

Minutes of the 8th Meeting of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee held on 23 January 2014 @ 09.00am in the Council Chamber.

Present:	Hon. Cyril George	-	Chairman	
	Hon. Wilson Duncan	-	Deputy Chairman	
	Hon. Gavin Ellick	-	Member	
	Hon. Mrs Christine Scipio-O'Dean	-	Member	
	Mr Derek Henry	-	Acting Director, ENRD	
Invited:	Mrs Carol George	-	Corporate Services Executive	
			Manager – Item 8.1	
	Mr Leon de Wet	-	Deputy Director – Connect St Helena –	
			Item 8.2	
	Mr David Taylor	-	Head of P&DC – Item 8.3	
	Mr Dave Malpas	-	Roads Manager – Item 8.3, 8.8.	
	Mr Ben Sansom	-	Head of EMD – Item 8.4, 8.5, 8.6	
	Dr Judith Brown	-	Darwin Project Manager –	Item
			8.4, 8.5, 8.6	
	Mr Nicky Lawrence	-	Secretary	

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Open Agenda.

8.1 Public Transport.

In welcoming the Corporate Services Executive Manager the Chairman explained that ENRD is now responsible for Transport and asked if she could update Committee on the progress of Public Transport. The CSEM said that there are two contracts in operation namely Colin Williams and Joshua's Taxis and went on to explain how they operate. She stated that to take public transport forward it must operate on a more commercial basis which must fall to the provider and not be borne solely by SHG.

Members expressed concerns about the bus timetables and stated that they were not suitable for Nursing Staff and some areas were not serviced when needed. CSEM assured members that she would look into these matters. The Acting Director also explained how the timetable was compiled after public consultation, visits by members of the former Legislative Council and by questionnaires. Many other questions regarding timetables, especially pickup times for Nurses, bus service to Levelwood, Thompson's Hill And Rupert's were fielded by members which CSEM assisted by Deputy Director responded to.

Plans are in hand for a review of the Public Transport arrangements by an independent consultant when Terms of Reference are approved.

Chairman thanked CSEM for her valuable input and indicated that she would be invited to a future ENRC meeting for a further update.

Action: Chairman

8.2 Connect St Helena Ltd.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Leon de Wet the Deputy Director of Connect St Helena Ltd. The main reason for inviting him to the meeting was to ask for an update of the activities of Connect St Helena and the progress to date.

Mr de Wet gave a detailed and informative report on subjects such as water treatment and storage capacity, electricity generation and sewage management and also informed members of plans for future developments of these utilities. Members raised many questions on these topics and also on Connect's Budget and they were provided with appropriate answers. He stressed that Connect St Helena is still in its infancy and inevitably there will be minor problems.

The Chairman thanked Mr de Wet for his input and said he would be invited to a meeting at a later date for a further update.

Action: Chairman

8.3 Parking layout in Jamestown.

The Head of Planning & Development Control presented a recommended revised parking layout in Main Street. The advantages and disadvantages of the layout were explained to members who in turn informed Head of P&DC that the plan in question had been rejected by Committee and Legislative Council at previous meetings. Chairman to approach Clerk of Councils to follow up on ExCo minutes from 2010 regarding the subject and determine what decision was made. Head of P&DC to be updated thereafter.

Action: Chairman

8.4 Whale Shark Policy.

The Head of the Marine Section and Director of EMD took members through a draft Environmental Policy for Whale Shark and Cetecean interaction activities on St Helena to minimise risk and disturbance to the animals. Committee was asked to comment on the Draft Policy before it is being put forward for public consultation. Members raised a few questions which were addressed and approval was given for the document to be put out to public consultation.

Action: Head of EMD

8.5 Environmental Research Permitting Policy.

The Head of EMD explained the purpose of the Policy which is to protect the Islands Endemics from being over exploited. However, he stated that the Policy is still in draft stages and he would like to bring it back to Committee at a later date for approval. Members agreed.

