

**Reburial of Liberated African Remains –  
Stakeholder Group Update on Progress to Date**

**Background**

1. A stakeholder group was established to identify what is to be done with the skeletal remains discovered in Rupert's Valley between 2008 and 2014. As part of this work, a consultation took place in 2015 to gauge views both locally and internationally, as to what should happen to the remains currently stored in the former Pipe Store.
2. Approximately 250 people responded to the consultation and the results indicated strong feelings to rebury in Rupert's Valley. The outcome of the consultation was endorsed by Executive Council who also designated a plot of land in Rupert's Valley (Plot RV0082) which is currently the Temporary Fuel Store. This is expected to be released before the end of 2017.

**Progress to date**

3. A new stakeholder group was established in April 2017 with a mandate from Executive Council to rebury the remains in the allocated plot at Rupert's. The tasks to achieve this will include determining and overseeing the following;
  - Archaeologist contracts – guidance and advice
  - Concept Designs
  - Detailed Designs (public roadshow) & Planning permission
  - Casket / Coffin design & ordering
  - Landscape contracts
  - Planting
  - GPS location Contract
  - Reburial itself
  - Dedication Ceremony
4. Outline Development permission was requested in April 2017 and granted in May 2017 with a 12 month timeframe to submit a detailed design although a new outline application can be submitted for an extension to this timeframe.
5. The first meeting of the new stakeholder (chaired by Lee McMahon) was held in April 2017 and agreed the following:
  - Draft ITT's for Caskets,
  - Archaeologist call down contracts & Concept Designs (all drafted but not peer reviewed or issued). The delay in issuing was due to lack of funds and the need to reapply for capital funding
6. A follow up meeting was held in Sept 2017 ( the delay being due to Purdah and the allocation of new councillors to the stakeholder group), the meeting was unable to progress the work already started as members raised the following points;
  - Why are we reburying and is this the best site?
  - Is this best for ST Helena?

- What about Research & Tourism?
  - Why is the group not bigger (including input from the academic & wider world?)
  - The survey does not give a fair and balanced view of the islands wishes (not enough respondents to the survey) do we need to arrange another?
  - Need to identify with painted stones the other identified Grave Yards in Rupert's
  - The need to approach the wider world to raise funds e.g. New York
  - What Memorial will be erected & how to mark the graves (this was already expected to be part of the concept design ITT)?
7. The Executive Council decision was explained to the group and members were informed that no changes could be made to the mandate without Executive Council approval.
8. There is currently no budget in place although a Business case has been submitted to Capital programmes to request funding.

#### **Key Risks**

9. The project is currently at risk because of a lack of funding and because there is a lack of support from members of the stakeholder group for the original mandate