

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Commissioners

Date: 1st December 2025

Time: 19:00

Location: Castletown Town Hall

Present: Mr J A Brown, OBE, Chairman
Mr J J Cringle
Mr W F Galley
Mr A Leonard
Mr M P Patel
Ms C Quine
Mr L R D Watterson

In Attendance: Mr C Meakin (Deputy Clerk)
Mr M Williams (Support Officer)

PS/074 Opening of the Meeting

The Meeting was opened by Mr Brown, OBE, Chairman.

PS/075 Suspension of Standing Order 10A (1)

Proposed: Mr Cringle

Seconded: Mr Leonard and unanimously agreed that Standing Order 10A (1), regarding digital recording, be suspended.

PS/076 Approval of Minutes held on 3rd November 2025

Proposed: Ms Quine

Seconded: Mr Galley and unanimously agreed that the Minutes of a Meeting held on 1 September 2025 be signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

PS/077 Business out of the same

(1) Chairman's Report – Local Government (Amendment) Bill 2023

The Chairman noted that Legislative Council would conclude consideration of the new Clause 5 to the Local Government (Amendment) Bill 2023, at the sitting the following day, Tuesday 2nd December 2025.

He referred to the unique occasion at which local authorities presented arguments against the existing Clause 5, which he believed could lead to the dismantling of local government in the Isle of Man.

He expressed the hope that the representations made would at least secure changes to the proposed Clause 5 to ensure financial safeguards were included to protect ratepayers as part of the process.



(2) PS/073 - Questions

It was noted that the name of the questioner was Caroline Collister, not Carol Collister as stated in the Minutes.

PS/078 Business Required By Statute (Standing Order 5(1)(d))

None.

PS/079 Reports

Reports and recommendations presented by the Chairman of each Committee of the Board were considered as follows:-

(1) Board In Committee

The Chairman referred to the Commissioners Public Consultation Document dated 15th July 2025, with reference to the to The Market Square, Pedestrian Streets and Barrack Square.

Many written and verbal responses had been submitted and a wide range of views had been expressed, which the Commissioners had taken into account in formulating the views of the Authority. The Chairman expressed the gratitude of the Board to all contributors.

The Commissioners response to the views received had been published in a document dated 27th November 2025.

Proposed: Mr Brown

Seconded: Mr Patel and it was unanimously agreed that the Castletown Town Commissioners note the report dated 27th November 2025 and approve the Commissioners proposals as set out in column 4 within the Report titled "The Response to the Public Consultation".

(2) Business, Development and Finance Committee

Mr Cringle reported that the Committee continued to focus upon the finances of the current year and had commenced work in relation to the upcoming budgetary process in relation to the next year.

Income and expenditure reports in relation to the first two quarters of the year had been completed.

Thanks were expressed to the recently appointed temporary Finance Officer and the Accountant for their work in bringing the accounts up to date.

It was noted that recent staffing issues had meant that it had not been possible to submit VAT Returns in accord with requirements and as a result, a fine had been levied and paid in the amount of £200.

All commercial invoicing in respect of the first six months of the financial year had been issued and work was underway in respect of raising invoices in respect of October 2025.

The deadline for setting the rate for the 2026/27 year was 31st January 2026 and so it was intended that the work collating requirements would be completed by mid-January 2026.

Proposed: Mr Cringle

Seconded: Mr Leonard and unanimously agreed that the Income and Expenditure reports presented be approved.

(3) Infrastructure Committee

Mr Patel confirmed that necessary approvals had been secured in respect of Phase 2 of the School Hill development and that works were expected to commence in January 2026.

(4) Leisure Committee

Ms Quine confirmed that the work of the Committee in the previous month had all been about Christmas preparations culminating in the switching on the of the lights on Saturday 29th November 2025. The event was well received considering the prevailing weather during the day.

Ms Quine expressed the grateful thanks of the Committee to all involved, including more than 60 people who had attended the Civic Hall over the preceding weekends to make willow lanterns for the event. She also thanked Jen and Christvin at Castletown Methodist Church, Mrs Duggan and her choir at Castle Rushen High School and the soloist, Maddie Brookfield, who sang so beautifully. Ms Quine also thanked the Castletown Town Band for participating, acknowledging the return of the Ian Astill.

Finally, Ms Quine thanked the staff of the Authority for getting everything ready in and around the town.

Ms Quine confirmed that work would now commence on next years' event but that in the meantime, work was progressing in relation to the parks and in the New Year, the Committee would be collating plans for a summer programme of events in relation to the Square.

PS/080 Chairman's Report

The Chairman made the following report:-

(1) Royal British Legion – Castletown Poppy Concert

The Chairman had been officiating at the Castletown Poppy Concert and had therefore been unable to represent the Castletown Town Commissioners. The Vice-Chairman, Mr Cringle, had deputised for him as principal guest and had been accompanied by Mrs Cringle. The Chairman thanked both of them for attending.

