

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSIONERS IN PUBLIC SESSION



**CASTLETOWN
COMMISSIONERS**

Date: Tuesday 1 June 2026
Time: 7.00pm - 7.34pm
Location: Town Hall Boardroom

PS No.	MINUTE
PS/168	MEMBERS PRESENT & APOLOGIES Mr. J.A. Brown, O.B.E. (JAB, Board Chairman), Mr. J.J. Cringle (JJC, Vice-Chairman), Mr. A. Leonard (AL), Mr. M.P. Patel (MPP), Ms. C.B. Quine (CBQ), Mr. L.R. Watterson (LRW), Mr. W.F. Galley (WFG) (Full Board)
PS/169	ALSO IN ATTENDANCE Mrs. D. Williams (DW) (H.R. Manager & Acting Deputy Clerk) Mrs KS Foy (KF) (Office Manager / Minutes Clerk)
PS/170	OPENING OF THE MEETING The meeting was opened by the Chairman, Mr. J.A. Brown OBE who introduced the board members and welcomed those members of the public present at the meeting.
PS/171	APOLOGIES RECEIVED None.
PS/172	SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 10A (1) Proposed: Ms CB Quine Seconded: Mr WF Galley Carried unanimously that Standing Order 10A (1) regarding digital recording be suspended.
PS/173	Declaration by Members and Officers in attendance of any interests in any matter on the agenda. None.
PS/174	Approval and signing of Minutes held on 5th May 2026 Minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting held on 5 th May 2026 were presented to the board for consideration and approval: Proposed: Mr. L.R.D. Watterson Seconded: Mr. J.J. Cringle and unanimously agreed that the minutes for the meeting held on 5 th May 2026 be signed as a true and correct record.
PS/175	Matters arising out of the 5th May 2026 Minutes [Standing Order 5 (1)(d)] None.

PS/176	BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE [Standing Order 5 (1) (c)] None.
PS/177	Committee Reports Reports and recommendations presented by each Committee of the Board were read and noted: 1. Business, Development, Finance & Administration Committee Mr. J. Cringle provided a report dated 30 th May 2026, which is herewith attached and deemed to be incorporated into these minutes. 2. Infrastructure Committee Mr. M.P. Patel stated there was nothing of note to report, however work was progressing in the background to ensure that matters were addressed as necessary. 3. Leisure Committee Ms. C. Quine provided a report as at 1 June 2026 which is herewith attached and deemed to be incorporated into these minutes.
PS/178	Chairman's Report The Chairman Mr. J.A. Brown OBE stated that he would give specific responses to issues to be raised during the meeting rather than giving an overall report.
PS/179	Written Questions [Standing Order 5(1) (f)] None
PS/180	Monthly Financial Report [Standing Order 5(1) (h)] None produced.
PS/181	Correspondence Received The following correspondence received was presented to the board:- a. Regional Hubs COMIN report for debate at June Tynwald sitting. On behalf of the Board the Chairman read out a prepared response, which forms part of these minutes and is herewith attached. Agreed that the Chairman (JAB) should forward the response to the 2 constituency MHKs for their information. Proposed: Ms CB Quine; Seconded: JJ Cringle – Unanimously agreed. b. Temporary Traffic Regulations, Road Closure Notice: The Crofts 29/6/26 – 3/7/26 Noted.



	The following correspondence items were considered in conjunction with item PS/182 (f.) relating to the Planning Application submitted for the development of the former Buchan School site, and in particular, the demolition of Westhill House: c. Castletown Heritage letter re Westhill House d. Email Tom Sinden re Westhill House e. Manx National Heritage Westhill House f. Email David Bellamy Westhill House h. Email Matt Dean Westhill House i. Email Daisy Doolittle Westhill House In response, the Chairman (JAB) read out a statement relating to the correspondence received and the Planning Application being considered. A copy of the statement is attached herewith and forms part of these minutes. Proposed: JAB, Chairman; Seconded: JJC Vice Chairman and agreed unanimously.
PS/182	Planning Applications The following planning applications had been submitted and were considered by the Board: a. PA 26/00313/B 30 Victoria Road - Agreed b. PA 26/00470/B 16 Brewery Wharf - Agreed c. PA 26/00101/B 1 Victoria Road - Agreed d. PA 26/00344/C 13 Malew Street – JJC advised that the Application has been withdrawn. e. PA 26/00244/B 23 Arbory Street - Agreed f. PA 26/00122/B Buchan School / Westhill site (see also item PS/185 (c – i) inclusive) - Defer. On the last item, it was noted that although the Board of Commissioners generally supported the development of the site, a final decision would only be forthcoming following the resolution of the issue concerning the proposed demolition of Westhill House. It was agreed to defer the decision until a more detailed assessment has been received from the Planning Division. Proposed: JAB, Chairman; Seconded: JJC Vice Chairman and agreed unanimously.
PS/183	Notices of Motion [Standing Orders 5(i) and 6] None.
PS/184	Questions from the floor In accordance with Standing Orders(5)(i) and (6) the Chairman invited questions from residents attending the meeting: (i) A resident of Queen Street asked about progress regarding item PS/166 raised at the Public Meeting held on 5 May 2026. The Chairman advised that the matter had been referred to the Police who were monitoring the situation and the matter of speeding and safety in Queen Street would be raised with officers from the Department of Infrastructure, Highways when they next meet.

