

	GARFF DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS Wednesday 7th February 2024, 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), Mr S. Clague (SC), A. Creer (AC), Mr T. Kenyon [apologies late: 7.15pm], (TK), Mr. J. Smith (JS). Officers: Mr M. Royle (MR), Deputy, Mrs J Mattin, Housing Manager. Apologies: Mr P. Kinnish (PK), J. Pinson (JP), Mr P. Burgess (PB), Clerk.
7.00pm	Public Meeting <i>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.</i>
	Opening Remarks from the Chair <i>SR thanked Mrs Fargher for representing the Commissioners so well at the three-day Boundary Review Inquiry. He stated that she had covered the issues comprehensively and done a 'sterling job.' Members thanked Mrs Fargher for attending along with SR, JS, and MR. The Chair of the Inquiry will report in due course.</i>
	Planning Matters
13.24.b	Cooil Roi Report <i>JM outlined the options in regard to the effect of heating charges on the rents paid by Cooil Roi tenants. Several options were explored to ensure that any future changes to rents were minimised. Members considered the options, and the consensus was that a 4% rise would ensure that an appropriate level of heating reserve was maintained. MF proposed that the heating element of the rental charges be raised by 4%. This was seconded by MC and Resolved.</i> <i>JM referred to the report she had circulated to Members dated 30th January 2024. The report covered Health and Safety, summarised the work carried out at the Complex in the period, and reported on a new payroll system that she was operating at the Complex. JM reported that the Resident's Committee had raised £1,784 for a range of charities including Sight Matters & Hospice. Members thanked the residents for holding the events that had raised the money. SR proposed that a letter be sent to the Committee congratulating them on their success. This was unanimously agreed.</i>
10.24.c	To discuss Management Response from the Board in relation to completed YE23 Audit (<i>document to be circulated 06.02.24</i>). <i>MR had circulated a report with responses to the Audit letter indicating the actions that had and were being taken to address the recommendations in the Auditor's Report for YE23. MR & JM advised that various procedural matters such as double authorisation of payments, IT policy, and a new payroll system had been improved. The report is a public document and can be viewed at the Commissioners' Offices alongside the YE23 audited accounts.</i>
08/24	Planning Applications
a)	23/01492/B Field 616167 Lower Ballabeg, Laxey Proposal: Erection of 3No 3kw/h wind turbines. https://services.gov.im/planningapplication/services/planning/planningapplicationdetails.iom?ApplicationReferenceNumber=23/01492/B <i>The Commissioners noted the report from the Eco System Policy Officer at DEFA objecting to the application and requesting additional information including bat and bird activity surveys and updated site plans. One Member commented that the proposed units would look more like transmitters than conventional wind turbines. Several Members indicated support for the proposals. Members considered the level of the visual intrusion that the turbines would cause, but the consensus was that these matters would not be significant enough to warrant refusal of an application for facilities which would provide cleaner power than other sources. The consensus reached was that the Commissioners had no objection to the turbines being installed provided that the information submitted satisfied DEFA that the turbines would not present an unacceptable threat to wildlife through their position, etc.</i>

b)	<p>24/00004/B Amagary Cottage Baldhoon Road Glen Roy Laxey Proposal: Single storey extension to the rear of dwelling. https://services.gov.im/planningapplication/services/planning/planningapplicationdetails.iom?ApplicationReferenceNumber=24/00004/B <i>MC declared a potential conflict of interest in this application and withdrew from the room for the duration of the discussion and decision.</i> <i>The location of the dwelling was noted, and the visual impact of the extension considered.</i> <i>The Board Resolved to submit no objection to the proposals.</i></p>
c)	<p>24/00041/B New Dwelling North Of Leithgate Highfield Drive Baldrine Proposal: Installation of an externally mounted twin wall flue system to serve wood burning stove. https://services.gov.im/planningapplication/services/planning/planningapplicationdetails.iom?ApplicationReferenceNumber=24/00041/B <i>Members expressed disappointment that a more traditional chimney had not been included in the design of this newly built dwelling. It was noted that to mitigate the impact of the metal flue a brick flue could be constructed. This would clearly add cost to the proposal but would be more visually sympathetic. Notwithstanding this, the Commissioners took a pragmatic decision not to object to the proposals.</i></p>
