



City of Douglas

**COUNCILLOR MRS NATALIE BYRON-TEARE, JP
MAYOR**

City Hall,
Douglas,
3rd January, 2025

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a MEETING OF THE COUNCIL of the CITY OF DOUGLAS to be held on WEDNESDAY, 8th JANUARY, 2025, at 2.30 o'clock in the afternoon, in the COUNCIL CHAMBER within the CITY HALL, DOUGLAS for the transaction of the hereinafter mentioned business.

I am,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen', written in a cursive style.

Town Clerk & Chief Executive

Order of Agenda

I - Election of a person to preside (if the Mayor is absent).

II - Any statutory business.

III - Approval as a correct record of the minutes of the last regular and any intermediate Meetings of the Council.

IV - Questions of which Notice has been given by Members of the Council, pursuant to Standing Order No. 39.

V - Consideration of the minutes of proceedings of the Council in Committee.

VI - Consideration of the minutes of proceedings of Committees of the Council in the following order:

- (i) The Executive Committee;
- (ii) The Housing and Property Committee;
- (iii) The Pensions Committee;
- (iv) The Standards Committee;
- (v) The Eastern District Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee;
- (vi) Any other Joint Committee;
- (vii) The Regeneration and Community Committee;
- (viii) The Environmental Services Committee;

VIII - Consideration of such communications or petitions and memorials as the Mayor or Chief Executive may desire to lay before Council.

IX - Notices of Motion submitted by Members of the Council in order of their receipt by the Chief Executive.

X - Any Miscellaneous Business of which Notice has been given pursuant to Standing Orders.

The above Order of Agenda is in accordance with Standing Order No. 16(1); under Standing Order No. 16(2) it may be varied by the Council to give precedence to any business of a special urgency, but such variation shall not displace business under I and II.

AGENDA

III – Chief Executive to read minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 11th December 2024.

VI(i) - The proceedings of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE as follows:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 18th December, 2024.

Members Present: Mrs C.L. Wells (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor I.J.G. Clague, Mr Councillor F. Horning, Mr Councillor D.R. Watson.

In Attendance: Chief Executive (Miss K.J. Rice), Director of Finance (Mr A.J.T. Boyd), Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney), Executive Officer (Mrs J.M. Keig) (taking minutes).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Executive Committee's delegated authority

A1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley (and on behalf of Mr Councillor F. Schuengel, Vice Chair of the Regeneration and Community Committee).

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28th November 2024 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Clause A8 – Chief Executive's Department Service Plan Performance Report: further to the request by Members that the next Staff Survey be undertaken in January 2025, it was noted that arrangements were being progressed accordingly.

A5. Referrals from the Environmental Services Committee

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on Monday 16th December 2024.

A6. Referrals from the Regeneration and Community Committee

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the rescheduled Regeneration and Community Committee meeting held on Friday 29th November 2024.

A7. Referrals from the Housing and Property Committee

There were no referrals from the public minutes of the Housing and Property Committee meeting held on Thursday 12th December 2024.

A8. Monthly Financial Review – November 2024

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance setting out details of progress made against Key Performance Indicators for Finance, and other related key financial monitoring information.

The monthly report was required to monitor progress against the Finance Department's Service Plan actions and to meet objectives set out in the 2022 – 2026 Corporate Plan.

Resolved, "(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including in particular:-

- The rates collection figure of 93.1% for the April to November 2024 period, which compared well with the target figure of 91.6%, and the previous year's equivalent of 93.5%."

A9. CIPFA Public Finance Live Conference 2025

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance seeking approval to attend the CIPFA Public Finance Live Conference taking place in Birmingham on 24th and 25th June 2025.

The Director of Finance usually attended the conference on an annual basis, as it represented some very useful continuing professional development and, as the Council's Responsible Finance Officer, it helped his formulation of strategic financial advice to Committee and Council.

It was common for other local authorities to send more than one delegate to this event and, for 2025, it was proposed that the Assistant Chief Officer (Income) also attend. Although a CIPFA member and a Fellow of the Institute, and an Assistant Chief Officer at the Council for twelve years, she had never attended the conference, so this would be a very useful development opportunity.

