



Borough of Douglas

**MR COUNCILLOR JONATHAN JOUGHIN, JP
MAYOR**

Town Hall,

Douglas,

4th June, 2021

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are hereby summoned to attend a MEETING OF THE COUNCIL to be held on WEDNESDAY, the 9th day of JUNE, 2021, at 2.30 o'clock in the afternoon, in the COUNCIL CHAMBER within the TOWN HALL, DOUGLAS for the transaction of the hereinafter mentioned business.

I am,

Yours faithfully

For the 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 Pensions Committee;
- (iii) The Standards Committee;
- (iv) The Eastern District Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee;
- (v) Any other Joint Committee;
- (vi) The Housing and Property 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, 12th May, 2021.

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Friday, 28th May, 2021.

Members Present: Mr Councillor D.W. Christian (Chair), the Mayor, Mr Councillor I.J.G. Clague, Councillor Mrs C.L. Wells, Mr Councillor R.H. McNicholl.

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 S.R. Pitts.

A2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were submitted.

A3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 30th April 2021 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising From Previous Minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

A5. Referrals from the Environmental Services Committee

There were no referrals from the minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on Monday 17th May 2021.

A6. Referrals from the Regeneration and Community Committee

There were no referrals from the minutes of the Regeneration and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 18th May 2021.

A7. Referrals from the Housing and Property Committee

There were no referrals from the minutes of the Housing and Property Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19th May 2021.

A8. Chief Executive's Department Service Plans - Performance Report

The Committee considered a written report by the Chief Executive providing an update on performance, compared against measures outlined in the Chief Executive's Department's Service Plans for 2019 - 2021.

The Council had adopted a new Corporate Plan for 2017 - 2021 in January 2017 and, following on from this, each Service had its own Service Plan to run for the two financial years 2019 - 2021. Service Plans were an important part of the process to ensure that performance and standards were addressed and delivered; and Members accordingly noted the actions from the Service Plans, together with an update on performance as at May 2021.

It was noted that there had been some delays in progress in some areas, due to the ongoing implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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

(ii) That the progress against planned actions and performance indicators also be noted."

A9. Annual Financial Review – March (Year End) 2021

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance setting out monthly figures for various financial items during the 2020 / 2021 financial year.

The report was required in order to monitor progress against the Finance Department's Service Plan actions, and to meet the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2017 - 2021.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including in particular the 99.5% rates collection figure for April 2020 - March 2021, compared against the target figure of 99% for that period."

A10. Monthly Financial Review – April 2021

The Committee considered a written report by the Director of Finance setting out details of progress made against key performance indicators for finance, and related key financial monitoring information.

In July 2020, the Committee had approved a two-year extension to the local authority long-term borrowing facility with HSBC. It had been indicated at that time that the LIBOR (London InterBank Offered Rate) was due to be phased out by the Bank of England, and it was now noted that banking regulators had recommended the SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index Average) benchmark as the replacement for GBP LIBOR in the UK and Isle of Man. The SONIA was a backward-looking rate, based on actual historic transaction data, and was therefore more robust and less volatile than the LIBOR (which was forward-looking and based on estimates). Members were advised that there was not expected to be any adverse financial consequences as a result of this change.

Resolved, "(i) That particulars of the report be noted on the minutes, including in particular the 14.9% rates collection figure for the month of April 2021, compared against the target figure of 11.7% for that period;

- (ii) That approval be given for the LIBOR (London InterBank Offered Rate) to be replaced by the SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index Average) for existing and future loans through the long-term borrowing agreement with HSBC; and
- (iii) That the Director of Finance circulate a Briefing Note to all Members of Council explaining in more detail the principles of the SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index Average)."

A11. Capital Out-turn Report 2020 / 2021

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) in relation to the financial year-end out-turn position on the Capital Programme.

Members noted the values spent on all Capital schemes in 2020 / 2021, and the variances to the revised estimates. In respect of the amounts recommended to be carried forward, formal approval of this expenditure was sought where schemes had progressed more quickly than budgeted for.

Members were advised however that it looked highly unlikely that the Capital Programme would be achievable in 2021 / 2022, as there was a shortage of contractors tendering for construction business on the Island at the present time. Every approved scheme in the Capital Programme had been assigned a status (e.g., 'Essential' or 'Desirable'), and it was recommended that officers should focus on the Essential schemes that were also urgent by nature (i.e., could not be deferred). This would optimise the use of the limited resources available, as there was clear evidence to show that current contractors' work rates and tender prices had been impacted in a significantly adverse manner, putting value-for-money at risk. The Chief Officers' Management Team would review the list of schemes accordingly, and recommend those which should be pursued.

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

- (ii) That the 2020 / 2021 capital spend of £11,989,000 (public sector housing, £11,119,000 / General Rate Funded, £870,000), representing 61% of the Original Estimate, be noted;
- (iii) That the carry forward of £6,105,000 to 2021 / 2022 of all unspent balances on projects where work was ongoing or retentions were payable, be approved;
- (iv) That the early expenditure of £1,952,000 of the 2021 / 2022 Capital Programme be approved; and
- (v) That the difficulties now being experienced in sourcing contractors be noted together with the proposed prioritisation of capital schemes in the 2021 / 2022 Capital Programme - i.e., those with a Status of 'Essential' over those with a 'Desirable' Status, and the consideration of scheme urgency."

