

**Minutes of the 18<sup>th</sup> Open Meeting of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 @ 10:30am in the Council Chamber.**

<b>Present:</b>	Hon. Russell K Yon	-	Chairman
	Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex	-	Deputy Chairperson
	Hon. Gavin G Ellick	-	Member
	Hon. Cyril K Leo	-	Member
	Hon. Cruyff G Buckley	-	Member
	Mr Derek Henry	-	Director of ENRD
	Mr Nicky Lawrence	-	Secretary
<b>Invited:</b>	Ms Isabel Peters	-	Chief Environmental Officer (Item 3)
	Ms Ludi Kern	-	Invasive Plant Specialist (Item 2)
	Mrs Samantha Cherrett	-	Ag Marine Conservation Officer (Item 3)

**Welcome.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present and proceeded with the Open Agenda of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee.

**Open Agenda.**

**18.1 Matters arising from Open Minutes of 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018.**

**Safety concerns about Jamestown Run.**

This matter will be followed up in the January 2019 meeting.

**Heritage Report.**

The Director reported that input is still required from the Chartered Engineer. It is anticipated that the revised report will be presented at the January 2019 meeting.

**Action: Chartered Engineer/Director**

**Road Traffic Regulations.**

The Regulations are still with the Attorney General's Office who will identify areas for the ENRC to address.

**Action: Chairman**

**Environmental Protection Ordinance.**

This is being addressed in the closed session.

### **Request for approval for Government Landlord House designs.**

The Director reported that expressions of interest have been received to construct a pilot house and tenders are now being sought.

**Action: Head of Property**

### **18.2 Update on ‘Namibian Iceplant’.**

Ludi Kern, the Invasive Plant Specialist presented an update on the ‘*Namibian Iceplant*’. This particular species is a perennial herb with pink or white-ish pink flowers about 4-5mm wide. This invasive plant was first seen on St. Helena in February 2017 by Mikko Paajanen, whilst working as an Ecologist on the LEMP Project. The plant was observed mainly within the boundaries of the Airport, however it has since been identified outside of this area mostly where some of the imported sand from Namibia was either stored or used. The current control and monitoring actions in place are centred around public awareness, how to identify this species and reliance on the public to inform the Invasive Plant Management team of particular areas where the plant is believed to be growing. To date the team has accounted for over a thousand plants found in locations in and around the airport but are also concerned that these plants can germinate as far as 150 metres away from its presumed original propagule source. The plant can produce an estimated 95 to 300 seeds annually. The plant can be eradicated successfully if immediate action is taken and information shared by all. Most of the plants found so far were disposed of through double bagging and/or incineration.

#### **Invasive species update.**

A member was interested in the future plans after completion of the Invasive Plant Management Project and asked if will there be guidelines for each specie, how to control invasive species, best trialling methods, next steps to sustain and improve on going forward. The work of the Specialist should inform future decisions.

The Director said that support was being sought as part of the 2019 recurrent budget process to enable Invasive Species work to continue post project end.

### **18.3 New/updated Marine interaction Policy.**

Samantha Cherrett the Acting Marine Conservation Officer, presented an update on the Marine Interaction Policy.

The ‘*Environmental Policy for Whale Shark (Rhincodon typus), Devil Ray (Mobula tarapacana) and cetacean interaction activities on St Helena Island to minimise risk of injury and disturbance*’, adopted under the Marine Management Plan (2016) currently provides guidance on interaction with marine species of St Helena.

A recent review of this Policy and associated Environmental Best Practice Guidelines identified gaps in guidance for some interactions as well as grey areas such as rare chance encounters. In consultation with the Marine Management Organisation, local stakeholders and organisations, the policy (renamed '*Policy for marine species interaction activities on St Helena Island to minimise risk of injury and disturbance*'), as well as species and activity related best practice guidelines were reviewed and updated to include details for more species and provide guidance for chance encounters with large or rare marine mega-fauna. It is hoped that these documents will be used as best practice moving forward and incorporated into the Marine Management Plan in the future.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:15pm.

The next meeting of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee will be held **@ 10:00am on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2019 in the Council Chamber.**

Confirmed... *Ben* ..... Date... *08 JANUARY 2019* .....