	(ii.) A resident attempted to ask a question regarding a member of the Commissioners staff. The Chairman advised that under Standing Orders, questions relating to staffing matters were not allowed and any submission should put in writing to the Commissioners.
PS/185	Close of the Meeting The Chairman thanked those present for coming and the meeting closed at 7.34pm.

Signed:  _____

Dated: 7th July 2026



Castletown Town Commissioners

Meeting date – 28th May 2026 @ 14:00 hrs.
Town Hall Boardroom

Business, Development, Finance & Administration Committee

Report

BDFA met with an agenda focusing on current financial activities through to the scope of that role within the Commissioners.

1. Finance

➤ Accounts

○

➤ Role FO

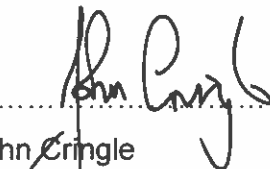
- Following the strong response, we have held first stage interviews and will now progress to second stage and would hope to appoint within the next weeks.

2. Business

- We have met with our web designer and we will be starting redevelopment of our web site to add additional content and make it more user friendly.

3. Admin

- A full review has completed with proposals agreed and we will now look to implement the plan.


.....
John Cringle
Chair BDFA Committee
30th May 2026

Leisure Committee report 1 June 2026

- Progress is still continuing behind the scenes regarding our Parks, as you can appreciate to get things right it takes time.
- There have been various events held in The Square throughout May and all upcoming events are listed on the CTC website and will be posted in the notice board also, please do take a look.
- We have a big celebration on the 28th June 130th anniversary of Poulson Park, in partnership with Manx Bird Life and Save our Swifts also Friends of Castletown Station and IOM Railways, full details will be on the website/notice board, hope you can all attend.
- If anyone wishes to hold an event in The Square or have a presence at one of the Commissioners events please do get in touch with the Town Hall.
- Set up a friends of Ballalough nature reserve in due course

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Castletown Town Commissioners Statement at Public Session Board meeting 1st June 2026
Ref: Report of the Council of Ministers to Tynwald - June 2026 – 'Regional Hubs'.

The Commissioners received from Government a copy of their report to the June Tynwald relating to 'Community Hubs'.

In my opinion of the Commissioners the report does not reflect reality, nor does it recognise that the Island already has regional Hubs, without the need to create what is being progressed within the report, - the present Community Hubs are called 'The Isle of Man Post Office'.

The Government has consciously taken away most of the business from the Post Offices and sub-Post Offices, which is impacting on their sustainability in the regions.

Here in Castletown, we have recently seen our sub-Post Office being closed on Saturday's, staff numbers reduced, this being regardless of any public service community need.

We have seen the Government service facilities being removed from the Islands regional Post Offices, with for example the resultant chaos of Castletown residents, along with many residents from across the Island having to travel to Tromode Vehicle Test centre to renew their annual vehicle licences or driving licences unless they have internet or post their renewal applications.

The location of Tromode could not be much worse for general access for our residents.

These changes do not say much for Governments commitment to Climate change, which we continually hear them talking about, nor does it recognise that a large portion of our community, especially the elderly, do not use the internet.

Government is now requiring thousands of residents drive across the Island to access these public services, that until very recently were provided in the regions across the Island, - in our Towns, our Villages, our Parishes!

The Government policy report flies in the face of Tynwald's resolution, which states: "*That Tynwald is of the opinion that face to face engagement with Government services will remain important for communities even where digital delivery as the default becomes more prevalent....*" the resolution continues "*providing essential community services at a regional level....*"

This report from Minister Ashford and his team from the Department of the Cabinet Office, seems to totally ignore Tynwald's opinion and we hope Tynwald will insist on Government adhering to their resolution of November 2025 in this matter, which we believe this report does not do.

The Commissioners also found the statement set out in the report unbelievable, as it states, "*Council of Minister's remains of the view that a community Hub concept is not about physical location but a collection of services that can be offered to residents in their community.*" But it seems like not all communities! I think this tells us everything about the Governments attitude to our small Island regional communities and demonstrates they do not care about what Tynwald, or our regional communities want, and importantly need.

