

## **Minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015 @ 09.45am in the Council Chamber.**

<b>Present:</b>	Hon. Pamela Ward Pearce	-	Chairperson
	Hon. Gavin Ellick	-	Deputy Chairman
	Hon. Cyril George	-	Member
	Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex	-	Member
	Hon. Christine Scipio-O'Dean	-	Member
	Mr Derek Henry	-	Deputy Director of ENRD
	Mr Nicky Lawrence	-	Secretary
<b>Invited:</b>	Mr Mike Durnford	-	Environmental Risk Manager – Item 2
	Mrs Debbie Parkinson	-	Observer
	Miss Lucy Cranfield	-	Finance Manager – Item 4
<b>Absent:</b>	Mr Trevor Graham	-	Director (Overseas Leave)

The Chairperson welcomed everyone present and opened the meeting.

### **Open Agenda.**

#### **30.1 Matters arising from minutes of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015.**

##### **Disused Burial Grounds.**

##### ***Amendment to minute of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015 for clarification.***

*'At the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July it was noted that at the meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> June it was agreed that there was a need for a new Ordinance'.*

The Access Office is still waiting to hear from Committee if approval has been given to their original request which is:-

*'In order for the disused burial ground in Rupert's to be used for the development of the Access Road, the Burials Ordinance requires that a declaration is made by the Council Committee for the area to be declared for a public purpose, in this case for the use of road and fuel pipeline alignment.'*

After the meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015 the Deputy Airport Project Director (DAPD) circulated a Site Map to members defining the area which needed to be declared a disused burial ground for the purpose of installing a fuel pipeline and access road. Members had originally objected to this proposal due to the area being a burial ground for Liberated Africans.

The Deputy Director reminded members that when Development Permission was granted in 2008 the Environmental Statement made provisions for the excavation, research and re-interment of archaeological remains.

The majority of members felt that if there is *no alternative* they will grant permission provided the relevant protocols and procedures for the preservation

of human remains are followed. Secretary was asked to inform Access Office of their decision.

It was noted by a Member that plinths for the pipeline have been installed before Committee's formal approval.

Because of this they expressed disappointment and concluded that the application received was just a 'paper exercise' as the works had commenced before permission was granted.

**Action: Secretary**

#### **Duke of Edinburgh Playground.**

The Roads Manager and Civil Engineer has been asked to present a planning application to the Planning & Building Authority for the change of use of the Duke of Edinburgh Playground (DoE) to a Car Park in readiness for the Land Development and Control Authority meeting in September or October.

There were concerns about the public toilets being placed out of order for safety reasons and it was asked if can there be interim measures for the public to have a convenient facility. The Deputy Director will look into this.

A member said that it was encouraging to see trees being lopped and the workers should be commended when the job is completed.

**Action: Deputy Director**

#### **Jamestown Parking Review.**

The Roads Manager was revisiting the Business Case to incorporate additional information regarding alternative methods of collecting fees other than just using parking meters. The use of scratch cards had been suggested but this has not progressed any further. A member asked why there has been no progress and was told it was because of lack of resources due to the Roads Manager being off island. Members expressed concern that so many Officers from one Directorate are on leave at one time and said this matter should be highlighted as an issue for Executive Council (ExCo).

A member asked that the JTPR be given a high priority with a December deadline. Committee is concerned about the lack of progress of the Jamestown Parking Review and the Deputy Director was directed to give this a high priority following the return of the Roads Manager.

**Action: Deputy Director**

### **Road Traffic Ordinance.**

A member asked what progress is being made with the Road Traffic Ordinance (RTO) and was told that the RTO Working Group has not met since their initial 'brainstorming' session. A member of the RTO working group told Committee that this was due to the Chief of Police (CoP) being off island and lots of issues in the RTO involved Policing.

### **Traffic calming at Red Hill.**

The Deputy Director told Committee that when this section of road is upgraded under the R1 project it is planned to install 'road humps' in this area. A member asked if there is a timescale for this to be undertaken. Another member asked if this could be done as soon as possible rather than wait for the road works to start. The Deputy Director said he would look into this, bearing in mind that resources would have to be diverted away from other planned work.

**Action: Deputy Director**

### **Roads Works Programme.**

The Deputy Director told members a Roads Inspector was appointed in July this year and one of his task's is to inspect all island roads and put together a works programme showing the work required, time required and the cost and priority of the works.

The Roads Inspector is currently working on this programme to be completed by December of this year. A member asked what has happened to the works started by the Roads Manager. The Deputy Director will check progress made.

