Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS (focus group Properties and Amenities) held in the Boardroom, Willow House, Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 13th May 2013 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Mr R. Callister (Chairman)
Mr D. Crellin (Lead Member for Environmental and Technical Services)
Mrs J. Kelly (Lead Member for Properties and Amenities)
Mr J.F.J. Quaye (Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes)
Mr R.C. Turton
Miss K. Williams

Apologies: Mr D. Scambler (Vice-Chairman)

In Attendance: Mr P.M. Hulme (Chief Executive)
Mr T.R. Craig (Deputy Clerk)
Mr B. T. Price (District Surveyor)
Ms A.S. Dentith (Personal Assistant)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to his first meeting as Chairman of the Board. The Chairman indicated that under Standing Order 9(1) – voting at the discretion of the Chairman, that voting would be carried out by a show of hands of those present unless a secret ballot was required.

C13/05/02/01
TO CHOOSE A PERSON TO PRESIDE IF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN BE ABSENT

Not necessary.

C13/05/02/02
BUSINESS REQUIRED TO BE DEALT WITH BY STATUTE BEFORE ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Declaration of Chairman

The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

C13/05/02/03
MINUTES

1. Ordinary meeting held on 29th April 2013

The minutes of the public section of the ordinary meeting held on 29th April 2013, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered.

(a) C13/04/04/07(1)(d) – PA 13/00379, 33 Howe Road

In the last paragraph delete the word unanimously.

Subject to the above amendment, it was proposed by Mrs Kelly, seconded by Mr Crellin, and it was unanimously RESOLVED that the minutes be signed as a correct record of proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

2. Ordinary meeting held on 7th May 2013

The minutes of the public section of the ordinary meeting held on 7th May 2013, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered.
### IN PUBLIC

(a) It was agreed to change the year to read 2013.

(b) C13/05/01/05(2) – IOM Municipal Association

It was agreed that the word reserve representative be added.

Subject to the above amendments, it was proposed by Mrs Kelly, seconded by Mr Turton, and it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes be signed as a correct record of proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

#### C13/05/02/04
**BUSINESS ARISING NOT REFERRED TO IN THE MINUTES OF ANY SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

1. **C13/04/01/05(1) - Springfield Court - Boilers**

   The Deputy Clerk advised that the replacement of the boilers for Phases 1 and 2 at Springfield Court had been completed. Compliments had been received on the level of performance.

2. **C13/04/03/04(4) – Onchan Park – Playground**

   In answer to question, the District Surveyor indicated that the playground at Onchan Park would be open before Practice Week.

3. **Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee – Political Representation**

   The Chief Executive clarified that the political representative was elected for a period of two years, the current member having come to the end of that period. Matter to be considered under the next agenda item.

#### C13/05/02/05
**BUSINESS ADJOURNED FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Selection of Richmond Hill Consultative Committee – Political Representative**

   In answer to question, the Chief Executive advised that the requirement for a representative on the Committee had been part of the original planning approval, and it was the view of the previous Board was that it was no longer required.

   After discussion, it was agreed that the Chief Executive write to the Richmond Hill Consultative Committee advising that the Board of Onchan District Commissioners declined to send a representative for the municipal year 2013/14. However, the Board would still like to receive minutes.

2. **Eastern Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee – Political Representative**

   The Chief Executive advised that the current representative had completed their two year term.

   In answer to question, the Chief Executive advised:-
   - Onchan has a 17% vote
   - Onchan’s representative’s directive had been that the representative should not vote without the prior approval of the Board.
   - Other Local Authorities are able to vote without having to return back to the Board for clarification.
The Committee would not be able to function correctly if every member had to go back to their Board for approval.

A member stated that the Chief Executive always attended the meetings to support the political representative.

It was proposed by Mr Callister, seconded by Mr Quaye, and unanimously RESOLVED that the political representative for the Eastern Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee be Mr Derek Crellin. Further, that the political representative be able to vote at the meetings as and when required.

C13/05/02/06
BUSINESS EXPRESSLY REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DONE

None.

C13/05/02/07
PLANNING DECISIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Plans to the Board

(a) The following plans were considered by the Board. It was proposed by Mr Crellin, seconded by Mrs Kelly and unanimously RESOLVED that the following planning applications be recommended for approval:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA 13/00447</td>
<td>Melvaig House, 32 The Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 13/00461</td>
<td>Onchan Parish Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 13/00475</td>
<td>8 Windermere Avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 13/00477</td>
<td>4 Summerhill Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 13/00491</td>
<td>13 Furman Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 13/00493</td>
<td>1-3 Elm Drive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) PA 13/00417 - Plot to rear of 47 Governors Road – Amended plans to previous submission indicating site levels. Previous ODC recommendation Refusal. No reason to amend that decision.