An early booking discount rate of £595 plus VAT per delegate was being offered for bookings received by 24th January 2025. Funding would be from the General Revenue Reserve (as in previous years and per policy) and, with flights and accommodation, the estimated cost would be in the region of £1,000 per delegate.

Resolved, "(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes; and

- (ii) That approval be given for both the Director of Finance and the Assistant Chief Officer (Income) to attend the CIPFA Public Finance Live Conference in 2025."

A10. Douglas Promenade – Archibald Knox Garden and 'Isle of Knox' Banners

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking agreement for improvements to the Archibald Knox Garden and to the flying of 'Isle of Knox' banners on the Promenade.

In 2025, the Archibald Knox Forum and Manx National Heritage would be joining forces to jointly curate and host an exhibition in the Manx Museum. 'Isle of Knox – Order and Beauty' was to be the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of Archibald Knox's work ever assembled worldwide, with the aim of connecting Archibald Knox to the Isle of Man and elevating his profile onto the global stage.

The Archibald Knox Forum had made an approach to the Council, seeking to explore ways in which it may wish to assist with the celebration of Archibald Knox in 2025 – potentially, by the display of posters around the City to promote the year, and any plans for the Archibald Knox Garden in Marine Garden No.6.

It was understood that the Forum would also like to commission the local artist who had designed the original Promenade banners, Nicola Dixon, to design a version of the banner to contain the words 'Welcome to the Isle of Knox'. The suggestion was that some of the wind-damaged banners on the lighting columns on the Promenade could be replaced with the 'Welcome to the Isle of Knox' banners. As the banners were flown in symmetrical pairs, the 'Isle of Knox' banners would only be used as replacements where both banners on the same pole were damaged - any single damaged banners would be replaced with like-for-like.

It was noted that improvements to the Archibald Knox Garden were already included in the Capital Programme as part of the wider Promenade infrastructure improvements to the Marine Gardens, and it was recommended that officers be authorised to commence discussion with the Archibald Knox Forum and Ms Dixon, with a view to the Council commissioning Ms Dixon to create a work (or works) for the Archibald Knox Garden as part of those improvements.

Resolved, "(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes;

- (ii) That approval be given for the replacement of some of the wind-damaged Promenade banners with 'Welcome to the Isle of Knox' banners, to be designed by artist Nicola Dixon, the designer of the original banners;
- (iii) That officers be authorised to commence discussion with the Archibald Knox Forum and Nicola Dixon during 2025, with a view to commissioning Ms Dixon to create a work or works for the Archibald Knox Garden as part of the Promenade infrastructure improvements; and
- (iv) That depending on the outcome of resolution (iii) above, a further report be brought before the Committee detailing the project brief and proposals."

A11. Isle of Man Municipal Association

No documents had been received from the Isle of Man Municipal Association in advance of the meeting.

A12. Items for Future Report

The Committee considered a written report by the Chief Executive identifying those issues on which further reports had been requested or which were outstanding, so that Members and officers were aware of them and could monitor progress.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that it be considered and monitored at each meeting of the Executive Committee.”

A13. Time and Date of Next Meetings

The time and date of the next meetings were confirmed as 09:30am on Thursday 16th January 2025 (Special Budget Meeting) and 2.00pm on Thursday 23rd January 2025 (scheduled Meeting).

The Committee rose at 4.25pm.

VI(ii) - The proceedings of the HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE as follows:

HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday, 12th December, 2024.

Members Present: Mr Councillor D.R. Watson (Chair), Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin, Mr Councillor P.J. Washington.

In Attendance: Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney), Assistant Chief Officer (Housing and Property) (Mr V. Zivave), Assistant Chief Officer (Income) (Mrs C. Pulman), Housing & Property Operations Manager (Mr J. Chatwood), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) Mr M. Quayle (Items A1 to A4 and B12), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Mrs C. Maddocks).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted by the Worshipful the Mayor and Councillor Ms J. Thommeny.

A2. Declarations of Interest

Mr Councillor P.J. Washington declared an interest in item A7, Willaston Apartment Complex naming proposal.

A3. Minutes – 16th October 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 16th October 2024 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising

No matters were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A5. Vacant Property Update

The Committee considered the monthly report submitted by the Assistant Housing Manager (Maintenance) to update on the number of vacant social housing properties.

