

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the **ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS** held in the Boardroom, Hawthorn Villa, 79 Main Road, Onchan, on Monday 8th September 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)
 Mr D Quirk
 Mr R Turton

Apologies: Miss G Corkish
 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)

C25/09/01/01

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

Not Applicable.

C25/09/01/02

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.

C25/09/01/03

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

None.

C25/09/01/04

MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 26th August 2025

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 26th August 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated were considered.

Amendments:

Page 5

- Complaints Procedure – Update

Replace the “28th July 2025” with the “29th July 2024”
 Last sentence replace “Member of the Board” with “Board”>

Page 9

- Rent Setting

Second bullet point replace “September 2026” with “September 2025”

Fourth bullet point replace “September 2027” with “September 2026”

Page 12

- **External Refurbishment Project Scheme 10 Barrule Drive Social Housing – Update**

Final paragraph delete “retendering” and amend to “without a final costing being agreed”.

Subject to the above amendments, 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.**

C25/09/01/05

TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ARISING FROM SUCH MINUTES

1. Complaints Procedure – Update

A Member asked the Chief Executive/Clerk if they had contacted the Authority’s legal adviser to obtain advice regarding the proposed changes to the Authority’s Complaints Procedure.

The Chief Executive/Clerk confirmed that he had received a response and that further information will be provided to the Board for consideration.

C25/09/01/06

TO DISPOSE OF ANY BUSINESS ADJOURNED FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

None.

C25/09/01/07

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

None.

C25/09/01/08

PLANNING DECISIONS/COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING COMMITTEE

None.

C25/09/01/09

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

None.

C25/09/01/10

CONSIDERATION OF ANY REPORTS FROM THE CLERK OR OTHER OFFICER

1. Tynwald Commissioner for Administration (Amendment) Bill – Consultation Draft Response

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

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

- The Authority received correspondence at the beginning of August 2025 regarding providing a response to the Tynwald Commissioner for Administration (Amendment) Bill consultation (“the Consultation”);

- The deadline for responses to the Consultation is Tuesday 16th September 2025;
- Previous postholders have requested that the Act be amended in various ways;
- In January 2023, the Cabinet Office advised that the Government had decided to remove the Tynwald Commissioner for Administration (Amendment) Bill (“the Bill”) from its Legislative programme and asked if the Tynwald Management Committee would be prepared to pick it up, to which it agreed in May 2023;
- An initial consultation on general principles was held between 26th October and 24th November 2023. This invited comment from Tynwald Members, Departments, Statutory Boards, Local Government, and the incumbent and outgoing TCAs. Following the preparation of a marked-up proposal known as the Keeling Schedule (“the Keeling Schedule”), the Committee is now consulting the public and inviting feedback; and
- The Committee intends to report to Tynwald Court with detailed proposals. If approved, the Bill would then be introduced into the House of Keys.

The Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes stated the following:

- He has no concerns about the proposed responses to the consultation questions. However, he has concerns about how the consultation has been carried out, which should be raised in the response;
- As any Manx resident can make a complaint to the TCA, the Consultation documents should be readily accessible to the public. The only document relating to the consultation available from the Tynwald website appears to be the Keeling Schedule. This does not contain either the Consultation questions or the policy principles that were consulted on in 2023. The Consultation questions can only be seen by starting to complete the survey, which is not ideal;
- The policy principles are available from the Authority’s agenda papers for the 13th November 2023;
- A feedback statement from the 2023 consultation does not appear to have been prepared. However, it appears that all the policy principles have been taken forward except item (d) in relation to ex-gratia payments for complainants; and
- There are also new items that were not included in the 2023 consultation.

Members expressed their thanks to the Chief Executive/Clerk for preparing the draft responses, and to the Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes for his overview of the matter.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Lockwood and seconded by Mr Turton and **RESOLVED to submit the draft responses as provided by the Chief Executive/Clerk on behalf of the Authority in relation to the Tynwald Commissioner for Administration (Amendment) Bill. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Authority will publish the consultation on its website and social media pages to increase awareness among members of the public.**

Mr Wilson declared an interest and did not take part in the discussion, nor cast a vote.