A12. **North Quay Pedestrianisation – Revisions to Pavement Café Guidelines and Policy**

The Committee considered a written report by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking approval of proposed revisions to the Council's Pavement Café Policy ahead of the summer pedestrianisation of part of North Quay.

Following the success of the trial pedestrianisation during the late summer and early autumn of 2020, the Council had subsequently agreed to a summer-long evening pedestrianisation of part of North Quay in 2021.

In 2020, the Council had agreed some minor amendments to its Pavement Café Policy to reflect the temporary nature of the trial and similar amendments were again sought, which reflected the extended, but still temporary nature, of the use of North Quay for pavement cafés that were larger in area than those permitted when the road was open to traffic.

The hospitality sector was critical to the success of the Town Centre and the support of such businesses on North Quay would help to maintain a lively and vibrant Town Centre. The proposals - which protected the interests of the visually impaired (all temporary pavement cafés areas being required to be surrounded by suitable barriers) - would be cost-neutral to the Council and not detrimental to ratepayers; and the measures proposed complied fully with Section 78 of the Highways Act 1986.

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

(ii) That the following amendments to the Council's Pavement Café Policy be agreed in relation to the summer pedestrianisation of an area of North Quay:

- That weighted barrier bases around pavement café areas be permitted; and
- That application fees for premises amending or extending an existing pavement café be waived, but that this waiver of fees be not extended to premises that did not have an existing pavement café licence; and

(iii) That the changes agreed to the Council's Pavement Café Policy in respect of this year's summer pedestrianisation of an area of North Quay be reviewed prior to any similar arrangements in future years."

[Mr Councillor R.H. McNicholl requested his vote against the resolution (ii) be noted on the minutes.]

A13. **Isle of Man Municipal Association**

The Committee had been circulated with a number of documents received from the Isle of Man Municipal Association.

Resolved, "That particulars of the documents be noted on the minutes."

A14. **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."

A15. **Vote of Thanks**

Mr Councillor R.H. McNicholl advised the Committee that it was his intention not to seek re-election to the Council in the forthcoming local authority elections in July 2021. Councillor McNicholl had served on the Council continuously since April 1993, including four terms as Mayor in 2003 to 2005 and again in 2010 to 2012; and he expressed his gratitude to all the Members and officers he had served with during that time.

Resolved, "That particulars be noted on the minutes, and that a vote of thanks be extended to Mr Councillor R.H. McNicholl for the contribution he had made to Douglas Borough Council over the past twenty-eight years."

PART C –

Matters subject to Council approval

No matters subject to Council approval were considered.

The Committee rose at 3.40pm.

VI(ii) - The proceedings of the PENSIONS COMMITTEE as follows:

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

PENSIONS COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 26th May, 2021.

Members Present: Councillor Ms K. Angela (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Mrs C.E. Crawley, Mr Councillor F. Horning (Vice Chair), Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny, Mr A. Thomas (Independent Member).

In Attendance: Director of Finance (Mr A. Boyd), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr E.P. Pierce), Democratic Services Officer (Miss C. Cullen). Mr M. Freeman – Hymans Robertson (by video-link). Mr James Penn, Mr David Long, Mr Matthew Seaward, Mr Greg Easton – Capital International (Items A8 and A9).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Committee's delegated authority

A1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence submitted.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A3. Minutes – 24th March, 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 24th March, 2021 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

A5. Corporate Bond Portfolio Recommendation

The Committee considered a report by Hymans Robertson to provide a review and recommendation on the suitability of the proposed corporate bond mandate by Capital International Group.

Members were reminded that Capital International had been invited to this meeting of the Committee to present their proposal following a benchmarking exercise of alternative corporate bond managers in the Isle of Man carried out by Hymans Robertson.

Mr Freeman advised that Hymans Robertson continue to support the Committee in maintaining an active approach to the corporate bond portfolio rather than passive in order to avoid holding bonds which are subsequently downgraded and fall out of the investment grade corporate bond index.

Mr Freeman explained that Capital had proposed two strategies for the corporate bond mandate, both of which target a similar yield to maturity and duration. Strategy 1 is a standard corporate bond portfolio, whilst strategy 2 is a portfolio with an ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) & Green Bonds overlay.

Set out within Hymans' report was an in-depth analysis of both strategies. Both strategies had the same Yield to Maturity and average duration. Strategy 2 provides greater diversification by way of a higher number of holdings. An analysis of the credit ratings of the bonds making up both strategies was provided. It showed that overall Strategy 2 has higher credit quality. Hymans Robertson recommended the lower risk option of adoption of strategy 2, which has a materially higher rating from an ESG perspective.

During discussion on the proposed investment parameters a Member queried the maximum 10% allocation to Government Bonds, noting that the Scheme already has a portfolio for Government bonds. In response Mr Freeman advised that the Committee may wish to raise this with Capital during their presentation of the proposal.

Mr Freeman moved on to the managers' proposed fees for the mandate with Members noting that total transition costs were expected to be 0.6% of assets transferred, or £44,040. Members were reminded that the new portfolio with Capital will incur lower ongoing manager fees compared with Canaccord's current fees (including third party pooled fund fees), which will result in an ongoing fee saving of £24,500 per annum.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that a vote on the recommendation be made after Capital International's presentation to Committee."

A6. Review of Investment Managers' Performance

The Committee considered a report by Hymans Robertson to review the Investment Managers' Performance for Quarter 1 of 2021.

