

Constituency Meeting

Blue Hill Community Centre
Thursday – 6 November 2025 at 7:30 pm



Chair: Councillor Clint Beard

Present: 10 Elected Members
14 Constituents

Apologies: Cllr Ronald Coleman, Minister Karl Thrower

Secretary: Anita Legg

Recording: Meeting recorded

1. Introductions and Roles of Council Members

The meeting was opened by Cllr Beard who welcomed attendees, noting apologies from Cllr Coleman for special circumstances and Minister Thrower who was overseas. Consent was confirmed for the meeting to be recorded for minute-taking accuracy.

Councillors introduced themselves and outlined their current responsibilities, including changes in committee roles and district representation due to absences. This provided a clear understanding of each member's latest duties and how collaboration would occur in the meeting.

Constituents raised the following:

2. Roads and Infrastructure

Constituents raised concern regarding road repairs, particularly Thompsons Wood Road, which had been promised 5/6 years ago. The signpost by the bus shelter was also down.

Discussion

There were detailed updates about roadwork in areas such as Thompsons Wood and Head O'Wain, highlighting ongoing and future maintenance (notably scheduled for 2026) and immediate concerns about drainage and hazardous track conditions. The need for further assessment of forestry roads was emphasised, with a plan for Myra to inspect specific problematic routes.

Actions:

- Follow up with Roads Department about work plans for Blue Hill and assess condition of forestry roads in High Hill area and coordinate with authorities
- Raise the issue of the signpost near Blue Hill bus shelter with the relevant portfolio

3. Budget Constraints & Road Maintenance

Constituents asked about Burnt Rock Road, which is still in poor condition despite serving a number of houses, raising questions why government sold these plots without repairing the road. Similarly, a district road in Sandy Bay was also mentioned, as needing repairs.

Discussion

Significant discussion centered on limited funding for community and district road maintenance. It was explained that only main roads are prioritised for government resources, and historical budget cuts have reduced support for smaller roads. The importance of multi-year and increased EDIP funding was stressed for sustainable improvements.

Actions:

- Suggested to advocate at JMC level for more multi-year funding for infrastructure

4. Efficiency and Accountability of Public Services

The effectiveness of the public service and its management was debated, with concern over the gap between operational delivery and legislative intentions. The arrival of a new Head of Public Service (HoPS) was considered a potential catalyst for better alignment and community involvement. Discussion also ensued on FAM negotiations and how it is managed.

5. Energy and Water Infrastructure Development

The energy segment focused on challenges with integrating renewables, the lack of battery storage, outdated windmills and shifting regulatory frameworks with Connect. There was strong advocacy for investing in a smart grid and upgrading infrastructure to reduce water losses. A specific concern was raised around the water pipe at Casons and whether it constitutes non-revenue water and who bears responsibility for its costs. Residents recommended restricting public access, particularly for car washing.

- Actions:

- To look into the matter of the water pipe at Casons; this would include a similar situation with the fountain near the Castle.

6. Internet and Communications Contracts

Constituents asked for an update on the internet and associated infrastructure.

Discussion

Negotiations for improved internet infrastructure were ongoing but remained commercial-in-confidence. Discussion emphasised the need for contract flexibility to accommodate future technological advances. Past mistakes in contract writing were acknowledged, with steps being taken to draft better agreements going forward.

7. Casual Work Schemes and Social Support

Concern was raised regarding persons able to work receiving unemployment or social benefits.

Discussion

Discussion ensued on the government practice of supporting young and unemployed people, with debate around conditionality of benefits, mental health assessments, and the practical/legal challenges in reintroducing an effective casual work scheme. The Employment Rights Committee is currently exploring short, recurring casual work schemes to support employability without breaching legal barriers.

8. Housing, Land Policy, and Building Regulations

There was concern over the difficulty in acquiring land for housing and the overly complex building regulations driving up construction costs.

Discussion

Calls were made for a review of both land access and regulatory burdens, aiming for more flexibility and affordability. Broad Bottom land was also queried.

Actions:

- Review regulations and policies on land acquisition and housing development
- Request further information from Solomon's Board of Directors on the status of Broad Bottom land

9. Hotel Subsidies and Economic Development

Discussion centred around Mantis Hotel where Councillors clarified that the majority of hotel-related government subsidies go toward loan administration, not daily operations. Tourism was cited as an important economic driver, with the need to balance investment in facilities and support for the local economy. Some staffing issues had been sorted but concern remained on how the hotel is managed.

10. Education, Youth Employment, and Vocational Skills

Residents asked whether students were encouraged to apply for jobs currently being advertised.

Discussion

CASH does go into schools regularly. Career support and barriers for young people were discussed, with criticism of current HR practices and calls to value both academic and vocational tracks equally. The role of schools in firing up students' ambitions and smoothing their transition into employment was highlighted. Constituents were encouraged to contact schools direct on any specific issues.

11. Building the Local Economy & Retaining Population

The conversation closed on the need to create new revenue streams; enhance local food and energy production - suggestions ranged from agricultural initiatives to stronger economic development planning; and retain and attract skilled residents - Councillors advised of a graduate scheme in place.

12. Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked all attendees for their participation and said the next Constituency Meeting would be around finding solutions to problems. He was also hoping to encourage the HoPS to engage with the community.

Meeting concluded: Approx. 10:00 pm