

**MINUTES OF ISLE OF MAN MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY MEETING
HELD AT BRADDAN COMMISSIONERS' OFFICES AT 7PM ON THURSDAY
28TH MARCH 2019**

PRESENT

Vivien Quane	Lezayre Commissioners	President & Chairman
Alison Lynch	Marown Commissioners	Vice Chairman
Andrew Jessopp	Braddan Commissioners	
Neal Mellon	Braddan Commissioners	
Raina Chatel	Douglas Borough Council	
Betty Quirk	Douglas Borough Council	
Tim Kenyon	Garff Commissioners	
Margaret Kennaugh	German Commissioners	
Bob Pilling	Malew Commissioners	
Geoff Gelling	Patrick Commissioners	
Lindsay Ridley	Patrick Commissioners	
Michelle Heywood	Port St Mary Commissioners	
Graham Connor	Secretary	

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. The speaker tonight was Geoffrey Boot MHK accompanied by his Chief Executive Richard Lole. The Minister would provide a brief update on hot topics within his Department and there would then be a round the table question and answer session.

Guest - Geoffrey Boot MHK

Mr Booth said that he was pleased to have been given the opportunity to continue his dialogue with the Municipal Association. He had brought Richard Lole with him to answer any technical issues and take away action points should there be any. He began by provide an update on the following issues:

- a. **Brexit** – despite the Isle of Man not being part of the EU there were relationships established under Protocol 3 which had required review. Staff had been seconded into this area and, as a result, over 400 pieces of amending legislation had been identified and dealt with, and there were around another hundred items which were still subject to review.
- b. **Fisheries** – the Island was recognised to have some of the best fisheries science in Europe. Enforcement was a high priority and had recently improved. The queenie catch had been reduced this year and predictions for the upcoming king scallop yield were “not good”.
- c. **Biosphere** – a champion had been appointed and there was a drive to motivate in schools, colleges and on social media.
- d. **Climate change** – the 2016/20 strategy was 83% complete but it was felt that this had not been ambitious enough and, as a result, future strategy was out for consultation.
- e. **Agricultural support** – the new scheme was also out to consultation with a strong desire to bolster environmental aspects of this.
- f. **Planning bill** – clauses had been reviewed last week with the aim of having a third reading in the House of Keys “very soon”. This was not a big bill with the prime aim

being to make it easier to make changes to planning applications. There would be a new concept of a National Policy Directive.

- g. **Meat plant** – the future of the meat plant is now more secure with finance obtained for this term.
- h. **Cross-departmental working** – although there was always room for improvement it was felt that this was working more smoothly with examples cited in respect of sewage treatment and bathing water standards where there had been collaboration between DEFA, Manx Utilities and the DOI.

The Chairman asked for questions for the Minister. Topics covered included:

- Planning – interested party status (a lengthy discussion), site visits, the scope of amendments to plans in relation to the new Planning Bill, and landscaping.
- Central and Local Authority combined working.
- A longstanding pathway issue in Glen Rushen which remained unresolved as a result of the alleged failure of one specific Department (DOI or DEFA) to take responsibility. The Secretary noted that he had minuted this issue on several occasions and the Minister asked for specific details to be sent direct to him to resolve.
- Potential for the employment of Archimedes screws in the supply of “green energy.”
- Conservation officer impact on the proposed redevelopment of the Bay Queen site in Port St Mary.
- Bath water standards and testing methods.
- The senior structure of the Isle of Man NHS compared with that of the police and fire service. Mr Boot said that this was not his area of responsibility and he was not in full possession of the facts. He felt that the Health Minister was “doing a good job in difficult circumstances”.
- Sourcing and suitability of horses employed on the promenade tram system.
- Incinerator – promises had been made regarding availability of up-to-date monitoring information on the EFW plant particularly as RHCC meetings had been abandoned. Some information was now over a year out of date. Richard Lole would check in the morning and resolve.
- Climate change – Andrew Jessopp felt that this issue was one where “the can had been kicked down the road for many years”. He thought that Local Authorities had a part to play in driving change from the bottom up and would outline Braddan Commissioners’ approach to Members later. On the wider front, consultation needed to be done and a new strategy with challenging hard targets put in place as a matter of urgency.
- Sewage treatment plant Garff – the Minister indicated that he expected this to be delivered by 2021.
- Improvements to Sulby Claddaghs.

Members thanked the Minister for coming along and being willing to engage so openly. Both sides appreciated that there were likely to be differences of opinion in many areas but recognised that communication was the key to progress. Andrew Jessop expressed his thanks for the good work which had been undertaken in Soderick Glen.

Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Adrian Cowin (Arbory), Carol Quine (Castletown), Raina Chatel, Jamie Smith (Garff), James Cherry (Onchan), Chris Quirk (Onchan), Eddie Convery (Peel) and Alan Jones (Peel).

Minutes of February 2019 meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2019 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. Members were advised that Anna Marie Goldsmith would attend the July meeting along with another colleague from the Library Provision Working Group to discuss their remit and seek Municipal Association feedback on issues and proposals. She confirmed that all Local Authorities had also been written to along similar lines.

Nominations for elected posts 2019/20

The Secretary, Treasurer and Auditor had indicated their willingness to continue to serve subject to approval. The Chairman asked for nominations for the post of Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The following nominations were received:

Chairman – Vivien Quane. Proposed by Alison Lynch and seconded by Bob Pilling
Vice-Chairman – Alison Lynch. Proposed by Betty Quirk and seconded by Bob Pilling.
There were no other nominations and it was agreed that confirmation and ratification of all the above posts would be sought at the Annual General Meeting in May.

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

There were no items to be passed on to the DOI this month

Any other business

a. Climate change

Andrew Jessopp advised that Braddan Commissioners had resolved to declare a climate change emergency within the Local Authority. Following their declaration, they will look at new office measures such as cutting back on water and energy usage and changing procurement policies to ensure contractors have the right 'environmental credentials'. He urged other authorities to consider taking similar action since it was felt that a bottom up approach could pay dividends for the Island ahead of the implementation of any new strategy.

b. Housing

Alan Jones was unable to attend this evening but requested that the following statement be read out and minuted.

“ I would ask that following on from the Housing issues I mentioned at a previous meeting some research we have done shows that there may be some reluctance from

the Officers in some Local authorities to ensure that Political members are fully updated and be made aware of discussions they have with the Department of Social Housing. I would urge all those Local Authorities who have responsibility for housing to ensure that their officers do keep them fully apprised of the discussions they have with the Department and to ensure they are aware that Policy should be decided at Political level and not Officer level. There are reported instances in which the Department has seen fit to mislead officers as to the legal advice given i.e. Attorney General says etc. I understand that Douglas has expressed similar concerns.”

c. Rates meetings

Brief feedback was given by some of those who had been present.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.
Date of next meeting: **Thursday 25 April 2019 at 7pm.**

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....