



**Port St Mary Commissioners
Report on Finance and Operations
For 6 months to
30th September 2015**

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION.

The work of Port St Mary Commissioners is tightly interwoven with the health of our village. It is gratifying to hear that the increased efforts that we are putting in are noticed by the people who live work and visit here.

This last six months have been marked by:

- a redoubling of our efforts to improve the visual aspect of the village and
- assuming of additional responsibilities from central government providing us with, not only more work, but a welcome control over the condition of our village.

This report, and the data it is founded on marks a step change in the quality of management information that we now have over our operations. The Board now have the ability to understand and direct our operations more closely than we had previously and are focused on delivering a balanced range of outcomes for our community.



I commend this interim report to you. It is not only a good read, but describes a community that is striving to be the best that it can and is contributing regionally and nationally to the development of this island.

Mrs B McCabe,
Chairman

CONSERVING OUR VILLAGE

Much of the work that we do is based on our strategy to make the village a beautiful, safe and friendly place to live or work in. It is not possible to describe every aspect of this work but some of the major threads are:

DIRECT LABOUR OUTCOMES:

Over the last six months we have operated a Direct Labour Squad of six men led by a working Foreman. They are the backbone of the day to day management of the village and are engaged in landscape and street maintenance, refuse disposal and recycling.

Their wage costs came to £88 000 and the activities can be summarised as follows:

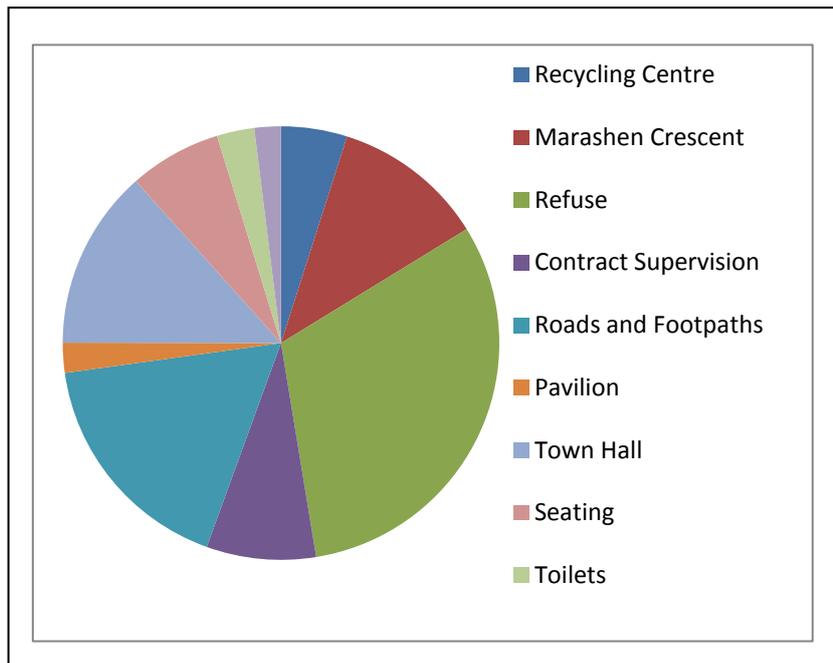
£8 500 of the costs have been spent working for other organizations:

- The Southern Recycling Centre:
- Marashen Crescent Housing Committee
- Rushen Commissioners

When we work for other organizations it is on a contracted, full cost recovery basis.

In a change to previous years we expect our squad to reduce by two members over the winter season, a profile which more accurately reflects the flow of work.

The largest cost we have incurred at £16 420 has been the labour element of refuse disposal and recycling. This however is reduced from the same point last year.



On 30th September we completed the 12 month trial of kerbside recycling. During the trial we diverted 94.57 tonnes of waste from the Energy from Waste plant and saving ratepayers £11 200 compared with the cost of incineration. Over the coming few months we shall be considering how to improve on these outcomes.

Within these costs is the cost of New Duties assumed from the Department of Infrastructure. We have taken on responsibility for street sweeping, maintenance of gullies, hedges, verges and minor street repairs. These have incurred a manpower cost of £9 078 and a capital cost of £9 900 equipping our workshop with the necessary equipment. It is likely that the over a full year the cost of these New Duties will come close to the £30 000 which we had budgeted for it.