Appended to the officer's report was a summary chart showing the number of properties returned in each month, details of the category repair type for each property, together with the number of void properties in each estate.

Members were advised that there are currently sixty-six vacant properties, twenty of which are active. The remaining forty-six properties require refurbishment works and as such, are deferred.

The Director of Housing and Property advised that the voids capital scheme petition had been approved, it was noted that this funding will be used to undertake works to some of the deferred properties on the list.

Resolved, "That particulars of the discussion and the number of vacant properties be noted on the minutes."

A6. Quarter Two Performance Monitoring 2024/25

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Housing and Property Operations Manager to update on the progress made against the performance indicators for quarter two 2024/25.

Appended to the officer's report were the quarterly performance figures for first and second quarter of the 2024/25 financial year and statistical trend analysis data for rent arrears.

Of note for quarter two:

- 95.3% of emergency repairs had been completed within the target time of twenty-four hours;
- 79.9% of urgent repairs were completed within the target period of 7 working days;

- 65.1% of routine repairs were completed within the target period of 28 days; and
- 80% of standard voids were completed within the target time of five weeks and 100% of major voids were completed within the target time of twelve weeks.

Members were pleased to note that all repair targets had improved since the first quarter.

Members noted that there are currently 241 people on the housing waiting list. The Housing and Property Operations Manager advised that to date in 2024 there had been ninety-five new applications for social housing.

During discussion of the rent arrears position, it was agreed that a report be forthcoming to review the feasibility and implications of standardising the rental period.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that the progress made against the performance indicators in the Service Plans for quarter four 2023/24 be noted.”

A7. Willaston Apartment Complex – Naming Proposal

A report had been circulated for the Committee to consider a name proposal for the new Willaston Apartment complex.

Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1985, Mr Councillor P.J. Washington declared an interest in the item.

In the absence of Mr Councillor P.J. Washington the Committee was no longer quorate. As it was considered that the item was not urgent it was deferred for consideration in January 2025.

A8. Items for Future Consideration

The Committee noted the monthly report and schedule setting out items which will be brought forward for consideration to future meetings.

It was agreed that the following reports be added to the schedule of items for future report.

1. Strategy for Commercial Properties;
2. Review on standardising the rental period;
3. Willaston Apartment Complex naming proposal.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and schedule be noted on the minutes.”

A9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next monthly meeting was scheduled to take place at 10.00am on Wednesday, 15th January 2025.

Resolved, “That the date and time of the next meeting be noted on the minutes.”

Part B – Public

Matters referred to the Executive Committee

There were no public matters referred to the Executive Committee.

Part C – Public

Matters Requiring Council Approval

C10. Council procedures for managing housing tenants who are at the end of their tenancy

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Director of Housing and Property in response to a Motion which had been moved at the October 2024 Council meeting;

“In exceptional circumstances, tenants who come to the end of their tenancies should be offered a further twelve-month contract until such a time as the Department of Infrastructure sets new financial thresholds for eligibility to remain in social housing.”

Members were advised that since 2014, five-year fixed term tenancies (FTTs) have been issued by Public Sector Housing providers on the Isle of Man to individuals on the general needs housing waiting list and to existing tenants entering into new agreements, including cases such as transferring to a different property or updating tenancy holder information.

The process for issuing and managing fixed term tenancies is detailed in the ‘*Guidelines on the Implementation and Management of FTTs in Public Sector Housing*’ as issued by the Department of Infrastructure, a copy was appended to the officer’s report.

Members were advised that tenants undergo a financial review before the expiration of their tenancy. If household income exceeds the qualification thresholds, rents are adjusted accordingly. Tenants exceeding the maximum income threshold (£67,000) are generally required to vacate the property but are offered a 12-month tenancy, as per Government guidelines, at an uplifted rent (+100%) to facilitate transition. Mitigating circumstances may allow tenants to remain under specific terms.

The guidance document also stipulates that if there is a change in circumstance during a tenancy directly impacting the tenant's income, the Council will carry out an additional review and the tenant's new income will be reflected in the tenancy and the associated rental charge.

The guidance also provides an alternative pathway for tenants whose income exceeds the maximum threshold with mitigating circumstances. These mitigating circumstances must relate directly to the tenants or members of their household and not to external factors, such as private housing availability or broader economic conditions (e.g. cost of living crisis). Mitigating circumstances are considered 'exceptional' and may include examples such as health issues or pregnancy impacting household stability.

