

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, 79 Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 11th August 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Present: Mr A Allen (Chairman)
 Mr O Lockwood (Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes)
 Mr A Gibson (Lead Member for Environmental & Technical Services)
 Miss G Corkish
 Mr D Quirk
 Mr R Turton

Apologies: Mr S Wilson (Vice Chairman and Lead Member for Housing)
 Mrs S Johnson (Chief Finance Officer)

In attendance: Mr R Phillips (Chief Executive/Clerk)
 Mr R Forgie (District Surveyor)
 Miss A Crellin (Executive Officer/Assistant)

C25/08/01/01

TO CHOOSE A PERSON TO PRESIDE IF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR BE ABSENT

Not Applicable.

C25/08/01/02

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS OF MEMBERS AND OFFICERS (in accordance with Standing Order 18.3)

The Chairman asked Members and Officers if they wished to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda items due to be considered this evening.

The Chairman reminded Members and Officers that declarations of interests can be recorded now or when the agenda item is due to be considered during the meeting.

No declarations were recorded.

C25/08/01/03

BUSINESS REQUIRED TO BE DEALT WITH BY STATUTE BEFORE ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

C25/08/01/04

MINUTES

1. Notes of the Joint Political Meeting held on Monday 21st July 2025

The Notes of the Joint Political Meeting held on Monday 21st July 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated were considered.

The Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes highlighted that he had not received all of the notes in his agenda pack.

Due to not all the pages of the notes being circulated to some Members, it was agreed that the matter be deferred to the next Ordinary Meeting to be held on Tuesday 26th August 2025.

2. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 28th July 2025

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 28th July 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated were considered.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Lockwood and seconded by Miss Corkish, and **RESOLVED that the minutes be agreed as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.**

For: *Mr Allen, Mr Lockwood, Miss Corkish, Mr Turton, and Mr Gibson*
Against: *Mr Quirk*

C25/08/01/05

TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ARISING FROM SUCH MINUTES

1. Page 6 – To Answer any Questions submitted asked under Standing Order 25

A Member raised his continued dissatisfaction regarding the response which he received from the Chairman and the Vice Chairman in relation to the questions which he had submitted under Standing Order 25, and that the questions were not included in the agenda for consideration.

The Chairman confirmed that the Chief Executive/Clerk had responded to the Member's questions as instructed by the Chairman and the Vice Chairman. The Chairman noted that, as the questions related to the Authority's procedure for dealing with complaints, the relevant information regarding the Authority's complaints procedure was provided rather than wasting time during a Board Meeting.

The Member highlighted that the question to the Vice Chairman was in relation to a letter which the Authority had sent to a social housing tenant regarding the upkeep of their garden. The Member stated that in his opinion the tone of the letter was offensive, and that he had met with the tenants in question as they were distressed about receiving the letter.

The Chairman advised the Member of the following:

- That tenants have access to the Authority's complaints procedure, and that it is also published on the Authority's website, so it is publicly available to all;
- That the Member should have authorisation from the tenant to act on their behalf regarding their tenancy; and
- Under the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations, Officers should not liaise with the Member regarding tenancy matters without obtaining permission from the tenants first.

The Member confirmed that he does not have authorisation, but he can obtain retrospective permission.

The Chief Executive/Clerk advised the Board of the following:

- This is a tenancy matter; therefore, the tenant should be advised to contact the Housing Department to provide assistance. Furthermore, the Housing Department's contact details are contained in the garden improvement letters for tenants to make contact;
- Officers on behalf of the Authority did try to contact the tenants via telephone^[ODC 26/08/2025] prior to issuing the notice, but failed to make contact; and
- The wording of the garden improvement notices has since been changed to hopefully avoid any future issues.

The Chairman advised that if any Members receive inquiries, they should be signposting queries to the correct Officer within the Authority to deal with the matter and should not get involved in operational matters.

A Member queried if a resident within the District approaches a Member regarding an issue, do they have to ask the resident to provide the Member with authorisation so that they can act on their behalf.

The Chief Executive/Clerk advised if Members are contacted by a tenant in relation to a tenancy issue, then they need to ask the tenant to provide them with authorisation, which confirms they are authorised to act on their behalf in relation to a specific tenancy issue.

The Chairman clarified that if any Member is contacted by a resident regarding a non-social housing-related issue, they do not require authorisation to act on their behalf, but should first signpost the resident to the Authority's Officers.

The Chairman concluded the discussion and advised the Board that no further consideration of the matter would be heard during the meeting.