**Action: Deputy Director.**

### **Community and District Roads.**

The Deputy Director reported that assessments of the 48 applications for Community & District Road funding are almost complete. Some applications do not qualify because there are not enough residents on the road and some have had funding in the past. The Roads Inspector is finalising assessments. A member reminded Committee that people who had funding last year were told that this was part funding and they should re-apply again this year. However, this depends on the outcome of the assessment.

### **Land and Buildings Disposal Policy.**

The final draft Land & Buildings Disposal Policy (L&BDP) will be completed soon apart from the Evaluation Criteria which needs to be developed by staff of the Environment and Natural Resources Directorate (ENRD). A final draft will then be sent by email and a special meeting held if there are other issues to address.

**Action: Deputy Director**

### **29.3 Release of housing land for development.**

The target is to release 15 plots in year one and 20 plots in year two. A member asked what is the progress and the Deputy Director said that the plans are currently underway to release eight (8) plots of land in the upper Half Tree Hollow area.

### **Illegal Importation of live fish and Bee Equipment.**

Members asked if there could be more public awareness on this matter and the Deputy Director undertook to look into it.

**Action: Deputy Director**

### **Scott's Mill Complex.**

The Head of the Agriculture & Natural Resources Division (ANRD) had forwarded a paper to the Estates Strategy Panel (ESP) in November 2014 requesting that the building be earmarked for Agricultural use.

The Chairperson asked for the paper to be circulated and she would follow up with the Chair of the Estates Strategy Panel.

**Action: Chair/Secretary**

## **30.2 ENRC Memo – Horse Point Landfill Site opening and closing times.**

The Environmental Risk Manager (ERM) presented a memo seeking approval from Committee for the proposed opening and closing times of the Horse Point Landfill Site (HPLS). The memo also gave background information on the HPLS which provides St Helena's waste management facility. The HPLS processes domestic waste, bulky waste, green waste, hazardous waste and the thermal treatment of select biosecurity, medical waste and hazardous wastes in a Macrotec V708 incinerator.

In addition, a public recycling facility has been created, to provide a safe area for disposal of wastes whilst reducing the need for public access to the wider site. Progress is also being made in the development of a waste recycling programme to enable some of the more significant waste streams to be processed and exported.

The ERM also indicated that there are plans to reintroduce the collection of bulky waste such as old furniture, refrigerators etc. Members of the public will be able to call EMD and ask for collection of this waste. The ERM will advise if the waste is acceptable or not i.e hazardous waste will not be accepted. There is no need for additional resources or budget. This service will be free of charge and collection will be made with a Landrover and trailer. The Chairperson said this is a good service and was glad that it is being reinstated.

An updated HPLS Operation Manual and a Hazardous Waste Incinerator Operational Manual have been produced. The procedures outlined in these manuals have been designed to meet the requirements for airport certification and operation to reduce the risk of bird strike at the airport.

To safeguard valuable infrastructure, plant and equipment, procured primarily for airport certification and operation, it is proposed that the HPLS operates under the following times:-

Monday to Saturdays – 09.00hrs to 15.00hrs.  
Sundays and Public Holidays – Closed.

These hours of operation will be strictly adhered to, however, in the event of an emergency, or as deemed necessary, SHG may provide or authorise access to the site at alternative times.

Members were not happy with these operating hours and wished for the HPLS to be opened seven days a week. The ERM explained that this is not possible due to Health & Safety issues, lack of resources and insufficient budget.

The Chairperson asked the ERM if he would prepare a new paper outlining what is needed for the HPLS to effectively operate Monday to Sunday. The ERM agreed to prepare and circulate a paper via email to members with a view to discussing it at the special meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

**Action: Environmental Risk Manager**

### **30.3**

#### **A Bill for an Environmental Protection Ordinance.**

Due to this being a lengthy document members asked for this item to be deferred for a special meeting. It was agreed for this meeting to be held on the 01<sup>st</sup> September 2015. Secretary to confirm time and venue.

**Action: Secretary**

## 30.4

### **Report on Financial Performance for period 4 – 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.**

The Finance Manager (FM) presented the Financial Performance Report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

#### **Expenditure.**

Members were informed that the sum of £936,385 was budgeted and the sum spent was £908,374 which left an underspend of £28,011. There were also total outstanding commitments of £188,617. As requested at the last meeting explanations were given for all variances exceeding £1,000.

A member asked for an update on Fisheries Protection and Policy. Another Member indicated that a tender process is ongoing and expected to be finalised by the end of August. The member also asked if £33,210 committed for procurement of pesticides which had been delayed will be spent soon and was assured that this should be sorted by September or October. .

A member asked how Accrual Accounting works. The FM explained that SHG operates a partial accrual process and not a full process as was explained by the Head of Accounting Services in the recent budget discussion. Under the old cash accounting system, expenditure and revenue was recognised when cash was physically received or paid, under accruals accounting, expenditure and revenue is recognised at the time of sale or receipt of goods etc.