The report advised that the Department had submitted a report to Tynwald in July 2024 in response to motions raised regarding the future of Fixed Term Tenancy (FTT) policies. In this report, the Department clearly outlined its intention to conduct a comprehensive review of the terms and conditions of the FTT policy. Council Officers have engaged with the Department, which confirmed that following the Tynwald motions, the FTT review is included in their current work plan. A submission to Tynwald is anticipated in the second quarter of 2025.

Based on this timeline, it is reasonable to assume that any current tenants found to exceed the maximum household income threshold during their financial review will be issued a 12-month tenancy by the Council. The Government's FTT policy review is expected to be completed well within this period. Should the thresholds be revised as part of this review, the Council will reassess the tenant's eligibility accordingly.

Appended to the officer's report was an extract of the work plan as taken from the Department of Infrastructure's website, together with the report to Tynwald in July 2024 on the Allocation and Renewal of Public Sector Housing Fixed Term Tenancies.

There are currently two tenants whose tenancies have expired and are currently on 12-month tenancies paying +100% of rental. If these tenants are experiencing mitigating circumstances, the current process caters for assisting these tenants.

During discussion, a Member raised concern about ending tenancies for those exceeding income thresholds now, who might qualify for public housing if thresholds are uplifted in 12 months, as indicated by the Department of Infrastructure.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that no further action be taken at this time, as the Council already offers a further 12-month tenancy to all tenants whose tenancies have ended due to their earnings exceeding the current FTT thresholds. Additionally, the Council provides support to tenants facing exceptional circumstances."

1 For. 2 Against.

[Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin and Mr Councillor P.J. Washington asked that their names be recorded as voting against the resolution.]

VI(v) - The proceedings of the EASTERN DISTRICT CIVIC AMENITY SITE JOINT COMMITTEE as follows:

EASTERN DISTRICT CIVIC AMENITY SITE JOINT COMMITTEE

EASTERN DISTRICT CIVIC AMENITY SITE JOINT COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday, 19th November, 2024.

Members Present: Mr D. Quirk (Onchan) (Chair), Councillor Ms J. Thommeny (Douglas), Mr T. Kenyon (Garff), Mrs A. Davidson (Santon).

In Attendance: Mrs D. Eynon (Douglas), Mr J.C. Whiteway (Braddan), Mr P. Burgess (Garff), Mr A. Crook (Contractor, Item A4 only), Mr M. Quayle, Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Douglas), Mrs L. Radcliffe (Douglas, taking notes).

Apologies: Mr N. Mellon (Braddan) and Mr R. Phillips (Onchan).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters dealt with under delegated authority

A1. Minutes – 15th October 2024

Approved unanimously and signed.

A2. Matters Arising

A2.1 2025/26 Budget Increase for Replacement Skips (Onchan)

The Chair confirmed that the budget increase for replacement skips has been authorised by Onchan Board of Commissioners.

A2.2 Civic Amenity Site Paper Bring Bank to Local Authority and Civic Amenity Site Boards

The Government announced on 21st October 2024 that Paper Bring Bank Collections would cease in early November 2024. The Contractor has offered a solution and is awaiting a decision from Committee. The Contractor proposed a charge of £1,200 for 2025/26 to cover the cost of collection, processing and haulage and including the provision of wheeled bins, when the Government remove the current paper bins.

It is therefore requested that Committee agree to an additional £1,200 per annum to cover the cost of collection, processing and hauling of paper collected at the site. This is split per authority based on the rateable value and is estimated as follows:

It was agreed:

That the offer to provide a paper recycling service at the Eastern Civic Amenity Site is approved with cost by the authority as follows: -

- Garff (5.42%) - £65
- Santon (1.69%) - £20
- Onchan (17.67%) - £212
- Braddan (12.86%) - £154
- Douglas (62.36%) - £749

It was noted by Mrs Eynon that a media request was made at the October Council meeting by the Local Democracy reporter and that she was advised to approach the Chair of the Eastern Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee.

