

LAXEY VILLAGE COMMISSIONERS

Monthly Meeting

Wednesday 6th August 2014 6.45pm

Meeting Minutes.

Present: Mrs R. Bate, (RB), (Vice Chairman), Mr J James, (JJ), Mr P Kinnish, (PK), Mr AJ Moore, (AM), (Chairman), Mrs J. Pinson, (JP).

In Attendance: Mr P Hill Deputy Clerk.

Guest Speaker: Mrs L. Beckett. (LB).

Members of the Public: Mr & Mrs L. Roome; Mr W. Snelling, Mrs P. Burgess.

Apologies: Mr P. Burgess, Clerk.

Meeting Commenced at 1846 hours.

AM welcomed the members to the meeting, advised everyone present that they must switch off all electronic equipment and welcomed **LB** to the meeting, and then handed the meeting over to her.

41/14 **LB** introduced herself and appraised the Members of what she, with others, were trying to achieve by creating a Manx Fun Palace in Laxey. It is an historical trail through Laxey on 4th and 5th October and which is something for all of the Community, free, local, innovative, transformative, engaging and inspired by Laxey's heritage to create a vision for the future. She advised the Members that this could take any shape, woodwork, weaving, theatre groups for under 21 year olds. In answer to a question she stated that the Event was island wide and had to take place on 4th & 5th October and the Island of Culture was heavily involved. She stated that she sought financial and practical support from the Local Authority and an active involvement. Costs were discussed and figures between £2000.00 and £25000.00 were mentioned, but this may be recoverable from a budget set aside by the Government. At the conclusion of the briefing the members fully supported the initiative and **AM** proposed that a meeting be arranged between all interested parties, Government and Members, on Monday 11th August at 1100 hours. Seconded by **PK**, supported by all. **LB** to make contact with Emma Quirk to arrange said meeting. **AM** thanked **LB** for the briefing and she left the room at 1910 hours. Action
LB

38/14 Planning Matters

Planning Applications

a) Planning Application No 14/00861/B of 17.07.14 in respect of Repaving of public footpath, erection of highway signs and erection of a bus shelter at bus stop at New Road, including Corners of Church Hill and Captains Hill, Laxey. [LVC Ref: 3683]. *A discussion took place and the main source of concern was the extended pavement outside the Cooperative Shop, which they believed could be counterproductive to vehicles entering and leaving Baldhoon Road. However, they supported the rest of the proposals. Application approved with caveat to remove/reconsider pavement extension.* PH

b) Approval Notices (DoI Planning Committee)

Planning Approval Notice No 14/00757/B of 31.07.14 in respect of retrospective application for erection of a retaining wall of gabion baskets along the boundary with Manx Electric Railway at land adjacent to Rockwood, Ramsey Road, Laxey. [LVC Ref: 3679]. *Refused by LVC.*

Planning Approval Notice No 14/00764/B of 04.08.14 in respect of installation of external flue at Harbourside Cottages, 3, Tupperts Terrace, Tent Road, Laxey. [LVC Ref: 3680]{Delegated Powers}. *Approved by LVC.*

Planning Approval Notice No 14/00765/C of 04.08.14 in respect of change of use from tourist accommodation to residential at 1 Glen Roy Cottages, Laxey. [LVC Ref: 3681]{Delegated Powers}. *Approved by LVC.*

c) Refusal Notices (DoI Planning Committee)

None.

- d) **Appeal Notices (DoI Planning Committee)**
None.
- e) **Planning Enforcement (DoI Planning and Building Control)**
None.
- f) **Planning – Correspondence**
None.

39/14 Approval of Minutes - Minutes of the mid monthly meeting held on 16th July 2014 were presented for approval.

The Minutes of the Mid Monthly Meeting held on 16th July 2014 were examined for accuracy, and it was unanimously resolved they represented a correct statement of events.

Proposed by **RB**, Seconded by **JJ**

Mobile phone of P. Burgess rings at 1921 hours.

40/14 Matters arising out of the minutes 16th July 2014.