2. Commissioners Surgery

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

- The Commissioners' Surgery, which was due to be held on Saturday 6th September 2025, had been cancelled due to only one Board Member being available to attend; and
- The next scheduled Commissioners Surgery is due to be held on Saturday 1st November 2025, at the HUB between 10:00 am and 12 noon.

It was queried if the Members wish to rearrange the cancelled Commissioners Surgery or leave it until the next scheduled Commissioners Surgery, and if the Members wish to agree who will attend future Surgeries for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Commented that the dates of the surgeries should be more proactively advertised to obtain public interest and to improve attendance;
- Suggestions for advertising included publicity in the event section of the Authority's website, on the Authority's social media pages, and in the public notice boards;
- Commented that more information should be shared with social media pages and groups that relate to Onchan, even if some of those following such pages and groups are not residents of Onchan; and
- Suggested that the dates of the surgeries should be set far enough in advance so that Board Members can diarise them before making other arrangements.

The Chief Executive/Clerk advised the Board that he has started investigating the potential for the Authority to provide a public information line based around applications such as WhatsApp to allow members of the public to sign up to receive updates in relation to services and events, and to increase engagement with the public. The Chief Executive/Clerk confirmed that once more information has been obtained, the matter would be brought back to the Board for consideration.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that:

- The next Commissioners Surgery would be held on Saturday 1st November 2025 at The HUB between 10:00 am and 12 noon, and for it to be advertised on the Authority's noticeboards, social media pages, and other associated pages and groups, and the website; and
- The dates for future Commissioners' Surgeries will continue to be brought to the Board for consideration two weeks prior to each surgery to allow the Board Members to confirm their attendance.

C25/09/01/11

CONSIDERATION OF ANY RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE

1. Consultation on Mooir Vannin Offshore Wind Farm Limited application for Marine Infrastructure Consent

A copy of the consultation in relation to the Mooir Vannin Offshore Wind Farm Limited application for Marine Infrastructure consent, copies of which having been previously been circulated was noted.

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

- The deadline for the consultation is the 18th November 2025;
- The matter had been considered by the previous Board on the 29th July 2024, and at that time it was agreed that the Authority undertake it's own public consultation;
- 21 responses had been received, most of which were opposed to the wind farm; and
- The matter was reviewed again by the previous Board on the 27th August 2024^[ODC 22/09/2025], and the Board had resolved that the Authority submit a response to the consultation, noting that the Authority is not in support of the development due to the visual impact and the initial development providing no direct financial benefit in relation to energy production, or climate change benefit to the Isle of Man.

The Chief Executive/Clerk queried how the Board wished to proceed with consideration of the matter, including undertaking a further public consultation, providing the same responses as last time, or providing no response.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Recommended that a draft consultation response be included on the agenda for the 3rd November Board meeting. Furthermore, if the Board wishes to make changes, then

this will still allow for a revised draft to be included on the 17th November agenda for approval by the Board;

- Concerns were raised regarding the proposal for a cable to make landfall at Groudle Bay, which could cause significant disruption to a well-established recreational area during construction, and would also require a much longer onshore cable to connect to the electrical grid at Lord Street;
- Concerns were raised regarding the visual and noise impacts of the proposed wind turbines for properties based on the East coast of the Island;
- Recommended that the Authority should undertake a further public consultation for the residents of Onchan to obtain public opinion;
- Suggested that the company responsible for the works should be requested to attend the Island to provide information to members of the public at publicly accessible buildings and meetings;
- Highlighted that the publicity of the consultation appears to be minimal, and that many people who may be affected by the proposal have not made a comment upon the consultation, and many are not aware of the consultation;
- Some Members confirmed their stance in relation to being opposed to the development; and
- Highlighted that Garff Commissioners recently held a public meeting regarding the matter.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that:

- The Chief Executive/Clerk contacts the Clerk from Garff Commissioners to obtain feedback regarding the recent public meeting;
- The Chief Executive/Clerk is to publicise the consultation on the Authority's social media pages and website; and
- The matter would be brought back to the Board for further consideration.