A2.3 Civic Amenity Site Ramsey Town Commissioners

Ramsey Town Commissioners had requested that the Eastern Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee consider the possibility of allowing other parishes to join and contribute to their sites and allow Ramsey residents to contribute to the Eastern Site. If agreeable, they had asked what the likely cost would be.

Onchan District Commissioners did not support the request to allow other parishes to join and contribute to the Eastern Civic Amenity Site.

It was agreed:

That a report be forthcoming to consider the legality, costs and staffing requirements of allowing other parishes to join and contribute to the Eastern Civic Amenity Site and to be presented at the next meeting.

A2.4 Isle of Man Creamery

The request for the Chair to meet the Managing Director was declined.

It was agreed:

That the Vice-Chair and an officer meet with the Managing Director.

A2.5 Men in Sheds (Douglas)

The Douglas representative had nothing further to report and it was suggested that an alternative provider be considered by expressions of interest. Mrs Eynon requested that officers be given the time to consider the approach.

A2.6 Waste Strategy Submission to Government Consultation Hub

The administrator confirmed that a response was provided following confirmation from the Clerk to Onchan Commissioners.

A3. Declarations of Interest

None.

A4. Operational Contractors Report

Mr Crook joined the meeting to present the November operational contractor's report.

1.1 Oversize items charges – There have been no further incidences of oversized items since the last report.

1.2 WEEE contract – The Waste Management Unit (WMU) has recently sought tenders for the new WEEE contract (Fridges, Freezers, Monitors, TV'S etc.) to also include batteries and other small WEEE not covered under the current contract. The WMU has recently advised of an anticipated commencement in January 2025. No further information has been provided at the time of producing this report.

The contractor advised that this remains an uncertainty and may result in a cost to the Committee.

1.3 Reuse area – To accommodate the increases in reuse item deposits, following the closure of the Northern re-use area, the Contractor has extended the usable area by a further bay. However, depending on the arrangements for the small WEEE, will determine how the space can be optimised, whilst ensuring that the dismantling of sofas and setting aside items for the rotary club can continue unhindered.

1.5 Bodycams – no change noted.

1.6 CA site telephone – The current arrangement for householders contacting the site is that they will hear a message detailing opening hours and are directed to the Council's dedicated page on its website for all other details including materials accepted, site rules and arrangements for chargeable WEEE items. If the caller needs to speak with someone, they are directed to waste services through Douglas City Council reception. It was requested as part of the new contract, that incoming calls would be directed to a site mobile phone. However, this would only be feasible had committee accepted the initial proposal for five staff on site. The Contractor does not feel that it would be safe or practical for the Chargehand (site supervisor) or Assistant Chargehand to manage the mobile, whilst for large periods of the day they are driving the Hookloader skip vehicle or operating the skip compacting plant. Similarly, it would not be appropriate to delegate this responsibility to site operatives as they are sometimes agency staff who have very limited scope in terms of decision making. It is therefore, recommended that the current practise remains.

1.8 Provision to deny access to Bride ratepayers – the Contractor stated that there has been no impact at present.

It was agreed:

1. That the report and statistics be noted.
2. That the relevant Authorities have approved the request to the uplifted replacement skip programme ahead of the 2024/25 budget round;
3. That the relevant Authorities have approved a paper recycling service at the Eastern Civic Amenity Site with associated cost to each Authority;

4. That a report is brought back to Committee outlining the financial impact of allowing other parishes to join and contribute to their site; and
5. That the administrator arranges a meeting between the Vice-Chair and an officer with the Managing Director, Isle of Man Creameries.

A5. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 18th February 2025 at 2.30pm.

The meeting ended at 3.10pm.

VI(vii) – The proceedings of the REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE as follows:

REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Friday, 29th November, 2024.

Members Present: Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner, Mr Councillor S.R. Crellin, Mr Councillor F. Schuengel.

In Attendance: Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr M. Quayle), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) (Mrs L. Radcliffe), Head of Parks (Mrs S. Parkinson), Democratic Services Officer (Mrs D. Atkinson).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

There were no apologies submitted for absence.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 19th November 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 19th November, 2024, were approved and signed as a true and accurate record. It was noted these minutes had not yet been considered by Council due to the early date for the December Committee Meeting.

