

**MINUTES OF ISLE OF MAN MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY MEETING  
HELD AT BRADDAN COMMISSIONERS' OFFICES AT 7PM ON THURSDAY 31  
JANUARY 2019**

**PRESENT**

Vivien Quane	Lezayre Commissioners	President & Chairman
Alison Lynch	Marown Commissioners	Vice Chairman
Neal Mellon	Braddan Commissioners	
Andrew Jessopp	Braddan Commissioners	
Raina Chatel	Douglas Borough Council	
Betty Quirk	Douglas Borough Council	
Tim Kenyon	Garff Commissioners	
Jamie Smith	Garff Commissioners	
Barbara Brereton	Malew Commissioners	
Bob Pilling	Malew Commissioners	
Chris Quirk	Onchan Commissioners	
James Cherry	Onchan Commissioners	
Geoff Gelling	Patrick Commissioners	
Lindsay Ridley	Patrick Commissioners	
Alan Jones	Peel Commissioners	
Ffinlo Williams	Ramsey Commissioners	
Peter Gunn	Rushen Commissioners	
Graham Connor	Secretary	

**Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all members along with our guest speaker and felt sure that this would be a useful meeting with updates to be given on key areas of DOI work and the opportunity to question the Minister and his advisor.

**Guest Ray Harmer MHK accompanied by Jeff Robinson (Director of Highways)**

**1. Updates**

**a) Douglas Promenade**

Jeff Robinson advised that the project was still on course to be completed in October 2020. He said that there was some disappointment with progress, but resources were due to be ramped up and the onset of better weather and longer daylight hours would help. The contract included significant penalty clauses for late completion and (lesser) incentives to finish ahead of time. The maximum working day is from 7am to 10pm. Contractors are aware of their obligations to minimise noise and disruption early and late in the day and at peak traffic periods.

A second workforce had been deployed on the south promenade and issues about parking had been tackled through opening the promenade walkway and a proposal to install 51 spaces on the Summerland site. There was always a requirement to maintain two-way traffic flow. Work would cease during TT with all areas being sealed off. There would be room for the funfair to operate if this was rebooked. Excavated materials were removed from site and used as infill wherever possible.

Currently work was concentrating on tramway provision although it seemed unlikely that this would be completed ahead of the summer season. The Minister advised that he would consider suggestions that season pass charges should be reduced to reflected this although it was not anticipated that there would be any overall decrease in fares for visitors.

**b) Sea defences**

It was confirmed that the planning application for changes to the sea wall near the Douglas War Memorial was to be resubmitted. Drawings were passed around for information.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding proposals for Laxey. The Minister felt that Laxey (sic) Commissioners had made the right call in supporting the application although he understood that such plans could provoke controversy. It was recognised that artist's impressions of the new structure would be useful and these, along with a fly-by 3D model had been commissioned. It was understood that around 50 objections had been made to the planning authorities who were seeking to work through and address these wherever possible. The Minister also noted that there had been many objections to new sea defences built in Peel some years ago but that residents were now content with the end product. Subject to planning the hope was to begin work in April/May 2019. Some concern was expressed on the impact this might make in the summer season.

There was also a wider discussion on longer term strategy for Island wide provision of sea defences particularly in the light of climate change predictions. In particular concerns were expressed about coastal erosion in the north east of the Island which could result in landfill waste being exposed. The protection of public versus private property was also considered with the Minister advising that some feasibility studies were under way or in the planning stage.

**c) Footpaths**

An update on the Douglas-Peel Heritage pathway was given. Much concern was also expressed on the state of pavements (as opposed to footpaths) particularly in rural areas. Mr Robinson advised that it was natural for his Department to concentrate on urban areas with higher footfall, but he undertook to look at any specific examples given where resources permitted. A problem in Glen Maye where the Local Authority was caught in an impasse between Government Departments over responsibility was mentioned and it was agreed that this would be taken away for review and action. Frustration was also expressed regarding the state of highways etc around the airport at Ballasalla which was "a key Gateway to the Island." Members felt that it was wrong to hide behind the potential provision of a by-pass and infrastructure upgrades which might result from additional housebuilding, both of which were some years down the line.

**d) Questions and answers**

The Chairman invited questions from around the table. Topics included:

- Responsibility for rivers and significant water courses. (Manx Utilities)
- Tree limbing and disposal of hedge trimming waste
- Landscaping of common areas and drainage issues on new housing estates
- Dalton St/Sydney St carriageway maintenance (DOI to review)

- Collapsed fencing on Brookfield Terrace, Foxdale which had been reported at least three times. (DOI to review)
- Failure by the DOI to ensure the rally organisers properly clear away any debris and repair any damage caused by the rally
- Proposed cycleways
- Traffic liaison meetings – didn't seem to be happening (DOI to review)
- Proposed Ramsey marina

### **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Adrian Cowin (Arbory), Carol Quine (Castletown), Margaret Kennaugh (German), and Eddie Convery (Peel)

### **Minutes of November 2018 meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **Matters arising from minutes**

There were no matters arising

### **Treasurer's Report**

The report had been circulated and was noted.

### **Secretary's Report**

The report had been circulated and was noted.

### **S.A.V.E. and joined up service suggestions**

There were no items to be passed on to the DOI this month. There was a discussion on the overall effectiveness and contribution of the scheme to the rebalancing of government finances particularly when viewed alongside the major issue of public sector pensions. Members were also concerned that any move towards rates reform might provide an opportunity for the shifting of costs from Central Government onto Local Authorities.

### **Energy from Waste/RHCC**

Andrew Jessopp advised that he was scheduled to attend a visit to the incinerator next week. He felt that there had been some progress made and that data was generally more up to date although some figures were still suspect. SITA data indicates that we are now better able to control emissions levels. A further update would be provided in April.

### **Housing**

Alan Jones referred to correspondence on housing matters sent to the DOI by Peel Commissioners. He expressed concern that civil servants seemed to be in the business of making policy without consultation with Local Authority. Members were asked to consider if there were similar examples of elected representatives who were being side-lined or ignored and report back. Concerns were also expressed regarding differences in criteria being used in the allocation of sheltered housing. It was agreed that there should be a housing forum to consider such matters and ensure consistency of approach.

**Any other business**

**1. Planning policy**

Attention was drawn to the recently made policy changes in interested person status. Alison Lynch felt that these should apply to new applications only and that to remove such status during consideration of an application was grossly unfair. She would continue to challenge this change and would welcome any support which Members were able to offer.

**2. Designated burial authority**

Jamie Smith sought advice in relation to potential changes being considered in Garff. Following a brief discussion on status the Chairman advised that she could offer some guidance and would speak privately with Mr Smith after the meeting.

**3. Waste charges for schools and nursing homes**

There was a brief discussion regarding the current situation.

**4. Upcoming speakers**

Members felt that it would be useful to have a general meeting in February and, as a result, no speaker would be invited. The Secretary asked for agenda items to be notified directly to him as soon as possible. Rates reform and bus provision would be included on the agenda. It was agreed that Geoffrey Boot MHK should be invited to attend in March/April and Chris Thomas MHK, Laurence Skelly MHK or a representative from the Rivers' Authority being asked to fill the other slot prior to the AGM. Preliminary planning for the AGM was under way.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Date of next meeting: **Thursday 28 February 2019 at 7pm.**

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....