C25/08/01/06

TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ADJOURNED FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

None.

C25/08/01/07

TO DEAL WITH ANY BUSINESS EXPRESSLY REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DONE

None.

C25/08/01/08

PLANNING DECISIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING COMMITTEE

None.

C25/08/01/09

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

None.

C25/08/01/10

CONSIDERATION OF ANY REPORTS FROM THE CLERK OR OTHER OFFICER

1. Destination First Board – Presentation, Questions and Resident Sentiment Survey Results

The report of the Chief Executive/Clerk dated 8th August 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The Chief Executive/Clerk provided the Board with the following overview:

- On Monday 28th July 2025, the Board of Onchan District Commissioners received a presentation from representatives on behalf of Destination First Board regarding its formation, its aims and how it can assist local authorities;
- Following the presentation, the Destination First Board issued questions for the Members to consider and answer, as well as providing the results of the Destination First Board's recent resident sentiment survey;
- It was highlighted that the majority of issues raised within the survey relate to highway and pavement defects; and
- Does the Board wish to provide a collective response or respond individually.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Some Members expressed that they wish to submit their own individual responses, rather than a collective response from the Board;
- Some Members expressed that they wish for a collective response to be issued on behalf of the Board; and

- The Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes provided an overview of his proposals regarding improved access from the Village Green to Main Road via a parcel of land in the ownership of the methodist church, and consideration of an all-Island “report a problem” system.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Chief Executive/Clerk will circulate the Destination First Board contact details to whom the individual responses can be submitted.

2. Belgravia Road and Royal Drive Parking Issues – Update

The report of the Chief Executive/Clerk dated 8th August 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The Chief Executive/Clerk provided the Board with the following overview:

- Previously, the Board has supported the implementation of parking restrictions on the publicly adopted highway on Belgravia Road and Royal Drive with the aim of reducing:
 - The likelihood of the area being used as long-term parking for vehicles not owned by residents; and
 - Congestion by allowing more parking for patrons attending Onchan Pleasure Park, especially when public events are taking place.
- A public consultation was undertaken in 2024 to obtain the views of members of the public, following which it was resolved that the Authority request that the Department of Infrastructure (“the DOI”) implement parking restrictions of a maximum stay of 18 hours in any 24 hour period, except for those with permits;
- Unfortunately, when liaising with the DOI, it has been noted that the proposal is not supported, and the matter is now at an impasse. The reasoning for not supporting the proposal is:
 - Parking permits are onerous for the DOI to manage due to the administration and the cost of signage and enforcement;
 - The limitation of resources available to undertake enforcement, and no provision for undertaking enforcement outside the normal working hours;
 - The potential for a number of consequential issues for residents, such as eligibility for a permit;
 - Permit schemes are only introduced in areas where commuters park during a working day; and
 - It is likely to displace problematic vehicles onto adjacent roads.

The Chief Executive/Clerk provided the Board with options to consider progressing the matter.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- The Lead Member for Finance stated that if the previous requests were not administered in line with the DOI criteria now in use, then it is advised that this option be progressed, and spending ratepayers’ money on creating additional parking spaces or enforcement on behalf of the DOI is difficult to justify;
- Support was expressed by the Members for any proposals which would help improve the car parking situation around Belgravia Road and Royal Drive;
- Some Members expressed their disappointment at the DOI and the Minister for not wishing to progress the Board’s recommended parking restrictions;
- Examples were given of some of the vehicles that use the area as a long-stay parking area, especially for motorhomes and larger commercial vehicles that are not regularly used;
- It was recommended that the Members of the House of Keys for Onchan and Garff should be approached to support the Board’s proposals; and
- Highlighted that the Board has been discussing this matter for the last two years, and requested that something be done as soon as possible.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Officers of the Authority create a submission to the DOI based on the implementation of parking restrictions of a maximum stay of 18 hours in

any 24 hour period, except for those with permits. The submission is to be created using the DOI's guidance for Minor Traffic Management Schemes and Assessment Matrix.

3. Onchan Pleasure Park – Redevelopment Proposals

To be considered In Committee.

C25/08/01/11

CONSIDERATION OF ANY RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE

1. Public Consultation – Tynwald Commissioner for Administration ^[ODC 26/08/2025] **(Amendment) Bill**

A copy of the correspondence received Head of Legislation Services dated 7th August 2025, in respect of the public consultation regarding the Tynwald Commissioner for Administration ^[ODC 26/08/2025] (Amendment) Bill, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Chief Executive/Clerk would draft a response to be brought back to the Ordinary Meeting to be held on Monday 8th September 2025, for consideration by the Board prior to submission.