Mr Freeman presented the executive summary for the quarter. The Scheme returned 0.8% over the quarter, with a relative return of 0.5% against its benchmark. The relative outperformance over the quarter was driven from the Capital International absolute return fund and the Canaccord corporate bond fund outperforming their respective indices.

The Scheme's assets increased by £1.3m over the quarter. This was driven by the Scheme's growth assets increasing by £3.4m as equity markets continued their recovery after the Quarter 1 2020 losses, partially offset by a decline in the value of protection assets.

The value of the Scheme's corporate bonds mandate decreased by £0.1m as credit spreads were driven by changes in nominal yields.

Mr Freeman finished with a presentation on individual manager performance and analysis.

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

A7. Adjournment and Resumption

The meeting adjourned at 1.10pm and resumed at 2.15pm, with the same Members and officers present.

A8. Manager Reporting: Capital International – Absolute Return

Mr James Penn, Mr David Long, Mr Matthew Seaward and Mr Greg Easton joined the meeting for this item and item A9.

Mr Penn began by presenting the quarter returns of 3.1%. Mr Penn explained that the return resulted from allocation and stock selection with the fund outperforming in all markets other than Emerging Markets.

Mr Penn advised that market recovery to date has been sharper than first expected, but it will probably be late 2022 before economic output returns to 2019 levels.

Members were presented with the longer term outlook predictions which continues to improve following a successful rollout of vaccines in Israel, the UK and the US.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and presentation be noted on the minutes."

A9. Capital International – Institutional ESG and Green Bond Portfolio

The Committee considered a report submitted by Capital International outlining the proposed Sterling-denominated ESG and Green Bond Portfolio.

Mr Easton began by presenting the proposal for an actively managed fixed-income portfolio focused on positive impact strategies and resource sustainability, advising that there would be a 35% allocation to certified Green Bonds and a 65% allocation to positively screened ESG rated issuers. Members noted that the portfolio would deliver a yield to maturity of 1.8% and a modified duration of 8 years.

Mr Easton explained that Green Bonds and ESG assets are a way of strengthening fiduciary responsibility and that non-ESG companies were facing increasing consumer, investor and regulatory pressure to change business models.

Mr Easton advised that the portfolio is positioned to benefit from the decarbonisation of the energy and utilities sectors with exposure to global leaders funding the development of clean technologies. Members noted that the portfolio includes companies that have been identified as leaders in the issuance of certified Green Bonds where the funding is used for designated projects aligned to UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr Easton went on to explain the proposed asset allocation and gave a summary of the portfolio's ESG rating. It was noted that 60% of issuers are AAA/AA-rated and recognised as ESG Leaders in their sectors and peer groups, 20% are recognised as ESG average and there would be 0% exposure to ESG laggards. This leaves 20% exposure to corporate bonds that are not in the MSCI ESG universe; however, all are covered in secondary ESG ratings from Sustainalytics and would be categorised as ESG Leaders.

Mr Easton finished by presenting the investment summary advising that the yield to maturity and modified duration are equal to a traditional bond portfolio but this ESG portfolio has a higher credit rating.

In response to a Member query to reduce the proposed 10% allocation to Government bonds to 0% Mr Easton advised that Capital would look to amend the investment parameters.

Mr Penn, Mr Long, Mr Seaward and Mr Easton were thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

A10. **Corporate Bond Portfolio Recommendation**

Following the presentation by Capital International Group Representatives the Committee moved to a vote on the recommendation.

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

- (i) That Capital International Group be appointed for this mandate adopting strategy 2 with the ESG and Green Bonds overlay; and
- (ii) That the 10% allocation to UK Government Bonds proposed by Capital International be removed;
- (iii) Hymans Robertson be appointed to manage the transition from Canaccord.”

A11. **Re-balancing of the Fund**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) to periodically review and consider disinvesting some funds to re-balance the fund.

Members were reminded that different asset classes perform at different levels so over time the actual percentage allocations can drift from the strategic allocation set by the Committee. Officers monitor the actual fund values against strategic allocations and use surplus contributions to top up the most underweight funds. It was noted that this approach is generally effective but over time this will not necessarily be adequate to maintain the balance close to target if markets move significantly.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) advised that global equity markets have provided higher levels of return than most other asset classes over the past year resulting in the Council’s global equity portfolio nearing the top of its allocation range. Most of the Council’s other portfolios have drifted below their target allocations. It was noted that the global equities asset class was just 0.6% under the upper limit of its control range at the end of the financial year. It is proposed that some money be disinvested from global equities so that the class reduces to its target allocation. The money disinvested can then be spread across other asset classes in proportion to the level they are underweight. Members were advised that there is also surplus contributions of £200,000 available to invest at this time.

Set out in Appendix 1 of the report were the relevant values and percentages for all portfolios before and after the recommendation. Members noted that if approved the balance of the fund would be restored in line with the strategic allocation within a range of -0.4% to +0.3%.

The Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) explained that the Committee may wish to consider a fundamental change of mandate to direct an ESG-tilted approach given the information presented recently by Hymans Robertson in relation to favourable returns from ESG-tilted funds.

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

- (i) That £2,200,000 be disinvested from Global Equities;
- (ii) That £200,000 of surplus contributions be invested along with the disinvestment above be invested as follows:
 - a) £400,000 into UK equities;
 - b) £900,000 into property;
 - c) £800,000 into fixed interest gilts; and
 - d) £300,000 into index-linked gilts.
- (iii) That Committee instruct Hymans Robertson to prepare a report to be presented to the September meeting of the Committee considering the returns experienced from funds which deliberately focus on UK and global companies scoring highly in relation to Environment, Social & Governance factors (“ESG-titled equity funds”) that would be available to this pension scheme in comparison to the current passive investments in those asset classes.”