d)	<p>24/00089/B Site Office Laxey Glen Mills Mill Road Laxey Proposal: Replacement windows and doors (Retrospective). https://services.gov.im/planningapplication/services/planning/planningapplicationdetails.iom?ApplicationReferenceNumber=24/00089/B Members expressed great surprise that the windows had been replaced without planning permission on this Government owned building. This surprise was exacerbated by the fact that the building is within the Laxey Conservation Area. It was noted that the UPVC windows had replaced timber and were in a different colour and configuration. Members acknowledge the environmental benefits that new windows will bring but felt that this was no reason to circumvent the planning system. Members reiterated that it was extremely disappointing that a Government agency had felt it satisfactory to ignore the planning regulations which are supposed to apply to all organisations and individuals. The Board resolved to submit an Objection to the application on the grounds that the material, colour, and configuration of the windows had been changed, but also on the grounds of the procedural breach that had taken place.</p>
e)	<p>24/00022/B Brookside Glen Road Laxey Proposal: Removal of existing front walling and storage shed and formation of new garage / workshop adjacent to main dwelling. Existing parking to front of building to be retained. https://services.gov.im/planningapplication/services/planning/planningapplicationdetails.iom?ApplicationReferenceNumber=24/00022/B <i>AC & MC declared a conflict of interest in this application and withdrew from the room for the duration of the discussion and decision.</i> <i>The visual impact of these proposals was considered. The consensus being that these would be minimal. There were no objections to this application.</i></p>
f)	<p>24/00046/B Crowcree Ballaglass Glen Road Cornaa , Maughold Proposal: Proposed alterations and extensions to create additional living accommodation and replacement garage comprising of amendments to P.A. No- 20/00267/B. https://services.gov.im/planningapplication/services/planning/planningapplicationdetails.iom?ApplicationReferenceNumber=24/00046/B <i>The visual impact of these amended proposals was considered. The consensus being that these would be minimal. There were no objections to this application.</i></p>
g)	<p>24/00075/B Thalloo Queen Cottage Glen Mona Loop Road Glen Mona Proposal: Extension to Thalloo Queen Cottage (amendments to PA21/00340/B). https://services.gov.im/planningapplication/services/planning/planningapplicationdetails.iom?ApplicationReferenceNumber=24/00075/B</p>

	<i>The visual impact of these amended proposals was considered. The consensus being that these would be minimal. There were no objections to this application.</i>
	Approval Notices (DEFA Planning Committee) <i>The following approvals were noted. No further instruction.</i>
h)	23/01411/B Single storey extension to rear elevation in conjunction with replacement roof to single storey cottage. Removal of chimney stack. Linwood Cottage Ballabeg.
i)	23/01362/B Erection of bicycle store and storage sheds. Methodist Sunday School Glen Road Laxey.
j)	23/01305/B Re-rendering of the external finish. Queens Hotel New Road Laxey.
k)	23/01166/B Erection of a garden room to replace a shed and a separate decking platform (retrospective). Maycroft Minorca Hill Laxey.
l)	23/00966/B Removal of existing garage and erection of extension together with a garden shed. Slieu Ruy Highfield Drive Baldrine.
m)	23/01045/B Proposed alterations and extension to dwelling to provide replacement garage and additional living accommodation, together with erection of a detached garden room building to rear garden. Ben Veg The Colony Port Lewaigue.
n)	20/01472/B Installation of garden terracing and river storm defences and extension to residential curtilage (retrospective). Cornaa House Ballaglass Glen Road Cornaa.
o)	23/01055/B Conversion of garage to ancillary accommodation. 2 Marguerite Cottages Glen Road Laxey
p)	23/01148/B Erection of external decking area (part retrospective). Bramble Brae, New Road, Laxey IM4 7HS.
q)	23/00382/B Removal of boundary wall and associated landscaping and erection of 2 sheds to the rear (retrospective) Inglenook, Fairy Cottage Laxey.