A4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

A5. ELS Family Music Festival in Noble's Park

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Parks seeking approval to enter into a licence agreement with Event Lighting Solutions (Isle of Man) (ELS) to host a family-orientated music festival in Noble's Park. Mr J. McMullan and Mr R. Rooney from ELS joined the meeting to present their proposal.

Mr McMullan outlined the event's concept as a family-friendly festival featuring live performances, children's entertainment and local vendors. The event is planned for the weekend immediately following the end of the Department for Enterprise's (DfE) occupation of the park for TT, allowing ELS to take over the facilities that are already in place for the TT festival, reducing set-up time. It would be held in the trackside area, and a proposed site plan was shared with Members. It was intended to finish the event at 9.00pm each evening to ensure that noise and disturbance to residents is minimised.

Mr McMullan and Mr R. Rooney were thanked for their presentation and left the meeting.

Members expressed support for the proposed event. In response to question the Head of Parks confirmed the handover process from DfE to ELS will require further consideration and discussions with DfE were planned.

The Head of Parks confirmed the proposed fee was calculated based on the Committee-approved matrix for events in Noble's Park.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that subject to planning consent, entertainment and alcohol licence approval, consultation with local residents and an acceptable traffic management plan, a license agreement with Event Lighting Solutions (Isle of Man) be entered into to host a family music event in Noble's Park for a fee as detailed in the report from Friday, 20th June to Sunday, 22nd June from 9.00 to 21.00 each day."

A6. Event Dates 2025

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Democratic Services Officer to seek approval for the 2025 public and civic event dates.

The proposed dates and preliminary planning details were listed in the report. The report recommended rescinding the Council's policy to hold the fireworks display the Friday closest to the 5th November and permit officers to determine the most appropriate date for the event based on the tide times.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and the following dates and arrangements be approved for the 2025 public and civic events;

- (i) The 80th anniversary of VE Day be commemorated on Thursday, 8th May, 2025 with a beacon lighting event and short service;
- (ii) The D Day Landings commemorative service take place Thursday, 5th June, 2025 (one day earlier due to the Senior Race Day Bank Holiday);
- (iii) The Douglas Beach Day take place on Saturday, 19th July;
- (iv) The Fun Day take place on Saturday, 2nd August, with a contingency date of Sunday, 3rd August in the event of inclement weather;
- (v) The Fireworks Display take place on Wednesday, 5th November, and the previous resolution to hold the event on the Friday closest to the event be rescinded;
- (vi) The date for the 2025 Remembrance Sunday service on 9th November be noted;
- (vii) The Christmas Lights Event take place on 20th November;
- (viii) Officers continue to seek sponsorship and a media partner where appropriate for events."

A7. Items for Future Report

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Democratic Services Officer regarding reports for future consideration by the Committee.

Resolved, "That particulars of the matters for future consideration and discussions be noted on the minutes."

A8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting was due to take place on Tuesday, 14th January, 2025.

Resolved, "That the date and time of the next meeting be noted on the minutes."

A9. Beach Maintenance Update and Beach Safety

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Parks to update on beach maintenance works conducted in summer 2024 and proposed changes to the beach management contract.

Members were reminded that in December 2023, the Committee approved a one-year extension to the current beach management contract. This extension allowed for a trial of a more intensive beach re-profiling approach to inform the new contract in 2025. The reprofiling was carried out in spring 2024. Despite significant sand removal the natural wind and tidal activities have restored the sand to its original levels.

Based on the trial and public feedback, the report recommended enhancing the beach's appeal by removing 150mm of the larger cobbles and shingle from the top layer of the beach to the two ends of the beach. This work would require a tractor equipped with a stone rake collector. It was noted that the raking would be in addition to the existing seaweed and minor reprofiling beach works and was proposed to be carried out internally for the first year as a trial. The report recommended purchasing a tractor stone collector to undertake the works at a cost of £5,000 to be funded through existing budgets.

