**PLANNED HOUSING MAINTENANCE**

It was confirmed that an Officers' meeting had taken place on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November, the meeting attended on behalf of the Commissioners by the District Surveyor, the Housing Maintenance Manager and the Deputy Clerk, and on behalf of the Department of Local Government and the Environment by the Building Surveyor responsible for this matter in the Onchan District.

Arising from the meeting:-

**1. Planned Housing Maintenance Survey**

It was noted that the update of the Planned Housing Condition Survey, the results of which had been inaccurate, had been returned to the Consultants and submission to the Onchan District Commissioners was still awaited.

**2. Upgrade of Electrical Wiring – Nursery Avenue, The Park and School Road (Schemes 1 to 5 – 90 units)**

It was noted that a sample condition survey had been undertaken at properties in Nursery Avenue (Scheme 1 – 13 units) and the advice of Commissioners' Electrical Contractor had been that the properties should be the subject of a rewire project. Discussions had taken place with regard to the appointment of an appropriate Consultant, as had been the case with the Ashley Park project recently completed, and a fee proposal had been submitted to the Department of Local Government and the Environment from the Consultant involved. Approval to the use of the Consultant to progress the project in relation to the Nursery Avenue properties at Schemes 1 and 2 – 38 units – was awaited. It was further noted that on appointment of the Consultant in this regard, instructions would be issued to the Electrical Contractor to undertake a sample condition survey of the Park Bungalows, The Park Houses and the School Road properties owned by the Commissioners.

Finally, it had been suggested that the budgetary provision within the capital programme would be insufficient to complete the project over the longer term and an increase in that budget had been suggested.

**3. Upgrade of Electrical Wiring – Barrule Drive (Schemes 6 and 7 – 42 units)**

It was noted that this scheme was due to be progressed in the 2006/07 financial year and, upon completion of the schemes at Schemes 1 – 5, instructions would be issued to the Commissioners' Electrical Contractor to undertake a condition survey.

**4. Replacement of Fascias, etc, Ashley Park (Scheme 13 – 60 units)**

Scheme complete.

**5. Replacement of Fascias, etc, Hackett Close/Meadow Close/Nursery Avenue (Schemes 11, 12 and 11a – 36 units)**

Scheme complete.

**6. External Works – Various Properties (Schemes Pre War to Scheme 7 - 140 units)**

It was noted that in the past, discussions had taken place to provide financial provision within the planned maintenance programme, and to work towards individual schemes for roof refurbishment, footpath and garden wall refurbishment and render repairs to various properties within the earliest of the Commissioners' housing schemes. Those discussions had developed and, to restrict the disturbance to the residents involved and indeed for purposes of value for money, it had become apparent that some of the works should be organised to take place at one time or immediately following each other. The original proposals, therefore, for separate schemes were under review with a view to the amalgamation of some of those projects in to a larger scheme.

It was confirmed that the priority foreseen by Officers in this regard was to progress with render repair and, if appropriate, roof refurbishment, to the properties in School Road where brick work deterioration and indeed condensation issues were a cause for concern. With the approval of the Department of Local

Government and the Environment, a feasibility study had been undertaken by a consultant who had specialised in similar works elsewhere on the Island, and a report had been received and referred to the Building Surveyor at the Department for consideration.

The budgetary provision had previously been inadequate to undertake such works but it was understood that an additional provisional budget had been prepared and included in the departmental planned maintenance programme. The matter was still under consideration.

**7. Electrical Wiring – Springfield Court, Phase 1**

It had been noted that the first phase development at Springfield Court had taken place in 1978/79 and that, therefore, the electrical installation was 25 years old. The Authority had previously used the 25 year period as a guide after which an inspection of the electrical installation should take place. A request had been made, therefore, that money be set aside in the capital programme to address any deficiencies in the electrical system to the flats at Springfield Court, Phase 1, and it had been agreed that the Commissioners' Electrical Contractor should undertake a sample survey of perhaps two or three units at Springfield Court, Phase 1, to assess the extent of works required, if any.

**8. Replacement of Central Heating Boilers**

During the discussions, it had been noted that some of the gas central heating boilers which had been installed by the Commissioners were approaching 15 years of age. Further, it was noted that a substantial number of gas central heating boilers had been installed within a particularly short time, and it was possible that a significant number of units could fail and require replacement within one financial year.

It was, however, recognised that the replacement of central heating boilers should not be arranged on the basis of an anticipated life span, but rather on the basis of the condition of the existing boilers and the advice which had been received from the Commissioners' Maintenance Contractors was that the central heating boilers were generally in good condition and did not, as yet, require replacement.

A request had therefore been made for the inclusion of an amount within the planned maintenance programme to allow for the replacement of a number of central heating boilers in each financial year, the actual boilers for replacement being identified during the maintenance programme.

A comment was made that officers should be mindful of the move toward the installation of condensing boilers and that any formal proposals should have regard to any requirement which might be introduced for condensing boilers to be installed.

**H04/12/01/09**  
**HEALTH AND SAFETY BUSINESS**

There were no health and safety issues arising. An enquiry was made as to whether there was any further likelihood of the existence of asbestos in soffits or barge boards to the Commissioners' housing properties. This was considered to be unlikely since all fascia boards had been replaced up to and including properties constructed in 1978. Subsequent developments had not taken place until the 90's and it was unlikely that any asbestos would be present in materials used at that time.

Officers were reminded of the necessity to be aware that asbestos could be present in other areas of the property such as existing floor tiles and the like and the appropriate precaution should be taken to test such materials if the presence of asbestos was suspected.

**H04/12/01/10**  
**OFFICERS REPORT**

**1. Housing Allocations**

It was confirmed that all housing applicants and housing transfer applicants recently allocated had been advised of their selection. In two cases, whilst the applicant was aware of the selection for allocation, the identification of the address had not yet been confirmed since the property was not ready for occupation. It was not envisaged that applicants selected as reserve for the allocations would be required on this occasion.

**2. H04/11/01/20(5) – Visit to Springfield Court/Heywood Court**

It was suggested that the proposed visit by the Housing Committee to the elderly persons complexes at Heywood Court and Springfield Court could take place on either of the following dates in each case:-

Heywood Court 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005 or 24<sup>th</sup> January 2005  
Springfield Court 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005 or 26<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

These dates were subject to confirmation by the Officers.

### **3. Sheltered Housing – Heating Charges**

A memorandum had been circulated that evening which gave details of the costs incurred in the provision of central heating, hot water supply and communal electricity supplies both at Heywood Court and Springfield Court. It was noted that the cost of the provision was significantly higher in the current financial year than was to be collected from the residents by way of heating charges. It was further noted that the small heating reserve balance which had accrued over a number of years would be substantially depleted as a result of the increased charges and that whilst it was always the intent to limit the impact of the fluctuation in heating charges for the residents, it appeared to officers that there would be no alternative but to seek to increase the heating charges which were made of residents both in Heywood Court and Springfield Court.

It was noted that it was too early to accurately predict the excess of costs over collection in the current financial year, and that such an exercise would be undertaken in February 2005. However, the figures presented demonstrated it may be necessary to increase the charges by an amount in excess of £2 per week for each flat. The precise amount, however, would be determined in February 2005.

Mindful of the need to ensure that the residents were advised of the likely increases at the earliest date, officers were instructed to write to the residents and advise of the likely increase in charges with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005, giving an indication of the minimum level at which the increase was anticipated.

#### **H04/12/01/11** **ANY OTHER CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

#### **H04/12/01/12** **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

None.

#### **H04/12/01/13** **MATTERS REFERRED BY THE BOARD/OTHER COMMITTEES**

##### **1. Policy and Finance Committee – Environmental Controls**

It was noted that Mr Watterson had raised the question of environmental controls at a recent meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee and at the meeting of the Board held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2004, it was agreed that the Standing Committees of the Authority should consider this matter further.

It was explained that the type of issue which the Committees were to consider was whether paint used in the Housing Department was environmental friendly, the method of disposal of any unused paint and whether there were any alternatives which might be considered in such matters. The same analysis could be made in a number of areas in relation to housing issues. It was left with Officers to consider this matter further and report back to the Committee.

#### **H04/12/01/14** **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **1. Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Housing Committee would take place on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2005, commencing at 7.00 p.m.

##### **2. Commissioners' Surgery**

It was noted that the next Commissioners' Surgery was to take place on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2005, commencing at 6.30 p.m.

***There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.05 p.m.***

Minutes of a meeting of the **WORKS & CLEANSING COMMITTEE** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2004 at 7.06pm.

