

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, 79 Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7:00 pm.

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

*Apologies:* 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)

**C25/06/03/01**

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

Not Applicable.

**C25/06/03/02**

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

**1. PA 25/00579/CON - Onchan Parish Church Parochial Church Council - St Peter's Church**

Mr Lockwood and Mr Wilson declared a non-pecuniary interest in the above mentioned planning application.

**2. PA 24/00196/C - Mr Collin Purvis - Field 534019, Onchan AFC & DHS&OB AFC Clubhouses - Blackberry Lane**

Mr Quirk declared a non-pecuniary interest in the above mentioned planning application.

**3. Department of Infrastructure 20 MPH Consultation – Board Response**

Mr Wilson and Miss Corkish both declared a non-pecuniary interest in the above mentioned agenda item.

The Chairman requested that those Members who had declared non-pecuniary interests do not take part in the debate or vote when these agenda items are considered.

**C25/06/03/03**

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

None.

**C25/06/03/04**  
**MINUTES**

**1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated were considered.

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

*Miss Corkish did not cast a vote as she was not present at the meeting.*

**2. Notes of the Meeting with the Minister and Officers from the Department of Infrastructure**

The Notes of the Meeting with the Minister and Officers from the Department of Infrastructure held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated were considered.

Following a discussion it was proposed by Mr Quirk and seconded by Mr Lockwood and unanimously **RESOLVED that the Notes of the Meeting be agreed as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.**

*Miss Corkish did not cast a vote as she was not present at the meeting.*

**C25/06/03/05**  
**TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ARISING FROM SUCH MINUTES**

None.

**C25/06/03/06**  
**TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ADJOURNED FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING**

**1. Department of Infrastructure 20 MPH Consultation – Board Response**

The report of the Chief Executive/Clerk dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

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

- The Isle of Man Department of Infrastructure (“the DOI”) is currently undertaking a public consultation regarding the implementation of new speed limits within the District;
- The Minister, on behalf of the DOI requested to meet with the Board of Onchan District Commissioners to discuss the proposals and the consultation process. Noted that this meeting took place on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025;
- Highlighted that the Board of Onchan District Commissioners has yet to submit a response to the consultation;
- Proposed recommendations for the Board to consider are to submit a collective response, or if agreement cannot be obtained, that the Board Members submit individual responses; and
- The consultation is due to close on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Noted that many of the residential areas within the District are already “home zones” with existing 20 MPH speed limits in place;

- Some Members supported the idea to trial changes to speed limits on the busier roads to see if there are any noticeable benefits; and
- Comments were made in relation to the high level of public comment regarding the consultation and the Department's approach to communication with the public.

A Member highlighted that the Minister and Chief Officer for the DOI had attended the most recent Isle of Man Municipal Association Meeting and that this matter was discussed by those in attendance.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Lockwood and seconded by Mr Quirk and **RESOLVED** that the Chairman will sign the proposed collective response contained within the Chief Executive/Clerk's report dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 on behalf of the Board. Furthermore, the response will be submitted to the Department of Infrastructure in response to the Department's proposed Speed Limits Order 2025 consultation.

*Due to their employment within the Isle of Man Government, Miss Corkish and Mr Wilson declared a non-pecuniary interest and did not cast a vote.*

C25/06/03/07

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

None.

C25/06/03/08

**PLANNING DECISIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- (i) PA 25/00579/CON Onchan Parish Church Parochial Church Council - St Peter's Church

Members were advised that the planning application is for registered building consent for the removal of cement strap pointing on the East Wall of Onchan Parish Church and replacing with lime mortar – RB 119

In answer to questions, the District Surveyor advised:

- No comments as of the date of the meeting have been received from neighbouring properties; and
- The return date for comments for the planning application is the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Quirk and seconded by Mr Turton and **RESOLVED** that planning application 25/00579/CON – St Peter's Church be recommended for approval.