The money raised at the event was in excess of £700.



(2) Castletown Remembrance Service – 9th November 2025

The Chairman thanked the organisers and all of the participants at the Castletown Remembrance Sunday event as the Town remembered all who had served in our Armed Forces and especially those who had sacrificed so much in the two World Wars.

The Chairman had laid a wreath during the ceremony on behalf of the Town.

This year, the Town had been delighted that His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and Lady Lorimer had been able to attend for the special commemoration, with His Excellency also laying a wreath.

There was a large attendance by the Town community for which the Chairman expressed thanks.

(3) The National Service of Remembrance – 6th November 2025

The Chairman had been officiating at the National Service of Remembrance in his capacity as President of the Isle of Man County of the Royal British Legion. He thanked the Vice-Chairman for deputising as representative of the Authority.

The weather for the Town Remembrance Service and the National Service of Remembrance had been kind at both events.

(4) Act of Remembrance – 11th November 2025

The Act of Remembrance was held at 1pm on 11th November 2025 and had been attended by the Chairman and fellow Commissioners. The weather had been inclement but the Chairman thanked all of the community that had attended.

(5) Castle Rushen High School Annual Awards – 13th November 2025

The Chairman had been pleased to attend the Castle Rushen High School Annual Awards presentation evening, where all of the students received their awards for all their hard work during the year. The Chairman offered congratulations to all of the recipients.

(6) King William's College – 15th November 2025

The Chairman had been pleased to accept an invitation from the Principal of King William's College to view the new facilities that had been provided at the school for the younger children.

He commented that the facilities were wonderful and colourful, providing both the children and the teachers with modern comfortable facilities within a new learning environment.

He added that the facility was a great asset to the school and thanked the Principal for the invitation.

(7) Castletown Christmas Light Switch-On Event – 29th November 2025

The afternoon of the event to switch on the Christmas Lights in Castletown had started with heavy rain. However, the Community Carol Concert had been held at the Methodist

Church in Arbory Street which was full of members of the community and was a great start to the Town's Festival time. The entertainment was fabulous.

On behalf of himself and of the Commissioners, the Chairman thanked all who participated, organised and worked to ensure that the event was joyful and meaningful to the community. He offered specific thanks to the Minister and everyone at the Church and to the Chairman of the Leisure Committee and her committee for putting the event together. Finally, he thanked the Castletown Carnival Queen for switching on the Christmas Tree and the Christmas Lights.

(8) Christmas Greetings

The Chairman took the opportunity, on behalf of himself and on behalf of the Commissioners, to wish all Town residents and especially the children, a very Merry Christmas and a good and healthy New Year ahead.

PS/081 Written Questions (Standing Order 5(1)) put by a Member to be answered by the Chairman of the Board or the Chairman of a Committee.

None.

PS/082 Correspondence Received

(1) Isle of Man Orienteering Klubb

An email dated 19 November 2025 was reported as received from the Development Officer of the Isle of Man Orienteering Klubb, advising that the organisation was planning to create an Urban Orienteering map of Castletown. The organisation asked whether the Authority would like to initially support the production of such an orienteering map and additional resources such as permanent orienteering markers put up around the Town.

The email went on to provide further details of the proposal.

After a short discussion, it was felt that the matter should be referred to Committee for consideration and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that the proposal for the creation of an Urban Orienteering map of Castletown and associated proposals be referred to the next meeting of the Leisure Committee for consideration and report back to the Board.

(2) Castletown and District Branch, Royal British Legion

A letter dated 23rd November 2025 was reported as received from the Branch Parade Marshal and Poppy Organiser of the Castletown and District Branch of the Royal British Legion, in which thanks were expressed to the Castletown Town Commissioners and all of the staff who helped with Sunday morning's Remembrance Service and Parade.

The letter went on to state that from getting the staff to monitor the Square, making it safe to form an orderly gathering without the hassle of inadvertent parked cars to getting a policeman and staff to man the route through Quens Street, a route not taken for many years. It also referred to the cleaning and tidying of the War Memorial and surrounds, stating that a few people mentioned how clean it looked. It also referred to putting out the extra plinths to accommodate the mass of wreaths that were placed every year.

Finally, it mentioned the re-arrangement of the street furniture which enabled all of the Standards good access to the front of the Memorial and a good seating plan for some of the older residents who no longer can stand for the duration of the service. Finally, it referred to the refreshments provided after the event.

Mr Cringle suggested that the Commissioners should be thanking the Branch for its work in relation to the event.

The Chairman commented that meetings of parties before the event certainly helped to ensure the success of the event.