For: 5 Against: 1

Mr Councillor F. Horning asked that his name be recorded as voting against resolution (i).

A12. **Items for Future Report**

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Democratic Services Officer setting out items that are to be considered at future meetings and to review any future training requirements.

Resolved, “That particulars of the items for future report be noted on the minutes.”

A13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee was due to take place at 10.30am on Wednesday, 23rd June, 2021.

Resolved, "That particulars of the next meeting be noted on the minutes."

PART B –

Matters requiring Executive Committee approval

There were no items requiring Executive Committee approval.

PART C –

Matters requiring Council approval

There were no items requiring Council approval.

The Committee rose at 4.05pm.

VI(iv) - 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 Monday, 10th May, 2021.

Members Present: For Douglas Borough Council – Mr Councillor R.H. McNicholl, Mrs D. Eynon (Director of Environment & Regeneration), Mr A.J. Donnelly (Assistant Chief Officer (Environment)). For Onchan District Commissioners – Mr D. Crellin (Member). For Braddan Parish Commissioners – Mr A. Jessopp (Member), Mr J.C. Whiteway (Clerk). For Garff Commissioners – Mr T. Kenyon (Member). For Santon Parish Commissioners – Mr G.B. Kennedy (Clerk).

In Attendance: Secretary – Mr P.E. Cowin, Assistant Town Clerk. Miss C. Cullen, Assistant Democratic Services Officer. Department of Infrastructure Representative – Mr J. Quayle. Operational Contractor’s Representative – Mr S.A. Crook (Items A3, A4 and A5 only).

Apologies: Mr N. Dobson (Member, Garff and Chair of Committee). Mr N. Young (Member, Santon and Vice-Chair). Mrs L. Radcliffe (Chief Executive and Clerk, Onchan).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters within the scope of the Joint Committee’s delegated authority

A1. Chair of Meeting

In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, Mr Councillor R.H. McNicholl was unanimously elected to take the Chair of the meeting.

A2. Minutes of Meeting - 18th February, 2021

The minutes had been circulated and were approved as a correct record.

A3. Operational Contractor’s Report

Mr Crook joined the meeting at 2.35pm; his report on operation of the Site had been circulated and was noted.

Mr Crook further explained the occasional closure at certain times because of capacity issues. The last opportunity to use the Energy from Waste Plant was midday on Saturday, so waste deposited from then until Monday morning would simply accumulate on the Site and there was no spare capacity. The issue had been exacerbated by failure of the plant used to compact the skips.

Members felt that it had been foreseeable that the amount of waste being brought to the Site would increase following the easing of pandemic restrictions. There was also concern over the frequency of emptying of the Government’s Bring Banks.

There was some concern expressed about the Government’s stance on closure of Civic Amenity Sites at the commencement of the lockdown, with guidance having been issued that the public should not travel unnecessarily but statements having been made that opening the Sites was for local authorities to decide. Mrs Eynon advised that she would be writing to the Government seeking clarity of guidance in relation to waste operations in any future case.

One incident had been reported of a user disobeying signage and rules on the Site, with the individual concerned having been banned from using the Site for a period of three months. He had complained about, and appealed against the ban, but it had been upheld.

The report noted that the Southern Site was now charging users for disposal of sofa beds, and the Northern Site was charging for rubble and plasterboard. It was agreed that the quantities of those items be monitored over the coming months to assess any increase in use that may be due to the imposition of those charges.

It was agreed: That the report be noted and that the amounts of plasterboard, rubble and sofa beds being brought to the Site be closely monitored by the Contractor.

A4. **Operational Statistics**

Mr Crook had circulated statistics concerning the various waste types passing through the Site, and the number of vehicles visiting, during the year to the end of March 2021. Members noted that month by month comparisons were difficult due to the effects of Covid restrictions and closures of the Site, together with the increased quantities immediately after reopening.

It was agreed: That the statistics be noted.

A5. **Operational Hours**

Mr Crook had circulated a report in relation to the introduction of Summer opening hours of 8am to 7pm. Monitoring of traffic using the Site had shown a marked drop in use during that last hour, and it was suggested that instead of opening until 7.00pm (with last entry 6.45pm) the Site should close an hour earlier at 6.00pm (with last entry 5.45pm).

He stated that the time saved in that way could then be used to have more staff on Site at peak times when better use could be made of the resource.

A proposal was made to adopt the change and Messrs Councillor McNicholl, Kenyon and Jessopp voted in favour, while Mr Crellin voted against.

It was agreed: By the majority of the weight of votes cast, that the proposal to close the Site one hour earlier during Summer opening hours, be approved.

It was further agreed: Unanimously, that the change take effect from 1st June, 2021, with it being publicised in advance as widely as possible.

A6. **Annual Meeting**

Following a query by the Chair of the Committee, and the postponement of the elections of local authority Members, the Secretary confirmed that legislation recently introduced provided for the terms of office to be extended until 1st August. He further advised that the Annual Meeting of the Committee, to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair, would take place as soon as practicable after the annual meetings of the respective Local Authorities which would appoint representatives to the Committee.

The meeting ended at 4.10pm.

VI(vi) – The proceedings of the HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE as follows:

HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

HOUSING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 19th May, 2021.