**Present:** Mr D.Crellin (in the chair), Messrs S.T. Black, M.J. Kennaugh JP, E.D.R. Killey and D.J. Quirk

**In attendance:** J.E.S. Smith (Clerk), E.K. Convery (Surveyor), Peter Kelly (Administration) and T.R. Craig (Waste Operations Manager) (from 7.15pm to 8.23pm)

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**WC/04/12/1**  
**MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, was taken as read, confirmed and signed.

**WC/04/12/2**  
**MATTERS ARISING**

a) **Land to rear of Royal Avenue/Path to Church**

The Surveyor informed members that he had received a response from the estate agents acting for the owners. They confirmed they had passed on the concerns of the commissioners to the owners. Nothing further had been received and no action taken on site. After a brief discussion it was agreed that a further letter be sent.

**WC/04/12/3**  
**MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

a) **Dogs (Amendment) Bill 2004**

Letter of acknowledgement from DOLGE in respect of the commissioners' submission had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted without further comment.

b) **Hague Crescent**

Letter and plan as received from Hartford Homes in respect of proposals for the garden area at the junction of Hague Crescent and Imperial Terrace had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Surveyor reported that he had contacted Mr Jim Davidson who was acting as liaison with Mrs Hislop. The proposed statue was to be 110% life size and was being modelled on a photograph taken at the start of the last TT races in which Mr Hislop took part. It is hoped that the statue would be unveiled in TT Week 2005. It was further noted that a planning application needed to be made and the committee raised no objection to this being done. Mr Quirk made comments in respect of the security of the site now that the site huts had been removed.

**WC/04/12/4**  
**WASTE MANAGEMENT AND OTHER CLEANSING BUSINESS**

a) **Officer's Report**

The Waste Management Operations Manager was in attendance and elaborated on his report viz:-

i) **Bin Weighing**

The Manager reported that there had been an under performance of recent due to an intermittent fault with some of the tag readings on vehicles. This has only shown up on a Friday morning. The reader would correctly read say ten bins and then miss ten before commencing again. Of recent times however readings were 96 – 97% effective. Contact had been made with the suppliers who advised that similar problems were being experienced throughout the UK and Ireland. The faults will be remedied in an upgrade to take place after Christmas. At the moment no charge has been made for the tag readers as these were being returned as faulty. There may however have to be a in-built periodic replacement in the future. Noted.

ii) **Pavement Cleaning**

The Manager confirmed that the new sweeper was working well but as it was slightly larger than the previous machine there were a couple of areas where it could not access now so in that sense it wasn't quite so versatile. The Chairman asked if everyone was happy with pavement cleaning to which Mr Killey responded that he noted the centres of back lanes were kept clean but it was the debris that managed to get under bushes on the boundary that the machine was not capable of reaching. The Surveyor advised that there was a suction nozzle on the machine like a vacuum cleaner which could reach such places.

### iii) **Abandoned Vehicles**

The Manager informed members that the situation was improving. All the abandoned vehicles in the Manx Arms car park had been removed and any found on the highway were reported by letter to the Onchan Police Station. Mr Quirk advised that there were English registered vehicles with out of date tax discs parked on Imperial Terrace. He then referred to vehicles at the rear of Barrule Drive and sought assurance from the Chairman that when these were removed the area would be tidied. The Surveyor advised that the area would be tidied up as part of the course of action.

### iv) **Fly Tipping**

The Chairman enquired as to how many incidences of fly tipping had been reported since the charges for waste disposal had been introduced by DOLGE. The Waste Management Operations Manager responded in the region of 70, some of which were quite significant. He then referred to one particular incident where one and half bin wagons full was removed but fortunately the department was in a position to progress a prosecution in that case.

### b) **Waste Disposal Charges**

The Clerk reported that the attempt by DOLGE to increase the domestic waste disposal charges by £20 per tonne to £30 per tonne had failed in Tynwald. The Minister accepted therefore that the charge for 2005/06 will remain at £10 per tonne. The Minister had further advised Tynwald that he would probably return in the autumn of 2005 with proposals for 2006/07. Noted.

### c) **Eastern Civic Amenity Site – Middle River**

The Clerk reported that Tynwald had approved expenditure in the sum of £1,063,700 for capital construction costs and associated fees. They had also extended the lease of the land which was now 28 years to expiration. The department had also yet to decide who would be operating the site once construction had finished. Noted.

## **WC/04/12/5**

### **STREET LIGHTING/SIGNS/FURNITURE**

#### a) **Officer's Report**

Copies of the report had been circulated prior to the meeting, and was noted with the following points being discussed further:-

##### i) **Church Road**

The Surveyor advised that he had made spoken with Alan Bridson of the MEA and they hoped to start work in late January. The original quotation was given three years previous and they have had to review their costings. Work involves excavation and the formation of new concrete bases for the lights and it is difficult to establish what the sub soil condition will be like. The revised quotation for the installation of three lights was £3,500. The Administrative Officer reminded members that a grant had been received towards this work from the Conservation Section of DOLGE. After further brief discussion it was

**\*RESOLVED**

***“to accept the quotation from the Manx Electricity Authority for the installation of three street lighting columns and associated works in Church Road in the sum of £3,500 plus VAT. (such expenditure to be met out of an existing capital borrowing authorisation)”.***

##### ii) **Heywood Park**

The Surveyor reported that the revised quotation in respect of the installation of six lighting columns on the footpaths in Heywood Park amounted to £9,085 + VAT. Mr Quirk commented that he hadn't seen where

the standards were to go. The Surveyor responded that they were at the ends of the footpaths. Mr Quirk then enquired about the issue of cabling to which the Surveyor replied that the MEA were abandoning all existing cable to the bollard lighting and would be installing a new cable. The Clerk pointed out that this work was originally going to go to petition for borrowing but suggested that it would be better taken out of revenue. After further brief discussion it was therefore

**\*RESOLVED**

***“to accept the quotation from the Manx Electricity Authority for the installation of six numbers five metre street lighting columns on the pedestrian footway at Heywood Park in the sum of £9,085 + VAT (such expenditure to be met from revenue account)”.***

**iii) Street Light Timing**

The Chairman noted the comment in the report that the fitting of photocells continued and enquired from the Surveyor how many had been fitted. The Surveyor didn't have an up to date figure. Noted.

**WC/04/12/6**

**DRAINAGE FUNCTION**

**a) Officer's Report**

Copies of the Building Control Officer's report had been circulated prior to the meeting with the following matter being discussed further:-

**Pumping Station Adoption**

Members noted that the rectification works in respect of pumping stations was not yet complete and therefore adoption had not taken place. Mr Quirk enquired as to what sort of defects had been found. The Surveyor responded that they were principally line defects with water infiltration into the system. There had also been a problem with the sizing of the pumps in respect of North Bank Land but this was a matter being handled by the DoT drainage inspectors. Mr Quirk asked whether it was worth the commissioners writing to express the concern of the authority. Members concurred that there was little point in doing so as the matter was entirely one between the contractors and the DoT Drainage Section at this stage.

**b) Other Drainage Works**

Mr Quirk enquired as to what was happening with Port Jack Glen stream. The Surveyor responded that early in the New Year it was anticipated a meeting would be held with DoT to discuss the matter. Noted.

**WC/04/12/7**

**PLANNING MATTERS**

**a) Planning Communications**

The Surveyor reported on the result of the Planning Appeal in respect of PA 03/1465 Additional use of holiday cottage for temporary permanent use, premises alongside 59 Governors Road.

The Surveyor advised that the twelve-month approval had now been extended to 24 months as a result of the Appeal and such time to run from the approval date following the Appeal. Noted.

**b) New Applications**

PA 04/2108 Extension 5 Whitebridge Road for Mr & Mrs P. O'Dea (amended plan)

**\*RESOLVED**

***“to recommend approval to the Planning Committee of DOLGE – neighbours to be notified”.***

PA 04/2448 Operation of additional Private Hire Cars from 107 King Edward Road for Mr B.I. Machin

The Chairman declared an interest in the application by virtue of his position as Public Passenger Vehicle Enforcement Officer and took no part in the discussion. Members noted that one hire car already operated from the premises and the positioning of another vehicle on the drive would not in their opinion have any detrimental affect to the amenities of the area. It was therefore

**\*RESOLVED**

***“to recommend approval of the application – neighbours to be notified”.***

**WC/04/12/8**

## **CAPITAL AND REVENUE SCHEMES**

### **a) Officer's Report**

Copies of the report had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was noted without further discussion.