The current contract, due to expire in March 2025, will be tendered for a further four-year term. The new tender will follow the structure of the existing agreement, with minor changes introduced including the removal of the requirements for a tracking device and CCTV cameras due to the site's prominent location. The contract will also include a provisional item to cover the possibility of the beach-contractor taking over the rake works following the 2025 trial.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) advised that during the summer there was a report on an incident on the beach in relation to a child who had swum out to the floating raft from the shore. The child had become distressed and was unable to return without assistance. The incident was resolved by nearby individuals. The incident highlights the need for enhancing safety measures, supervision and awareness to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

Discussions have taken place with the RNLI about beach safety at both Douglas Bay and Port Skillion and the prospect of providing lifeguards on Douglas Bay as part of investigating the possibility of obtaining blue flag status. The RNLI has recommended in the first instance a Beach Safety Assessment (BSA) and a review of signage and public rescue equipment. Officers are awaiting costs for the reports; it is intended to fund through existing budgets.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and;

- (i) The proposed minor changes to the beach maintenance specification be agreed;
- (ii) A tractor stone collector be purchased to scrape back the stones to expose the clear sand beneath at a cost of £5,000 to be funded from existing budgets;
- (iii) The appointment of the RNLI be supported to carry out a Beach Safety Assessment (BSA), signage audit and public rescue equipment review for Douglas Beach and Port Skillion Beach.”

The meeting ended at 12.35pm.

VI(viii) – The proceedings of the ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 16th December, 2024.

Members Present: Mr Councillor F. Horning (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny, Mr Councillor P.J. Washington.

In Attendance: Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Assistant Chief Officer (Environment) (Mr I. Jackson), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Items A1 to A4), Assistant Chief Officer (Democratic Services) (Mrs L. Radcliffe), Finance Manager (Mr E. Skinner) (Items A1 to A7), Dilapidation Enforcement Officer (Mr S. Salter) (Items A8 and A9), Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Mrs C. Maddocks).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 18th November, 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 18th November 2024 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

No matters were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A5. City Centre Umbrella Display

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Head of Electrical Services and E&R Projects seeking approval for the implementation of a suspended umbrella display in the City Centre shopping area, as part of a campaign to educate and raise awareness of Neurodiversity.

In March 2024, Members had previously considered and approved a proposal from ‘Removing Barriers’, for an umbrella display in the City Centre. Members were advised that the charity had run out of time to implement the display for TT 2024 and as such, have requested permission to install it for TT 2025.

Electrical Services has evaluated the proposal and a solution for the charity to consider was provided to the charity, a copy of which was appended to the officer’s report. If approved, Electrical Services will further liaise with the charity to ensure the display presents no hazards.

Members noted that it is intended to install the display for TT 2025 with removal to take place at the end of August. The umbrellas will be installed by a third party and all costs will be at the expense of the charity.

It is considered that the umbrella display will enhance the atmosphere in the shopping area and may assist in increasing footfall in the City Centre.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that the umbrella display in the City Centre shopping areas for TT 2025 to August 2025, be approved.”

A6. Use of the Bottleneck Car Park during TT 2025

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking agreement to the use of the Bottleneck Car Park during TT 2025.

Members were advised that following similar operations in 2022, 2023 and 2024, IOM Left Luggage had requested permission to operate a left luggage facility from four spaces in the Bottleneck Car Park during TT 2025. It was noted that installation would commence on 28th May and the site would be cleared on 10th June 2025. It is considered that the venture provides a useful service for TT visitors

without impacting greatly on the car park. The proposed fee prevents any loss of car park revenue and allows the Council to continue to gauge the level of use.

In addition to the request from IOM Left Luggage, a proposal had been received from Event Management Solutions in association with Foraging Vinters and Meximann to run the Marketplace of Mann event on the car park from Saturday 24th May until Sunday 8th June 2025. It was noted that set up would commence on 21st May and the site would be handed back following de-rig on Thursday 12th June 2025. The event would provide a marketplace for local Manx produce with food and drink available to consume on site alongside a relatively low-key entertainment offer. A copy of Marketplace of Mann's draft Event Management Plan was appended to the officer's report.

The event organisers anticipate that the event will boost footfall in Douglas City Centre and create a focal point linking the Promenade, City Centre and Quayside. Event Management Solutions has a relevant track record of delivering events on the island and they are aware of the proposal by IOM Left Luggage and propose incorporating it into their event proposal.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) advised that the Tevir Group are aware of the proposals received by the Council and if approved, their arrangement with the Council for parking contractor's vehicles would be suspended for the period.