Members Present: Councillor Mrs C.L. Wells (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Mrs C.E. Crawley, Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner, Councillor Mrs E.C. Quirk, Councillor Ms J. Thommeny.

In Attendance: Director of Housing and Property (Mr D. Looney), Housing Manager (Mr V. Zivave), Accountancy Manager (Mr M. Quayle), Assistant Town Clerk (Mr P. Cowin), Democratic Services Officer (Miss C. Cullen).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

A2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

A3. Minutes – 21st April, 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 21st April, 2021, were approved and signed.

A4. Matters arising

No issues were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A5. Vacant Properties 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 the void properties schedule, which showed that as at the end of April 2021 there were twenty-one vacant properties receiving attention. Members were presented with a summary chart showing the number of properties returned in each month, together with details of the category repair type for each property.

The Housing Manager advised that as of 19th May 2021, there were twenty-four vacant properties, five of which are ready for allocation.

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

A6. Housing Rent Arrears

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Housing Manager to monitor the progress made on rental income collection.

It was noted that since the outbreak of coronavirus in March 2020, Council officers had carried out a significant amount of work conducting welfare checks and calls to all tenants who were in rent arrears due to the effects of the pandemic. For any tenants who do not have payment plans, officers were engaging with and linking them to charities and Government organisations that offer debt counselling.

Members were advised that due to the frequency of rent payments there is a constant fluctuation of tenants in arrears of under £500 and as such, Housing officers were targeting tenants in the over £500 category noted at 3.5% of all tenants.

Appended to the officer's report was a table setting out the rent arrears statistics for March 2021 and April 2021, Members noted that as at the 31st April, the level of rent arrears was £140,672.99, an improvement from the previous month.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that the progress made on rental income collection be noted."

A7. Cleaning of Communal Areas

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Housing Manager (Maintenance) to appoint the contractor for the cleaning of communal areas within the Council's flat blocks.

Members were advised that at present, P&M Window Cleaners Ltd are contracted to undertake the cleaning under a three year contract which is due for renewal.

It was noted that following the procurement process two tenders had been received and it is recommended to accept the lowest tender submitted by P&M Window Cleaners Ltd. Appended to the officer's report and reviewed by the Committee was the proposed cleaning schedule. Members noted that the cleaning schedule covers 40 blocks and as such consider that the tender represents good value for money.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that the tender submitted by P&M Window Cleaners Ltd, for a three year term be accepted, which will be funded from the Housing Maintenance Budget."

A8. Lawn Cemetery Chapel Decoration and Remedial Works

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Property Manager (Assets) to appoint a contractor to undertake specified decoration and remedial works at the Lawn Cemetery.

Members were advised that to ensure the Lawn Cemetery facilities are kept in good condition it is proposed that the Chapel and Depot facilities are fully decorated internally and externally, along with the structures that are throughout the Cemetery as part of the planned maintenance programme. It was noted that where identified, remedial works will also be undertaken to ensure that the facilities are in repair as part of the scheme, these will include repairs to the timber floor, the doors and cleaning the high level inaccessible elements of the building. Members commended the approach and noted the commitment to a continued investment in the Maintenance of Council assets, acknowledging that this investment will reduce future renovation costs.

Expenditure for the internal works project to the Chapel building had been estimated at £15,000 and is funded from the 2021/22 property maintenance budget. In response to question, the Accountancy Manager agreed to send a briefing note to the Committee to advise on the use of the Graves Maintenance fund.

Members were advised that following the procurement process, one tender was received from FC Moore Limited. Members were advised that a tender analysis was undertaken and officers consider that the tender had been priced fairly and reflected competitively against the previously priced schemes for the Chapel. It is therefore proposed that the tender from FC Moore Limited be accepted as it considered to represent good value for money.

It was noted that the programme of works is still to be determined with the contractor with a view to commencing the works in late spring.

In response to question, the Chair reaffirmed that Council officers are currently reviewing the tender process with a view to making the process more streamlined.

Resolved, "That particulars of the report and discussion be noted on the minutes and that the tender submitted by FC Moore Limited, for decoration and remedial works be accepted."

A9. Minor Capital Works Update

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Housing Manager seeking approval for the continuation of the minor works capital funding process for 2021/22

Members were reminded that in January 2019, approval had been given to borrowing on an annual basis commencing in 2019/20 for a sum of up to £150,000 to be drawn down as necessary when maintenance work was required that was capital in nature.

The report advised that subject to approval, the 2021/22 budget was anticipated to be spent on, resurfacing works at Ballanard Court; intercom and door automation systems in Lheannag Park, Ballanard Court and Hanover House; fencing works at Alder Grove and Refurbishment Works to vacant properties.

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

- i) That the Chief Executive be authorised to petition the Department of Infrastructure for borrowing powers in the sum of £150,000, being the loan amount required to defray the cost of the minor works capital expenditure for 2021/22; and
- ii) That the Department of Infrastructure be advised that the Council confirms that there are insufficient monies available in its Housing Reserve to fund the proposed scheme via that source."

A10. 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.

The Chair requested that a report to consider the Council's future plans for an alternative central heating source to gas boilers within social housing properties be added to the schedule.

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

A11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next scheduled meeting was due to take place at 10.00am on Wednesday, 16th June, 2021.

Resolved, "That particulars of the next meeting be noted on the minutes."

PART B –

Matters requiring Executive Committee approval

There were no items requiring Executive Committee approval.