It was proposed by Mr Crellin, seconded by Mrs Kelly and unanimously RESOLVED that PA 13/00417, 47 Governors Road, be recommended refusal on the grounds that the proposals result in the loss of amenity and off street car parking provision for 47 Governors Road. The
Commissioners recognise the parking issues in the street and believe that this development would exacerbate those issues. Additionally the Commissioners consider that this proposal could be considered as backland development which is contrary to planning policies.

(c) PA 13/00487, 8 Howe Road – Proposed demolition of existing bungalow and replacement with a split level 3 bedroom unit. The proposals show a large balcony at the upper level which would create issues of overlooking, and there is a detached double garage to the front of the property which is well forward of any perceived building line.

It was proposed by Mr Crellin, seconded by Mrs Kelly and unanimously RESOLVED that PA 13/00487 be refused on the grounds that the proposed garage would adversely impact on the street scene, and that the proposed balcony would have an adverse impact on the adjoining property.  (notify 6 & 10 Howe Road)

(d) PA 13/00531, Groudle Glen Hotel, King Edward Road – Application for approval in principle to convert the existing premises into either permanent or tourist flats. It is proposed to form 6 units, 5 two bedroom and 1 one bedroom. The proposals also indicate the creation of 11 off street car parking spaces.

It was proposed by Mr Crellin, seconded by Mrs Kelly, and unanimously RESOLVED that PA 13/0052 - Groudle Glen Hotel, King Edward Road be recommended for approval. Notify White Cot and The Toll House.

1. Housing Review Consultation

The Deputy Clerk advised that dates for meetings for the Housing Review are as follows:-
- 22nd May at 10.00 a.m. at Keyll Darree
- 11th June, 2.00 p.m. at Murray House
- 25th June at Keyll Darree

The Housing Conference will be held on 19th July at Mount Murray.

2. Author R.W. Kay (Bob Kermeen)

The Chairman referred to Standing Order 20 – Intervention of Chief Executive/Clerk in debate, and made reference to an article printed in the IOM Examiner dated 6th May and an open letter which had been published in the Manx Independent on 9th May.

The Chairman commented:-
- The Board were not involved in the scheduling or cancelling of the talk by Mr Kermeen in Onchan Library
- No discussion was held between IOM newspapers and the Board.

The Chairman referred to Standing Order 15(13) - that a vote could be taken for any specified business be transacted in private. After a brief discussion, a vote was taken and it was agreed that the discussion remain in the public domain.

For: Messrs Quaye, Turton, Callister, Mrs Kelly and Miss Williams
Against: Mr Crellin
The Chief Executive stated that all Members were aware of the yellow journalism in the newspaper regarding a perfectly valid decision by management. A lot of nasty and personally abusive comments had been made on the newspaper website and felt it was important to have the correct facts in the public domain. He was disappointed in the way the newspaper had acted.

Discussion ensued:
- There were valid reasons for cancelling the talk. Only one attendee had been indicated for the talk. 15 to 20 people are required to warrant the Library being opened.
- It was felt that if any press contacts the individual member then they should be referred to the Chief Executive for comment.
- Advantages and disadvantages of social forums
- Felt the article had been blown out of proportion.
- The Author had been directed to Douglas Library, and is due to have his talk next Monday.
- Members felt that the comments on the newspaper website had gone over the top and were unfair to the Deputy Clerk.

A Member expressed concern over individual Commissioners going on social forums and putting their comments. Even if it was their personal view, their actions still reflected on the Board as a full body and came across as the view of the Board. The comments may be personal opinion but it is seen as serious concern as it does fuel the fire. As Chairman, any comments made, will be reflected on the Board.

A Member advised that their comments were personal, as a Commissioner they had not been aware of the booking of the author, that it had been cancelled or that the press had contacted the Authority. They would like to see that all Commissioners are kept informed that the press have been in touch.

The Chairman referred to the open letter which had been published which referred to Onchan District Commissioners as being narrow minded with the worst possible views and a complete bunch of idiots. That statement refers to the Board collectively, but the Board were not involved, this was a management decision.

A Member added that using online forums was a further way of interacting with the residents. The Chairman has been complimented for interacting with the people a bit more. However, there is a need to be factual and not to post personal opinions.

The Chief Executive clarified that Members go on to the sites that they should just be factual and not be drawn in to arguments.

In answer to question, the Chief Executive advised that the Authority used their own website, facebook and flickr.

The Chief Executive was requested, to ensure consistency, to look into:
- Commissioners’ protocols for social forums
- communication policy for an agreed way with dealing with the press

It was agreed that Members of the Board had not been aware of this incident and were confident that their staff had acted in good faith. Further, that if any approach is made to staff by IOM Newspaper that all Members be kept in the picture.

The Deputy Clerk thanked Members for their comments. He wished to make one comment on the decision. He was prepared to answer for any decision he made before the Board and the Chief Executive. However, the people most hurt through this episode were his family, they are the ones who he was concerned about. The comments which had upset his family were on the newspaper site and
he is now left with an issue he is trying to resolve with his family. He felt that this went far beyond the Board and it was his own opinion that least said soonest mended.

