

**OPEN AGENDA PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

Copy No:

No: 59/2017

**Memorandum for Executive Council**

**SUBJECT**

**Potential Sites for Proposed New Build Prison**

Memorandum by the Acting Chief Secretary

**ADVICE SOUGHT**

1. **Council is asked to consider and endorse three sites, all of which have been identified as suitable for the potential construction of a new Prison for St Helena Island. Approval is also sought for these sites to be taken out to public consultation before a final decision on a preferred site is taken by this Council.**

**BACKGROUND & CONSIDERATIONS**

2. Internal security is a Governor's special responsibility under the Constitution. There have been a number of assessments made of the Prison with the most recent being in 2013 and 2015 by the Prison Advisor for the Overseas Territories and the Southern Oceans Prison Advisor respectively. Both assessments have described the Prison Building (built in 1826) as being totally unsatisfactory in physical terms and unfit for purpose.
3. Work has been ongoing to identify potential sites for a new build prison which complies with HM Prison and Police Standards and which will be adequate for the needs of the Island going forward. It has taken some time to identify a suitable site, and this Council has recognised that the situation is becoming urgent and has given priority to resolving this issue.
4. On 14 August 2017 Legislative Council members and SHG officials attended a site visit at Bottom Woods to look at potential areas where a new Prison for St Helena could be constructed. Three sites were identified:
  - Corner of Meteorological Station Road and Haul Road
  - West of Meteorological Station
  - Goat Pen Area
5. The Project Manager (Employee of Turner and Townsend) undertook an investigation of the three potential sites which considered the following criterion:
  - Her Majesty's Prison and Police standards (previously National Offenders Management Service (NOMS) standards),
  - SHG Planning Regulations,
  - Operational Considerations,
  - Programming Considerations and
  - Estimated Cost considerations of the 3 identified sites

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6. An analysis of the sites is presented at Annex A.
7. The findings were presented to the Prison Project Board on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017. Project Board members accepted the findings and proposed the presentation be made to Legislative Council.
8. A subsequent presentation was made to Elected Members on the 20 September 2017. Members agreed that they would want to undertake a period of public consultation to ascertain the public's view on all three sites.
9. It was therefore agreed that Council would be asked to endorse the three sites, and to approve a period of public consultation to enable Executive Council to take account of the views of the public before deciding on a preferred site to be taken forward for planning permission.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. Expenditure incurred on the works completed to date by the Project Manager in undertaking the site investigations is being funded from the Capital Programme.
11. Endorsing the three sites as potential areas for a New Build Prison, will not incur additional expenditure.
12. There will be costs associated with the public consultation however, these are expected to be minimal and will be covered from the Capital Programme budget.
13. There will be significant costs associated with the building of the new Prison once the decision is taken on the preferred site and planning and building permissions have been obtained. It is envisaged that the Prison project will be included in the DFID Business Case for the Capital Programme which we hope will be forthcoming soon.

### ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

14. There are no economic implications arising from this paper.

### CONSISTENCY WITH INVESTMENT POLICY PRINCIPLES

15. Not applicable

### PUBLIC / SOCIAL IMPACT

16. The site for a new Prison has attracted much public attention in the past and concerns have been raised about the Prison being located in heavily populated areas. Further public attention is expected when the three potential sites are endorsed by this Council.

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### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

17. An initial Environmental Assessment of all three sites is currently being undertaken and once completed will help to inform decision making in determining a preferred site.

One of the sites, (Corner of Meteorological Station Road and Haul Road) is within the Millennium Forest Nature Reserve's planted area and therefore presents significant environmental issues. If this site were to be chosen as the preferred site, a licence to remove species protected under the Environmental Protection Ordinance, 2016 would be required.

Environmental issues for the other two sites are less significant although both sites are within National Conservation Areas. Environmental issues apparent relate to change in land use, visual impact and general construction impacts.

It is anticipated to have the Initial Environmental Assessment completed by 29 September (pending feedback from National Trust) and the findings will be made available during the public consultation period.

### PREVIOUS CONSULTATION / COMMITTEE INPUT

18. No previous consultation has taken place regarding these sites.

### PUBLIC REACTION

19. Endorsing the three sites is expected to raise both negative and positive reaction. However, the Public Consultation process which will follow will ensure full engagement with the Public.

### PUBLICITY

20. The Public is aware that an alternative site for the New Build Prison needs to be identified. Publicity will form part of the Public Consultation process which will be the next stage once endorsement of the three sites is provided.

### SUPPORT TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

21. This paper supports the following National Goals
1. Altogether Safer

### OPEN /CLOSED AGENDA ITEM

22. Recommended for the open agenda.

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Corporate Support  
The Castle

20 September 2017

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