PART C –

Matters requiring Council approval

There were no items requiring Council approval.

The meeting ended at 11.08am.

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 Tuesday, 18th May, 2021.

Members Present: Mr Councillor S.R. Pitts (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Mrs H. Callow, Councillor Mrs R. Chatel, Mr Councillor D. Watson, Councillor Ms K. Angela.

In Attendance: Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Assistant Town Clerk (Mr P.E. Cowin), Assistant Chief Officer (Finance) (Mr E.P. Pierce), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Borough Librarian (Mrs J. Macartney) (Items A1 to A7), Democratic Services Officer (Miss C. Cullen).

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 – 20th April, 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20th April, 2021 were approved and signed.

A4. Minutes – 30th April, 2021

The minutes of the special meeting held on Friday, 30th April, 2021 were approved and signed.

A5. Matters Arising

No issues were raised as arising from the previous minutes.

A6. Summerhill Glen Revised and Extended Illumination Period

Members considered a proposal submitted by the Head of Parks to extend the illumination period in Summerhill Glen.

Set out within the report were details of the current lighting period, the proposal to extend the illumination period for 2021/22, together with the proposed lighting period from 1st April, 2022.

It was noted that for 2021/22 it is proposed to commence the illuminations on 1st September, as opposed to 1st August and that the lighting period will run until 31st March, as opposed to 6th January. Members were advised that the proposal for this year is cost neutral but that should the extended period be implemented from 1st April 2022 an additional estimated budget of £5,781 per annum would be required to cover additional labour and maintenance costs.

In response to question the Director of Environment and Regeneration advised that officers were currently looking at installing counters within the Glen to monitor footfall with a view to these being in situ before August 2021.

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

- (i) That an extended and revised illumination period for the 2021/22 financial year, which is cost neutral be implemented as a trial; and
- (ii) That a revenue growth bid to implement an extended and revised illumination period from 1st April 2022, subject to revenue growth item approval, be approved, subject to the results of the trial.”

A7. Douglas Carnival 2021

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) seeking agreement to not hold the Douglas Carnival in 2021.

Members were reminded that due to the Promenade Refurbishment works the event was not held in 2020 and as it is still unclear when these works are likely to be completed, it is proposed that the event not be held in 2021.

Members noted that the progress of the Promenade works will be monitored to ascertain the viability of holding the event in 2022.

Resolved, “The particulars of the report be noted on the minutes and that the Douglas Carnival in 2021 not be held due to the ongoing impracticalities arising from the Promenade Improvement Scheme.”

A8. Quarter Four Henry Bloom Noble Library Service Plan Performance Monitoring 2020/21

The Committee considered a report submitted by the Borough Librarian to update on the performance made against measures as outlined in the library service plan.

Appended to the report were the actions from the Library service plan together with an update as at the end of quarter four 2020/21, together with Library usage numbers. A red, amber, green status had been applied to each measure.

It was noted that Library Membership had increased by 104% in 2020/21 despite the Library only being available online for part of the year.

The Borough Librarian agreed to circulate an update on the outcome of the trial installation of the post office kiosk including usage figures.

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

- (i) The progress against planned actions in the Service Plan be noted; and
- (ii) The increase to the Library’s digital usage number by 155% in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 in part due to the three lockdowns, be noted.”

The Borough Librarian was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting.

A9. Quarter Four Service Plan Performance Monitoring 2020/21

Members considered a report submitted by the Director of Environment and Regeneration to update on the performance made against measures as outlined in the Environment and Regeneration Department Service Plans as relevant to the Regeneration and Community Committee.

Appended to the report were the measures as outlined for the Parks Service, and Douglas Town Centre Management. A red, amber, green status had been applied to each measure.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration reminded that due to the delay of Local Government elections, the Corporate Plan had been extended to cover the additional municipal year, and the service plans have been extended accordingly. The Covid-19 crisis adversely impacted many of the measures and actions contained within the plans. This has resulted in target deadlines not being met, in some cases, new deadlines have been set which were reflected in the appendices.

It was noted that the measures in Parks behind schedule are due to Covid and actions by others, all other measures have been met. The Director of Environment and Regeneration advised that the staff absence figure had improved significantly in quarter four with overall sickness and long term sickness reducing by more than half of that recorded in 2019/20.

Douglas Town Centre Management completed several actions in 2019/20, a number of actions have been re-scheduled and all other measures are on target. Members noted that footfall had dropped in quarter four due to the two lockdowns.

Resolved, “That particulars of the report and the progress against performance indicators in the Environment and Regeneration Department Service Plans for Quarter Four 2020/21 as relevant to the Regeneration and Community Committee be noted.”

A10. 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 be noted on the minutes.”

A11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting was due to take place on Tuesday, 15th June, 2021.

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

PART B –

Matters requiring Executive Committee approval

There were no items requiring Executive Committee approval.

PART C –

Matters requiring Council approval

There were no matters requiring Council approval.

The meeting ended at 10.56am.

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

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 17th May, 2021.

Members Present: Mr Councillor R.H. McNicholl (Chair), the Mayor, Councillor Miss N.A. Byron, Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley, Mr Councillor S.J. Hamer, Mr Councillor F. Horning.

