

IN PUBLIC

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the **ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, 79 Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 23rd January 2017 at 7.21 p.m.

Present: Mr R. Turton (Chairman)
 Mr A. Allen
 Mr J. Cherry
 Mr D. Crellin (Vice-Chair and
 Lead Member for Environmental and Technical Services)
 Mr M. Macfarlane (Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes)
 Miss K. Williams (Lead Member for Properties and Amenities)

Apologies: Mr C. Quirk

In Attendance: Mr M.J. Morrison (Chief Executive/Clerk)
 Mr T.R. Craig (Deputy Clerk)
 Mr T.M.G. Edwin-Reed (Finance Manager)
 Mr B.T. Price (District Surveyor)
 Ms A.S. Dentith (Senior Administrator)

C17/01/02/01**TO CHOOSE A PERSON TO PRESIDE IF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN BE ABSENT**

Not necessary.

C17/01/02/02**BUSINESS REQUIRED TO BE DEALT WITH BY STATUTE BEFORE ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

C17/01/02/03**MINUTES****1. Ordinary meeting held on Monday 9th January 2017**

The minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Monday 9th January 2017, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered.

(a) C17/01/01/07(1)(VI) – PA 16/01372 – Former IOM Bank Site, 26 Main Road

Remove the word ‘unanimously’ from the Resolution.

(b) C17/01/01/16(1) – Kenyon’s Café

Delete the third sentence in the first paragraph.

It was proposed by Mr Cherry, seconded by Miss Williams and unanimously **RESOLVED that the minutes be signed as a correct record of proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.**

*IN PUBLIC***C17/01/02/04****BUSINESS ARISING NOT REFERRED TO IN THE MINUTES OF ANY SPECIAL COMMITTEES****1. C17/01/01/04(1) - 2 Wybourn Drive**

In answer to question, the District Surveyor advised that a letter had been issued to the owner of the property asking for them to continue to maintain the property to a good standard. The Vice-Chairman asked the District Surveyor to continue to monitor the premises.

C17/01/02/05**BUSINESS EXPRESSLY REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DONE**

None.

C17/01/02/06**BUSINESS ADJOURNED FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING**

None.

C17/01/02/07**PLANNING DECISIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING COMMITTEE****1. Plans to the Board**

(a) The following plans were considered by the Board.

(i) PA 17/00028 - 24 Ballachurry Close

The District Surveyor advised that the application was for a proposed conservatory to the side of the property. This is a corner plot and the proposal does not create any overlooking to adjoining properties.

It was proposed by Mr Crellin, seconded Mr Cherry, and unanimously **RESOLVED that PA 17/00028 – 24 Ballachurry Close be recommended for approval.**

(ii) PA 17/00030 – 117 Royal Avenue

Mr Crellin declared an interest.

The District Surveyor advised that the planning application was for a retrospective application for the erection of a shed located at the front corner of the garden. This is highly visible on the junction of Royal Avenue and Alberta Drive. It is not a permitted development and is subject to a planning application.

After discussion, it was proposed by Mr Macfarlane, seconded by Mr Cherry, and **RESOLVED that PA 17/00030 – 117 Royal Avenue that a letter be sent to the Planning Committee advising that the Commissioners recognise the limited space within the plot to locate a shed and are minded to accept the proposals but would ask if a condition could be imposed to let the hedge grow to offer screening or the shed is painted in a colour to soften its visual impact.**

*IN PUBLIC***(iii) PA 16/01050 – Strathallan Cliff House, Strathallan Road**

The District Surveyor advised that the planning application shows revised details for a new dwelling. The revision indicates the removal of a tree following discussion with Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture. New trees are to be planted in mitigation. Previous ODC recommendation was for Approval.

It was proposed by Mr Crellin, seconded by Mr Allen, and unanimously **RESOLVED that PA 16/01050 – Strathallan Cliff House, Strathallan Road, be recommended for approval.**

2. Planning Communications

None.

C17/01/02/08**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES MATTERS****1. Rate Arrears**

The following matter was considered in committee and transferred to the public domain.

Report of the Finance Manager dated 17th January 2017, having previously been circulated, was considered. The Finance Manager advised of payments received since the last meeting of the Board and gave updates with regard to action being undertaken. Discussion ensued with regard to historic defaulters.

In answer to question, the Chief Executive explained that the rate debt is not written off but becomes a debt on the property.

2. Rent Arrears

The following matter was considered in committee and transferred to the public domain.

Report of the Finance Manager dated 17th January 2017, having previously been circulated, was discussed. The Finance Manager advised that the report was not fully comparable with the previous month due to the effect of the public holidays. There was an increase in arrears due to the festive period which was not unexpected. However, over 60% of the reported defaulters had paid significant amounts in the last two weeks.

In answer to comment, the Deputy Clerk advised that as the tenants had not engaged with the Finance Team, Notices to Quit had been issued on 4 more tenants. There are a number of tenants in rent arrears who are on a fixed five year tenancy. One of the factors to consider before renewing a five year tenancy will be the rent payment history. The Deputy Clerk advised that he had written to those tenants who will be affected to give them an opportunity to correct their payment patterns.