- a) **PK – 34/14(a)** – Referred to the original agenda item 27/14(a) of 02.07.14 and that the matter of quantity and locations needed to be determined. A discussion took place and it was agreed that a total of six Noticeboards should be erected, 3 stand alone and 3 fixed; stand-alone at Whitehouse Square, Coach Park, Promenade; fixed at the Commissioners’ Office, Football Club and to be determined. Clerk to obtain quotation. Whilst on the subject of Noticeboards, **JP** raised the matter of publicising the dates of the Commissioners’ meetings so that the public could be made more aware and given the opportunity to attend and observe. She produced a specimen poster that could be displayed. A discussion took place. **JJ** quoted Standing orders and **JP** retorted that she had raised this matter two meetings ago and it was not new. It was agreed that the matter should be raised and dealt with at the next meeting.

PB
JP

JP/PH

41/14 General correspondence

- a) *Dealt with at commencement of meeting – Manx Fun Palace.*

LB

- b) Resident emails at 1702 hours on 21.07.14, with observations in respect of visitors the Laxey.
A week last Thursday I spent a day (9am –6pm) working in the vicinity of the Laxey coach park and pedestrian crossing near Black’s Fireplaces. (I was painting railings). I was located on the pavement between the bus stop and the Mines Road junction with a clear view of the coach park and roadway and this gave me the opportunity to observe a number of issues which I feel may be of interest to various parties including the Commissioners, the Regeneration Committee and the Department of Transport. During the day a number of tour coaches parked in the coach park and unloaded dozens of passengers. **1.** The first thing I noticed was that because the coaches reverse in to the park, they completely obscure the new Laxey Mini bus timetable information board from view. Because passengers alight from the left hand side of the coaches they are stepping into the carpark with their backs to the board so none of them know it’s there (unless their driver tells them which didn’t seem to be happening). From the number of visitors who stopped me to ask is there a shuttle bus?/ where does the shuttle bus park?/ how often does the shuttle bus tour the village? etc etc it struck me that the board was completely invisible in its current location. Perhaps, if the board was re-located by the new wooden benches it would be more visible to visitors? **2.** The other point that seemed evident as the day went on was the ‘invisibility’ of the shuttle bus itself. I knew what it was but that’s because I live in Laxey. Some visitors even watched it drive by then asked me if there was a shuttle bus?! I couldn’t help thinking its ‘Transport’ livery makes it look too anonymous (smart but grey with only a small sign above the driver’s window). How about a white background with a large red Laxey Wheel logo or something on the side to make its purpose more obvious? **3.** As tourists came off their coaches the majority seemed very confused about where to go next and how to get from the coach park to the tram station. Virtually none of them used the pedestrian crossing but I soon realised this could be because the paintwork on the crossing is very faded and it is not easy to see from the coach park until you’ve already started to cross the road. Also there is so much background signage, tram wires etc near the

PK/JP
PH

crossing that the belisha beacons are not immediately evident. Throughout the day many visitors (the majority of them over-60s) risked life and limb by heading straight across the tram lines and Ramsey Road across what is a very busy (and sadly often too fast) corner. Many of them were obviously attracted by the signs by the Valley Gardens entrance for the little railway so they headed straight for them. **4.** Many visitors throughout the day asked me where they could catch the Mountain railway. Even though there are signs pointing to it they seemed not to register where they should go to. Again, there seems to be so much signage in that part of Laxey in such a variety of styles and heights that visitors are bamboozled rather than guided. **5.** Could I suggest the production of a small, simple, free village map featuring all major attractions and facilities, to be placed for visitors by the benches in the coach park? Then they can study it and get their bearings before they attempt to cross the road. A few years ago I drew one up as an idea, based on a sample I had brought back from a holiday in Lyme Regis. I would be happy to provide a similar example for the Commissioners if they thought it was worth pursuing. In Lyme Regis such maps are provided in all the shops, post offices, galleries, museums etc and it proved invaluable and made our holiday so much more enjoyable. I hope these observations may prove useful. *The subject matter was fully discussed and it was agreed that the Resident should be thanked for her observations and that she should write to the Department of Infrastructure. The Board resolved that they would defer this matter to the regeneration Committee for consideration.*

c) Isle of Man Government Treasury emails at 1153hrs on 23/07/14 in respect of Local Government Audit & Assurance review, advising the tender process is now completed and the related legal agreements finalised. Please see Press release. *Noted.*

d) Letter from Andrew Smith to Laxey Commissioners thanking them for their support on the occasion of the Laxey Fair. *Noted.*

e) Local resident attends at 0915 hours on 30.07.14 with a photograph of litter by the Promenade Café taken at 0715 hours on Tuesday 29th July 2014. His Wife cleared it up. *PH*