In Attendance: Director of Environment and Regeneration (Mrs D. Eynon), Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) (Mr C. Pycroft), Accountancy Manager (Mr M. Quayle) (Items A1 to A7), Dilapidation Enforcement Officer (Mr S. Salter) (Items A8 to A13), Electrical Services Manager (Mr D. Cullen) (Item A5), Assistant Town Clerk (Mr P.E. Cowin), Democratic Services Officer (Miss C. Cullen).

REPORT

PART A –

Matters delegated to the Committee

A1. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

A2. Declarations of Interest

The Director of Environment and Regeneration declared an interest in item A10, **planning application 20/01538/B** (telecommunications mast at Woodbourne Lane);

Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley declared an interest in item A12, **planning application 20/01525/B** (9, Windsor Road);

Mr Councillor S. Hamer declared an interest in item A12, **planning application 20/01525/B** (9, Windsor Road).

A3. Minutes – 19th April, 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 19th April, 2021 were approved and signed.

A4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

At Clause A6, Expressions of Interest, Bottleneck Car Park, T.T. Week – the Chair emphasised that the exercise was not an invitation to tender but for expressions of interest for alternative uses.

Clause A8, Planning Application for 16 Belmont Terrace – the Director of Environment and Regeneration advised that following adjustment of the plans by the applicant to deal with the Committee's objection, the objection had been withdrawn.

A5. Willaston Park Footpaths Lighting

The Electrical Services Manager joined the meeting for consideration of this item. He had prepared a report following repeated requests from a member of the public for lighting of the pathways around the Park in Willaston to better facilitate use as a safe through way for pedestrians and for dog walking.

He advised that for most of the year, the pathways benefitted from backspill of light from the roadways parallel to the paths.

He further advised that since the Covid-19 restrictions, there was a high demand for contractors and that prices had increased significantly. Both labour and materials costs were affected.

The report contained the recommendation not to proceed with the work at the present time but to monitor the usage of the park and to review the decision in fifteen months' time.

There was speculation by Members that the area, or part of it, could potentially be affected by Housing development which would have an impact.

Resolved, "That the report be noted, that the scheme be added to the programme of planned works for the future, and that it be reviewed, with costs and report on the level of usage of the Park area, in fifteen months' time."

4 for; 1 against.

The Chair asked that his vote against be recorded.

A6. **Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring Report**

The Committee noted the 2020/21 Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring Report with Appendices in respect of:

- (a) Building Control;
- (b) Car Parks;
- (c) Electrical Services;
- (d) Fleet Services;
- (e) Community and Enforcement Service; and
- (f) Waste Services.

The report made particular reference to the following points:

- Given the delay to the Local Government elections, the Corporate Plan has been extended to cover the additional municipal year, and Service Plans have been extended accordingly;
- The Covid-19 crisis has adversely impacted upon many of the measures and actions contained within the service plans. This has resulted in target deadlines not being met; in some cases, new deadlines have been set and these are reflected in the appendices. Some project work has been suspended indefinitely to protect the Council's revenue position;
- All measures within Building Control were either exceeded or met;
- Actions in the Car Parks Service Plan are either completed or behind original target due to Covid or awaiting actions by others;
- Electrical Services project work is delayed due to successive lockdowns as are some annual programmes, which are slightly behind. Other performance indicators were met;
- Given the nature of the work within Fleet Services, nearly all indicators were met except for those impacted by lockdowns, staff turnover and border restrictions;
- Several of the measures within the Community and Enforcement team could not be met due to three lockdowns and the unavailability of staff in other areas and organisations to progress matters. All key performance indicators were met or exceeded and sickness remained lower than the industry benchmark;
- Sickness within Cleansing is higher than the industry benchmark due to two cases of long term sickness, the income from public toilets continues to be down due to successive lockdowns and the impact of promenade works. Successive lockdowns have also impacted nearly all areas of the service, delaying planned campaigns or actions.

Members noted that all services had been affected, to a greater or lesser degree, by the Covid-19 restrictions. Explanations were provided for all cases where targets had not been met.

Resolved, "That the report and appendices be noted."

A7. **Adjournment and Resumption of Meeting**

The meeting adjourned at 11.00am and resumed at 11.05am at which time the Dilapidations Enforcement Officer attended.

A8. **Planning Application 21/00032/B – Riley's Garden Centre - Refusal Notice**

The Dilapidations Enforcement Officer reported that the Planning Committee had refused the application for planning permission to extend the range of goods sold at Riley's Garden Centre, Cooil Road, Braddan, to which the Environmental Services Committee had objected.

An appeal had been submitted by the applicant and the Committee was asked to consider whether to make representation in writing sustaining the objection.

There was discussion of the potential effect on Town Centre retail outlets if the proposal were to proceed. The Assistant Chief Officer (Regeneration) advised that the initial objection had been lodged on valid grounds of failure to comply with planning and strategic policy which were still valid.

Resolved, "That written representation be submitted to the Planning Appeals Inspector confirming the Committee's objection to the application."

4 for; 1 against.

The Chair recorded his vote against.

Further resolved, "That the Council be not represented at the hearing of the appeal."

4 for; 1 against.

A9. Planning Application 21/00168/C – Temporary Car Park, 37-41 Circular Road – Approval Notice

The Dilapidations Enforcement Officer advised that the application for five years' extension of use of the property for temporary car parking, to which the Committee had objected, had been approved by the Planning Committee but for a period of two years only.

Members expressed dissatisfaction with the decision of the Planning Committee but accepted the recommendation of the report that on pragmatic grounds, as there was a clear and emphatic time limit to the approved use no appeal be submitted.