C25/09/01/12

TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 25

None.

C25/09/01/13

TO CONSIDER ANY MOTIONS

None.

C25/09/01/14

ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

1. Refuse Garage – Heating Options

The report of the Property Maintenance Manager dated 8th September 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The District Surveyor advised the Board of the following:

- The Authority's Refuse Depot is located at Snugborough Trading Estate and provides a base for the Refuse vehicles and members of staff. It provides indoor parking for vehicles and welfare facilities for members of staff;
- Currently, the welfare facilities are heated with electric tube heaters and electric hot water, which is not efficient and expensive to operate;
- It is proposed that a new oil boiler system be installed to provide an efficient heat source for space heating and hot water provision, and to provide money savings to the Authority with an estimated payback period of less than three years.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Commented that some Members are favourable to allowing the Authority's General Reserves to fund one-off items of expenditure;
- Commented that some Members are in agreement with the proposal and recommend that the works be undertaken and completed before winter to commence savings in relation to fuel usage;
- A Member raised that they are not in favour of any investment in the facility due to its locality, and highlighted that he has historically opposed the Authority's use of the facility as it is situated outside of the District. Furthermore, he is of the opinion that a site within the District would be more suitable; and
- A Member raised sustainability considerations and the lack of alternatives provided within the report for consideration.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that further information be obtained in relation to alternative heating solutions and that the matter be brought back to the Board for further consideration.

2. Street Lighting Project – Phase 2

The report of the District Surveyor dated 8th September 2025, copies of which having previously been circulated was considered.

The District Surveyor advised the Board of the following:

- The report has been prepared to update the Board Members regarding the Authority's Street Lighting Refurbishment Project and to ask Members to consider providing a suitable funding mechanism to enable Phase 2 of the Street Lighting refurbishment projects to commence;
- Members were previously advised at the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023, "should the pilot schemes prove successful, it is proposed to roll out a programme of replacements based on this model, and further information would be reported following the pilot scheme";
- At the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 18th November 2024, Members resolved to apply for borrowings of £250,000 to complete Phase 1 of the Street Light refurbishment programme to be repaid over 20 years;
- Concerns had been raised regarding how long it will take to improve the street lighting throughout the District, as there are currently approximately 1100 street lights in total;
- Concerns were also raised regarding the cost of improving street lighting throughout the District;
- Some Members noted that the condition of the Authority's street lights and safety concerns were raised in 2017, so some of the Members currently in office should be aware of what is required to resolve the matter; and
- Street lighting assets currently in the ownership and management of the Authority are of an ageing stock with various issues, most of which are becoming beyond economical repair and not installed to the current street lighting design guidelines. This could leave the Authority open to prosecution should an accident occur involving a street light failure or a road traffic collision due to non-compliant lighting. The risks are becoming greater as the stock ages, and subsequently, further risks are now being identified as schemes are surveyed.

A discussion in relation to the following took place:

- Some Members confirmed their support of continuing to replace street lighting and commented that the existing lighting on many roads in the District is no longer fit for purpose;
- A Member raised concerns regarding the level of expenditure required to fund the scheme, and the impact on the District Rate before any consideration of any other expenditure for the forthcoming financial year;

- Proposed that the size of the scheme is too large and that smaller schemes should be brought forward to limit the large impact of the proposed expenditure to fund the works;
- Counter proposed that a larger scheme will save money overall due to the cost of materials and labour increasing year on year, which will cost the Authority in future years;
- Queries were raised regarding why Birch Hill has been identified as the next priority for the Authority to address in relation to street lighting improvements.