Clerk to write a letter of thanks for their public spirited action.

f) Laxey & Lonan Heritage Trust writes on 30.07.14 regarding the toilets situated in the Fire Station Car Park. The Directors of the Trust are concerned about the poor condition of these facilities following numerous complaints received in the Heritage Shop. They want to know if there are any plans to modernise these facilities as they do not show Laxey in a good light. *A discussion took place and they unanimously agreed that the toilets were in a poor state of repair. It was agreed that action should be taken and AM suggested setting a maximum budget of £15,000.00. PK proposed support for this and JJ seconded. JP was against the proposal on the grounds that before setting a budget you should carry out proper research to establish how much a refurbishment would cost and then see if it was capable of budgeting for, and adjusting where possible to meet that criteria. RB stated that as they were planning for the erection of toilets at the New Road end of Mines Road they needed to be prudent and an over-spend on these toilets could compromise this. No instructions were given to the Clerk to progress either way.*

g) The OFT has today issued a Consultation on proposed changes to the scope of the Financial Services Ombudsman Scheme and would welcome your views on this matter. The consultation is being held for a period of six weeks and responses should be received by this Office before 5pm on **Wednesday 10th September 2014.** *JJ to report back at the next meeting.* *JJ/PH*

h) Mrs Pinson writes on 30.07.14 as **THE PROPRIETOR of the PROMENADE CAFÉ.** Regarding refuse disposal issues at and around the Café. The proprietor would like the Board to discuss this issue and the appropriateness of the bins and their location. Further she comments on litter that was scattered around the Café and the actions of a local resident to clear it up. **This item is placed on the Public Meeting Agenda for 6th August at her request.** (NOTE – See papers to the Meeting – 6th August 2014, item 41/14(e). Copy of photograph attached at White Papers - a). *PH/ AK*

A discussion took place during which JP correctly took no part other than to answer a question put to her by RB in relation to Commercial Refuse Charges. It was resolved that it would be sensible if

this matter could be discussed with the Refuse Contractor and the Clerk was directed to invite them to the next meeting.

- i) Mrs Pinson writes on 29.07.14 as **THE PROPRIETOR of the PROMENADE CAFÉ**. She expresses concerns about competition against her business in respect of the application by a Laxey resident to set up a mobile Ice Cream and cake selling business using a Vintage Bicycle. She explains her concerns and the possible impact this could have. Further she requests that the Board decision to recommend approval is re-examined a policy on issues like this formulated. **This item is placed on the Public Meeting Agenda for 6th August at her request.** *AM requested that JP leave the room as this matter was a clear conflict of interests. She declined to leave but correctly took no part in the discussions. It was resolved that this matter had already been determined within the previous 65 days, thus it could not be revisited at this time.*
- j) Mrs Pinson writes as a **COMMISSIONER** regarding the Commissioners Office at 35 New Road. She expresses her concerns about the general state of repair and requests a full discussion to evaluate and progress any actions necessary in the public interest. **This item is placed on the Public Meeting Agenda for 6th August at her request.** *AM outlined the history of this matter and costs and valuations that had been presented by various Consultants and Valuers. A heated debate took place regarding the future of the Commissioners Offices and what action should be taken to address the problems associated with its condition and viability. AM expressed the view that the cost of repair would be equal to if not greater than the ultimate value of the building and it was unlikely that the Government would support any financial assistance or loans to achieve this end. All Commissioners took part in the debate. JP believed that more work needed to be done to be able to make a balanced decision and that public opinion should be considered, as it was their asset. It was resolved to note the letter and contents*
- k) Mrs Pinson writes as a **COMMISSIONER** regarding Works and Amenities following a tour of the Village with Mr Kinnish. She requests that the maintenance and repair schedule is explained to her and wants to meet with the Clerk and Maintenance Operative to discuss these issues. She would be happy if another Commissioner accompanied her. **This item is placed on the Public Meeting Agenda for 6th August at her request.** *PK believed that this matter should be dealt with in Private as it concerned Staff, but it continued in Public. JP said that she simply wanted to know how works and amenities were prioritised and would like to be able to meet with the Clerk and Operative to discuss this so as to give her a better understanding and ability to respond to questions or complaints from the Public. AM advised her that as a Commissioner, she was always welcome to attend the Office with any queries and she should arrange so to do, but as the Operative was immediately answerable to the Clerk, the meeting should be with him.* JP
- D) Peel Town Commissioners Invitation of 04.08.14 to their Civic Sunday Service on Sunday 21st September 2014 at 1100 hours at Peel Methodist Chapel, Atholl Street, Peel, followed by refreshments. RSVP. **RB and Spouse to attend.** RB/PH

