

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, 79 Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 6th October 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Present:

Mr A Allen	(Chairman)
Mr S Wilson	(Vice Chairman and Lead Member for Housing)
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	

In attendance:

Mr R Phillips	(Chief Executive/Clerk)
Mrs S Johnson	(Chief Finance Officer)
Mr R Forgie	(District Surveyor)
Miss A Crellin	(Executive Officer/Assistant)

C25/10/01/01

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

Not Applicable.

C25/10/01/02

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.

C25/10/01/03

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

None.

C25/10/01/04

MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated, were considered.

Amendment:

Page 8 - Dates for the Diary – Fire Island and Chilli Festival
Amend the 13th October 2025 to 13th September 2025.

Subject to the above amendment, it was proposed by Mr Lockwood and seconded by Mr Wilson and unanimously **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. Staff Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025

To be considered In Committee.

C25/10/01/05**TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ARISING FROM SUCH MINUTES****1. Internal Audit Risk Areas for the year ending 31st March 2026**

To be considered In Committee.

2. Public Accountability Meetings

It was confirmed that the Chief Executive/Clerk would provide an update as part of the next agenda item.

C25/10/01/06**TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ADJOURNED FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING****1. Moor Vannin Windfarm public consultation**

Mr Quirk requested that it be minuted that during the Authority's previous consideration of this matter and the earlier consultation that he declared that he is in favour of the proposals put forward by Orsted and supportive of the windfarm.

It was agreed that Mr Quirk's name and comments be minuted in relation to the matter.

2. Public Accountability Meetings

The Chief Executive/Clerk confirmed that following the request of the Board that he had attended Ramsey Town Commissioners' public accountability meeting recently publicised. The Chief Executive provided the following overview of the meeting:

- The meeting was held on Wednesday 24th September 2025, between 7:00 pm and 8:15 pm.
- Noted that these meetings are to be held twice per annum, and that a provision for the meetings has been included in a recent update to Ramsey Town Commissioners' Standing Orders.
- The meeting was set up online via the Eventbrite ticket application. There was no criterion to comply with when booking a ticket, except for providing the attendee's name, contact details and address.
- If you applied for a ticket, attendees were asked if they wished to ask a question in person, or via e-mail in advance of the meeting, or if the attendee just wished to observe the meeting.
- Noted that questions submitted in advance of the meeting were not given to the Members of the Board until the meeting started, so there were no prepared responses.
- Sixteen people, including the Chief Executive/Clerk, attended the meeting. Those in attendance were mostly residents of Ramsey, but some were residents from outside of the Town.
- Eight Board Members were in attendance at the meeting to answer questions.
- The Clerk of Ramsey Town Commissioners introduced the meeting and highlighted that there would be no Officer involvement during the meeting.
- The Vice Chair of Ramsey Town Commissioners provided an overview of the Authority's previous twelve months' achievements and what the 2025/26 rates increase related to.
- The Vice Chair also provided an overview of social housing developments and future issues for Ramsey Town Commissioners to consider.
- The Vice Chair read out the pre-submitted questions, which were then answered by the Members of the Board.
- The Vice Chair then offered those in attendance the opportunity to ask questions, which were answered by the Members of the Board.
- Noted that predominantly only two Members of the Board answered the questions. Not all Members were asked to answer each question or give their views.

- This was the first meeting of its kind, so future meetings may obtain greater engagement from members of the public; and
- Regarding accountability to members of the public, it was noted that the Vice Chair's introduction and overview were insightful. The questions asked and the answers given did not provide much insight.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Highlighted that members of the public can contact Board Members directly by telephone or e-mail at any time, and that the Members' details are available on the Authority's website.
- Highlighted that members of the public can also ask questions of Members in person at political surgeries hosted at the HUB, and during Ordinary Board Meetings at the discretion of the Chairman.
- Suggested that Board Members receiving questions in advance of such a meeting would be more beneficial, as this would enable Members to provide more considered and accurate responses; and
- Noted that asking members of the public to register their attendance in advance of a meeting would put some people off from attending.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive/Clerk for attending the meeting and for providing his findings to the Board. The Chairman advised that if any Member of the Board wishes to progress this matter in relation to the Authority hosting such meetings, then any Member can bring forward a motion.