(3) Southern Charitable Causes – Funding Applications

An email dated 18th November 2025 was reported as received from Clerk to the Southern Civic Amenity Site, making the Commissioners aware that the next round of applications for funding from the Southern Charitable Causes had opened on 1st December 2025. It invited the Commissioners to highlight this and make any worthy causes aware.

The email went on to state that it was not possible to confirm how much funding would be available at the time of writing but it was expected to be an increase on the awards of the previous year.

(4) Department of Infrastructure – 20 mph Consultation

An email dated 25th November 2025 was reported as received from the office of the Minister at the Department of Infrastructure, with regard to the 20mph Consultation.

It referred to the Tynwald Commitment to implement a 20mph speed limit in residential areas. It stated that the Department of Infrastructure had developed criteria to define which areas would be included and had produced maps to illustrate these areas. It confirmed that an implementation plan had also been produced that included a staged approach and a consultation period with residents and local authorities.

The email confirmed that as part of the process, the Department would issue the maps to the relevant local authorities for their comments and where possible, for public display. As part of the engagement process, the Minister had requested that meetings be arranged with each individual authority so that the local proposals could be discussed and how this could make the streets in that area safer; it was intended that those meeting would take approximately one hour.

It asked that the Authority provide the Department with a couple of dates between the date of issue and 22nd December 2025 where the authority would be able to meet with the Minister. It acknowledged that this might be best at a scheduled Board Meeting but added that the Department was happy to accommodate a meeting with as many Board Members as possible and would co-ordinate calendars as best as possible. It added that

the Minister would be accompanied by a Highways Officer so that any queries relating to the proposed speed limit changes could be discussed at that time.

The email stated that following the consultation, any changes to the proposed scheme would then be considered; the Department would then install signage as agreed with the local community in a rolling programme around the Island.

After a short discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Minister for the Department of Infrastructure be invited to attend the meeting of the Castletown Town Commissioners, sitting as Board In Committee, on 15th December 2025, commencing at 7.30pm, for the purpose of discussing proposals for the introduction of 20mph zones in Castletown and that the views of the Authority, which had already been submitted, be re-submitted to the Minister for ease of reference.

(5) Public Audit Reform – Public Consultation

An email dated 24th November 2025 from the Treasury FGD Policy and Legislation Team was reported as received, advising that the public consultation was now open on the Isle of Man Government consultation hub in relation to Public Audit Reform.

The consultation would run until Monday 5th January 2026.

It asked that the Authority proceed to the online survey on the consultation page and submit a response.

The email confirmed that the Treasury was happy to accept responses to the consultation questions on the consultation document or in a separate document, by way of email or by post.

After a short discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the opening of the consultation period in relation to Public Audit Reform be noted.

(6) Reef House, Douglas Street, Castletown – Planning Compliance

An email dated 20th November 2025 on behalf of a number of neighbours in Douglas Street in relation to works undertaken on Reef House, raising a number of issues in relation thereto.

It stated that the vehicle entrance to the property was in a different location to that detailed in the Planning Application and accordingly was not in accordance with the planning approval.

It went on to state that agreement from the Department of Infrastructure (Highways) to the modification of the existing access to the property was secured on condition that a suitable drainage solution be proposed and agreed by the Department to prevent run-off on to the highway. The Developer amended their vehicle access plans to include a linear drainage channel to purport to address the condition. It confirmed that a Planning Officer's Report in relation to the Application specifically referenced this requirement to drain away surface water. It added that no drainage channel had been constructed and that this was a breach of the Planning Application.

The email added that the property flooded during severe coastal overtopping. It confirmed that at the Appeal hearing in relation to the erection of a triple garage, it was indicated that there were/would be drainage channels in the sea wall to allow for the flow back of water from the property on to the shore. It suggested there was only one small channel in the extensive length of sea wall adjacent to the parking/ground in front of the house and to the rear of the garage. It added that there appeared to be some more in the short length of sea wall adjacent to the house/conservatory but that these would not drain the area in front of the house and that the egress of water would be through the vehicle access gate on to Douglas Street. It concluded that accordingly, there may be egress of flood water on to the seashore to protect the house/conservatory but not in front of it to prevent the egress of flood water through the gates and protect Douglas Street.

It suggested that the ground level of the property parking area had been elevated and appeared to be impermeable having regard to the pooling of water which occurs during heavy rain and overtopping. The lack of permeability would increase the risk to Douglas Street. The elevation was not indicated in the planning application and would exacerbate run off into Douglas Street during severe overtopping as access to the property now sloped down to the highway. The email also suggested that the Department of Infrastructure appeared not to have been notified of this intended elevation and increased risk of flooding to Douglas Street caused by it and therefore its' consent had not been sought.