*Mr Lockwood and Mr Wilson both declared an interest and did not take part in the discussion or cast a vote.*

(ii) **PA 25/90464/B** **Ms S Dawson – The Spinney, Ballanard Road, Abbeylands**

Members were advised that the planning application is for the removal of the existing porch on the north-east elevation, replacement of roof tiles, re-rendering of external walls, and replacement of doors and windows.

In answer to questions, the District Surveyor advised:

- No comments as of the date of the meeting have been received from neighbouring properties; and
- The return date for comments for the planning application is the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Quirk and seconded by Mr Lockwood and unanimously **RESOLVED that planning application 25/90464/B – The Spinney, Ballanard Road, Abbeylands be recommended for approval.**

(iii) **PA 25/90591/B** **Mr W F A McLean – 18 Bemahague Avenue**

Members were advised that the planning application is for the replacement of the front garden with a driveway.

In answer to questions, the District Surveyor advised:

- No comments as of the date of the meeting had been received from neighbouring properties; and
- The return date for comments for the planning application is the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Quirk and seconded by Mr Lockwood and unanimously **RESOLVED that planning application 25/90591/B – 18 Bemahague Avenue be recommended for approval.**

(v) **PA 25/90598/B** **Mr M Playford – 84 Birch Hill Crescent**

Members were advised that the planning application for the replacement of the existing rear conservatory with a sunroom.

In answer to questions, the District Surveyor advised:

- No comments as of the date of the meeting have been received from neighbouring properties
- The return date for comments for the planning application is the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Quirk and seconded by Mr Turton and unanimously **RESOLVED that planning application 25/90598/B – 84 Birch Hill Crescent be recommended for approval.**

(vi) PA 25/90601/B

**Mr M Poole – 67 King Edward Road**

Members were advised that the planning application is for the erection of a decking/terrace area with glazed balustrades, alterations to windows, erection of steps and installation of a wall-mounted handrail.

In answer to questions, the District Surveyor<sup>[ODC 14/07/2025]</sup> advised:

- No comments as at the date of the meeting had been received from neighbouring properties; and
- The return date for comments for the planning application is the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Quirk and seconded by Mr Lockwood and unanimously **RESOLVED that planning application 25/90601/B – 67 King Edward Road be recommended for approval.**

(vii) PA 25/90611/B

**Mrs Dawn Collins - 34 King Edward Park**

Members were advised that the planning application is for a dropped kerb, amendment to gate posts and removal of part of the grassed bank to create vehicular access (amendment to PA 25/90295/B)

In answer to questions, the District Surveyor advised:

- No comments as of the date of the meeting had been received from neighbouring properties; and
- The return date for comments for the planning application is the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Quirk and seconded by Mr Wilson and unanimously **RESOLVED that planning application 25/90611/B – 34 King Edward Park be recommended for approval.**

(viii) PA 24/00196/C

**Mr Collin Purvis - Field 534019, Onchan AFC & DHS&OB AFC Clubhouses - Blackberry Lane**

Members were advised that the planning application is for the temporary use of a field as a campsite for TT and the Isle of Man Festival of Motorcycling.

In answer to questions, the District Surveyor advised:

- Comments have been received from neighbouring properties; and
- The return date for comments for the planning application is the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Following a discussion it was agreed that planning application 24/00196/C – Field 534019, Onchan AFC & DHS&OB AFC Clubhouses, Blackberry Lane be deferred to the Ordinary Meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 to allow for further comments to be received.

***Mr Quirk declared a non-pecuniary interest and did not take part in the discussion.***

C25/06/03/09FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

None.

C25/06/03/10CONSIDERATION OF ANY REPORTS FROM THE CLERK OR OTHER OFFICER**1. Media Contact Policy – Update**

The report of the Chief Executive/Clerk dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

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

- The Authority's Media Contact Policy is overdue for review;
- The Chairman has requested that this matter be progressed for consideration by the Board to provide all Members and Officers with an opportunity to obtain a greater understanding of their relationship with local media outlets, social media, and the governance of the Authority.

The Chairman stated that this is a policy which he feels in previous years some Board Members have been guilty of not complying with, and that the purpose of the updated policy is to make it very clear to what Members and Officers are permitted to do regarding making comments to the media.