2. Strategic Plan Review Preliminary Publicity 2025

A copy of the correspondence received from the Cabinet Office dated 7th August 2025, attaching a copy of the Isle of Man Strategic Plan, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

It was noted that responses to the public consultation are to be submitted by 5:00 pm on the 27th October 2025.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Chief Executive/Clerk would draft a response to be brought back to the Ordinary Meeting to be held on Monday 6th October 2025, for consideration by the Board prior to submission.

C25/08/01/12

TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 25

None.

C25/08/01/13

TO CONSIDER ANY MOTIONS

None.

C25/08/01/14

ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

1. Weed Spraying and Management – Update

The District Surveyor provided the Board with the following update:

- Three members of the Authority's appropriately trained staff have taken up the offer of overtime to undertake additional weed spraying throughout the District;
- The overtime started on Thursday 7th August and will be based around the spraying areas identified as a priority;
- The District Surveyor and Environmental and Technical Services Manager will then arrange for staff to manage the weeds manually, by way of ripping, and the use of hoes to manually extract the dead weeds; and
- Noted that 89 out of 161 roads have been weed-sprayed to date, which equates to 55.28% of the roads due to be weed-sprayed.

The Board Members noted their approval that some of the Authority's staff have agreed to undertake the work on overtime, and that it is hoped that an improvement around the District is noticed in the coming weeks.

C25/08/01/15

HOUSING MATTERS

1. Lead Member for Housing – Quarter 1 Report

The report of the Lead Member for Housing dated 11th August 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was noted.

It is noted that the report is for the period 1st May 2025 to the 31st July 2025.

In the absence of the Lead Member for Housing, it was agreed that the report be deferred to the next Ordinary Meeting due to be held on Tuesday 26th August 2025.

2. Social Housing Development Sites within Onchan – Update

The report of the Chief Executive/Clerk dated the 8th August 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The Chief Executive/Clerk provided the Board with the following overview:

- Previously, the Board has supported the creation and implementation of a formal social housing strategy for the provision of new social housing developments within Onchan, and that a draft social housing strategy be brought before the Board for consideration and approval;
- When the Board had previously considered this matter and social housing provision generally, it was requested that the Chief Executive/Clerk continue to approach the Isle of Man Government regarding vacant sites in the Government's ownership within the District that could be purchased to provide social housing development opportunities;
- Following ongoing correspondence throughout 2024 and 2025, updates are now available in relation to the three sites identified within the District:
 - The vacant sites adjacent to Triumph and the Former Gas Works Site on School Road and Second Avenue - it has been confirmed by the Treasury that the sites are currently not for sale, and they will be kept as Isle of Man Government Reserves.
 - Meadow View Complex on Second Avenue – the Authority continues to liaise with the Department of Health and Social Care regarding the purchase of the properties which are currently in the ownership of the Ballacurn Trust ("the Trust");
 - The Authority's interest in the Meadow View properties has been registered with the Department of Health and Social Care for consideration. Assurances have been given that the Authority will receive a formal response when a decision has been made in relation to the future of the properties;
 - The Meadow View properties are all vacant except for one. Based on a basic survey by the Authority's Officers, it is proposed that minimal expenditure will be required to re-let the properties for the Authority's social housing purposes and that the property sizes will be suitable for many of those on the Authority's current one-bed social housing waiting list.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Some Members supported continuing to approach the Isle of Man Government regarding the purchase of the sites adjacent to Triumph and the Former Gas Works;
- Highlighted that the lack of social housing provision is a big issue in Onchan;

- Requested that when the social housing strategy is drafted that Officers consider the Authority's existing housing estates to see if additional properties can be accommodated;
- Concerns were raised regarding the legalities of dissolving the Trust as a body, and splitting up the properties in its ownership;
- Highlighted that the Trust owns non-domestic use buildings within the Meadow View complex. It was queried if these properties are also to be sold, and if so, could these be utilised by the Authority for other purposes.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive/Clerk is to continue to engage with the Isle of Man Government regarding all of the sites and that the matter would be brought back to the Board for further consideration when updates are available.