The Commissioners refer to the aspect of the report that relates to Castletown, which is on page 4 under section 4.1, where Minister Ashford's report states, "*All, except Castletown, are able to provide PCs for public use and support with printing.*"

The statement is made without any comment or explanation as to why the Commissioners were unable to provide such a facility, or what the Commissioners advised them on their proposals the Commissioners views on their proposals have been ignored.

The first Castletown Town Commissioners knew about the transference of these Governments responsibilities over to the Commissioners was when we saw an advert placed by Government that appeared in the IOM Courier advising residents that such Government services were available in the Castletown Library.

The Commissioners requested the Town Hall to arrange an urgent meeting with Government to clarify the matter. The Commissioners views is that they are of the opinion that the best way to serve our regional communities is for Government to continue to provide these public services at the Castletown Post Office, and at all the Island network of Post Offices.

We are seeing our regional Post Offices being slowly dismantled by deliberate Government actions.

Government is endeavouring to pass on **their** costs to the Local Authorities - being transferred to our Ratepayers - expecting the Local Authorities to pick up the costs for such Government services and also relying on volunteers.

The Commissioners wish to make it clear, that the Castletown Town Commissioners **fully support** the provision of Government Services provided at local level through the Post Office network, as was the situation until very recently.

Amazingly, in the Council of Ministers Report, produced by the Department of the Cabinet Office, under the heading "**How we are starting**" it states, "*The anticipated annual cost is approximately **£200,000 per annum** and increases Government headcount by three full time equivalent.*" Really! So, to provide an inefficient service that does **not** meet the communities needs, a service that was previously provided through the Post Offices, the Government is now projected to cost the taxpayer **£200,000 per annum** – which **will** increase year on year, as will the staffing!

The Commissioners hope that Tynwald stops this nonsense.

The report also refers to the Post Offices, and in an endeavour to justify their reasoning behind their report's conclusions, they state, "*IOM Post Office has recently put into place changes which re-shape its Island-wide retail counter network to reflect changing customer demand....*" however, the report totally ignores the fact that Governments deliberate actions have exasperated this situation by Government taking away funding for local public services previously provided at our regional Post Offices.

The Isle of Man Post Office, which describes itself as a 'Hub', continues to be a valuable nationally owned public asset, and any funds Government expends to provide local services at the Post Offices ultimately benefits Government and every region.

The IOM Post Office regional retail network provides a vital all island community support network for local public service and Government should be utilising and investing in the Post Office to provide such community services throughout the Island Government should not be actively undermining and destroying the viability of the IOM Post Office network by introducing such ill thought out policies, which this report unfortunately promotes.

END

Castletown Town Commissioners Public Session meeting – 1st June 2026.

Chairman's Statement

Westhill House and grounds – P. A. 26/00122/B and Protection of Westhill House?

As the Commissioners have indicated on several occasions, when considering the proposed redevelopment of the Westhill estate in Arbory Road, the Commissioners agreed not to oppose the redevelopment proposals. Subsequently, the matter of retaining Westhill House and having it listed as a protected building has been raised. The Commissioners were of the view that there was inadequate information to promote or support the Registration of Westhill House.

The Commissioners were conscious of the initial comments of the Government's Senior Registered Buildings Officer and accepted that his advice was important if we were to support any proposal to protect Westhill House by having it placed on the Registered list.

Since the Commissioners' initial decision, we agreed to meet and had a very helpful meeting with Mr David Bellamy, and we have subsequently received correspondence from individuals and organisations, which has provided much valuable information regarding the House and grounds, which has been most helpful regarding understanding the history behind Westhill House and its historic value, and the merits of Westhill House being given special protection under the Town and Country Planning Act 1999 by being added to the Protected Buildings Register.

The Commissioners therefore support the proposal that a detailed assessment should be undertaken by the Planning Directorate, providing a professional assessment to confirm or otherwise the historic importance and special interest of Westhill House to the Island, so that Westhill House can properly be considered for inclusion onto the Registered Buildings Register, prior to any planning decision being made regarding the redevelopment of the Westhill estate site.

It is therefore proposed that the Commissioners support the deferment of any final decision relating to the Westhill Planning Application 26/00122/B, which relates to the redevelopment of the former Buchan School site until a more detailed assessment has been completed and published by the Planning Office.

It is important to clarify that the Commissioners continue to support the redevelopment of the Westhill site to provide residential units within the Town; however, the Commissioners believe that the future status of Westhill House should first be clarified and resolved, prior to any final decision being made relating to the present planning application.

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