C25/10/01/07

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

None.

C25/10/01/08

PLANNING DECISIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Planning Application 25/90869/B – Centenary Park, Hillberry Road

The District Surveyor advised the Board of the following:

- That the application has been made by the Authority in relation to the site known as Centenary Park, adjacent to Birch Hill and Cronk-Ny-Mona.
- For many years, the Authority has used a section of Centenary Park as an area for the deposit of biodegradable grass cuttings, cut plant and tree material produced from the upkeep and general maintenance of the Authority's open spaces.
- The Authority currently has a waste exemption licence for the area, but following discussion with the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture ("DEFA"), the Authority has been asked to enhance the arrangement by applying for a "Waste Transfer Licence" for the site.
- Confirmation from the Planning Department that the area is designated for this use was required, and an application was submitted last year for a Certificate of Lawful Use. The application was subsequently declined on the grounds of insufficient proof or evidence of the historic use of the site; therefore, a full planning application is now being submitted, which will allow the Authority to fulfil the request of DEFA and obtain a "Waste Transfer Licence" if approval is granted; and
- It should be noted that the green waste recycling site, if approved, is solely for the use of the Authority for disposing of grass cuttings, hedge cuttings, tree material and dead plants and will not be accessed by the general public.

The Chairman thanked the District Surveyor for the update. The planning application was noted.

C25/10/01/09FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

None.

C25/10/01/10CONSIDERATION OF ANY REPORTS FROM THE CLERK OR OTHER OFFICER**1. Rating and Valuation (Amendment) Bill – Public Consultation**

The Report of the Chief Executive/Clerk dated 6th October 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

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

- The Treasury is consulting to seek views in relation to amendments to the Rating and Valuation Act 1953 (“the Act”).
- The four proposals outlined within the consultation are:-
 - 1) Allowing the removal of rates exemptions for dangerous and ruinous buildings to discourage long-term empty/problem properties by amending section 75A.
 - 2) Removing the requirements that rebate schemes be funded by the Treasury in all cases to facilitate greater local flexibility by amending section 63A.
 - 3) Introducing a discount and potentially a cap on the rateable value of quarries by amending Schedule 4 and inserting a new section 13A to the Act; and
 - 4) Clarify whether or not to charge rates on property owned by charitable organisations by amending section 74.
- The closing date for responses is the 17th October 2025.
- Proposed responses on behalf of the Authority are outlined in the Supporting Rationale of the Chief Executive/Clerk’s report.

It was noted that the Lead member for Finance and General Purposes and the Lead Member for Environmental and Technical Services had both provided feedback on the draft consultation responses.

Following a discussion, it was agreed to consider the four proposals separately.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Lockwood and seconded by Mr Quirk and **RESOLVED** that the draft response to Proposal 1 contained within the Chief Executive/Clerk’s report dated 6th October 2025, be submitted in relation to the Rating and Valuation (Amendment) Bill Public Consultation.

Mr Wilson and Miss Corkish, as employees of the Isle of Man Government, both declared a non-pecuniary interest and did not cast a vote.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Lockwood and seconded by Mr Quirk and **RESOLVED** that the draft response to Proposal 2 contained within the Chief Executive/Clerk’s report dated 6th October 2025, be submitted in relation to the Rating and Valuation (Amendment) Bill Public Consultation.

Mr Wilson and Miss Corkish, as employees of the Isle of Man Government, both declared a non-pecuniary interest and did not cast a vote.

It was noted that Proposal 3 to introduce a discount and potentially a cap on the rateable value of quarries is not applicable to the Authority; therefore, it was agreed not to provide a consultation response.

