

Constituency Meeting

Sandy Bay Community Centre
Thursday – 19 February 2026 at 7:30 pm



Chair: Councillor Clint Beard
Present: 20 Constituents
Secretary: Anita Legg
Recording: Meeting recorded

1. Welcome & Purpose

Cllr Beard opened the meeting by welcoming constituents and explaining the new structure for Sandy Bay meetings, for which he intended to:

- Report back on actions from the previous meeting.
- Focus separately on *Sandy Bay-specific issues* and *island-wide issues*.
- Collect concerns requiring formal submission at the next LegCo meeting.
- Encourage residents to provide email/phone details to improve communication.

2. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting (23 October 2025)

2.1 Roads

Cllr Beard thanked constituents for work undertaken on their own and reported that roadworks across the island is currently driven by a 31 March funding deadline. Sandy Bay work was expected to resume after 1 April, when current funding obligations finish. Constituent's issues had been reported to the Roads Manager.

Concerns Raised

- Verge clearing and patching in Sandy Bay had *not* been completed as previously indicated.
- Deterioration of the road network since the last meeting.
- Safety concerns about road edges lacking reflectors and markings, especially dangerous at night.
- Water running from the top of Sandy Bay Ridges down into the main district due to drains not being cleaned.

Actions

- Representative to continuously push for Sandy Bay works immediately after 1 April
- To also request improved safety measures (reflective markers, rails, better paint)
- To request an explanation from the Roads Manager regarding the resurfacing slurry that is lifting, after application, especially noticeable on Ladder Hill Road
- To ask if the drains at the Ridges can be cleared

2.2 Sandy Bay Beach Road and Toilets

A site visit was undertaken by the Head of Tourism to explore improvements to the beach road and toilet facilities; a business case was now being prepared, including broader beach-area improvements.

Concerns Raised

- Residents emphasised that the beach is essential for *locals*, not only tourists.
- Lack of signage indicating the way to the beach area
- Long-standing deterioration of the road and lack of maintenance

- Past funding attempts collapsed due to disagreements over long-term maintenance commitments

Actions

- Representative to obtain a written update on progress from Head of Tourism
- Cllr Beard to check on the possibility of better signage to the beach

2.3 Public Transport

A question had been raised in formal LegCo. Government advised an island-wide review is planned, but expansion of public transport is unlikely in the short term.

2.4 Connect St Helena – Water & Electricity Services

A regulatory review by the Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA) revealed significant shortcomings however it helps Connect to rectify what is needed. Cllr Beard had gone on a site visit the previous day where he raised constituent's issues. He also noted a new CEO has been appointed but not yet on island.

Concerns Raised

- Maintenance of the trench, by the shop near Bamboo Hedge, should be the responsibility of Connect
- Why are residents forced to accept piped water from Levelwood
- Ageing infrastructure, poor maintenance, declining renewable generation i.e. wind turbines are being reassembled by salvaging parts from non-operational units
- Frequent outages and leaks.
- Community frustration with monthly billing and high tariffs.
- Ongoing debt owed to Connect by commercial users
- Hiring of foreign staff who are not fully qualified

2.5 Employment & Government Pay Structure

Cllr Beard advised that the Head of Public Service would attend the next constituency meeting which was an opportunity for a question-and-answer session.

2.6 Public Toilets

A discussion needs to be held on how to manage the use of these facilities for tourists and locals alike.

2.7 Peaks National Park (Pathogen-related Closures)

Residents expressed frustration that the Peaks remain closed. The ENRP Minister confirmed work is ongoing to design safe, structured access (possibly guided walks, conditional access based on weather, dog policies). Wider public communication is planned but delayed.

Concerns

- Lack of regular updates.
- Fear the closure could extend indefinitely.
- Questions about spread of the pathogens to lower Sandy Bay and access for dog-walkers.

Actions

- Cllr Beard to follow up with the Minister for explanations and timelines.

3. SANDY BAY–SPECIFIC ISSUES

3.1 Street Lighting

Residents identified inadequate lighting around the Church area and other sections of the district.

Action:

Representative to approach the Roads Section and responsible Minister.

3.2 Sandy Bay Properties

- Residents felt the clinic was an eyesore and needs to be returned to its original use or otherwise
- Bamboo Hedge Farm is also an eyesore, knowing people wanted to rent and develop it.

3.3 Sandy Bay Community Centre

Residents asked whether government could assist with maintenance (painting, minor repairs).

Action

- Representative to explore support through collaborative approach between government resources and community volunteer efforts.

3.4 Roadside Spraying

Residents believe herbicide spraying contributes to:

- Banks disappearing
- Possible contribution to erosion.
- Vegetation die-off
- Surface undermining
- Environmental health concerns

Action

- Representative to request a formal explanation from Roads Section.
- Suggest alternative vegetation management methods, including cessation of verge spraying.

4. ISLAND-WIDE ISSUES

4.1 Three-Day Work Scheme

The community felt that reinstating the three-day work scheme would:

- Improve community upkeep
- Provide employment to people willing; constituents noted it was currently blocked but there was general support among Councillors to revisit the scheme
- Address road maintenance shortages and in other areas as required

Actions

- Council to review health & safety and policy obstacles.

4.2 Fishing, Internet & Farming

Discussion included:

- Internet: decisions expected by May.
- Fishing: Government needs to prioritise local fish availability before export.
- Agriculture policy: Options paper being developed.
- Support skewed toward farming on government land; private landholders excluded from grants.
- High utility costs hurting agriculture viability.

- Declining young farmer participation, although it was noted the 6th Form policy was being taken forward.
- Another batch of day-old chicks recently arriving on island, which was not advertised to the public; constituents noted also that SHG could assist the private sector in bringing in their own chicks.

Actions

- To follow up with Councillor Leo on progress with the agriculture options paper
- To find about day old chicks

4.3 Minimum Wage Consultation

Four options were presented:

- **Option 1:** £4.50 (no change)
- **Option 2:** £4.70
- **Option 3:** £4.85
- **Option 4:** £5.00

Feedback

- No support for Option 1
- Most residents preferred Option 2 or 3
- Some strongly supported Option 4
- Concerns about rising cost of living, stagnant wages, and tax thresholds.

4.4 Airport & Port Infrastructure

Residents expressed worry about:

- Delays caused by aircraft issues
- High costs of repairing and maintaining critical infrastructure, not only at the airport
- Potential long-term damage to tourism and supply chains.
- Repairs on the aircraft engine which was underway
- Fire tender replacement being explored.
- Subsidy provided by SHG for empty seats and delays
- Preventative maintenance urgently needed for Rupert's jetty and other assets.

4.5 Prison & Litigation Cases

Government facing ongoing legal claims connected to:

- Pre-2019 prison conditions
- Possible medical negligence

Outcome

- Claims could impose significant budget pressures.
- Council awaiting details on financial exposure.

4.6 Enterprise St Helena

Action

- Representative to find out if something similar to ESH activities could be introduced

4.7 Fuel Farm

Repairs to the old fuel farm tanks have been completed but new fuel farm is still not fully commissioned. Significant capital spent; final report expected soon.

6. CLOSING SUMMARY

The representative thanked attendees and committed to:

- Sending follow-up questions to relevant departments.
- Returning with written updates rather than verbal interpretations.
- Ensuring Sandy Bay issues receive stronger visibility at Council level
- Continuing to improve communication channels for faster responses.