	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
09/24	Approval of Minutes
a)	Approval of minutes of meeting of the 10 th of January 2024. <i>These were agreed to be a correct record. Proposed, TK. Seconded, JS. Resolved.</i>
10/24	Matters Arising & Other Business
a)	<i>Feedback from MF & SR in regard to the Ramsey Boundary Extension Inquiry. MF gave Members a summary of the recent Inquiry into the proposal from Ramsey Commissioners to extend the town boundary into parts of Maughold and Lezayre. She stated that no evidence presented at the Inquiry by Ramsey met the terms of the six criteria that the proposal should be measured against. MF felt that the extension proposal was premature because the Area Plan for the North and West was due to be published this year, and, in addition, the Strategic Plan was undergoing a root and branch review. MF advised that the Inquiry Chair had changed the Inquiry schedule and allowed the Ramsey Commissioners to give their witness statements on the second day instead of the third. This meant that Lezayre's advocate, who was absent due to a previously arranged engagement, had been unable to cross examine the witnesses. MF said that this had disrupted her attendance at the hearing as she also had to leave early on the second day due to another engagement. She felt that this part of the Inquiry had not been handled satisfactorily or equitably by the Chair.</i>

	<i>There followed discussion of the costs incurred by Garff as a result of the process. MF advised that the Inquiry Chair had stated that he would consider claims for costs from Garff and Lezayre. It was agreed that Garff should submit costs to cover attendance allowance payments to MF, SR, JS, and MR and submit them to the Inquiry Chair.</i>
b)	<p>Proposal from a Laxey business for signage on the Promenade and at other locations listing businesses operating in Laxey.</p> <p><i>The correspondence had been circulated. The proposed had suggested advertising boards with a map of Laxey to show visitors where the various retail and food outlets are located. The proposal was for Laxey businesses to contribute to their funding. The general consensus was that this would be a good idea. Possible locations for the Boards were considered, but not decided. It was anticipated that one would be in the Laxey Promenade area and one in upper Laxey, perhaps in the Rose Gardens. MR was instructed to investigate options for production and funding of the Boards and revert to a meeting in due course.</i></p>
c)	<p>To discuss Management Response from the Board in relation to completed YE23 Audit (<i>document to be circulated 06.02.24</i>).</p> <p><i>This matter was moved forward to the beginning of the meeting (see above).</i></p>
d)	<p>To note: Correspondence from a resident in regard to difficulties accessing the ECAS site. <i>Please also note the response from a senior officer at ECAS also circulated by email 01.02.24</i>.</p> <p><i>The response from ECAS to the resident's letter was noted. It appeared that although average wind speed was not too high on the day (25mph), there were significant gusts of in excess of 32mph. It was agreed that this was a Health and Safety matter and in high winds closure was necessary to safeguard the staff and public. On the other day, the site had closed early because traffic had been unusually heavy, and all the skips had reached capacity. TK to raise these matters with the ECAS Committee at the next meeting with a view to seeing if there are any operational means to mitigate against closure when the site is busy.</i></p>
e)	<p>Feedback following the meeting with the Archdeacon regarding church properties on 29th January 2024.</p> <p><i>SC, MF, PK, JS, MR & PB had attended the meeting. SC advised that the Archdeacon was investigating options for the future of All Saints Church. These included having the roof repaired with monies that had been ring-fenced for maintenance of the building. Other options were to remove the roof and to demolish the Church. Neither of the latter were thought feasible because the walls and other parts of the structure would quickly decline if there were no roof, and demolition costs would be prohibitive. SC stated that if the roof were repaired it would be possible to open the Church for funeral services and also for use by the community. He said that there was a great deal of support in the Lonan community for something to be done, but volunteers needed to step forward and form a group to run the building for the community. If the Church were hired out the monies received could be used to pay for maintenance of the building. It was noted that there were several important features in the Church, including two war memorials, which had been designed by Archibald Knox. These were unique and must be preserved.