A discussion took place in relation to Proposal 4:

- Noted that some Board Members are associated with, and are members of, charities.

- Concerns were raised regarding the strains already placed upon charities in relation to administration and operating costs.
- Highlighted that imposing further burden on charities via some of the proposals outlined will most likely negatively impact charities.
- Concerns were raised regarding the appropriateness of local authorities having a duty to investigate charities, and highlighted that there are already regulations in existence to ensure that charities do not hold investments inconsistent with their objectives.

The Chief Executive/Clerk advised the Board Members in relation to declarations of interest.

Mr Wilson and Miss Corkish, as employees of the Isle of Man Government, both declared a non-pecuniary interest and did not cast a vote.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that, due to the differing opinions of the Board Members and concerns regarding declarations of interest, no response would be submitted in relation to Proposal 4.

2. Regulations, Orders and Byelaws Enforcement Policy – Introduction of New Policy

The report of the Chief Executive/Clerk dated 6th October 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

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

- Local authorities were contacted by the Environmental Health Unit within the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (“DEFA”) in 2025 to request that the authorities provide their enforcement policies.
- The Unit’s request intended to allow it’s officers to obtain a greater understanding of each authority’s policy when undertaking an investigation on behalf of an authority following receipt of complaints from members of the public.
- It was identified that the Authority does not currently have an enforcement policy in relation to the Authority’s statutory and non-statutory responsibilities under the provisions of any relevant regulations, orders, or byelaws.
- Based on the template provided by DEFA, a draft enforcement policy for use by the Authority is provided within his report for the Board to consider; and
- Additional amendments have been made to the original draft that was considered at the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025. The amendments are based on information provided by the Vice Chairman/Lead Member for Housing and the Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Lockwood and seconded by Mr Wilson and unanimously **RESOLVED to approve and implement the Regulations, Orders, and Byelaws Enforcement Policy with immediate effect.**

3. Mobile Telephone Policy

A copy of the Authority’s updated Mobile Telephone Policy, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

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

- The policy is an update of the existing 2021 policy.
- The policy has been amended so that it is more appropriate to how the Authority currently operates; and
- As this is an update to an existing policy, a resolution is not required, but feedback is welcome for inclusion within the document.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Authority’s “Mobile Telephone Policy” would be renamed “Mobile Devices Policy”.

The Vice Chairman asked that he be given more time to review the policy and provide his comments to the Chief Executive/Clerk for consideration. The Chief Executive/Clerk agreed to liaise with the Vice Chairman prior to implementing the updated policy.

C25/09/01/11

CONSIDERATION OF ANY RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE

1. Eighth Manx Bard – Poetry Concert Invitation

A copy of the correspondence received from Michael Manning to attend a Poetry Concert on Saturday 8th November 2025, at 7:30 pm, at Broadway Baptist Church, copies of which having previously been circulated was noted.

C25/10/01/12

TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 25

None.

C25/10/01/13

TO CONSIDER ANY MOTIONS

1. Motion 74 – Submitted under Standing Order 19

The Chairman advised the Board that his motion had been tabled and seconded at the previous meeting, and that the Members of the Board can now debate the matter before consideration of a resolution being proposed.

The Chairman advised that the Motion states:

“that the Authority will include Manx wording on all road and street name signage that the Authority has a responsibility to provide within the District when replacing such signage upon it requiring replacement due to damage or deterioration”.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Noted that many of the Members of the Board are in favour of the proposal.
- Noted that many of the Members of the Board support the promotion of the Manx language.
- Highlighted that many local authorities have already committed to including Manx wording on their street signage; and
- A Member raised concerns regarding the size of road signs if they are to encompass additional wording.