### **b) Port Jack Toilets**

A report from the architects had been received and copied to members. It was noted that the quantity surveyors advised that both tenders received represented value for money. The fact that the tenders were higher than the original estimate was attributed to working in rock, allowing for hardwood doors internally, the type of sanitary ware chosen and the site conditions affecting the construction of the roof.

After brief discussion it was

**RESOLVED**

***“to proceed with the petition for borrowing powers in respect of the replacement toilets at Port Jack”.***

**WC/04/12/9**

## **HIGHWAY AND TRAFFIC MATTERS**

### **Pedestrian Crossing**

Copy of a letter sent by the Secretary to Onchan Methodist Church to Adrian Earnshaw MHK requesting that a pedestrian crossing be installed between the commissioners' car park and the Methodist Church, together with Mr Earnshaw's reply advising that he had passed on the matter to the Director of Highways, had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Surveyor commented that he would arrange for the matter to be placed on the next agenda of the Eastern Sector Meeting and obviously the proposal needed proper evaluation with particular regard to any tailback within the T junction with School Road that may occur. Mr Quirk commented that a crossing between Heywood Park and the Birch Hill Estate would also be advantageous. The Surveyor responded that in the event of the traffic lights being installed in that location as suggested by DoT in connection with the proposed secondary school then provision would be made for a controlled crossing. Noted.

**WC/04/12/10**

## **FURTHER REPORTS**

Nil.

**WC/04/12/11**  
**CORRESPONDENCE/OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

a) **Winter Gritting**

Copy of a circular from Alan Hardinge of DoT to a number of local authorities had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the department was currently revising its winter maintenance procedures for gritting of highways/footpaths and how of recent times they have received more and more requests for footpaths to be gritted which they endeavour to attempt. Over the past few years however Ramsey and Peel have assisted with the gritting of footpaths and the letter enquired as to whether the commissioners would be prepared to assist on a similar basis. The Surveyor queried whether DoT would reimburse the commissioners for the labour time expended and also queried what the liability position would be if someone had an accident on a section of footpath that had not been gritted. He further added the commissioners didn't really have the labour resources to carryout this work. Mr Quirk suggested that the matter be discussed at the Eastern Sector Meeting he also suggested a meeting take place between the Surveyor, the Chairman of the Committee and DoT. The Surveyor reiterated his concerns at the implications of the proposals. The Clerk commented that perhaps the commissioners could advise that they could not commit themselves to assist but would do so if labour resources were available. After further brief discussion it was agreed that the commissioners' insurers should be consulted in the first instance.

b) **Onchan War Memorial**

Letter as received from the Secretary to the Onchan Branch of the Royal British Legion thanking the commissioners for tidying and replanting around the War Memorial had been circulated prior to the meeting. The letter further enquired if a handrail could be installed on the steps leading to the memorial. Mr Quirk commented that the litter bin was not secured on site and as a result debris was no under the bushes. The Surveyor informed members that the site was cleaned on a daily basis. He would arrange for the pavement sweeper operative to pay special attention to the area. With regard to the request for handrails this matter was briefly discussed with the suggestion that perhaps a handrail could be made but removed from the site at all other times with the exception of Armistice Day and the following Sunday for the wreath laying ceremony. No firm decision was made.

**WC/04/12/12**  
**OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

Copies of the list of outstanding matters had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted with the following being discussed further:-

W/00/03/19(b) Properties abutting lanes of Nursery/Church Avenue/Elm Drive – **Bylaw Enforcement Officer to produce report.**

Mr Quirk enquired as to what had happened with the report. The Surveyor informed members that he would press for an early completion of same.

3 (1) Carry out survey to establish requirement for future street lighting schemes.

The Surveyor suggested that a tour of the district take place following the next planning sub committee meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2005. Mr Quirk presented his apologies and Mr Killey presented potential apologies subject to other arrangements being confirmed.

**WC/04/12/13**  
**MATTERS REFERRED BY BOARD/OTHER COMMITTEES**

Nil.

**WC/04/12/14**  
**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) **Time and Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2005 at 7pm.

b) **Minutes/Resolutions**

Member reviewed the agenda and agreed that the following items be placed in committee, Shoprite Boundary, RCV repairs, Eastern Civic Amenity Site, Departmental Estimates, Nuisance Abatement and Surgery Complaints.

c) **Y.C.C.**

Mr Quirk enquired as to what was happening with the manhole cover in the School Road Recreation Ground close to the Youth and Community Centre car park. The Surveyor replied that he was looking at the problem. Mr Quirk then suggested that DoT or Sharkey Construction be brought in to assist. After further discussion it was agreed that the Surveyor would investigate and take the necessary action to overcome the flooding problem. Matter left to the discretion of the Surveyor.

d) **Royal Buildings Site**

The Chairman informed the meeting that he had received a complaint from Commissioner Astill regarding the weeds on the open land adjoining Royal Buildings. The Surveyor to draw to the attention of the site owners.

e) **Seasons Greetings**

The Chairman extended seasons greetings to the members and officers who reciprocated and expressed their thanks for him having purchased and provided light refreshments.

***Meeting terminated at 9.42m.***

Minutes of a meeting of the **LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, Main Road, Onchan, on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2005 at 6.58pm.

**Present:** Mr A.T.W. Norton (in the chair), Messrs M.J. Kennaugh JP, E.D.R. Killey, D.J. Quirk and B.Stowell

**In attendance:** Peter Kelly (Administration), Ray Quane (Amenities Officer)

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**LA/05/01/1**  
**PRELIMENARIES**

Mr Kennaugh requested permission to leave his mobile phone switched on as a close member of family was ill. Mr Stowell also sought permission to leave his phone switched on. For similar reasons. The Chairman extended New Years greetings to all present.

**LA/05/01/2**  
**MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, was taken as read, confirmed and signed.

**LA/05/01/3**  
**MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising which were not already on the agenda.

**LA/05/01/4**  
**PLAYGROUNDS/PARKS**

a) **Playground Log Books**

The Amenities Officer reported that the logbooks were ready for signing by the Chairman. He was concerned however that a section of safety flooring in front of the new train feature was splitting and appeared to have an air bubble beneath it. This was a wetpour application. After brief discussion it was agreed that the area should be photographed and contact made with the suppliers of the equipment. The Administrative Officer reminded the Amenities Officer that the installers were anticipating coming to the Island in the not too distant future to carry out work at Laxey and in which case perhaps the defect could be remedied at that time. Noted.

b) **Amenities Officer's Report**

Copies of the report had been circulated prior to the meeting with the following items being discussed further:-

i) **Stadium – Gents W.C.**

The Amenities Officer reported that the tiling was now complete and ready for grouting. The plumber would shortly be installing the fittings. Noted.

ii) **Roundabout – Concrete Base**

The Amenities Officer confirmed that the concrete base had been broken up and the area turfed over, however due to settlement the turf needed lifting and packing which he would arrange to have carried out shortly. Mr Stowell enquired as to the thickness of the concrete that was broken up. In reply the Amenities Officer informed members that it was between 2 foot and 2 foot 6 inches thick at the centre and 6 inches thick for the remainder of the area.

iii) **Stadium – Main Entrance**

In respect of the quotation for a roller shutter in the entrance between the arcade and café Mr Quirk enquired whether there was to be a lock release mechanism linked to the fire alarm. The Amenities Officer replied that such a device had not been considered. The Administrative Officer informed members that the roller shutter was only to be down when the premises were unoccupied and therefore a release of that nature was not necessary. He had anticipated the roller shutter would be padlocked on the front so that in the event of access being required by emergency services they would merely have to snap the padlock rather than destroy the door. The Chairman reminded the Amenities Officer that he had forwarded details of UK suppliers of roller shutters.

#### **iv) Fire Alarm**

The Amenities Officer had indicated in his report the costing by the commissioners' electrical sub contractor relevant to a conventional fire alarm system and an analogue addressable fire alarm system. Mr Quirk commented that the commissioners needed to ensure value for money and therefore alternative prices should be sought. The Amenities Officer commented that the two prices were to give an indication to the committee of the cost differential of the two systems but the advice from the visiting fire officer was that the conventional system was acceptable. If the question of fire alarm had to go out to tender then it was unlikely that the tenders would be received and work complete by the end of March which was a requirement of the Fire Prevention Department. Mr Stowell enquired whether when carrying out this work it would be better to go for the analogue addressable system rather than the conventional fire alarm in case standards change and it would be necessary to go through the whole process again at sometime. The Amenities Officer confirmed that the fire office had stated that the conventional alarm with four zones indicating the zone of any alarm was acceptable to the fire officer. Mr Stowell commented that in a hotel it was necessary to have the analogue addressable system and made reference to his time at the Mount Murray Hotel. The Amenities Officer responded that the situation at Onchan Park was that there was no residential accommodation and therefore in the event of fire at night there would be nobody sleeping on the premises and that is why the fire officer was happy with the conventional system. Mr Quirk enquired whether the Amenities Officer had that information in writing to which the Amenities Officer replied that he hadn't but had worked on what he was told by the fire officer. Mr Stowell suggested that in the absence of such information being in writing that the Amenities Officer should write to the Fire Prevention Department stating what he had been told and asking for confirmation of same. In the meantime members requested that alternative prices be sought for the two systems.