In response to question, the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) advised that Event Management Solutions had been approached to consider North Quay instead of the car park but they had deemed that location unsuitable.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes;

- (i) The proposal by IOM Left Luggage to be licensed to use four spaces in the Bottleneck Car Park from 28th May until 10th June 2025 be approved for a proposed flat fee, plus 5% of gross profits; and
- (ii) The joint proposal for Marketplace of Mann to be licensed in addition to IOM Left Luggage from 21st May until 11th June 2025, subject to approval of the event plan and any additional required consents and licences be approved."

A7. Planning Scheme of Delegation Revision

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Community and Enforcement Manager to further revise the Planning Scheme of Delegation following amendments that were approved by the Committee on 18th November 2024.

The Planning Scheme of Delegation (October 2024) had been presented to the Committee in November 2024 to approve wording changes included about Council responses to planning applications. This was due to the change in Interested Party Status brought about by the Town and Country Planning (Development Procedure) Order 2019 (DPO) and the guidance notes, as issued by the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) in August 2024.

Members were advised that the Planning Scheme of Delegation (October 2024), presented to the Committee in November 2024, contained an administrative error. It omitted a change approved in January 2021 during the COVID-19 lockdown concerning the withdrawal of objections. To ensure the Planning Scheme of Delegation is complete and accurately reflects the previously approved changes, the omitted section must be formally reapproved.

Appended to the officer's report was the current approved Planning Scheme of Delegation (October 2024), together with the proposed Planning Scheme of Delegation (December 2024) with the previously incorrectly omitted section included.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes;

- (i) The latest December 2024 revision of the Planning Scheme of Delegation be adopted to include the following section and wording:

Withdrawal of objections:

In Circumstances where the Council objects to a planning application following consideration by the Environmental Services Committee or the Executive Committee and the application is subsequently amended following such consideration but prior to being considered by the Planning Committee, the Director of Environment and Regeneration may withdraw the Council's objection without further consideration by the Committee if the Director is satisfied that the Council's reasons for objection have been negated by the amendment to the application. This decision to be made in consultation with the Committee Chair."

A8. Planning Application – Temporary Car Parking – St Georges Street

The Committee considered an appraisal of planning application 24/91195/C for the continued use of 22 temporary car parking spaces at 20 St Georges Street, Douglas.

It is recommended that the Council raises an objection against the application as it is considered that it does not comply with the following policy; Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016 Planning Policy 1: Development should make the best use of resources by: a) optimising the use of previously developed land, redundant buildings, unused and under-used land and buildings, and reusing scarce indigenous building materials.

It is also considered that the application does not align with the COMIN Policy from the Reform of the Planning System Program for Government 2016-2021:

“In order to continue to incentivise and support site redevelopment and the associated economic development, Planning Approval should not normally be given for brownfield sites to be used as temporary car parks.”

Members expressed disappointment that the site had previously received approval for a multi-storey car park, which was never built, noting that the planning approval had long expired. Concerns were raised about the detriment this site was having on the surrounding streets and residents in the area.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes;

- (i) That an objection be raised against planning application 24/91195/C for the continued use of 22 temporary car parking spaces at 20 St Georges Street, Douglas as it does not comply with the Isle of Man Strategic Plan 2016, planning policy 1; and
- (ii) That the planning department be advised that the Council had previously supported a planning application for a multi-storey car park.”

A9. Schedule of Dilapidated, Ruinous or Dangerous Properties

The Committee considered a schedule of properties in a state of dilapidation or disrepair. Members noted that five properties had been added to the schedule since the last meeting; two properties had been removed because work had been completed; and a total of fifty-one properties remained on the list. This equates to 0.34% of the total number of properties in Douglas.

Resolved, “That the schedule of dilapidated properties be noted and approved and that the Director of Environment and Regeneration be authorised to progress improvements to the properties, and report back to Committee if service of Notice and/or legal action is required.”

A10. Items for Future Report

The Committee noted a report submitted by the Assistant Democratic Services Officer with an appendix setting out a number of reports that would be brought forward for consideration by the Committee in due course.

Resolved, “That particulars of the matters for future consideration be noted on the minutes.”

A11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next scheduled meeting of the Environmental Services Committee was due to take place at 10.00am on Monday, 13th January, 2025.

Resolved, “That the date and time of the next meeting be noted.”

The meeting ended at 11.40am.