Motion 74 was proposed by Mr Allen, seconded by Mr Wilson and **RESOLVED that the Authority will include Manx wording on all road and street name signage that the Authority has a responsibility to provide within the District when replacing such signage upon it requiring replacement due to damage or deterioration.**

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

Against: **Mr Quirk**

A Member requested that officers be instructed to investigate the cost of providing new road signage with the Manx wording included on the main roads around the District in time for next summer, rather than waiting for them to be replaced due to damage or deterioration.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the District Surveyor will obtain costings for replacing the road signage on Main Road, Governors Road, Whitebridge Road, and Summerhill Road. Furthermore, if additional budget is required to undertake the works that the matter should be brought back before the Board for consideration.

2. **Motion 75 – Submitted under Standing Order 19**

Mr Wilson tabled motion 75

“that in conjunction with Onchan District Commissioners’ Social Housing Strategy , the Authority resolves to:

1. *Explore the acquisition of larger residential properties within the District with the specific intention of converting them into House of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) to help meet the diverse housing needs of residents. This can be achieved through direct contact with estate agents, and an advertising campaign encouraging those considering the sale of their properties to contact the Onchan District Commissioners.*
2. *Undertake an advertising campaign encouraging local landowners to contact the Authority should they wish to sell land that could be used for the development of affordable social housing.*
3. *Investigate the feasibility of compulsory purchase of land and properties where necessary to progress the delivery of social housing. Such compulsory acquisition would be undertaken under the powers granted by local authorities in the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 (of Tynwald) which enables compulsory purchase for housing and other public purposes, subject to Tynwald approval and safeguards for affected landowners”.*

Motion 75 was proposed by Mr Wilson and seconded by Mr Gibson and **RESOLVED to stand adjourned without discussion until the next Ordinary Meeting of the Authority to be held on Monday 20th October 2025.**

C25/10/01/14

ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

1. **Isle of Man Strategic Plan Review – Consultation**

The report of the District Surveyor dated 6th October 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The District Surveyor advised the Board of the following:

- The Isle of Man Strategic Plan provides the overarching planning policy framework for the sustainable development of the Island.
 - It guides land use to ensure development is well located, well designed and respectful of our environment.
 - It’s policies carry significant weight in day to day planning and in shaping detailed “area plans”.
 - The report provides the Board Members with a draft response on behalf of the Authority for the public consultation, which closes on the 27th October 2025; and
2. Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Gibson and seconded by Miss Corkish and unanimously **RESOLVED that the draft responses contained within the District Surveyor’s report dated 6th October 2025, be submitted in relation to the Isle of Man Strategic Plan Review public consultation.**

3. **Enforcement Section 51 of the Highways Act 1988**

The report of the Environmental and Technical Services Manager dated 6th October 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The District Surveyor advised the Board of the following:

- The report presented will require the Board to decide on the course of action required to pursue a property owner in the District, whereby the vegetation from it protrudes into the highway and following repeated letters, the homeowner is not engaging with the Authority.
- The property referred to in the report was first raised as an issue to the Authority on the 27th August 2025 by a member of the public.
- Following this complaint, officers attended the same day to make an assessment of the overhanging vegetation and subsequently issued a request to cut back the vegetation prescribed within a 21 day period.
- On this occasion, the hedge that boundaries the front of the property is overhanging the footpath by over 50%.
- The expiry of this request was the 18th September 2025. There was no work undertaken in this period by the homeowner, and officers reattended to engage with the homeowner on the 18th September 2025, but to no avail.
- On Tuesday 30th September 2025, officers attended again to inspect the property and found that no works had been undertaken by the homeowner. Officers again sent another request via recorded delivery to cut back the vegetation, this was on the same date, which will expire on Tuesday 14th October 2025.
- Due to the above factors, and there being no engagement from the homeowner, a notice has been drafted to serve on the homeowner upon the expiration of the 14 days request from the second letter. An action plan needs to be implemented prior to this date so the Authority can proceed with the enforcement under the Act.
- By way of serving a notice under the Act, it will require the homeowner to undertake the works specified in the notice, or if appropriate, the Authority will seek to undertake the works and recover the costs from the recipient of the notice. Should the works not be undertaken within the specified time, the recipient will be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £2500; and
- Due to the limitations of delegated authority of officers, it is requested that the Board consider providing a resolution to support the issuing of a notice if the matter were to proceed to court.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Gibson and seconded by Miss Corkish and unanimously **RESOLVED that the Authority issues a notice to the homeowner under Section 51 of the Highways Act 1986.**

C25/10/01/15
HOUSING MATTERS

None.