#### **v) Stadium Electrics**

Members noted the estimate received from the commissioners' electrical contractor for the fitting of a new electric mains unit at the Stadium. It was further noted that work would be required on the electric cupboard to both bring it up to standard and improve the appearance. Mr Stowell sought confirmation that cupboard will be completely stripped, the electrician set out his switch gear in a logistic manner and then a new cupboard built around it. After further discussion it was

**\*RESOLVED**

***“to accept the quotation of Richard Esp in respect of fitting new mains unit in the meter cupboard at Nivison Stadium in the sum of £1,285.98”.***

#### **vi) Park Trailer/Goal Posts**

Members noted that the trailer had now been sold and removed. In respect of the five-a-side goalposts there had been no enquiries in respect of these despite the advertisement. Mr Quirk suggested that they be cut up and the galvanised tubing used for other purposes. The Chairman commented that he would rather see them go to a good home as goalposts. Mr Killey proposed that contact should be made with the various football clubs and if no interest was shown then they should be dismantled as suggested.

#### **vii) Crown Bowling Green**

The Amenities Officer showed photographs taken of the damage done to the long shelter. The handles on the uPVC doors had been forced down in an effort to open them and the bottom pane on one of the doors had been smashed. A waste bin located on the edge of the green which has a hardwood timber surround had also been smashed and the timber pieces used to pit the green surface. Mr Killey enquired as to the cost of replacement to which the Amenities Officer anticipated approximately £80 for the glass replacement with the bin being repaired by the commissioners' own staff at approximate cost of £30. In respect of attending to the door handles he did not have an indication of price. Mr Quirk suggested that the bin be replaced by a standard 120 litre wheelie bin. He then asked whether the crime number had been obtained from the police to which the Amenities Officer replied that it hadn't. The Chairman then enquired whether it was Board Policy to go for compensation in the case of a successful prosecution. This was confirmed.

### viii) **Motorboats**

The Boatman/mechanic had prepared a report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report advised that the motorboats originally had dry exhausts which were replaced with water cooled exhausts around 25 year ago due to over heating of the engine compartment, leading to vapour locking of the fuel system and considerable fuel vapour in the boats. It also produced large quantities of smoke particularly when idling; heavy carbonisation of the silencers leading to poor running and engine failures together with high fuel consumption. There was also frequent failure of piping due to vibration. The boatman/mechanic further advised that dry exhaust were suitable for private users but for the amount of constant running by the boats in the park it was not a suitable arrangement. With regard to any signs of oily substance on the lake in the mornings this was mainly due to bilge water being pumped out and occasional fuel spillage during the filling process. Observing boats in an idling position will indicate that no oil is being emitted from the exhausts as the water around them is clear.

Mr Stowell commented that he was now somewhat confused having originally been told there was a pollution problem and now the mechanic saying there wasn't. In answer to question, the Amenities Officer advised that when the pool was cleared out at the end of the season then the debris at the bottom was generally leaves with some indication of oil. This was dug out and not washed away. Mr Stowell made reference to the information he had obtained from Shell in respect of Nautilus Biodegradable Outboard Oil and had this been considered. The Amenities Officer replied that he had spoken with Shell following receipt of that information and they informed them that the outboard oil could be used for the motorboats but there will be little difference in terms of any oil emission etc. Mr Stowell further advised that he had contacted Fairway Marine who informed him that the dry exhaust system was used in Blackpool and other locations. The Amenities Officer replied that following receipt of that information from Mr Stowell it was passed to the boatman/mechanic who had spoken with the firm and as a result two carburettors had been received with fixed jets and these would be tried together with the synthetic oil. The boatman/mechanic was concerned however that the outcome would be similar to the situation of 25 years previous when the changes had to be made. Mr Stowell commented that with a dry exhaust system any pollution was into the air and not into the water. The matter was left with the Amenities Officer and the Chairman asked that care be taken when the boats are refuelled to avoid spillage.

### c) **Park Foreman's Report**

The Parks Foreman was still on sick leave and therefore there was no report.

### d) **Annual Tour of the Park**

A list of items noticed during the annual tour held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2004 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Reference was made to the following items:-

**Garage doors at Pennington Hall – work now complete.**

**Correct CCTV signs to be erected** - signs obtained some time ago, hoped to be erected in the next week or so. The Chairman requested that this be complete prior to the next meeting of the Board.

**Fascia on either end of Stadium building requires painting** - price obtained from one contractor (together with other work) second price awaited.

**Toilet overflow activated in squash club – tenant to fix – tenant previously notified but unaware as to whether work done.** Mr Quirk queried whether this water supply was before or after the commissioners water meter.

**No drop spout on rear of squash court changing rooms** - ticket issued for work to be carried out by maintenance contractor.

**Externally stored equipment required to be tidied** - this had been undertaken and the owners of the tractor bucket had repositioned their equipment. Old goalposts not yet removed.

**Former shelter overlooking miniature golf course requires concrete seat supports to be cut off** - work started.

**Clean out from under tulip roundabout – work undertaken.**

**Break up concrete to form a roundabout and turf over** - complete

**Cover to lighting control on light near top car park needs replacing** – undertaken.

**Replacement for two of the golden trees** – undertaken

**Fuchsia bushes require to be cut back flush with new fencing** – undertaken.

Mr Stowell commented that there were several jobs still on the list and quite sometime had passed since the inspection in September. None of the jobs were particularly large and he was concerned that enthusiasm must be found in order to get the work complete. The Chairman further advised that it was

only approximately 10 weeks to Easter and it was necessary to have all this work complete by that time. The Amenities Officer replied that it would be necessary to bring in contractors to do some of the work. Mr Quirk suggested that rather than painting the fascias on the stadium it would be better to replace them in uPVC as was to happen at the Youth and Community Centre which would therefore eliminate the necessity or repainting in years to come. The Amenities Officer replied that the difficulty was in doing that was the fact that the roof above was felted and the new fascia could not be positioned under the felt. Messrs Quirk and Stowell both commented that they understood part of the building was to be re-roofed and therefore it would seem that the two could go hand in hand and even if the roofing was to take place first the felt could be turned back ready to receive the new fascia later.

e) **Proposed Skateboard Park**

The Amenities Officer advised that the decision following the planning appeal was still not known. Noted.

f) **Recessed Entrance to the Stadium**

The Administrative Officer reported letter as sent to the Senior Fire Safety Officer and reply thereto whereby it was now confirmed that subject to the measures indicated in the Administrative Officer's letter (roller shutters only be down when the adjoining premises were closed) a roller shutter to the entrance of Nivison Stadium was acceptable. This matter had already been partly discussed under the heading of the Amenities Officer's report and prior to obtaining quotations the subject of lock release connected to the fire alarm needed to be resolved.

g) **Wembley Football Arena**

The Amenities Officer advised that the District Surveyor had not yet made a planning application for the five-a-side/basketball facility in the School Road Recreation Ground. Members requested early action in this matter.

h) **Improvements to Lighting in Onchan Park**

The Amenities Officer informed the meeting that one of the UK lighting firms was sending a representative to the Island at the end of January. The Surveyor would arrange to meet with them to discuss lighting in Onchan Park. The Chairman requested that the Amenities Officer attend that meeting as well.

i) **Removal of Public Payphone**

The Amenities Officer advised that he was awaiting a response from the Fire Safety Officer in respect of any requirement of linking the fire alarm system to an outside service. Noted.

k) **Memorial Seat**

The Administrative Officer informed members that there had been no further communication from the Onchan Branch of the Royal British Legion in respect of a siting for the proposed seat. Noted.

m) **Ordering of Springers**

The Amenities Officer confirmed that he had contacted Douglas Corporation and Ramsey Commissioners and neither of them had playground suppliers coming to the Island in the near future. As a consequence the replacement springers for the Taveners Playground had been ordered prior to the price increase on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. Delivery was awaited and the setting of the rag bolts etc would be undertaken by the commissioners' staff but the springers not fitted until the suppliers were on the Island for another contract so that they could lay the wetpour safety flooring. Noted.