The District Surveyor confirmed that the Birch Hill estate had been selected as the next area for a replacement project due to the number of complaints that have been received regarding faults, and identification of common faults relating to the precast reinforced concrete style of the lighting columns. It was further advised that many of the columns are starting to encounter problems, including blown concrete allowing for water ingress, and issues relating to fires occurring within the columns.

The District Surveyor advised that there is a three month lead time on materials. Furthermore, if the petition to borrow was agreed and if the Board agreed to include the expenditure within the 2026/27 Financial Year, the Authority would be in a position to order the materials in order that the project is ready to commence from April 2026.

Following a discussion, the Chief Executive/Clerk advised the Members of the Board that a resolution is required from the Board in order for Officers to submit a petition in accordance with Section 51 of the Local Government Act 1985 to borrow money, and that the initial loan repayments would be included in the draft 2026/27 Financial Year budget, but any commitment from the Board in relation to the expenditure will not be required until the Board has considered the full draft budget as a whole as part of the District Rate setting process for 2026/27.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Mr Gibson and seconded by Mr Quirk and **RESOLVED** that the Authority submits a petition under Section 51 of the Local Government Act 1985 to apply for borrowings in the sum of £897,245 to be repaid over a 20 year period to fund the street lighting replacement scheme for Birch Hill Close and Birch Hill Crescent, Briarfield Avenue, Cronk Avenue, Highfield Crescent, Hillcrest Grove, Hollydene Avenue and Ivydene Avenue, Laurel Avenue, Rosedene Avenue and Rosedene Close, Seafeld Close, Hazel Close, Hawthorn Close, Clypse View, Hillberry View, Poplar Close, Oak Close, Sycamore Close, Beech Avenue, and Beech Close.

Furthermore, the initial loan repayments are to be included within the draft 2026/27 Financial Year budget and are to be further considered by the Board for inclusion or non-inclusion within the District Rate as part of the rate setting process due to be resolved by 31st January 2026.

For: Mr Allen, Mr Lockwood, Mr Wilson, Mr Gibson, and Mr Quirk
Against: Mr Turton

C25/09/01/15
HOUSING MATTERS

None.

C25/09/01/16
CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Dates for the Diary

Date	Organisation	Event	Time
8 th September 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm

13 th September 2025	Fire Island Chilli & BBQ Festival	Onchan Pleasure Park	12 noon to 9:00 pm
20 th September 2025	Onchan Methodist Church	Afternoon Quiz	3:00 pm
22 nd September 2025	Onchan District Commissioners	Board Meeting	7:00 pm

2. **Commissioners Surgery – Heywood Court**

The Chairman advised the Board that the Commissioner's Surgery, which was due to be held at Heywood Court on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 had been rearranged as it had not been adequately advertised to the tenants. It was advised that it had now been rearranged for Friday 12th September 2025, which the Chairman and the Lead Member for Finance and General Purposes would be attending.

C25/09/01/17

ANY URGENT OTHER BUSINESS

Due to the deadline for responses, the Chairman agreed to the request of the Chief Executive/Clerk that the following correspondence could be considered as Any Other Business:

1. **Douglas City Council – Civic Sunday Service**

The Chairman advised the Board that an invitation had been received from the the Mayor, Councillor Steven Crellin, to attend the Council's Civic Sunday Church Service on Sunday 28th September 2025, at St Matthew's Church, North Quay at 10:30 am.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive/Clerk would circulate the invitation to the Board Members for them to confirm their attendance before the deadline.

2. **Gardening Works - Heywood Drive**

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

A Member requested an update from the District Surveyor in relation to the concerns which he had raised at previous meetings regarding works being undertaken by a tenant at one of the Authority's social housing properties that adjoins the boundary of the Heywood Court sheltered housing complex.

The District Surveyor provided the Board with an update in relation to the matter following his visit to the property and discussing the Member's concerns with the tenant.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Authority would contact the tenant to advise that the Authority will reinstate the fence along the original existing boundary to provide security and privacy to the tenants on both sides of the boundary.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 20:54 pm.