Resolved unanimously, "That the report be noted on the minutes and that no appeal be lodged against the decision."

A10. Planning Application 20/01538/B – Woodbourne Lane Telecommunications Mast

The Director of Environment and Regeneration declared an interest in this item and withdrew while it was considered.

The Committee considered an appraisal of an amended application for planning permission for installation of a 15 metre telecommunications mast, together with associated cabinets, landscaping and fencing, at a vacant plot in Woodbourne Lane, to the rear of 7-11 Woodbourne Villas.

The Committee had previously considered the original application on 15th February and resolved to object on the grounds that it did not comply with certain elements of the Strategic Plan, principally by affecting the amenity of the area for residents. While the amended plan had addressed certain aspects of those sufficiently for officers to recommend that no objection be made, the Committee was mindful that the site was in a Conservation Area and therefore any development should enhance, and not detract from, the appearance of the area.

Members felt that some form of infrastructure sharing scheme would provide the applicant with the outcome the mast was intended to achieve, which was to improve the telecommunications network, without the visual intrusion of the mast. Although the applicant had provided some information on the reasons why alternative solutions were unsatisfactory, Members felt that further, meaningful consideration of alternatives needed to be demonstrated.

Resolved, "That the planning application and appraisal be noted and that objection be made to the application on the grounds of:

- Non-compliance with IOM Strategic Plan 2016 general Policy 2: (b) (c) (g) and (k) in that the application did not respect the site and the surrounding buildings, and would adversely affect the amenity of the local residents particularly those in close proximity with an outlook onto the proposed site; and
- Non-compliance with Environment Policy 35, in that the site being within a Conservation Area, the proposed development that does not enhance the area and should not be permitted."

A11. Planning Application 21/00261/B – 4, Brunswick Road – Conversion to Dwelling

The Committee considered a planning application and officers' appraisal in respect of the proposed conversion to dwelling, with alteration of existing shopfront to windows, at 4, Brunswick Road (former Post Office).

Members of the Committee welcomed the proposed use of the property as residential, but were concerned about the provision of parking on the site and its proximity to a road junction. Members agreed that the boundary line between the pavement and the building should be marked with a wall or similar rather than leaving it open for parking.

Resolved unanimously, "That objection be made to the application on the grounds that provision of parking within the curtilage is not acceptable in such close proximity to a road junction."

A12. Planning Application 20/01525/B – 9, Windsor Road – Conversion to HMO

Mr Councillor A.J. Bentley and Mr Councillor S.J. Hamer declared an interest in this item and withdrew while it was considered.

The Committee considered planning application and appraisal in respect of the proposed conversion of the former guesthouse 9, Windsor Road into a House in Multiple Occupation.

The appraisal confirmed that bin storage and bicycle storage were adequate.

There was discussion over the number of vehicles that may require parking in connection with the development. However the Dilapidations Enforcement Officer advised that the Department of Infrastructure (Highways) had raised no concerns over parking. Members recognised that although there was pressure on public parking in the area, Chester Street Car Park was close by.

Resolved, “That the planning application and approval be noted on the minutes and that no objection be raised to the proposed development.”

A13. **Schedule of Dilapidated, Ruinous or Dangerous Properties**

The Committee considered a schedule of properties in a state of dilapidation or disrepair, setting out five properties added since the last meeting; seven properties removed because work had been completed; and a total of fifty-two properties remaining on the list.

Members were reminded that the addition of any property to the list would first involve contact with the property owner to resolve the concern over its condition and to offer them reasonable opportunity to carry out the work willingly. Should that not happen, then Notice would be served that the work must be carried out, and failure then to comply with the Notice would involve the possibility of legal action being taken.

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, by service of Notice and legal action where necessary.”

The Dilapidations Enforcement Officer was thanked for his attendance and left the meeting at 12.55pm.

A14. **War Memorials – Protection**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Parks on a proposal by the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture to enter onto the Protected Buildings Register:

- Douglas War Memorial, Harris Promenade;
- Borough Cemetery War Memorial;
- Great War Memorial, Douglas Head; and
- Inkerman Memorial, The Nunnery, Douglas.

It was noted that, with the exception of the Inkerman Memorial, the monuments were all maintained by the Council.

The Great War Memorial was on private land but the Council undertook occasional maintenance of it.

Addition to the Register of Protected Buildings would mean that carrying out significant works to any of the monuments would require approval. However, Members recognised that they were worthy of protection and supported the proposals.

Resolved unanimously, “That the addition to the Protected Buildings Register of the four specific memorials be supported.”

A15. **Items for Future Report**

The Committee noted a report by the 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.

PART B –

Matters requiring Executive Committee approval

There were no items requiring Executive Committee approval.

PART C –

Matters requiring Council approval

There were no items requiring Council approval.

The meeting ended at 1.05pm.

IX – Motions, of which Notice has been given by Members of the Council pursuant to Standing Order 26:

MOTIONS

1. Councillor Miss N.A. Byron to move:

“That the Council, through the Regeneration and Community Committee, develop and implement an annual community award scheme to recognise residents of the Borough who, individually or as a group, have made significant voluntary contributions of time, effort and work to their own local community, the wider community of Douglas residents, or to charity. All residents of the Borough to be eligible to make nominations or to be nominated, and voting to be conducted online.”

On being moved and seconded, under Standing Order 30 the Motion will stand referred to the Regeneration and Community Committee for consideration and report to the Council by 8th September, 2021.