The Chairman further stated that:

- Anyone who does not comply with the Authority's Media Policy will not be supported by the Authority, and any comments which are made by Members that could be classed as slander or defamation of character, or place the person in a position of vulnerability, will have to defend themselves at their own costs;
- In relation to Members, action will be taken against any Member who does not comply with the Authority's Media Contact Policy; and
- All information is confidential until transferred into the public domain upon ratification of the minutes. Breaches can be investigated there is legislation regarding disclosure of information and fines are enforceable. or that of the Local Government Act 1985 in relation to disclosures of information.

The Chairman asked the Chief Executive/Clerk to provide an overview of the Authority's Standing Order 3 relating to disclosures of information. The Chief Executive/Clerk stated Standing Order 3:

*"All matters dealt with or brought before the Authority when sitting in private shall be treated as strictly private and confidential and, unless otherwise determined by the Authority, shall not be disclosed to any person outside the Authority."*

*Any Member of the Board or former Member of the Authority who, without the consent of the Authority, divulges any information communicated to him or her in confidence whilst a member shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000 (Local Government Act 1985)."*

A Member stated that he would not be supporting the amendments to the Authority's Media Contact Policy. He noted that:

- Section 4.5. states that Members must consult with the Chairman prior to making comments to the media. It is considered that this will prevent Members from making comments freely, and appears dictatorial and controlling of the Members; and

- All Members of the Board should have freedom of speech.

Another Member supported the Member's comments and highlighted that:

- Within the current version of the Authority's Media Contact Policy, it states that Members are encouraged to consult with the Chairman rather than must. It is considered that this is more favourable and less controlling; and
- Members should be encouraged to engage with the media to promote the Authority.

The Chairman noted that he receives frequent complaints from residents and ratepayers stating that there have been breaches of the Authority's policies and Standing Orders in relation to public comments made by some Members.

A Member asked the Chief Executive/Clerk if any complaints had been received by the Authority in relation to the matter.

The Chief Executive/Clerk confirmed that the only recent complaint made to him in relation to the matter was received from the Chairman, and that after reviewing the complaint, it was his recommendation to the Chairman to consider bringing the Authority's Media Contact Policy before the Board for consideration.

The Chairman stated the following:

- The purpose of updating the Authority's Media Contact Policy is to make it clear to Members what they can and can't do;
- If any Member is unclear, then they should speak to him or the Chief Executive/Clerk to obtain guidance; and
- He wishes for disclosures of information to stop occurring from this point forward.

The Vice Chairman concluded:

- The intention of the policy is to promote a more professional representation of the Board and the Authority;
- That the Members of the Board should be working together to promote a strong collective stance on behalf of the Authority; and
- As an Isle of Man Government employee, he and Miss Corkish are both governed by similar policies, so the proposed policy updates are not unfamiliar or out of the ordinary with accepted practice within Government.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Wilson and seconded by Miss Corkish and **RESOLVED that the updated Media Contact Policy be approved and that Members and Officers are to adhere to the updated policy with immediate effect.**

**For:** *Mr Wilson, Miss Corkish, Mr Lockwood and Mr Allen*

**Against:** *Mr Quirk and Mr Turton*

## 2. Notice of By-Election

The Chief Executive/Clerk advised the Board that the Notice of By-Election had been advertised in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Elections (Local Authorities) Regulations 2022.

It was noted that the Notice had also been advertised around the District on placards, and on the Authority's social media pages and website.

A Member requested that the Notice of By-Election be posted to the Onchan Residents Facebook group page. The Chief Executive/Clerk agreed to share the Notice to the group page as requested.

The Chief Executive/Clerk highlighted that the closing date for candidate nomination papers to be received by the Deputy Returning Officer is 1:00 pm on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025. It was

suggested that some Members may wish to publicise the By-Election to increase interest and awareness for residents.