Lastly, the email stated that during the renovation work, heavy vehicles used the pavement and this had caused extensive damage to it outside the property. It referred to the works to improve wheelchair access onto the pavements in Douglas Street. It stated that this damage would necessitate repair to facilitate the use of wheelchairs.

After a short discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the concerns received in relation to the works at Reef House should be referred on to the Planning and Highway enforcement offices for consideration. It was further **RESOLVED** that a response to the email be issued, advising of the action taken.

(7) Public Sector Rents and Allowances

A letter dated 1st December 2025 from the Department of Infrastructure was reported as received, enclosing a notification letter and press release detailing the revisions to the rental setting and allowances which would become effective from Monday 6th April 2026.

The enclosed notification letter, also dated 1st December 2025, advised that going forward, a new, more streamlined approach would be taken which would include a metric that ensured that decisions were data driven. Rent increases would be based upon the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) and each year, public sector housing rents would increase at a minimum of CPI using the preceding September's CPI figure.

It confirmed that the Department would monitor increases and retain the authority to intervene if it was felt that rents were rising to unsustainable levels.

From April 2026, public sector housing providers would have the additional ability to increase rents by a further 1% without the need for Departmental approval. It went on to confirm that the deadline for each provider to declare the planned increase (at CPI or CPI + 1%) was 8th December 2025. Next year the date for the decision to be taken



would be earlier as each provider would be able to gain the appropriate approvals in advance.

The letter stated that this policy development was underpinned by The Housing Act 1966 Part IV Section 49(3), quoted as saying that "*The authority shall from time to time review rents and (subject to the approval of the Department) make such changes, either in rents or generally or of particular rents, and rebates (if any) as circumstances may require.*"

The figures provided in the letter were:-

- 1) The annual increase in public sector rents with effect from 1st April 2026 will be 2.9% for landlords implementing the minimum increase. The rent point value therefore would increase from 1.797 to 1.849.
- 2) Landlords applying the additional discretionary uplift (+1%) would use a rent point value of 1.867.
- 3) The administration allowance would remain 7.0% of the total rental income.
- 4) The maintenance allowance would remain 32.5% of total rental income.
- 5) The community reserve (for Older Person's Housing) would remain at 8.4% of the total rental income.

The letter went on to say that following the recent Public Sector Housing Conference, additional changes to empower housing providers were being considered and that these would be developed further, along with additional detailed policy prior to additional consultation taking place. It was envisaged that these additional changes may be implemented as early as April 2027.

The press release confirmed that the previous rent increases were determined by the Department in Infrastructure following representations from Local Authorities. However, this process was not considered transparent enough, with no clear guidance about the rationale used for setting the rate. Furthermore, Government had been moving towards an annual uplift of fees and charges across all government services, usually linked to the relevant index, in this case CPI.

It stated that the proposed change aimed to modernise the rent-setting process by aligning annual increases with the Island's economic conditions while improving financial predictability for both tenants and landlords. Consultation with housing providers about changing the rent setting process had been ongoing since 2022. This new approach had been well received at the recent Local Authority Housing Conference, and further engagement was planned for future rent reforms.

The release also confirmed that to assess the potential impact before changing the mechanism, the Department looked at what would have been the impact of this rent rise mechanism if it had been applied for the last 14 years. The analysis showed that the average annual increase would have remained largely unchanged. If during the period all landlords had chosen to apply the optional additional 1%, the overall difference would have been just 0.2% higher than the current situation. However, a scenario where all landlords chose to impose the extra 1% rate every year was considered unlikely.

It drew attention of a key feature of the policy which was a safeguard clause, where if inflation spiked and proposed rent increases were untenable, the Department had



retained the ability to intervene and set a lower rate. The policy aligned more closely with the Housing Act 1955, which required regular rent reviews and Departmental approval for changes. It also acknowledged that many benefits from Treasury's Social Security Division were set with reference to the September CPI, and aligning rents with this mechanism would ensure that the increases were affordable for tenants on minimum or living wages.

During discussion, reference was made to the proposal being well received at the recent Local Authority Housing Conference. It was felt that the conference was more of a presentation being made with allowance for questions being posed thereafter. It was also of concern that other changes may well create a housing agency for the Isle of Man, albeit with staff being retained.

After the discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the position of the Castletown Town Commissioners in relation to the proposed rent increases in respect of the 2026/27 year, would be considered when the Board sat as the Board in Committee later that evening.

PS/083 Planning Applications

There were no planning applications for consideration at the meeting.

PS/084 Notices of Motion (Standing Orders 5(1) and 6)

There were no Notices of Motion for consideration at the meeting.

PS/085 Questions from Residents (Standing Orders 5(1)(j) and 9 apply)

There were no questions asked at the meeting by residents of Castletown.

PS/086 Date of Next Meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Authority was due to be held on Monday 5th January 2026, at 7pm.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.50pm.

Approved
19th January 2026