</i></p> <p><i>MF advised that the Commissioners' proposal to make more use of the Dhoon Church Field for the community had also been discussed. The Archdeacon had signalled that she would be supportive of such use for the field and had suggested that the Commissioners write to the Ramsey and Northern Parishes PCC. This would involve mowing the field several times a year, installing some picnic benches and perhaps some goalposts. The Board agreed to write to the PCC to initiate discussions on this matter. The Archdeacon had also been briefed on progress with refurbishing Kirk Maughold Cross House and the plans of MNH to safeguard the Celtic/Norse crosses held there.</i></p>
11/24	General correspondence -
a)	<p>D Day 80th Anniversary – Email from cabinet office enquiring as to any plans that may be proposed in respect of the Local Authority. Email circulated 31.01.24.</p> <p><i>It was noted that D-Day fell during TT. This mitigated against organising any large events. MC proposed investigating whether any Garff residents were involved at the time of the D-Day landings and presenting the information in some way depending on what was discovered. MR was asked to use social media to try to find out information. Members were also asked to forward suggestions for any other actions the Commissioners might take to mark the anniversary.</i></p>

12/24	Committees & Boards – By exception
a)	<i>MC reported that the Laxey Fair Committee was organising the event on the 6th July. The Commissioners would supply logistical assistance and other non-financial support. The Committee and School were thanked for the hard work they were putting in to revitalising this year's event.</i>
	<i>JS reported that a meeting had taken place the previous evening with the DESC Minister to discuss operating the regional swimming pools. JS had attended with other representatives of the Northern Pool and with representatives from the Western Pool. He advised that the meeting had been very positive particularly as the ways in which the regional pools can work more closely together had been identified. The meeting had also discussed ways of working closely with the Department in regard to obtaining green energy grants.</i>
8.55pm	<i>MF gave apologies and left the meeting to attend another engagement.</i>
13/24	Operational Reports
a)	35 New Road <i>A document listing works currently being undertaken was circulated to Members at the meeting. This was noted.</i>
b)	Cooil Roi – <i>This item was discussed at the beginning of the meeting (see above).</i>
14/24	Any Other Urgent Business <i>(to be submitted in writing by mid-day the previous Tuesday to the date of the meeting).</i>
a)	<i>SC asked if there had been any response from the Department regarding the poor condition of the road down to Garwick Bay. MR reported that an acknowledgement had been received but to date no indication had been given about when any works would take place. Speaking through the Chair, Mrs Caine MHK asked if the Board would like her to contact the Department to request that works were carried out as a matter of urgency. MR to forward images of the condition of the road to Mrs Caine.</i>
b)	Invitation from His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor to 'All at Sea' an exhibition about the Island's maritime heritage at the House of Mannanan, 5.00-7.00pm, Thursday 22 nd February. <i>SR to attend.</i>
c)	Captain of the Parish Award - Members had been invited to attend the presentation of a Captain's Award to the Laxey Skiff Building Community Project at 12.00 noon on Saturday 10 th February at the Commissioners' Long Shed on Laxey Promenade. <i>This was noted.</i>
15/24	Matters in Private
	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.'
a)	Proposal from Island Rover for an additional dedicated pitch at Laxey Campsite <i>(circulated 1st February 2024).</i> <i>A contractual matter in regard to use of a second pitch was resolved.</i>
b)	Campsite steps – Matter passed to Authorities insurers. Clerks to update. <i>MR reported that a Member of the Public had had an accident on the DESC's steps up to the school and campsite. This had been referred to the Authority's insurers for investigation.</i>
c)	Sheltered Housing Provision <i>The Board approved rent calculations for Cooil Roi provided by JM.</i>
	Meeting closed at 9.14pm Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 6 th March 2024