C25/10/01/16
CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Dates for the Diary

Date	Organisation	Event	Time
4 th October 2025	Isle of Man Federation of Women's Institutes	2025 Show – A Sparkling Christmas – Elim Church Hall	12 noon to 3:00 pm
6 th October 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm
12 th October 2025	Onchan Silver Band	Autumn Concert – Onchan Methodist Church	3:00 pm
20 th October 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm
1 st November 2025	Onchan Silver Band	Concert of Remembrance – St Peter's Church	3:00 pm

C25/10/01/17ANY URGENT OTHER BUSINESS**1. Isle of Man Municipal Association**

The Authority's representative for the Isle of Man Municipal Association, Mr Turton, provided the Board with the following update in relation to the Association's latest meeting:

- Highlighted that the meeting had been well attended and that more local authorities are continuing to join the Association.
- Noted that strong opinions had been expressed at the meeting regarding the Local Government (Amendment) Bill ("the Bill"). The Association decided that it would issue a statement and write to the Chief Minister on either the 10th or 11th October 2025, advising that it opposes some areas of the Bill.
- Noted that at this present time, the Isle of Man Government has stated that it does not have sufficient resources to progress the Local Government Pension Reform. It was highlighted that the Government has suggested that local authorities get together and provide the funding or resources to progress the matter.
- Noted that an Island leisure rate was discussed. The proposal was discussed mainly by the local authorities who pay towards the swimming pools in their respective area.
- Noted that the Family and Mobile Library had fallen on hard times, and the charity has been replaced by a new charity and board.
- Highlighted that Douglas City Council has recently entered into a campaign against dog fouling and litter. It was noted that details regarding dog fouling campaigns is due to be circulated to the local authorities by the Association; and

Mr Turton further advised that within the Association's constitution, there is a clause that the Isle of Man Government is to send the Association copies of all consultations, and this is not happening.

The Chief Executive/Clerk and the District Surveyor advised the Board that, at times, the Authority has not received notification of some Isle of Man Government consultations.

The Chief Executive/Clerk and the District Surveyor advised the Board that there is a consultation hub which you can sign up to, and receive notifications of consultations.

The Chief Executive/Clerk confirmed that he would contact the Secretary of the Isle of Man Municipal Association to make them aware of this.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8:16 pm.

The District Surveyor left the meeting at 8:16 pm.

25/10/01/18MINUTES**1. Staff Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025**

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

The Staff minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 22nd September 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.

C25/10/01/19

TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ARISING FROM SUCH MINUTES

1. Internal Audit Risk Areas – Year ending 31st March 2026

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

The Chairman requested that the Members of the Board raise any additional areas of risk that they wish to be included within the upcoming internal audit.

The Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes requested that social housing allocations be considered for inclusion.

The Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Mr Turton, who have undertaken the role of Lead Member for Housing, advised the Member of the Authority's current process for housing allocations, and expressed their views that including the social housing allocation process within the internal audit was unnecessary.

The Vice Chairman advised the Board that he had spoken with the Housing Manager regarding this matter recently, and it is proposed that a presentation or information be provided to the Board to explain how the Authority undertakes housing allocations in line with the relevant policies and procedures set out by the Department of Infrastructure.

It was noted that no other areas of risk were highlighted or requested for inclusion as part of the internal audit for the year ending 31st March 2026.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.34 pm.