The Finance Manager gave a brief explanation with regard to how the rents are calculated on the social housing stock and that this included an element based on the rates of the property.

The Lead Member for Properties and Amenities advised Members that each year, when the new rent levels are set, tenants receive a breakdown of how their rent is calculated. This gives details of the Commissioners rates, water rates, burial rate and the rent element to give a total for the weekly rent payable.

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In answer to comment, the Deputy Clerk reassured Members that when a Notice to Quit is served this effectively severed the old tenancy. The Board resolved some time ago that once the arrears and mesne profits were cleared than a new five year fixed term tenancy could be offered. An explanation was given with regard to the process for the granting of a Court Order for possession.

3. Internal Audit 2016/17

The following matter was considered in committee and transferred to the public domain.

Report of the Finance Manager dated 13th January 2017, having previously been circulated, was discussed.

In answer to question, the Finance Manager advised that the risks are reviewed for the whole Authority.

It was proposed by Mr Macfarlane, seconded by Mr Cherry, and was unanimously **RESOLVED:-**

- **That the Board agrees that the scope of the internal audit for the financial year ended 31st March 2017 is to be as detailed in the Finance Manager's Memorandum "Internal Audit 2016/17" dated 13th January 2017.**
- **That the Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes and the Chairman meet with the Internal Auditors once their report is finalised. Should any matters of concern be raised, then the Internal Auditors will be invited to meet with the Board.**

The Chairman requested that a review of the points raised from the previous report be undertaken to ensure they have been addressed.

4. Rate Setting for the year 2017/18 and Budget for Year Ended 31st March 2018

The following matter was considered in committee and transferred to the public domain.

Report of the Chief Executive dated 23rd January 2017, and the reports of the Finance Manager dated 11th January 2017, having previously been circulated, were discussed.

The Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes thanked the officers for the detailed reports.

The Finance Manager advised the Board that the Authority needed to keep reserves to a minimum of at least 25% of rate income. He also indicated that between 25% and 33% was reasonable and prudent.

After discussion, it was proposed by Mr Macfarlane, seconded by Mr Cherry, and **RESOLVED that the rate be set at 312p in the pound for the financial year 2017/18. In order to achieve this figure, early payment discount would be reduced to 4% and further savings in expenditure would be made.**

For: Messrs Turton, Macfarlane, Cherry, Crellin and Miss Williams
Against: Mr Allen.

The Chairman requested that Members were not to discuss the resolution until the press release had been issued.

*IN PUBLIC***C17/01/02/09****REPORT FROM THE CLERK OR OTHER OFFICER****1. Onchan Park – Tennis Courts**

The following matter was considered in committee and transferred to the public domain.

Report of the Chief Executive dated 18th January 2017, having previously been circulated, was discussed.

After discussion, it was agreed in principle that the area could be used for car parking. The Chief Executive and District Surveyor to investigate further and report back to the next meeting of the Board.

C17/01/02/10**LETTERS, PETITIONS, MEMORIALS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

C17/01/02/11**QUESTIONS**

None.

C17/01/02/12**MOTIONS**

None.

C17/01/02/13**ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES MATTERS****1. C17/01/01/04(3) – Groudle Glen House**

The following matter was considered in committee and transferred to the public domain.

Report of the Chief Executive dated 18th January 2017, having previously been circulated, was discussed.

After discussion, it was proposed by Mr Turton, seconded by Mr Crellin, and unanimously **RESOLVED that the Authority commences a prosecution under Section 58 of the Local Government Act 1985.**

2. Hawthorn Villa – Garages

The following matter was considered in committee and transferred to the public domain.

Report of the Chief Executive dated 18th January 2017, having previously been circulated, was discussed.

After discussion, it was agreed in principle that the area may be let out for commercial use. The Chief Executive and District Surveyor to investigate further and report back to the next meeting of the Board.

*IN PUBLIC***C17/01/02/14****PROPERTIES AND AMENITIES MATTERS**

None.

C17/01/02/15**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS****1. Attendances**

- 22nd January 2017 - Holocaust Memorial Day Service

2. Dates for Diary

- 11th February 2017 – Trustees of Manx National Heritage, 'The Fight for Beauty' - Speaker Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE. To be held at the Manx Museum, Saturday 11th February 2017, 2.00 p.m.

C17/01/02/16**OTHER URGENT BUSINESS****1. C17/01/01/16((12) – Hawthorn Villa – Automatic Access**

In answer to question, the District Surveyor advised that costs were being investigated.

2. Commissioners' Surgery

After discussion, it was proposed by Mr Allen, seconded by Mr Crellin, that the Commissioners' Surgery return to an open door policy for a trial period of 6 months. Surgeries to be held on the first Tuesday of each month between the hours of 6.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.. Commissioners Mr Allen and Mr Crellin to attend the first surgery. The February and March Surgeries to be held at Hawthorn Villa and, then at the Onchan Youth and Community Centre.

3. Political Surgery

Members were advised that Mrs Edge MHK would holding a political surgery at the Archibald Knox Meeting Room, at 7.00 p.m. on Thursday 26th January 2017.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.