Action: Head of EMD

8.6 Draft Environmental Protection Ordinance Update.

The Head of EMD briefed members on the various headings of the Draft Ordinance and gave an explanation for each. He indicated that he will meet with the Attorney General soon to finalise the draft. Because this is a 78 page document it was suggested to have a special meeting to review it. A member asked for an update on Climate Change Research and Crayfish Policy to which the Head of EMD responded.

Date of special meeting still to be agreed.

Action: Head of EMD

8.7 Budget Update.

The Acting Director took members through the ENRD budget explaining the position up until December 2013. Members raised various questions which were responded to by the Acting Director.

The Chairman requested that the Committee be updated on a monthly basis which was agreed.

Action: Deputy Director

8.8 Upkeep of Deadwood Plain Road.

A member enquired who was responsible for the upkeep of Deadwood Plain Road when the Haul Road is completed. It was assumed that the Haul Road would meet with the existing road and then to resident's homes in Deadwood.

Roads Manager explained that the road will be broken into sections with 4 to 5 homes in each leading to a Cul-de-Sac and play areas which will enable the roads to be maintained to a reasonable standard.

Action: Roads Manager

8.9 Cross cutting issues.

No issues were raised at this meeting.

8.10 Matters arising.

Affordable Housing.

8.10.1

Members requested an update on the motion that was presented at Formal Legislative Council in October 2013 if SHG should continue with the scheme it had for self-help affordable housing to meet the overall aim of economic growth and social development. Chairman stated that he has arranged to meet with Clerk of Councils in connection with an ExCo meeting on this subject held in March 2012.

Action: Chairman

8.10.2 Community Roads.

Residents have been informed of the process to receive funding and have been made aware that the money needs to be spent by the end of the Financial Year. The Deputy Director informed Committee that to date he has not received any invoices for materials. To be followed up.

Action: Deputy Director

8.10.3 Disposal of SHG Assets.

Matter will be dealt with by the Estates Strategy Group which will meet in early February.

Action: Estate Mgmt Advisor

8.10.4 Estates Strategy Group.

The Deputy Director informed Committee that the TOR's for the Estates Strategy Group were being revised and circulated and comments are expected by end January with first meeting anticipated to be held in early February. Composition of the Group to be circulated to members later.

Action: Deputy Director

8.10.5 TC Officers.

It was agreed that new TC Officers for the Directorate will be invited to the Committee meeting as part of their induction.

Action: Chairman

8.10.6 Longwood Road

Members discussed issues from the previous night's meeting at Harford concerning works to Longwood Road. Committee decided to invite representatives from the Access Office, Basil Read and Project Management Unit to attend a Special Meeting of the Highways Authority on Wednesday 29 January 2014.

A further Public Meeting will be held on the **5 February 2014 at Harford Community Centre.**

8.11 Any other business

8.11.1 White Gate to Red Hill road.

A member enquired if the condition of the White Gate to Red Hill road had been rectified. Roads Manager replied that the contractor had done some work but was still not completed. Members suggested that a letter be sent to the contractors regarding the matter.

Other issues concerning roads were discussed and it was agreed that the legislation needs updating so that improvements can be made.

Action: Chairman

8.11.2 Bonus for Roads Workmen.

A member expressed huge disappointment that the workmen did not receive a bonus upon completion of the Briars to Gordon's Post road upgrade. Roads Manager replied that the matter is still being considered but there are policies in place which must be followed. Roads Manager informed committee that this matter will be taken up with Human Resources.

Action: Roads Manager

8.11.3 Erection of Scaffolding.

Chairman informed Committee he had received a late request from a contractor requesting permission to erect scaffolding in Market Street to repair and paint a roof. Members approved but suggested that Chairman remind the contractor that future requests must be made within adequate time.

Action: Chairman

8.12 Next ENRC meeting will be held on 10 February 2014 @ 10.00am in the Council Chamber.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.50hrs.

Confirmed..... Date.....