n) **Ferguson Tractor**

This matter had been referred to the Board and the understanding of members was that it was to be placed in storage at Mr Stowell's livery stables. Mr Stowell advised that it had not been delivered as yet and the intention was to cover it in wax oil.

p) **Playground Seminar**

The Administrative Officer reported attending a seminar promoted by SMP, in the company of the Amenities Officer. The Chairman was unable to attend and had requested that the invitation be extending

to Commissioner Quirk. The Administrative Officer advised that the seminar was, contrary to a previous seminar put on by that company, not a sales pitch for their own equipment and in fact proved very useful in general terms and references to certain publications which would be beneficial to the technical side of the commissioners' staff. There was a general policy that in the event of installing equipment the age group concerned should be consulted beforehand not only in relation to the type of equipment but colour as well. There was also a requirement for somewhere to "hang around" with girls expressing a preference for this area to be clean. Any sports orientated equipment should look like the real thing and not a cheap imitation as the youngsters have the same attitude to equipment as they do to trainers and clothes. Obviously everything should be as vandal resistant as possible but equally it needs to be "as safe as it needs to be". At this point the Administrative Officer indicated that the presenter of that part of the programme had shown that attitudes to play equipment was now turning so that there was an element of risk in play rather than making everything so dull as to be unattractive. If a multi sports area arrangement was being considered then it should from the start incorporate all the various sports intended as this was hard to amend in retrospect. Equally lighting should be considered at the design stage and not afterwards. An early decision was whether the area was to be locked or left open. If it was to be locked then high fencing was required whereas if it was not then the low side fencing was all that was needed except at the goal ends. Provision should be made, however, for wheelchair access in all cases. The base should be tarmac with a total thickness including hardcore of 160mm. Any tendering process for such work should include a post installation inspection by an independent registered inspector. The general advice on multi purpose play areas was that they should not be too large and 20 metres by 12 metres was the average size. It was understood that new standards were to come forward in respect to these multi sport systems. The Administrative Officer was thanked for his report.

## LA/05/01/5 OPEN SPACES

### a) Amenities Officer's Report

Copies of the Amenities Officer's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted with the following being discussed further:-

#### i) **Village Christmas Trees**

The Amenities Officer had carried out an exercise for the information of the members of the committee in respect of the small Christmas trees placed on buildings through the centre of the district. The owners of the properties were charged £8 which was the cost of the tree but the work involved in trimming the trees, checking and attaching lights, locating the trees into the brackets, assisting with the wiring and then calling back if the lights fail together with a purchase of a certain number of replacement lighting sets equated a cost of £44 per property in addition to the cost of the tree. Members expressed their gratitude for being provided with the information. Members were reminded that the Christmas trees were originally something arranged by the Onchan Traders Association which had since become defunct, following their demise individual commissioners were involved in a personal capacity in the putting up of the trees but now it had become a rate borne expense. Mr Quirk queried some of the costing and indicated a preference for the work to be carried out by a contractor. The Amenities Officer was thanked for bringing this to the attention of the committee.

#### ii) **Christmas Tree Shredding**

The Amenities Officer confirmed that arrangements were in hand for Christmas trees brought to Nivison Stadium to be shredded. He anticipated the trees being taken Centenary Park where the shredder could blow the shredded material direct onto the ground. An item had been placed on the website in respect of this facility and also a media release had been issued to both the press and the radio. The Amenities Officer confirmed that the facility had been mentioned several times that day on the radio. Unfortunately the press rewrote the release and in so doing reduced the time trees could be brought to the stadium by two whole days.

### b) Port Jack Glen Lighting

The Amenities Officer confirmed that the Surveyor would be making contact with the lighting firm representative at the end of the month. Noted.

### c) Playground Grants

Letter as received from the Department of Local Government and the Environment in respect of their contribution towards playgrounds had been circulated. The letter advised that the policy of the department had been to provide grant assistance of up to 25% towards the cost of providing playground facilities. Following a Select Committee Report it was now proposed that this be increased to 40% subject to local authorities having in place a proper planned maintenance programme and that the grant should always be paid in full. The department had decided that grant assistance of up to 40% of the total cost would be made available under certain criteria in respect of social needs and the financial position of the local authority. Members expressed delight at the news. The Amenities Officer, however, pointed out that whilst the grant was up to 40% it was quite possible that the financial status of Onchan District Commissioners was such that grant assistance may not be made available because of the reserves and surplus funds held. The revised policy will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005. Noted.

**d) Hague Crescent Garden**

The Administrative Officer had distributed copies of a plan and letter as received from Hartford Homes in respect of the refurbishment of the garden/observation area at the junction of Hague Crescent and Imperial Terrace. He explained that the matter had been presented to the meeting of the Works and Cleansing Committee the previous week in respect of obtaining permission to proceed for planning approval in for the Steve Hislop Statue. Members viewed the plan and noted that it was proposed to have uplighting set around the statue and therefore it was wondered whether this was to be operated from a lighting pillar in which case this was not shown on the drawing. There was a query over the seats of which six were shown and members were concerned that these would need to be provided by the contractors and not by the commissioners. There was a query as to whether there should be lighting within the area but members were of the opinion that the street lighting in that vicinity would be sufficient.

**e) Basketball Posts**

Mr Quirk queried when the basketball post removed from the Youth and Community Centre car park due to damage was going to be repositioned. The Amenities Officer responded that he understood it was beyond repair. The Administrative Officer was of the opinion that it had been taken away from the School Road Dépôt as part of the demolition process. Should the multi purpose play area proceed then a proper basketball court etc would be provided thus taking any play away from parked cars.

**LA/05/01/6**

**PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

**a) Amenities Officer's Report**

Copies of the report had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read. It was noted that a further soap dispenser had been fitted in the gents toilet at Main Road on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

**b) Port Jack Toilets**

The Amenities Officer reported that a petition had now been made to government for borrowing powers. Noted.

**LA/05/01/7**

**PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**a) Librarian's Report**

Copies of the Librarian's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted with following matters being discussed further:-

**i) Issues**

The statistics for November were slightly down on the previous year but the librarian was confident that the membership figures for December were likely to show an overall increase.

**ii) Display**

The current library display for the Christmas holidays was based on Harry Potter and Isle of Man Post had offered presentation packs of their Harry Potter stamps as prizes for the various children's competitions taking place.

**iii) Photocopier**

The Librarian had obtained costings as a comparison between purchase and leasing over a three year period as requested. The leasing option equated £375 more than the purchase price. Mr Stowell commented that if the photocopier was purchased then the chances were after three years it would still be serviceable and it may be another two years before it needed replacing. Should a photocopier be leased for three years then at the end of that period the commissioners would be faced with taking out a further lease. Mr Quirk advised that he favoured leasing and felt copies of the specification for the photocopier should be made available. After further discussion it was agreed that the Chairman of the Committee should seek the Finance Officer's opinion at the next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee.

**iv) Staff Training**

The Librarian explained it was necessary to have a staff training day in respect of the computerisation of the library stock and this would be provided by the supplier of the system as part of their package. It would, however, involve the closing of the library for a day and a suggestion was Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2005. After brief discussion it was

**RESOLVED**

***"that the library should be closed to the public on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2005 for the purpose of staff training".***

**b) Amenities Officer Report**

Copies of the Amenities Officer's report had been circulated from which it was noted that four new fluorescent light tubes had been fitted on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2004. It was further noted that no indication had been given by the Librarian as yet in respect of the proposals to adapt certain fittings in the junior library to form a boat. Provision had been made in the current year estimates for this work and the financial year was now beginning to run out. The Amenities officer to progress.

**c) Diamond Jubilee**

The Chairman advised having attended the evening reading on the Jubilee Day and was pleased with both the presentation and the public reaction. The Board Chairman commented on the arrangements earlier in the day and thanked the Administrative Officer for the preparation of the souvenir history of the library booklet.

The Administrative Officer reported that every effort was made to try and have Mr Frank Johnson present at the morning ceremony as he was the last surviving commissioner from 60 years ago to have attended the opening of the first library. Unfortunately he did not feel up to the journey from Ramsey although he did enjoy his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday that day.

The Administrative Officer informed the meeting that a souvenir pen and booklet were sent out to everyone on the invitation list as prepared by the Librarian. Further copies were sent to other persons who had family connections with the library. Letter of thanks had been received from Mr Dursley Stott whose father was chairman of the appropriate committee in 1944. All the souvenirs were posted the day before the actual anniversary so that they would arrive on the anniversary day. It transpired however that only approximately half of the posting had been delivered that day and the remainder the following day. Correspondence had taken place with Isle of Man Post in an effort to establish why only half the post was delivered when it was all posted at the same time in the same post box and therefore presumably collected and taken to the sorting office at the same time. No answer of explanation could be found within the postal system by the Customer Service Manager for the delay. Noted.