A member questioned an overspend on roads. The FM explained that this overspend was largely due to works undertaken for Connect St Helena. The Directorate is currently pursuing an application with the Financial Secretary to spend some of the revenue collected from these works in order to offset the overspend.

Under the area Lands & Building a member questioned an overspend on Office Furniture. The FM advised that the furniture was not budgeted for but was approved by the previous Head of Property & Housing. This was processed during the time the FM was on overseas leave so she was not aware of the finer details.

The member also asked about the changes in the Customer Services Centre (CSC) and where was this work budgeted from. The FM will look into this.

The member also asked why the post of Rockguard had not been advertised and the Deputy Director indicated that a headcount was awaited which should become available in October. There is soon to be a retirement in the Roads Section which will be converted to the Rockguard post.

There was an overspend on Street lighting which was attributed to the electricity bill.

The FM stated that some of the underspends resulted from errors in forecasting and to address this, the budget has been re phased from 01 July to

end of March. The budget will be reviewed at the end of each quarter as circumstances change.

### **Revenue.**

The budgeted revenue was £174,146, however with £150,000 collected from Connect St Helena the actual revenue was £316,208 with a variance of £142,062.

A member questioned reimbursement of international calls made by a staff member and was told that a member of staff had used the telephone for personal reasons and was required to pay for the call – this is standard SHG practice.

Veterinary collections were questioned and the FM explained that beginning in August when sales are made during the monthly mobile clinic in Jamestown, these will be cash sales rather than customers being invoiced.

A member referred to the sale of Marine Documentary DVD's not previously budgeted for and asked if revenue from the sale of the Marine Books will be coming back to the Directorate. The FM explained that the cost of making the DVD's and Books were borne from the Darwin Project funds, therefore revenue from the sales will go back to the Marine Section, however it will form part of the consolidated fund like all other revenue collected.

Members thanked the Finance Manager for her presentation and said her explanations were very helpful.

## **30.5 Renaming of the Haul Road.**

There was an overwhelming response from school children who entered into a competition to rename the 'Haul Road'. Because so many names had been suggested Committee decided that a site visit may be appropriate and preferred names could be shortlisted to about six names. It will also be decided if different sections of the road may be given individual names.

It was decided to have a site visit on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August at 13.00hrs. The winners of the competition will receive £15.00 book vouchers.

Secretary was asked to arrange transport with the Access Office for 12.30pm outside the Castle.

## **30.6 Parking in front of Court House.**

This item was moved to the Highway Authority Agenda at the request of the Chairperson.

**30.7**

**Any other urgent business.**

**St Helena Map.**

A member asked what is the progress on the new St Helena map. The Deputy Director said that there was a request for it to go back for public consultation before going to Executive Council but will confirm this

**Action: Deputy Director**

**Policy for collection of endemic plants.**

A member asked if this policy has been endorsed by Committee. Secretary to check if comments have been received from all members of the ENRC.

**Action: Secretary**

**AVEC Building.**

A member asked for an update on the AVEC Building. The Deputy Director said that the building had been vacated by the Education Directorate to enable the Police Service to move there. However, the Police do not require the building now and the Education Directorate has expressed interest in using it again.

Enterprise St Helena (ESH) has also made application for the building to be used until December this year whilst the Market is being refurbished.

**Basil Read Blasting.**

A member said that Basil Read is currently doing all the blasting for quarries on the island. This used to be done by Infrastructure & Utilities. The private sector who operate the quarries are extremely concerned about what will happen when Basil Read withdraws. Each Quarry has its own trained shot firers but there are issues with the importation, storage and legislative issues regarding explosives.

The Deputy Director said that this issue has been raised with the Directorate and . Is being followed up. He said legislation will need to be drafted to enable the private sector to continue this core business.

**Progress on Terms of Reference for Council Committees.**

A member asked what progress has been made on the Terms of Reference (TOR's) and have they been finalised. The member was told that the TOR's have been looked at but there is need for a final comparison before bringing it to Committee.



### **Field Road.**

The Chairperson said that constituents of Rupert's had asked if there could be some remedial work on the Field Road such as earth moving and stone clearing because it becomes very slippery after rains. The Chairperson was informed that there is an agreement with Basil Read to undertake spot clearing when necessary. However, major works on the Field Road will be undertaken under the R2 project when the Haul Road is handed over to SHG in 2016.

### **Delegated Powers.**

The Chairperson asked that persons having delegated powers be reminded that any decisions they make they should inform Committee.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.45pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at 09.15am in the Council Chamber.**



Confirmed.....Date.....11.09.15.....