C25/08/01/16

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Dates for the Diary

Date	Organisation	Event	Time
11 th August 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm
15 th August 2025	Royal British Legion – Onchan Branch	80 th Anniversary of VJ Day – Onchan War Memorial	10:45 am
23 rd August 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Party in the Park	12 noon to 6:00 pm
26 th August 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm

C25/08/01/17

ANY URGENT OTHER BUSINESS

None.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8:07 pm.

C25/08/01/18

CONSIDERATION OF ANY REPORTS FROM THE CLERK OR OTHER OFFICER

1. Onchan Pleasure Park – Redevelopment Proposals

The following was considered In Committee and transferred to the public domain.

The Chief Executive/Clerk provided an overview to the Board regarding the private meeting held on Monday 4th August 2025, involving the Board and representatives on behalf of a private developer who has approached the Authority to consider allowing the construction of an indoor padel tennis facility at Onchan Pleasure Park.

The Chief Executive/Clerk confirmed that the discussion had identified the following:

- The developer wishes to enter into an agreement to lease land from the Authority to facilitate the construction of an indoor padel tennis facility with associated parking within the grounds of the Park;
- The proposed area for leasing and developing the facility is located on part of the miniature golf course adjacent to Hague Crescent and St. Anthony's Church;
- The facility will require planning approval;

- The developer proposes to self-fund the entirety of the development, including the planning and construction stages;
- The developer proposes to self-fund the operation and maintenance of the facility once operational; and
- The developer proposes to pay an annual rent to the Authority, including a consumer price index^[ODC 26/08/2025] increase per annum.

A discussion in relation to the private meeting took place. It was highlighted that queries had been raised by the Board that required information to be obtained. The Chief Executive/Clerk provided the following responses to the queries raised by the Board:

- The Authority's legal advisers had confirmed that there are no restrictive covenants that would affect the proposal;
- Advice obtained from the Department of Infrastructure's Local Government Team, and the Authority's legal adviser confirmed that obtaining approval under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1985 for a lease period in excess of seven years may be difficult;
- It was advised that a business case and a draft lease would have to be submitted to the Department for consideration;
- Public consultation would be required as part of a Section 25 process, allowing for members of the public to comment;
- The developer has confirmed that a café will not be constructed, but is proposed that vending machines and a reception counter would be provided to allow users of the facility to purchase soft drinks and snacks;
- The developer has confirmed that the proposal is for the facility to be open to anyone to use, not just those with a membership. It is proposed that bookings for the use of the courts will be administered via an online platform;
- The developer has confirmed that the proposed hours of operation are twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, subject to any restrictions imposed by Planning;
- The developer proposes that the external appearance and design of the facility can be changed to try to be as sympathetic as possible to the existing landscape and to address any concerns raised by the Planning Department and members of the public; and
- Confirmed that the developer is aware that they will be liable to pay the Authority's rates, Treasury rates, and commercial refuse charges.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Concerns were raised regarding obtaining planning permission for such a structure in a prominent area of the Park, and the impact on the coastal landscape of Onchan;
- Concerns were raised regarding those who may oppose such a development, including Bay View Road and Hague residents, and St. Anthony's Church;
- Concerns were raised regarding entering into a lease agreement for a long lease period;
- Highlighted that the Isle of Man Government has entered into long lease period agreements with tenants on various sites located throughout the Island. Examples were given of such lease agreements;
- Suggested that including a clause in a lease to allow a "rolling" lease or renewal may be more preferable for the Authority and the Isle of Man Government, and may still also provide commitment to the developer to support their substantial financial investment;
- Noted that support is given to the developer's proposal to construct designated parking spaces for the facility, as this would not impact the adopted highways on Hague Crescent and Bay View Road, nor impact the limited parking provided by the Authority within the Park;
- Noted that some ratepayers may be opposed to limiting the use of the public open space for such a development or for a long period of time;
- Noted that members of the public will have the opportunity to consult upon the proposal if the matter is progressed via Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1985;
- Noted that the proposal would be at no financial burden to the Authority or ratepayers;

- Considered that the proposal could provide an opportunity to increase footfall to the District, which could in turn benefit local businesses.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Gibson and seconded by Miss Corkish and **RESOLVED** that the Authority will submit a petition and draft lease to the Isle of Man Government under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1985 to obtain permission to lease the land identified at Onchan Pleasure Park for a period longer than seven years for the construction of an indoor padel tennis facility, and the associated vehicle parking spaces.

For: *Miss Corkish, Mr Gibson, Mr Lockwood, Mr Quirk, and Mr Turton*
Against: *Mr Allen*

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8:53 pm.