**LA/05/01/8**

**YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**a) Amenities Officer's Report**

Copies of the Amenities Officer's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read. It was noted that a replacement front mat was fitted in the mat well on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2004 and a cracked pane of glass in the entrance doors was to be replaced by Regal Aluminium.

**b) Fascia Boards**

The Amenities Officer informed members that the petition for borrowing powers in respect of the fascia board replacement was ready to go to DOLGE.

**c) Any Other Matters**

Mr Quirk made reference to the fan convectors in the sports hall and advised that he had taken a brush and cleaned out under them. He then enquired as to when the convectors were last serviced but the Amenities Officer did not have that information to hand. A discussion then took place in respect of the thermostats on them.

The discussion then moved on to the cleaning of the Youth and Community Centre but the Administrative Officer pointed out that cleaning was a matter for the Management Committee and not the Leisure and Amenities Committee who were responsible for the fabric of the building.

**LA/05/01/9**

**PROMOTIONS/ADVERTISING/PUBLIC INFORMATION**

**a) Website**

The Administrative Officer reported on the receipt of the statistics from WebOne UK. These showed total hits in November as 21,794 with page views at 6,112 and visits 2,574. In December these figures increased to total hits 26,141, page views 7,419 and visits 3,468. The web provider had commented that this would suggest the site is now being used as a resource for Onchan with regard to things such as open hours over Christmas, refuse collections, local events etc. Noted.

The Administrative Officer reported having received an enquiry during the month in respect of the former White City Amusement Arcade. The enquiry centres on the Boni and Osborn family with particular regard to any stalls they had there. Fortunately the rate books indicated stallholders and as much information as possible was passed on. This also related to a shop held by the Boni's at Port Jack. There was no indication however of the Osborn's having a rifle stall but the Administrative Officer had pointed out that there were other places of amusement outside Onchan where this could have been situated. Noted.

**b) Southern Motorcycle Club Event**

The Chairman reported that he held a meeting with Mr Derry Kissack from the Southern Motorcycle Club together with Mr John Whitehead. They exchanged views and their appeared to be general agreement in respect of a change of date for the "Big One". Mr Kissack needed to go back to his committee which was meeting later that night. No further indication had been received. The Administrative Officer to establish the status quo.

**b) Estates Gardens Competition**

The Administrative Officer reported receipt of the replacement cup which was being purchased and the costs thereof being reimbursed by the Isle of Man Bank who had agreed to provide a new cup to replace the damaged trophy which they had won the previous year.

**d) Torchlight Procession/Santa's Visit**

The Chairman commented that there seemed to be positive remarks in respect of this year's Torchlight Procession. Mr Stowell informed members that when he was on duty at the barrier alongside Springfield Court he was approached by a resident of Second Avenue complaining that he had not been advised that the road was closed. In answer to question Mr Stowell responded that he was not aware whether this resident actually wanted to leave his house or was just making comment. Members concurred that the Road Closing Order was published in the newspaper and the Torchlight Procession had followed the same route for many years without problem. The length of time that the roads were actually closed was quite minimal and of course the roads were opened following the parade as it passed through the village.

The Administrative Officer reported having spoken with a representative of the Onchan Rotary Club who were happy in having brought Santa to the parade and would do so the following year. They suggested however that the parade should start at 7pm rather than 7.30pm so that some of the younger children

would be able to see Santa before it is too late. They also suggested that Santa not be part of the parade but arrive at the carol singing in Springfield Court car park as it comes to a close. Noted.

A discussion then took place in respect of the wax torches. The Administrative Officer reported that only 15 lanterns were sold and from the photographs it was quite obvious that people were still buying and presumably preferring the wax torches. He also commented that no new stock had to be purchased this year and it was his hope to sell all wax torches and glowsticks to provide a clear run for the next time that the event was held. There was a small supply of both left. After discussion the committee agreed that the wax torches would not be used in future.

Mr Stowell then brought up the question of regularity commenting that he understood the Administrative Officer on previous occasions to have suggested that the procession be held on say alternate years so as to provide greater interest when it is held. The Chairman commented that he felt it should be every year.

e) **Twining**

The Administrative Officer reminded members that this matter had been taken to the Board by the committee to seek the views thereof. After concluding that the Board had referred it back to the committee it was unanimously agreed to delete this item from the list.

f) **SEA Isle of Man 2005**

The Administrative Officer again reminded members that at the last meeting it was left that they would consider the matter and come up with proposals at this meeting. Mr Quirk commented that he understood the Model Boat Club were prepared to do something. The Administrative Officer then elaborated on discussion he had held with Mr Brian King of the Manx Model Boat Club whereby they were prepared to put on an event of a Manx Heritage nature which would embody models of Steam Packet boats, Ramsey Steamship boats, Manx Fishing boats etc. He had also offered to put on a lifeboat event which would include representatives from the Douglas Lifeboat and the Coastguard being present with a loudspeaker system to simulate an emergency call out which would be enacted using the model boats. This had previously been carried out in the boating pond on Loch Promenade but of course the pond had long since been altered and no longer suitable.

The Administrative Officer continued that there was also the possibility of the event running in to an Venetian Evening but it had to be decided whether this took place; on the same day as a village type fair or whether it was treated as a separate entity. The advantage of a separate entity was that the audience would not be split between the two events and also it could be timed so as not to interfere with the motorboat running. Members agreed that it should be a separate entity. With regard to a fair members were again in favour of this and after due deliberation it was agreed this should take place on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2005. Members did not however have any suggestions how this could be related to SEA Isle of Man 2005. The Administrative Officer reminded members that at the previous meeting he had suggested that the Mariners Choir be invited and that there be a children's fancy dress competition with a nautical flavour. Mr Quirk then suggested that there could be a "services challenge" on the lake in Onchan Park. This could include a walking on water competition, tin bath race etc. The matter was discussed at some length with no firm proposals in respect of date, participants etc. The Administrative Officer to progress all matters.

g) **Christmas Lights Competition**

The Chairman confirmed that he and the Board Chairman had carried out the judging and that the winner of the domestic section was Mr Stuart Hampson of 2 Marine View Close and in the case of the commercial section A Touch of Class, Avondale Court which was run by Mrs S. Hine. Photographs of the presentation had been put on the website.

The Administrative Officer queried whether members were content with the format whereby each member was given forms to distribute over a set area and then the entries were collated for judging. He pointed out that the number of entries actually made, compared to the number of forms put out, was only a small percentage and an alternative would be for each commissioner to view the area allocated and make nominations for the best decorated premises in that area. The two judges would then judge on all the nominations made. Mr Kennaugh commented that it took three hours to do the judging as it was and he was concerned as to the time commitment if the number of properties judged was greater.

The Administrative Officer then enquired whether on a future occasion there should be a second and third prize together with say some highly commended prizes. This would perhaps create more interest rather

than just a single winner. Mr Killey commented that as this would only involve a certificate he thought it was a good idea. Members concurred.

**h) Manx Radio Broadcast**

The Administrative Officer made reference to an outside broadcast undertaken by Manx Radio from Onchan just prior to Christmas. He pointed out that this was not a commissioners' event although the commissioners had been asked firstly could they provide a room within the office building and secondly could contact be made with representatives of the church, shopkeepers, schools etc. As a result interviewees were found including the Chairman of the Board and in fact having heard some of the broadcasts earlier in the week from other locations in the Island additional interviewees were brought in relevant to youth (cubs, scouts, youth club, Kenyon's Café) and the elderly per the Onchan Live at Home Scheme.

Mr Quirk enquired whether the commissioners could make better use of Manx Radio in the summer with perhaps a broadcast from the event in the park. The Administrative Officer replied that they had been requested to do so at the last fair but Saturday afternoons are devoted to sport and therefore this was not possible.

**LA/05/01/10**

**OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

The list of outstanding matters had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted with the following matter being discussed further:-

*LA/99/9/9(b) Twinning to be referred to the Board - delete item.*

**LA/05/01/11**

**MATTERS REFERRED BY BOARD/OTHER COMMITTEES**

Nil.

**LA/05/01/12**

**CORRESPONDENCE OR OTHER COMMUNICATION**

None to report – all reported within the various section headings.

**LA/05/01/13**

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**a) Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2005 at 7pm.

