

Castletown Town Commissioners
Ordinary Board Minutes

15 January 2024

Present: Mrs. B. Cannan (BC) (Vice Chair)
Mr. C. Leather (CL)
Mr. J. Cubbon (JC)
Mr. J. Ludford-Brooks (JLB)
Miss D. Quinney (DQ)
Mr. N. Rogers (NR)

Apologies: Mr. J. Horton (Chair) (JH)

Attending: Mr. H. Mackenzie, Town Clerk (HM)
Mr. L. Wylie, Operations Manager/Deputy Clerk (LW)
Miss H. Fox (minutes)

OB/105.23 Chair's Welcome

As Mr Horton is on annual leave, Mrs Cannan assumed the role as Chair. Mrs Cannan opened the meeting and welcomed those present. She wished everyone a Happy New Year and hoped they all had a Merry Christmas. She reported she attended the RNLI service the last Sunday. It was noted the Carol Service in Market Square was well attended however was noted that it would have good to have hymn books distributed for people.

Members gave a recap of events that they had attended on behalf of the town. Mrs Cannan then confirmed Castletown Town Commissioners has issued the following statement on behalf of the Board.

"The Board of Castletown Town Commissioners wish to place on record their dismay at the proposed closure of the Southern Swimming Pool. This is yet another body blow to our town and the wider Southern Community, and we wholeheartedly concur with the comments from Mr. Speaker that the residents of the South have been betrayed by this administration.

It is well-documented that swimming pools serve as spaces for children to acquire swimming skills and water safety, where families strengthen their connections through water-related activities, clubs foster friendships, and individuals of all ages enhance both their physical and mental well-being.

We urge the Island's MHKs to contemplate how they would respond if a similar proposal affected a regional pool within their constituencies. It is essential to ensure that this myopic proposal does not garner support.

Minister Edge's proposal would appear to contradict three of the five values outlined in the "Island Plan," specifically "Building Great Communities," "Health & Wellbeing," and

"Learning & Development." This decision should serve as a stark realisation that the current administration lacks the strategic vision needed to ensure fair access to community facilities across the Island, let alone implement its wider Island plan.

If a key community facility such as the Southern Swimming Pool can be extinguished at the stroke of a pen on purely financial considerations rather than true consideration of value to residents, then we are deeply concerned about what may follow. Castletown has the highest proportion of low-income households in rented public sector properties on the Island, and the closure of a facility that is available to lower-income users without the need to incur additional travel costs is a particularly crass move and contradictory to the Net Zero action plan statement that Government will be "Managing Change in a way that is fair and beneficial to the health and wellbeing of our community".

The Board has accepted an invitation to meet with other local political representatives later in the week. We can confirm that a request has been received from ratepayers to hold a public meeting, and consideration shall be given to the same once the political meeting has taken place so that we are better informed.

In the interim, we would wholeheartedly encourage residents to make direct representations to local MHKs, Minister Edge, and the Chief Minister or alternatively offer support through the petition proposed by the Southern Pool"

A discussion regarding the Southern Swimming Pool then took place. It was highlighted that the facility is well used by residents and schoolchildren. The impact of its closure would mean increased time out of school to travel to other swimming pools located round the island which would have an impact on learning time. It was also noted that other areas are not paying for their leisure facilities, e.g. Douglas Onchan and Braddan.

Standing orders were suspended to allow for a local resident to speak.

Proposed: Mr Cubbon
Seconded: Mr Leather

A further discussion took place on the swimming pool with contribution from members of the public gallery. It was resolved a public meeting should be held following submission of signed correspondence requesting this.

OB/106.23 Minutes of previous meeting

It was resolved the minutes of the meeting of 18 December 2023 be approved as read and a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Mr Ludford-Brooks
Seconded: Mr Leather

OB/107.23 Business out of the same

Windfarms

No update at present.

Market Square

6-month seasonal closure has been applied for to begin 6 March 2024.

OB/108.23 Accounts

Noted. Individual queries to be discussed in the committee meeting.

OB/099.23 Notices of Motion

No Motions were tabled.

OB/100.23 Correspondence

Invites and Events

Malew Civic Service – 3 March 2024. Mrs Cannan and husband to attend. Mr Ludford-Brooks and wife to attend also.

General Correspondence

Bowling Club

A letter was received from the Bowling Club requesting expenditure on various matters. The Clerk was directed to advise that no expenditure would be agreed until such time as a valid lease was in place. No update on this.

Tennis Club

Mr Ludford-Brooks felt that the time had come to seek wider expressions of interest for the site. Mr Horton agreed that he would be willing to make himself available over the festive period to meet club representatives on site.

CRHS

A timeline of the proposed CRHS redevelopment was received and a discussion took place with members expressing various frustrations. No update.

News release was published regarding KWC and Buchan.

OB/101.23 Planning Applications

Planning applications from intervening press lists were discussed. No objections were forthcoming.

OB/102.23 Planning matters/decisions

Discussed and noted.

OB/103.23 Consultations

The live consultations on the website were listed.

OB/104.23 Matters for future discussions

The Clerk noted the MUA lighting replacement works is progressing. Consideration will be given to ensuring the type of lighting is in-keeping with the conservation area.

Meeting Closed: 19:05.

*During the meeting Mr Rogers left at 19:00 and returned 19:02.