### **3. Party in the Park – Update**

The Chief Executive/Clerk advised the Board that due to the weather conditions on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2025, he had made the decision to cancel the Authority's Party in the Park event. It was advised that the event has now been re-scheduled to be held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2025.

The Chief Executive/Clerk advised that he will provide the Board with a further update nearer to the date of the re-arranged event, and that advertising of the event will commence during July 2025.

**C25/06/03/11**

## **CONSIDERATION OF ANY RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE**

### **1. Department of Infrastructure – Declaration of Interests/Conflicts of Interest**

A copy of the correspondence received from the Local Government Unit within the Department of Infrastructure dated 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was noted.

The Chairman advised the Board of the following:

- That the Authority's new Standing Orders require Members and Officers to declare any declarations of interests, whether these be pecuniary or non-pecuniary; and
- Reiterated the advice provided by the Local Government Unit, which is that if a Member or Officer is in doubt about a matter, declare an interest to protect both yourself and the Authority from any perceived bias or influence.

Two Members highlighted that they had to obtain permission from the Chief Officer within the Isle of Man Government before they were allowed to stand as a Board Member, and as Government employees, they are restricted on what they can and cannot comment upon.

### **2. Douglas City Council – Local Government (Amendment) Bill 2023**

A copy of the correspondence received from Douglas City Council dated 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025 regarding the Local Government (Amendment) Bill 2023, copies of which having previously been circulated was noted.

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

- All local authorities had been asked to attend a meeting to discuss and prepare for the Legislative Council evidence stage hearing;
- Noted that many of the local authorities attended the meeting, but not all;
- Highlighted that a legal advisor was in attendance at the meeting for use by all of those in attendance;
- Many of the local authorities agreed that the time limit to prepare evidence and the limitation of speakers were unfair;
- Following the meeting, it was agreed that the legal advisor would provide wording for Douglas City Council to write to the Legislative Council on behalf of the local authorities to request that the matter be deferred, and to allow more speakers to give evidence;
- Confirmed that the evidence stage will now be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025;
- All the local authorities intend to meet again prior to the hearing to discuss the matter further; and
- Legal advice provided during the meeting suggests that a democratically elected Member of the Board should represent the local authority, not an officer.



The Chairman advised the Board that, due to Mr Wilson and Miss Corkish being Government employees, he recommended that they do not represent the Authority at the hearing.

Following a discussion it was agreed that the Chairman would attend the Legislative Council evidence stage hearing on behalf of the Authority and that he would be accompanied by the Chief Executive/Clerk.

The Chairman encouraged the Members of the Board to liaise with him and the Chief Executive/Clerk to provide their views prior to the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025 hearing.

#### **C25/06/03/12**

#### **TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 25**

None.

#### **C25/06/03/13**

#### **TO CONSIDER ANY MOTIONS**

None.

#### **C25/06/03/14**

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES**

##### **1. Annual Health & Safety Report – 2024/25**

The Memorandum of the District Surveyor dated the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The District Surveyor advised the Board of the following:

- The purpose of the Health and Safety report is to ensure that the Board is briefed on the health, safety and wellbeing of the organisation and understands how the Authority's responsibilities as an employer and to members of the public are met;
- The Authority's Health and Safety Committee, which consists of representatives from management and the Authority's external Health and Safety Adviser, meets on a quarterly basis and provides an overview and a route for escalation of issues;
- The Memorandum provides a summary of data regarding accidents and near miss information data for the Authority's fiscal year 2024/25;
- There are no further records of any previous annual reports to compare the data with;
- Included is a report of training and inspection regimes during the period; and
- Noted that the Authority's previous Health and Safety report recommended that the Authority begin work to achieve ISO 45001 accreditation, which is the world's international standard for occupational health and safety that aims to protect employees and visitors from work-related accidents and diseases<sup>[ODC 14/07/2025]</sup>. The Authority has begun work to start reaching this accreditation, with Officers beginning to review their management areas. A full internal Health and Safety audit is due to commence this financial year by the Authority's external Health and Safety Adviser. It is expected that the Authority may be in a position to apply for ISO 45001 within 2026 or 2027.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Noted by some Members that it is positive that there has been an increase in near miss reporting during the period and that this supports the principle that more staff are now reporting issues rather than not reporting them;
- Concerns were raised by a Member regarding the accidents and near misses recorded in relation to vehicles within the Refuse Department; and

- A query was raised by a Member regarding risk assessments to be used by those operating on behalf of the Probation Services, as reported at the last meeting of the Board.