**b) Minutes**

Mr Kennaugh enquired as to what items were to be placed in public and which in committee. Mr Stowell commented that in his opinion it should all be in public bar anything dealing with staff or finance. Mr Quirk expressed concern that the Wembley Football Arena had been reported in committee the previous meeting. The Administrative Officer checked the minute book and advised that it had been reported in committee because prices were quoted as had been the case the previous month. There was no directive from the committee.

Meeting terminated 10.41pm

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Boardroom at Hawthorn Villa, Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2005, at 5.30 p.m.

**Present:** Mr G.K. Astill (Chairman)  
Mr M.J. Kennaugh, J.P.  
Mr D. Crellin  
Mr A.T.W. Norton  
Mr J.K. Watterson

**In Attendance:** Mr J.E.S. Smith (Chief Executive/Clerk)  
Mr A.S. Booth, F.C.A. (Chief Finance Officer)

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## **PF05/01/01** **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

## **PF05/01/02** **BUSINESS ARISING**

### **1. PF04/11/01/16 – Guidance Notes – EU Directive on Taxation of Savings Income**

Copies had been circulated of a letter and practice note on the E.U. Directive on the Taxation of Savings Income. Clerk advised that he had received the comprehensive guidance note (GN31) relating to the European Union Directive on the Taxation of Savings Income which document had been produced following consultation with financial sector and professional groups in each of the three crown dependencies of Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Clerk further advised that the Directive was due to come in to force on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005 and would require the Authority to deduct with holding tax from interest payments to off Island bond holders who were residents of E.U. member states. *Noted.*

## **PF05/01/03** **BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

### **1. Proposed Changes to Domestic Rating**

Copies had previously been circulated of a News Release dated 8<sup>th</sup> December 2004 from the Treasury on the subject of Domestic Rating – Proposed Change to Capital Value Basis. It was the intention of Treasury to seek Tynwald approval in principle at the January sitting before proceeding with plans to change the basis of the Island's domestic rating system from the rental value of property to the capital value. The Treasury Minister stated that a capital value basis would be much fairer and simpler. The change would mean adjustments to rates bills both up and down but the impact would be phased through transitional relief. The new system would not affect the total revenue raised by Local Authorities.

A discussion on the subject ensued after which the press release was noted.

## **PF05/01/04** **FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Finance Officer's Report copies of which having previously been circulated was considered and arising therefrom:-

### **1. Rates Collected**

It was noted that the total estimated collectable rates and cash received in the current financial year to 4<sup>th</sup> January 2005 compared with the previous financial year were as follows:-

2004/05 estimated amount collectable including arrears brought forward	£1,340,222
2004/05 collected to 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2005 less refunds	£1,320,780 (98.55%)

#### Comparative figures

2003/04 estimated amount collectable including arrears brought forward £1,419,928

**2. Revenue Account Payments**

The lists of payments from revenue account during the months of November and December 2004 copies of which having previously been circulated were considered and it was **RESOLVED\***

*That the said payments from revenue account as detailed on the lists attached to the minutes be endorsed.*

**PF04/03/05**

**CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

**1. Playground Assistance**

Copies had been circulated of a letter from the Department of Local Government and the Environment advising that it had been current Department policy for a number of years to consider applications from Local Authorities for grant assistance of up to 25% towards the cost of providing playground facilities. Any assistance given was subject to the necessary funds being available and with the proviso that the facility complied with the latest health and safety guidelines.

Following approval by Tynwald of a Select Committee's Report on the provision of play areas and playing fields for children within residential areas, the Department considered one of the recommendations contained therein and as a result the Department has decided that consideration would be given to providing grant assistance for Local Authorities of up to 40% of the total cost of providing playground facilities. It had also been decided that the Department would determine the level of assistance for each application based on certain criteria which would include the social needs of the area in question and the financial position of the Local Authority. Furthermore, it had been agreed that skateboard parks should be eligible for assistance in the same way as other playground equipment. All provisions would be required to meet the latest health and safety guidelines and any assistance given would be subject to the necessary funds being available within the Department's budget. The revised policy would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 and any applications for consideration would require detailed costings along with a business plan indicating perceived requirements and an indication of ongoing maintenance provision. It was agreed that the letter be noted in the minutes.

**PF05/01/06**

**MATTERS REFERRED BY COMMISSIONERS/OTHER COMMITTEES**

None to report in public.

**PF05/01/07**

**RECOMMENDATIONS WITH POLICY OR FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the following recommendations from the Housing Committee Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2004, be endorsed:-

1. That authority be given to purchase a box of ten of the "Window Pull" devices, at a total cost of £174.50 plus V.A.T., such units to remain within the ownership of Onchan District Commissioners but to be loaned to residents at Springfield Court by the Wardens as and when considered appropriate.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following recommendations from the Works and Cleansing Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2004, be endorsed:-

1. To approve accepting quotation from Manx Electricity Authority for the installation of six five metre street lighting columns on the pedestrian footway at Heywood Park in the sum of £9,085 plus V.A.T.. (Such expenditure to be met from Revenue Account).
2. To approve acceptance of revised estimate from the Manx Electricity Authority for the installation of three street lighting columns and associated works in Church Road in the sum of £3,500 plus V.A.T.. (Such expenditure to be met out of an existing capital borrowings authorisation)

It was **RESOLVED** that the following recommendations from the Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2005, be endorsed:-

1. To accept the quotation of Richard Esp in respect of fitting new mains unit in the meter cupboard at Nivison Stadium in the sum of £1,285.98 + VAT (N.B. No provision in the estimates and building maintenance and materials budgets both overspent).

**PF05/01/08**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business for consideration in public.

**PF05/01/09**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that an extraordinary meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee to which all Commissioners would be invited would be held at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005 to consider the draft estimates and proposed rate for 2005/06.

It was agreed that the next ordinary meeting of the Committee be held at 5.30 pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

***There being no further business the meeting terminated at 7.00 p.m.***

Minutes of a meeting of the **RURAL COMMITTEE** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, Main Road, Onchan, on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2004 at 5.22pm.

**Present:** Mr J.K. Watterson (in the Chair), Mrs W.E. Megson, Messrs B.H. Moore and W.A. Skillicorn

**Apologises:** Nil

**In attendance:** Peter Kelly (Administration) & E.K. Convery (District Surveyor) (until 5.52pm)

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**R/04/12/1**  
**MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004, copies of which having previously been circulated, was taken as read, confirmed and signed.

**R/04/12/2**  
**MATTERS ARISING**

The following matters were arising from the minutes:-

**a) Joint Meeting with Police and DoT**

The Chairman apologised to members but when he gave a report of that meeting at the previous meeting of the committee there were a number of items which had slipped his mind. He then advised on the following:

**i) Scollag Road Ponding**

This matter had been ongoing for 13 years and DoT seemed to be changing directions on how to tackle the matter. They had previously decided to install a storm water drain and consequently started at the Abbeylands Crossroads working up towards the point of main concern. In doing so gullies were inserted as the work progressed. Then due to finance being required for other projects the matter was put on hold. It now transpired that the level at which the drain had been set is not suitable for draining the worse area of ponding. The department were therefore looking towards draining that section onto the land of the adjoining owner. Provision was to be made in the 2005/06 budget but the department could not confirm that the amount would be left in the budget or that the work would in fact be carried out.

Mr Skillicorn commented on how bad the road was to such an extent that DoT had erected signs by the worse areas of ponding saying "ford" and then signs advising motorists to test their brakes.

**ii) Icing on Roads**

The Chairman advised that he would speak on both that item and the next item together.

**iii) Stones Washed onto Roads**

At the joint meeting he had expressed concern where water runs down from lanes and drives onto the highroad and then freezes causing potential danger. The problem is sometimes caused where ditches at the side of the road are not cleared and therefore the water does not follow the course which was intended. Equally, in some cases stones and gravel are washed down onto the highroad during periods of heavy rain from adjoining driveways. The debris is then left on the road and not removed. This too being a potential danger to road users. The Chairman expressed his concern that the reply given by DoT was to the affect that it was not their problem and they were not obliged to deal with it. They did offer however to assist the commissioners to have the problems resolved but they were not going to send men on site to rectify the situation. Members expressed concern over what had been reported. Mr Moore made reference to the fact that in the past there was always Highway Board men clearing ditches to ensure that such problems did not occur.

**iv) Tree Branch Cutting Over Roads**

The Chairman made reference to a complaint received some months previous which had been reported at a meeting of the Rural Committee and was relevant to the owner of a horse box which had received damage to its roof due to overhanging branches. This matter had been raised at the joint meeting and the DoT advised that they had an obligation to provide a safe route for passenger carrying vehicles i.e buses and coaches but not for any other vehicles such as a horse box, furniture van etc. This was a matter for those who felt they were affected to take up with the landowners upon whose land the tree was growing.

