

GARFF PARISH DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday 19th October 2022, 7.00 pm

Commissioners' Offices, 35 New Road, Laxey

Minutes of the Meeting

Present: Mr S. Ryzak (SR) Chair, Mrs M. Fargher (MF) Vice Chair, Ms M. Christian (MC), Ms A. Creer (AC), Mr S. Clague (SC) [joined 8.15pm], Mr P. Kinnish (PK), Mr. J. Smith (JS) joined 7.06pm

Officers: Mr P. Burgess (PB), Clerk, Mr M. Royle (MR), Deputy Clerk/RFO.

Apologies: Mr T. Kenyon (TK), Julie Pinson (JP)

Also in attendance: Mrs Daphne Caine MHK, 3 Members of the public

7.00pm

Public Meeting

To open the meeting and request that Members consider this agenda and declare any interest that they may, or may be perceived to have, in its business.

The Chair read this item to Members. There were no declarations of interest at this point.

128/22

Meeting with Crogga Ltd.

Mr Pearce a director of Crogga Limited attended the meeting to speak to the Commissioners and those members of the public who had attended the meeting. Mr Pearce provided a range of information. Crogga have been granted a licence to appraise the gas deposit on the sea bed approximately 8-10 miles off Maughold Head: the total area of interest was 266 square kilometres. The area is within Manx territorial waters. Mr Pearce stated that other products could be manufactured from the gas such as hydrogen.

The former investigations undertaken by BP in the 1980s were noted. At that time 1 trillion cubic feet of gas was identified. Mr Pearce stated that Crogga anticipated an initial extraction of 100 million cubic feet of gas per year rising to around 300 million cubic feet in subsequent years.

If Crogga did go ahead and extract gas, the IOM Government has insisted that an element of renewable energy production be incorporated. To provide this Crogga would be working with a renewable energy company who would seek to provide a 'small' wind farm at an as yet undecided location. The extracted gas could be piped into the current pipeline running from Scotland via Isle of Man to Ireland, or it could be shipped as liquid natural gas (LNG) to Barrow in Furness or another suitable port – it was not intended to land LNG by ship on Manx shores.

Any permission and licence to extract gas would be terminated by 2048 in order that the Government's 2050 date to achieve net zero emissions be met. The benefit to Islanders was that the Isle of Man Government would benefit from a very significant VAT take once production commenced.

Mr Pearce explained how the gas would be extracted. Surface rigs would be in place initially and then periodically for maintenance for up to thirty days; but for much of the time the gas would be extracted through undersea manifolds and no equipment would be visible, he stated.

Mr Pearce stated that Crogga would like to begin drilling and when possible extracting gas in the summer of 2023, but this timing was dependent on many variable factors. Full Environmental Impact Assessments would need to be undertaken. Further seismic and other modelling surveys would also have to take place.

A Member asked how all this would fit into the Island's UNESCO biosphere status. Mr Pearce stated that this was not a matter that Crogga could comment on; rather it was a matter for the Island's politicians to determine. Varied and complex licence conditions particularly on emissions would have to be met throughout the extraction period.

Mr Pearce summarised the position by stating that at this stage options and their details were still being considered: there was much left to investigate. A range of factors would dictate the progress of the project. Mr Pearce intimated that many of the factors were variable and 'out of the control of Crogga'. These factors would be resolved in due course. The variables could impact on timings and the companies wish to begin extraction in summer 2023 was not a certainty.

The Chair thanked Mr Pearce for taking the time to speak to the Commissioners. This section of the meeting ended at 7.48pm.