CONTRACTED WORK

While our Direct Labour Squad manage the day to day maintenance of the village, we rely on contractors for more specialist works. Over the year we have employed landscaping contractors for 25 man days maintaining either trees or bankings where specialist access equipment is needed.

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

One of the main purposes of the Commissioners is to support the community of Port St Mary. In pursuit of this we have provided:

HOUSING

The Commissioners operate 125 rented properties. Over the six months we have had an occupancy level of 99% in our properties with an average void time of 1.6weeks.

During the reporting period we have had two major contracts running to maintain our housing stock. The first was to replace windows in The Paddocks and Creggan Beg. This was completed ahead of schedule and within budget and has been welcomed by tenants.

The second was to replace soffits, gutters and fascia boards and remove chimneys in both Barna Beg and Links Avenue. This will also finish within the projected timescale on 17th October 2015 and budget.



All administrative requirements of the Department of Housing have been met on time with quarterly returns always being submitted ahead of the deadline.

The Board are committed to maintaining a balance in the demography of our village and recognise the potential requirement to assist young families to live here. During the period we have been pursuing the development of four shared-equity houses on a site that we own adjacent to Chapel Gate Car Park aimed firmly at this market.

TOWN HALL:

Our Town Hall has been the subject of a major refurbishment since 2012. It is now in its last phase and during the reporting period we have completed the fit out to a quality standard. Following the completion of structural repairs last financial year we have installed a theatrical sound and light system, purchased chairs and tables that make it useable as a multi- purpose venue. These purchases have been 75% grant assisted by the Manx Lottery Trust.

Recognising that the Town Hall only suits larger events, we have developed the West Room at a cost of £15 000 as a community room for groups of up to 40 people. Bookings are building up having already hosted a 9 day exhibition, business meetings and a training day. Enquiries or bookings are being received for family parties, a nine day corporate training events and night classes. This facility complements the Town Hall by providing the "village hall" facilities for smaller groups that are missing from so many communities today.

PLAYING OUR PART IN ISLAND LIFE

We contribute fully to the regional and national roles in our island. The Commissioners, or their staff attend the following Boards:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Marashen Crescent Housing Committee | Southern Civic Amenity Site |
| Isle of Man Municipal Association | Southern Police Liaison Group |
| Southern Swimming Pool Board | Isle of Man Waste Working Group |
| Southern Housing Working Group | SW Regeneration Committee |

Through our office we provide contract management, clerk and administration services to both Marashen Crescent Housing Committee and the Southern Recycling Centre.

STAFF RESOURCES

During the reporting period we have carried average of 10 staff, three of whom worked in the office. During the reporting period we had a staff absence rate of 3.34%. All staff absence has been professionally managed with return to work interviews taking place on every occasion.

We filled a long standing vacancy for a Finance Officer.

All staff are subject to staff appraisal process with 6 monthly interviews.

FINANCES

Management accounts for the six month period to 30th September 2015 are unaudited and therefore cannot be published. These accounts show finances for Housing and Rate borne matters separately. These accounts have already been overseen by our accountant, Ian Begley of SMP Partners who has expressed no reservations about them.

HOUSING ACCOUNTS

The Housing accounts are very much in line with expectations. Rents have risen by 3.3% over the period. The amount spent on housing maintenance has risen due to more active management of the Housing stock.

RATE BORNE ACCOUNTS

Our rate borne expenditure is also progressing in line with expectations. These figures include:

1. £15 000 spent on the development of the West Room as a public hall:
1. £9 000 was spent on street sweepers which is a capital cost:

THE COMING SIX MONTHS

The winter months always demand a change of focus for our work. Instead of landscape management our staff will be more focused on

- street cleaning,
- gulley emptying
- maintenance of street furniture.

We shall also ensure that they are trained and able to deal with any arising issue over the stormy winter months.

There will be a number of civic occasions starting with our Remembrance Service followed by our highly popular Celebration of Christmas.

During the winter we intend to re-decorate our Board room. This was last done in the 1970's and is looking tired. This will be done using a blend of our own staff and, where required, specialist tradesmen.

There are two Strategic Working Groups meeting in the island considering the future of Housing and Waste Management. We are proud to be represented on both Boards and shall ensure that the voice of our community is heard when reaching decisions that shall impact our tenants.

In summary, Port St Mary Commissioners are working hard to deliver a balanced scorecard of outcomes for the benefit of our community.