The Chairman expressed concern at the situation with regard to DoT commenting that it looked as if the commissioners were going to get less co-operation and more debris and water on the roads. The members concurred.

**b) Beating the Bounds**

The District Surveyor advised that the Building Control Officer was on holiday over the Christmas/New Year period and therefore he was not aware as to any further follow ups in respect of replacement signs etc relevant to the items noted on the Beating of the Bounds tour. He was aware that commissioners' staff went to Conrhenny Road following the mention at the previous meeting of fly tipping having taken place because when they went the commissioners vehicle got stuck and had to be pulled out. The Chairman commented that he understood DOLGE had sent a sub-contractor to the site of the fly tipping to collect the items but he was not aware whether this referred to the same reporting or another one.

**c) Hedge Trimming Policy**

Letter reported as sent to the Operations Section of the Department of Transport giving the committee's views on the hedge trimming policy documents read and considered at the previous meeting. Reply as received that day was read which thanked the committee for its response pointing out that such views expressed differed from those of the conservationists and this tended to leave the department in the middle trying to satisfy both options. There was no indication as to any proposed amendments to the policy document which was the object of the exercise.

**d) Dog Fouling around Reservoirs**

Reply read as received from Patrick Heaton-Armstrong, Chief Executive of the Isle of Man Water Authority. Members noted that the authority had of recent provided dog deposit bins around the reservoirs and notices were shortly to be erected advising as to necessity of poop scooping.

The situation was to be monitored by the authority with particular regard also to dogs entering the reservoirs. The Administrative Officer informed members that he had spoken briefly at a social function with Mr Heaton-Armstrong and had learnt that the car park at the Clypse/Kerrowdhoo Reservoir had now been surfaced. Mr Skillicorn commeted that surfacing had been taken right down to the reservoir house and in his opinion speed bumps were desirable.

**R/04/12/3**

**OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

The list of outstanding matters had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted with the following points being discussed further:-

**a) Shannon Rae Site – Replacement Seat**

The Administrative Officer advised that the Leisure and Amenities Committee was still awaiting a reply from The Onchan Branch of the Royal British Legion which he would hope would be available by the time of the next meeting of that committee a week hence. Noted.

**b) Street Light Hillberry Corner**

Letter reported as received from the Network Services Graduate Engineer on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2004 thanking the commissioners for their acceptance of the quotation and advising that the project had now been released to enable work progression. The letter further suggested the commissioners may wish to consult with their contractor. The Administrative Officer reported that this must be a standard letter as the acceptance was probably 18 months previous and the contractor was in fact the MEA themselves. Noted.

The Administrative Officer advised that he would contact the writer of the letter to put him fully in the picture. A discussion with one of the officials of DoT had suggested that the cable laying exercise to the Pinfold Depôt was due to take place before Christmas but that opportunity had gone. Mr Skillicorn suggested that if nothing was done by the time of two meetings of the committee hence he would put forward a proposal that a "green" light (either solar panel or wind turbine) be installed.

**R/04/12/4**

**MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Nil.

**R/04/12/5**

**MATTERS REFERRED BY BOARD/OTHER COMMITTEES**

**Recreation Policy Re; Glens**

The Administrative Officer reported that he understood the Deputy Clerk was going to have the recent communication from the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry referred to the Rural Committee for answer. The matter related to a strategic review of countryside recreational provision and took the form of a covering letter and report prepared by Graeme Watson the Access and Recreation Officer of DAFF. Copies of the report had been circulated prior to the meeting but as the Deputy Clerk was currently on holiday he was unable to confirm that the matter had been referred. The Chairman advised that it had been.

The Chairman commented that it was commendable that DAFF were considering opening up the plantation areas and land for recreational purposes. He felt, however, that there could be a knock on affect when horses and motor vehicles were permitted into the plantations as this could cut up the surface and make it difficult for pedestrian users. He further added that as society seemed to be having more leisure time then obviously there would be greater pressure put upon these areas which would need to be addressed. There would be a need for more car parks, litter bins, dog deposit bins. Then there was the concern over the use of lands around the former mines which could contain industrial pollution and also the use of green lanes to the extent of damaging the surface. He wondered whether an opportunity now existed for private owners of land to open it up for say four wheel drive and motorcycle events and in which case was there likely to be a glut of planning applications for same.

Mr Skillicorn commented that he understood DAFF were trying to arrange for large areas of recreation which could be created by buying in more land between the existing plantations in order to do so. He was concerned that the Ordnance Survey Maps show tracks in close proximity to the plantations but the Ordnance Survey does not distinguish between private and public rights of way. Whilst he accepted that the DoT had produced a public rights of way map not everyone had or used it. As a result adjoining landowners often found people trespassing and it would be beneficial if in someway the public and private tracks near plantations and glens could be distinguished.

Mrs Megson thought there was an opportunity for private land to be opened up for recreational purposes pointing out that in some of the glens it was not possible for horses or bikes to get through. She further advised that horse riders needed a permit in order to ride on the beach and keys were needed to gain access for riding within the plantations which could only be done with permission.

The Administrative Officer suggested that the best way forward was to address the questions posed in the covering letter rather than reiterating points made in the report. Consequently the following answers were formulated:-

- *What do you think of the present recreational opportunities across the department's estate?*

Agreed all answers relate to Onchan glens and plantations which comprise Groudle Glen, Molly Quirk's Glen, Bibaloe Walk together with plantations at Ennemona, Injaighen and part of Conrhenny Plantation. With regard to the glens, these facilities are quite acceptable other than the paths which in many places require considerable maintenance due to water draining onto them. With regard to the plantations, where there are paths through them there should be directional signs.

- *How do you think it could be improved?*

All glens and plantations should have interpretative panels with map and indicating length of paths in terms of time to walk etc. Any further use of the plantations in terms of recreation should relate to the size, topography and any other prevailing conditions in the plantations in question.

- *Are there any facilities or services you feel should be provided?*

Seating is always preferable on any path but in the case of larger plantations or glens then provision should be made for toilet facilities.

- *Are there any other important factors which should be considered?*

Persons using the glens and plantations sometimes use the Ordnance Survey Map of the Isle of Man. These show tracks which are often in the vicinity of the plantations but such maps do not distinguish between public rights of way over these paths or lanes from what is in fact private farm lanes. Some form of indication should be provided so that users of the facilities do not find themselves trespassing albeit in innocence. Furthermore, if events are to be promoted on land owned by DAFF such as BMX rallies or other events involving several people, then notification to adjoining landowners should be given in case the event affects farming practices that are due to take place. A system using email communication could be drawn up once the identity of owners was established.

**R/04/12/6**

## **PLANNING MATTERS**

### **i) Planning Decisions**

The District Surveyor reported on the receipt of the following two planning decisions:-

PA 04/01587 Approval in principle for the demolition of derelict cowshed and erection of a double garage with studio over, enlargement of driveway and parking area and erection of greenhouse to side of garage, Brooklands, Sir George's Bridge, Abbeylands for Dr. D. James – **Approved subject to the living accommodation within the roof space being ancillary to that of the main dwelling Brooklands and that the new garage maybe no larger than the footprint of the building which is to be replaced and must reflect the size of building required in relation to the number of vehicles owned by the applicant.**

*Members were surprised and concerned over the approval as the building to be replaced was one of a temporary nature which never had the benefit of planning approval and that there were permanent buildings to the side of the dwelling which could provide the accommodation required. After a brief discussion it was*

#### **RESOLVED**

***“to seek Review of the decision”.***

The Chairman commented that this was not the first time that the committee and commissioners had found it hard to follow the decision of the Planning Committee as it was contrary to their own policies and inconsistent with other decisions.

PA 04/02258 Division of unit A of unit 18 into two units with new entrance and rear loading bay Carr's Road Tromode Industrial Estate, Tromode for Clucas PLC. – **Approved subject to the building being used for industrial purposes and not for any form of retail activity. Noted.**

### **iv) Registered Buildings**

The Administrative Officer advised that in respect of the recent application by Clucas PLC to have the chimneys and adjoining engine house, weir, millrace de-registered and in connection with which he had attended the Review Hearing, no indication as to the decision of the Planning Committee had been received. He understood, however, that a decision has been made and notification will be sent out after the Christmas/New Year holidays so as to avoid any confusion on time period relevant to the seeking of an Appeal.

R/04/12/7

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) **Time and Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2005 at 5.15pm.

***Meeting terminated at 6.50pm.***