The District Surveyor provided answers in relation to the Board Members' queries, including details regarding near miss and accident reporting procedures, and risk assessments used by the Probation Services.

The Chairman thanked the District Surveyor for the report and noted that the matter will be considered again in 12 months.

**C25/06/03/15**  
**HOUSING MATTERS**

None.

**C25/06/03/16**  
**CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**1. Dates for the Diary**

Date	Organisation	Event	Time
28 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Onchan Silver Band	Saturday Night at the Movies – St Peter's Church	7:00 pm
30 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	(P) Health & Safety Presentation	6:00 pm
30 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm
9 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Last day for nominations papers to be received for the By-Election	To be received by 1:00 pm
12 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Commissioners Surgery – The Hub	10:00 am to 12 noon
14 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm

The Chairman highlighted the recent achievement of Onchan native Callum Gawne on winning the Parish Walk. The Board expressed their congratulations to Callum on his achievement.

The Chairman confirmed that he would be attending the Tynwald Day ceremony at St. Johns on behalf of the Authority.

Members were asked for their availability to attend the Commissioners Surgery due to be held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2025. It was agreed that as only one Member was available to attend that the surgery would be re-arranged.

**C25/06/03/17**  
**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**1. Isle of Man Municipal Association Meeting**

The Authority's Isle of Man Municipal Association representative advised that he had attended the most recent meeting, where the Minister for the DOI was in attendance. The following overview of the meeting was provided as follows:

- It was noted that the 20 mph speed limit order consultation was discussed. The Member stated that it is his personal opinion that it appears as though the Speed Limit Order 2025 is going to be implemented regardless of consultation responses. It was noted that the Isle of Man Municipal Association is due to meet again on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025, and the matter will be discussed again.
- A discussion had taken place in relation to the DOI's proposal to introduce a social housing agency, rather than a housing association. Concerns were raised by some local authorities that there had been no consultation with any local authorities regarding a housing agency; and
- Noted that the Minister has agreed to consider the points raised by the Isle of Man Municipal Association in relation to both matters. It was highlighted that a letter will be drafted by the Isle of Man Municipal Association expressing their views in relation to these matters, which should be brought before the Board for consideration.

The Chairman thanked the Member for the update provided, but expressed his concern regarding a collaborative response without the Authority first considering the matter. It was suggested that the Authority should provide its own individual representation if a response is required in relation to a social housing agency.

## **2. Department of Infrastructure – 20 mph speed limit public consultation**

The Vice Chairman advised Members that he had emailed the Chief Executive/Clerk to express his thanks to him and his officers for the approach taken when dealing with some of the negative publicity recently experienced in relation to the matter, and for providing a well-balanced draft response for the Board to consider submitting to the consultation.

## **3. Letter of Complaint**

The Chairman advised the Board that he had received a letter of complaint from a resident regarding the unfairness of not charging the Isle of Man Municipal Association for hire charges to host its meetings at the Hub.

A Member requested that the complainant be named and that a copy of the complaint be provided to him. The Chairman declined to provide the name of the complainant but did agree that a copy of the complaint could be provided to the Member.

The complainant was in attendance in the public gallery of the meeting and publicly identified himself as the complainant to the Board. With the permission of the Chairman the complainant provided an overview of the reasoning for the complaint.

The Chairman concluded that the matter could be considered as follows:

- That a Member can bring forward a motion to overrule the current resolution on the Board to provide free room hire for a period of one year; or
- That the matter be considered later in the year when the one-year period of free hire is due to cease.

No further comments in relation to the matter were provided.

***There being no further business the meeting ended at 8:34 pm.***