

**NOTES FROM CONSTITUENCY MEETING HELD AT ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, RUPERTS
ON 7 NOVEMBER 2013**

MLCs in attendance - Hon Mrs BA Olsson, Hon IS Rummery

There were 8 members of the public present.

The meeting was opened by Cllr Rummery who welcomed all present. The first topic was the Lucy Faithful Foundation Report.

Lucy Faithful Report

Cllr Rummery explained the background to the on-island visited which had resulted in the recent summary report being issued and the work that the organisation undertakes. He explained that a more detailed report had been issued to key officials in SHG and that it would not be appropriate to circulate that more widely, as it would be possible to identify the individuals in certain cases. Recommendations from the report were being taken forward by Social Services and the Police but the need for the community as a whole to safeguard its children was acknowledged. One constituent asked whether there were any explanations as to why child abuse had occurred in the community. Cllr Rummery expressed the view that the island has a certain tolerance towards relationships between young women and older men and that it may be necessary to change attitudes towards these relationships. It was also necessary to think ahead to when access to the island is enhanced through air access, with the possibility of young girls becoming impressed by men arriving from overseas who are attractive to them and sexual grooming occurring. One constituent commented that parents need to take responsibility and need to be educated to talk to their children about the dangers of becoming involved with older men.

Roy Sainsbury Report

Cllr Rummery gave the background to this report being produced and explained the thinking behind the introduction of a Minimum Income Standard. He also explained that in future, IRB and BIP levels would be pegged at the Minimum Income Standard, rather than trying to calculate a % increase each year.

Cllr Rummery explained that IRB and BIP levels would increase by 7% wef 1 December 2013. Cllr Rummery explained that households in receipt of Transitional Protection payments may not necessarily benefit from the increase; it was noted that there were relatively few households on transitional protection. The Sainsbury report had made various other recommendations which needed to be given further consideration. The controversial 'Household' basis for awarding IRB had been looked at and whilst there might be some changes, it was not intended to revert to the pre-legislation system when IRB was awarded on an individual basis. The possibility of taking forward the recommendation to introduce child benefit would take time to introduce, as it would

cost around £100k per year. Possible changes to awards of Disability Allowance and Occupational Therapy payments were also being considered for the longer term.

A further change was that SHG pensions would be linked to BIP, so the same % increase would apply to SHG pensioners.

A query from a constituent was raised regarding the fairness of an older person's IRB being discontinued because an adult child had returned to the island to care for their parents, so their income was taken into account. They was also having to pay for the cost of the parent's medical treatment and some low income pensioners are not entitled to free prescriptions because they are not entitled to a BIP. Cllr Rummery explained that staff were following the rules in treating this case in this way but some people do fall foul of the system. The way forward was to look at individual cases and see what they have in common and then see if the rules can be changed to meet their needs, with the rules being fair and fairly applied.

Communication

Cllr Rummery explained that MLCs are trying to deliver as much information as possible to the public, in the spirit of openness and transparency. He asked for views on whether more information needed to be made known and the method in which it could be communicated for optimum effect. One constituent felt that radio was a good means of communication. Cllr Rummery asked in there were any specific issues constituents would like to talk about and if they prefer the MLCs providing the information rather than the government? He added that MLCs would work on the possibility of more open agenda items for committee meetings and for ExCo, elected members were now able to comment on whether or not they were of the view that an item should be included in the 'open' or 'closed' agenda when the memo was circulated in draft. He was also of the view that ExCo Memos should be made public in the future.

Cllr Rummery gave an example of the recent press release about the asphalt plant procurement coming about as a result of concerns and questions from the public, with SHG issuing the press release to set out what had transpired. A similar example of giving accurate information was that relating to the steel framed houses. He added that SHG had introduced new Procurement Regulations which should ensure that there would not be a repeat of the asphalt plant procurement errors.

Update on Ruperts Wharf Development

David Taylor was in attendance to provide an update on progress. He explained that the planning application had been issued for public consultation until 18 November 2013. Any comments would be taken back to the Land Planning Agency and then a recommendation would be put to Executive Council. Mr Taylor explained that consultation on the Ruperts development plan was overlapping the wharf development consultation, with the draft being considered by the Land Planning Agency on 6 November, which was happy in principle but requested a few 'tweaks' to the plan. The recommendation would be considered by the ENRC on 14 November which would be followed by 8 weeks of public consultation, then further

consideration by the Land Planning Agency , ENRC and then final consideration of ExCo in the New Year. If all parties are happy that will then be the development plan for Ruperts.

Mr Taylor explained that the plan for the wharf would 'organise' what would happen to make the rest of the plan work, with areas 'zoned' for certain activities.

Mr Taylor highlighted that no provision had been made in the plans for prevention of rockfall which could be a cause of concern for the Authority. A question was asked about whether or not there would be a customs building. It was commented that on the Falklands, a peripatetic service operated for customs and immigration and that might be considered. Alternatively, the former SHFC building could be used if premises are required. There has also been some concern that the beach would not be open to allow for recreation when the port was functioning and it had been suggested that pedestrian access to the beach could be via the culvert. A question had also been raised about the road needing to accommodate a weight of more than 14 tons and the agency has asked that this be addressed, with another public meeting following in a month's time.

General Questions

A constituent inquired about progress in the acquisition of a fishing ship for the Island. Cllr Rummery was not aware of the current position and could not speculate as to financing of it.

A question was asked as to whether any provision for housing had been made on the beach side. MR Taylor was able to advise that there had been. He further advised that commercial premises should not have doors opening to the valley side.

A question was asked about a future coastal road to Jamestown. Mr Taylor stated that it was physically possible but funding would be an issue. He also commented that it would not be ideal for Jamestown, as the traffic from Ruperts would be arriving in a future wharf leisure area.

With regard to paid car parking in Jamestown, Cllr Rummery reported that this was to be considered by the relevant committee with a view to freeing up car parking spaces in Jamestown, which would be further enhanced by a robust public transport system. With regard to re-paving in Jamestown, some constituents commented that the recent ducting and re-paving had resulted in unsafe pavements in some places, as they were uneven. Cllr Rummery reported that this was to be discussed by the ENRC meeting on 14 November.

Cllr Rummery asked views of constituents about the proposal for bollards to be placed on the pavements when the new paving stones were in place. This would prevent parking on pavements which would result in the new paving stones becoming broken and would allow Jamestown to become more 'pedestrian friendly'. A response was that the bollard in the road near the Bridge should have reflective tape put on it to make it more visible at night.

The meeting ended at 20:10.