



Constituency Meeting – Longwood

Date: 27 October 2025

Time: 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Chair: Councillor Denis Leo

Venue: Harford Community Centre

Attendance: 22 (Male: 12 and Female: 10)

1. Introductions and Council Roles

The meeting opened with all elected members and officials introducing themselves and clarifying their portfolios and responsibilities, ranging from District Representatives and the committees they sit on. There was a reminder about the meeting's logistics, safety exits, and the note-taker/recording arrangement.

2. Roads Programme Update

The Roads Manager outlined the multi-phase roads resurfacing program in Longwood district and related timelines. Emphasis was placed on the disruption to residents, requests for public cooperation, and the need for clear communication on closures. Residents highlighted ongoing problems with unclear detour signage and confusion during previous closures in other districts, especially for non-locals, resulting in inconvenience. The roads team agreed to improve informational signs and to keep the community better informed.

3. Road Maintenance and Resource Constraints

There was discussion about ongoing maintenance needs versus available budget and personnel, with only a small portion of the total adopted roads being regularly serviced. Monthly inspections prioritize the worst sections, but participants expressed frustration that roads perceived locally as most in-need were often not immediately addressed.

4. Immigration, Relocation, and Employment Policy

Constituents raised strong concerns about barriers for St Helenian residents wishing to return and settle, questioning government support for expatriate hires versus returning Saints. Members described the origins of existing policies, acknowledged current shortcomings, and committed to pursue more equitable packages and policy revisions, bearing in mind constitutional constraints determined by the UK which prevents the implementation of a 'Saints First' Policy.

5. Agriculture and Land Use Issues

Farmers and supporters spoke about the barriers to access land, inadequate support for irrigation, fencing, and infrastructure, plus the complexity of government agriculture schemes. Concerns included transparency and fairness of application and evaluation procedures. Members admitted failings in supporting and monitoring agricultural investments and agreed that practical reforms, better contracts, and focus on enabling youth farmers were needed. Questions were asked about the annual increases in land and lease fees, with residents saying the charges rise each year without explanation. Councillor Essex agreed that more clarity is needed on how fees are calculated and noted that the issue has already been raised with the ENRP. The Chief Minister added that a full review of the fee structure is being carried out, and results will be shared once completed.

6. Fisheries and Industry Regulation

The performance and lack of accountability of a key fishing company was questioned, especially in relation to a problematic legal agreement. Members acknowledged deep flaws in contract drafting and challenges in holding the operator to account, pledging to revisit

agreements and seek specialist legal input if required. Calls were made for an inclusive approach to be established to address the issues continuing within the fishing sector and policy/legal reform for both farming and fishing sectors.

7. Utility Regulation and Telecommunications

Constituents complained about recurring service and regulatory issues with both the water/electric utilities (Connect) and telecom (Sure): short-term contracts, outdated systems, and the long-term impact of lacking robust regulatory frameworks. Members committed to developing stronger regulatory structures and ensuring clearer long-term goals for utility service providers.

8. Taxation and Refunds

Questions were raised about the timeliness of income tax refunds, high tax rates, and the process for claiming refunds. Members acknowledged cashflow and administrative pressures and promised ongoing review, while the chair took it on to investigate the situation and feedback to constituents.

9. Housing, Repairs, and Social Welfare

Housing maintenance, allocation, and suitability—especially for younger and vulnerable residents—were discussed. Select Committee 2's report highlighted delays in repairs and allocations for government landlord housing. Select Committee findings were referenced, and Members remarked on budget limitations, but committed to keep improving maintenance and transparency. A Constituent raised concerns regarding the lack of saints obtaining government housing when there are many empty houses going to ruin. Another constituent asked why, the Longwood First school building isn't being converted into housing.

10. Police & Community Relations

Concerns were aired regarding aggressive police behaviour, a lack of trust, and unclear complaint mechanisms. Elected members urged the public to formally file complaints or work with their district representatives so issues could be addressed by the relevant committees. Recent actions to monitor police performance were detailed, including forthcoming reports which are to be tabled at the upcoming Police and Crime Panel meetings.

11. Road Traffic and License Administration

The community discussed the need for modernised licensing (card-based rather than paper), issues with annual renewals, and especially backlogs related to medical eye checks for older drivers. Previous efforts and obstacles were acknowledged, and the Minister for Health and Social Care indicated new equipment for cataract and lens replacement is on order and the eye specialist visits has been increased to resolve eye-related backlogs.

12. Cost, Subsidies, and Major Infrastructure

The economic cost, subsidy structure, and practical operation of the new port infrastructure were discussed, particularly the knock-on costs for local businesses. Ministers stressed that ongoing reviews were underway and that better planning and efficiency improvements would be prioritized for future capital projects, similarly to the renovations with the primary schools.

13. Privacy and Public Facility Design

Concerns were expressed about lack of privacy for sensitive matters in government buildings (Liberation House). The Minister for Safety, Security and Home Affairs clarified there is a private

room, apologized for gaps in staff awareness, and promised to follow up and reinforce best practices with staff.

14. Economic Diversification and Innovative Agriculture

New potential crops (like medical marijuana) were discussed as an innovative approach to diversify agriculture and improve economic outcomes. The Chair invited interested operators to submit detailed business plans to trigger legislative review and potential change.

15. Community Organization

The need for collective action among farmers and fishermen was emphasized by both constituents and Members; sharing resources, cooperating on fencing, and mutual support were considered essential for the success of new and traditional projects.

16. Road Erosion:

A resident from the Deadwood area raised the issue of road erosion, explaining that the edge of the road near the bend has begun to collapse and poses a danger to drivers. It was asked if the Roads Section would undertake the necessary work to address this concern. Cllr. Leo explained that he had been advised by the roads section, that the area in question, is private property and therefore it is not the responsibility for the roads section. He did agree that he would follow up with the roads section as to whether anything can be done, noting the danger it poses.

It was also asked if the owner of the private property had been contacted to advise them of the escalating issue.

17. Other Topics Raised

Other issues debated included cost transparency for customs and port operations, the need for youth engagement and training in agriculture, challenges with supply chain logistics, and continued calls for better consultation and cross-departmental coordination.

Constituents spoke about the need for toilets, poor drainage, and paths that become unsafe when wet in the Dungeon Graveyards. A constituent asked for a follow up to be taken on the pavement rail installation that she had requested in a previous Constituency Meeting. Minister Brooks mentioned that she has previously been working on this and would follow up the status. Towards the end of the meeting, several residents raised ongoing frustrations with Barn View. They questioned why it is no longer being used if it was previously being used for persons with disabilities. It was also mentioned by a constituent that the funds to build Barn View was mostly public funds. Ministers explained that in a report the building was deemed not fit for purpose.

ACTION ITEMS

- Minister Brooks to report progress on revised immigration and visa policies.
- Councillor Leo to confirm passport delivery process and update community.
- Follow up tax returns with Tax Office and share outcome with constituents
- Find out what GLH houses are available and where they are located.
- Minister Henry to investigate the cataract situation and resolve
- Councillor Leo to investigate the drainage problems at the dungeon graveyard
- Minister Brooks to follow up the pavement rail for the dungeon graveyard
- Councillor Leo to follow up on the status of the Hutt's Gate mirror
- Councillor Leo to follow up with the Governor's Office re Passport arrivals