129/22	Planning Matters
	Planning Applications
a)	22/01088/B - Installation of cantilevered timber deck around the existing house, timber decks on retaining walls to the east of the existing house, fence and retaining wall adjacent to southern site boundary and creation of parking bays to the west of the existing house. Savannah Clay Head Road Baldrine. <i>Deferred from meeting 5th October 2022.</i> <i>The impact on views from several directions were considered. It was not felt that these were significant. The consensus was that the style, scope, and size of the decking, etc was visually 'in keeping' with the modern style of the main dwelling. There were no objections to the proposals.</i>
b)	22/01145/B - Erection of a detached double garage with living accommodation / home office above. Primrose Lodge Slieau Lewaigue Lewaigue Maughold. <i>Deferred from meeting 5th October 2022.</i> <i>The impact on views from several directions were considered. It was felt that the proposed building would have some visual impact, but the consensus was that this would not be significant enough to cause concern. No objection.</i>
	Approval Notices (DEFA Planning Committee) - ntr
	Refusal Notices (DEFA Planning Committee) - ntr
	Appeal Notices (DEFA Planning Committee) - ntr
	Planning Enforcement (DEFA Planning and Building Control) - ntr
	Withdrawal Notices (DEFA Planning And Building Control) - ntr
	Demolition Notice (DEFA Planning And Building Control) - ntr
130/22	Approval of Minutes
a)	Approval of minutes of meeting of 5 th October 2022. <i>These were agreed to be a correct record of the decisions made. Proposed, JS. Seconded, MC. Unanimous.</i>
131/22	Matters Arising & Other Business
a)	Regional Sewerage Treatment, Laxey and Lonan. Meeting with Tim Johnston MHK, Chairman of Manx Utilities. Commissioners Board meeting Wednesday 7 th December 2022, at 7pm. <i>This was agreed to be an opportunity for Mr Johnston MHK to introduce himself to the Commissioners as MU Chair. The clerks were instructed to write to Mr Johnston to confirm the terms of the meeting. No further instruction.</i>
b)	MF – Re-opening of the Laxey Wheel. Letter of thanks and Congratulations to MNH. <i>SR, MF, and SC had attended the re-opening ceremony. SR and MF briefed Members on the event. The Wheel had been opened by Lady Lorimer MBE. The scale and cost of the completed works that had been committed to the refurbishment were noted, but further works were still required to re-instate the T Rocker. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Executive Director of MNH thanking them for the work undertaken and the financial commitment given to restoring the wheel.</i>
132/22	General correspondence - ntr
a)	Local Authority Nominations for Deputy Returning Officers - In accordance with the relevant legislation, Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) Act 2020 and also Elections (Local Authorities) Regulations 2022, we are seeking nominations from all Local Authorities for appointment as Deputy Returning Officers (DRO) for each Local Authority. <i>This matter was discussed. The requirements of the roles were considered. It was agreed that PB should be put forward to fulfil this function for Garff. Proposed, MF. Seconded, MC. Resolved.</i>
b)	Email dated 07.10.22 from Clara Isaac at Recycle Collect. – Request to meet with Commissioners to discuss opportunity to discuss Recycle collect's collections in the Garff area, our collections statistics and the future of our initiative. <i>The extension of the companies recycle collection service across Garff was noted: although very rural areas could not be serviced at the moment. There followed discussion of a 'min-recycling centre initiative that had recently been proposed by Bill Dale of Beach Buddies at a</i>

	<p>meeting. This would be a joint initiative between Beach Buddies and the Commissioners. MR directed the attention of Members to the current 'mini-recycling-centre which had been installed several years ago at the Coronry estate in Maughold: this made use of enclosed wheelie bins for a range of recyclables and was an example of the initiative proposed for Garff by Mr Dale. The Coronry initiative had proved convenient and successful for a small estate; such centres could be incorporated in other areas provided that appropriate locations could be identified. Further discussion of the live 'Recyclecollect' initiative took place. It was agreed that the directors of the company should be invited to speak to the Commissioners again at a future meeting. SR referred to the weight of business on the November and December agendas and proposed that representatives from the company be invited to come to the February 23 meeting.</p>
	<p>SC joined the meeting at 8.15pm following a prior engagement.</p>
133/22	Committees & Boards – By exception
134/22	Operational Reports
a)	<p>35 New Road – Approval of Audited Financial Statements - The Financial Statements for the Year End 31st March 2022 to be presented to the Board for approval. The Financial Statements had been given clearance by the auditors, received at the office and circulated to Members. <i>The completed audited accounts had been circulated to Members on the 17th of October. Several Members had not had time to fully digest the document and it was agreed to postpone further discussion until the extraordinary meeting on the 26th of October 2022. Consideration of the audited accounts would take place in public at this meeting. Once approved by the Board they would be forwarded to the LGU and posted on the Commissioners' website. It was noted that Garff were once again one of the first local authorities to have had their accounts approved by the auditors.</i></p>
b)	Cooil Roi –
135/22	<p>Any Other Urgent Business <i>(to be submitted in writing by mid-day the previous Tuesday to the date of the meeting).</i> <i>SC asked when the new lighting scheme on Mines Road would be completed as it appeared to have stalled. The clerks advised that MU had been contacted on several occasions and that further correspondence requesting completion had been issued on the 18th of October 2022. PK reported a street-light that had malfunctioned at Ballacannell in Lonan.</i></p> <p><i>A discussion in regard to rates debtors was initiated by AC. MR reminded Members that a report had been issued in August which outlined the projected costs of taking the responsibility for rate collection 'in-house'. This report had recommended that the Commissioners should continue to use Treasury as their collection agents. A local authority who maintained an 'in-house' system had been consulted and the detailed cost analysis demonstrated that an 'in-house' approach would not be cost-effective despite the perceived inefficiencies of Treasury whose charge was low in comparison. The Commissioners had resolved, however, to identify the more significant debtors and approach them directly to demand payment. This system would require further part-time staffing dedicated to the process. This would begin once staffing had been procured.</i></p> <p><i>The Public Session of the meeting was closed at 8.36pm.</i></p>
136/22	Matters in Private
	<p>Note: Local Government Act 1985, section 65; Disclosure of Information 'Any member or former member of a local authority who, without the consent of the authority, divulges any information communicated to him in confidence as such member shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1000.' <i>This legislation was noted by all Members present.</i></p>
a)	<p><i>A discussion took place in regard to the extraordinary meeting taking place on the 26th October to discuss the final details of the enhancements that will be undertaken to the Public Shelter on Laxey Promenade.</i></p>
	<p>The meeting closed at 8.40pm</p>

	Date of next Meeting 9 th November 2022
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