C13/05/02/09
LETTERS, PETITIONS, MEMORIALS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

1. Onchan Traffic Lights

Correspondence received from the Minister of Department of Infrastructures dated 1st May 2013 which replied to the ongoing concerns of the Authority, advising that the traffic lights were problems were due to the fault of the drivers.

A Member commented that:-
- the pedestrian crossing lights are not staying on long enough for pedestrians to cross safely,
- the sequence of lights cause traffic to block the carriageway making which in its self makes it unsafe for pedestrians to cross.
- This was an accident waiting to happen.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive contact the Minister advising that the Board were not satisfied with the response, and enquire if they are going to make any changes to the sequence of lights.

2. Malew Parish Commissioners – Civic Service

Letter of acceptance to the Authority’s Civic Service was noted.

3. Douglas Borough Council - Civic Sunday

Letter of invitation received dated 17th April 2013, inviting the Commissioners to attend Civic Sunday on 9th June 2013 at St Thomas’s Church, Douglas, at 10.30 a.m. Chairman, Chairman's Lady, Messrs Crellin and Turton to attend.

4. Peel Town Commissioners – Civic Sunday

Letter of invitation received dated 18th April 2013, inviting the Commissioners to attend Civic Sunday on 26th May 2013 at Peel Methodist Chapel at 11.00 a.m. Chairman, Chairman's Lady and Mr Crellin to attend.

5. Friends of Chernobyl’s Children (IOM) – Invitation

Correspondence received dated 22nd April 2013, inviting the Commissioners to attend ‘Farewell Party’ on Wednesday 7th August at the Manx Legion Hall, Douglas at 7.30 p.m.. Chairman and Chairman’s Lady to attend.

The correspondence also expresses thanks to the Commissioners for granting “Onchan Park Passports” to the children of Belarus and their host families during their month long stay. Noted.

6. Crossroads Care – Conferences

Letter of invitation received dated 5th April 2013, inviting the Commissioners to attend the Prepare to Care Seminar on 18th September 2013 at 1.30 p.m. in the Villa Marina, Promenade Suite. Noted.
7. **Armed Forces Day Committee – Invitation**

Letter of invitation received dated 17th April 2013, inviting the Commissioners to attend the Armed Forces Day Committee celebrations at the Villa Marina on Sunday 30th June 2013. Mrs Kelly, Mr Crellin, Chairman going to attend with their partners.

8. **P.H.S.E. Classes, Bemahague High School**

Mr Turton advised that he would be able to attend at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday 16th May.

C13/05/02/10

**QUESTIONS**

None.

C13/05/02/11

**MOTIONS**

None.

C13/05/02/12

**CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. **Attendances**

   18th May - Onchan AFC Centenary Dinner
   19th May - Onchan Commissioners - Civic Service

C13/05/02/13

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **Parish Squawk**

   A Member advised that St Peters Musicale are completing the parish squawk to coincide with their 25th Anniversary. They are doing 17 performances in a 12 hour period. They are expected to be at St Peter’s Church at approximately 8.20 p.m.. Members were invited to attend. **Noted.**

2. **C13/03/01/21(1)(a) – Library Service**

   In answer to question, the Deputy Clerk advised that the audit results of footfall would be placed on the Board agenda for the next Properties and Amenities focus group.

3. **C13/04/04/13(1) - Road Sign – Seafield Crescent**

   In answer to comment, the District Surveyor advised that a replacement sign was on order and would be reinstated as soon as received.

4. **Civic Sunday – Ties**

   A Member commented that all Commissioners’ ties should be worn for Civic Sunday.

   Members were advised that Onchan ties were available at a cost of £7.95 each.
5. **Sunnybank Avenue – Grass Verge**

   A Member enquired if the turf that had been moved by the snow plough be reinstated to its original position. District Surveyor to report back to the next meeting of the Board.

6. **Chairman and Chief Executive Meetings**

   A Member hoped that the weekly meetings between the Chairman and Chief Executive would continue, and that the Chairman keeps Members updated.

7. **C13/04/03/04(2) - Land for Housing – Former Police Station**

   The Chief Executive advised that the documentation had been received with regard to the purchase of the Former Police Station. Chairman to sign documentation and the Authority can issue the cheque for the purchase of the former Police Station.

8. **C13/04/03/20(1) – Management Agents – Commercial Property Portfolio**

   The Deputy Clerk advised that the Management Agents were willing to meet with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Date to be arranged.

   The Deputy Clerk advised that he had received correspondence indicating changes to the terms which he would circulate to Members.

9. **The Rec, School Road**

   In answer to question, the District Surveyor advised that the benches had been installed at the playground.

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*There being no further public business the meeting terminated at 8.00 p.m. and the Board moved into Committee.*