42/14 **Committee Reports**

- a) **Municipal Association** – Roz Bate – *Stated that she was unable to attend due to health problems.*
- b) **Laxey & Lonan Heritage Trust** – Peter Kinnish – *Stated that he was unable to attend the last meeting but understood that there was a problem with the painting of Lady Evelyn, which Laxey Commissioners were underwriting. A meeting with the Contractor is being arranged to resolve this.*
- c) **Cool Roi Housing Authority** – Andrew Moore Jeff James – *He had nothing to report.*
- d) **Laxey & Lonan Sports and Community Facilities** – Jeff James – *He had nothing to report.*
- e) **Garff Joint Initiative Committee** – Roz Bate, Vacancy, meeting 30.06.14. – *AM Stated that the Next meeting was on 13th August. The matter of the vacancy was discussed and JP stated that she would be happy to fill this. Consequently she duly elected.*
- f) **Northern Traffic Management Liaison Committee** – (Next Meeting – 21.10.14). Roz Bate, Peter Kinnish – *PK expressed his concern about parking at the top of Old Laxey Hill which was compromising road safety and that there were no parking controls in place. A discussion took place* PH

and it was resolved that a meeting on-site should be arranged with the relevant Highways Officer to discuss any action that could be taken to address this perceived problem.

- g) **Laxey Youth Initiative** – Roz Bate, Jeff James – *Nothing to report.*
- h) **Regeneration Committee** – Peter Kinnish, Julie Pinson – Meeting dates - 27.08.14 – **PK** advised the Board that the last meeting was cancelled and there was nothing to report.
- i) **Eastern Civic Amenity Site Joint Committee** – Andrew Moore - *Nothing to report.*
- j) **Works and Amenities** – Andrew Moore, Peter Kinnish - *Nothing to report.*

43/14 **Chairman's Report**

There was nothing to report.

44/14 **Any Other Business**

- a) **JJ** – requested that action be taken regarding blocked drains around the Promenade which had blocked during recent heavy rainfall and both he and other residents were fearful of flooding. PH
- b) **PK** – Commented on the state of the Village and referred to two properties at the top of Lhergy Graw that were in a poor state of repair. He continued about the condition of the railings at the End Café which were in need of attention. He said that he had been in contact with Messrs Robinson and Clark at the Department who said that they would meet with him, but nothing has happened. **AM** suggested preparing a list of works for the attention of the Department and that Robinson and Clark should be contacted. No directions were given regarding the preparation of the aforementioned list. PH
- c) **JP** – Brought to the attention of the Board an apparently abandoned vehicle and trailer parked on land opposite the Football Ground and what steps could be taken to remove them, as it was an eyesore and deprived others of a valuable parking facility, particularly if there was a match on. A discussion took place regarding the powers that were available to the Authority and it was resolved that a poster should be placed on the said vehicle/trailer asking the owner to remove them. PH
- d) **RB** – asked what had happened to the two kiosks at the Station. It was established that they were located near to the former Bank and that they were supposed to be being restored. She added that a Lonan Resident had offered to fully pay for the restoration herself and it was resolved to refer the matter to the Regeneration Committee for consideration. No directions were given to the Clerk. PH
- e) **RB** – Informed the Board that a rope swing that had previously been removed by the Commissioners on safety grounds had been replaced by one of the parents and sought Board approval to remove it together with the branch from which it hung. This was agreed by all. PH
- f) **AM** – Nothing to Report.

As the Public part of the Meeting was now concluded, AM requested the Public Members to depart and they did so at 2038 hours.

Meeting Closed at 2110 hours.

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 20th August 2014 1000 hours.