

Minutes of the 23rd Open Meeting of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee held on Thursday 20th June 2019 @ 10:30am in the Council Chamber.

Present:	Hon. Russell K Yon	-	Chairman
	Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex	-	Deputy Chairperson
	Hon. Gavin G Ellick	-	Member
	Hon. Cyril K Leo	-	Member
	Mr Derek Henry	-	Acting Director of I&T
	Mr Nicky Lawrence	-	Secretary
Invited:	Mr Darren Duncan	-	Ag Director of ENRP – Items 3, 4, & 5.
	Miss Isabel Peters	-	Chief Environmental Officer – Item 5
	Mr Lourens Malan	-	Terrestrial Conservation Officer – Item 5
	Mr Ismail Mohammed	-	Chief Planning Officer – Item 3
	Mr Derek Pedley	-	Head of Property
	Mr Deon Robbertse	-	Roads Manager
	Mr Darren Francis	-	Roads Inspector
Apology:	Hon. Cruyff G Buckley	-	Member (CPA meeting)

Welcome.

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the Open Agenda of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

Open Agenda.

23.1 Matters arising from minutes of 16th May 2019.

Proposal for excision of land from the Forest Estate.

The Acting Director of ENRP told members there were no objections to this proposal. A Memorandum will be prepared to be presented to Executive Council for approval.

The Chairman said he will meet with the Directors and Crown Estates to identify lands for development. All land is developable under the LDGP according to location and purpose. The Director's will write a briefing paper to accompany the Memorandum for Executive Council (ExCo) approval.

Action: Chairman/Ag Director of I &T/Ag Director of ENRP

Heritage Report.

The Report has been approved and Terms of Reference are being prepared.

Action: Chairman/Acting Director of ENRP

Update on progress of the Invasive Plant Project.

This project has been prioritised for MTEF Funding.

Waste Management Policy update.

The Environmental Risk Manager is on leave, therefore an update cannot be given at this time.

Action: Environmental Risk Manager

MTEF Policy Priorities 2020/2024.

This exercise has now been completed.

Peaks Conservation Management Plan.

This is an Agenda item for today's meeting.

Water run-off from Red Hill Road.

An investigation uncovered a broken water line which has now been repaired.

Safety Rail near Gray's Cottage, Vaughn's.

A site visit was made to the area and a costing is being made on the feasibility of installing a safety rail.

Action: Roads Manager

Drainage at Longwood Hangings.

A site visit was made to this area and further work needs to be done to tackle the problem. The Chairman said he awaits feedback from the Roads Manager and the Buildings Manager.

Action: Roads Manager

Verge cleaning at Ladder Hill and Jamestown.

This work is being carried out with available staff.

Roundabout at Scotland.

This work is to be done when line painting resumes.

Action: Roads Inspector.

Three day work scheme.

The Director reported that they await the return of the Director of Human Resources so that there is input from Corporate Human Resources to draft a general SHG Policy for a Part Time Work Scheme.

Action: Chairman/Acting Director of I&T

23.2 Discussion on roads issues.

During the recent Island-wide constituency meetings, several constituents raised matters relating to roads. Following discussion the Roads Manager was able to provide information affecting the operations of the Roads Division, especially the funding from the recurrent budget that is used to procure materials including colas, aggregates, street lights, safety barriers, road side mirrors, signage and road paint to name but a few and how these are managed throughout the year to keep the roads teams engaged and able to perform their work.

Current works to ascertain the best mix of slurry and areas of use on the Island's roads are ongoing and although this is expected to cost more than the current method it will evidently be long lasting, should the decision be made to continue its use island-wide. Using slurry to seal and rehabilitate the Island's roads infrastructure will require additional funding but in the long term will reduce the amount of repairs required. The majority of the roads on the Island are well over 50 years old and were not designed for the number and type of vehicles that use the roads today.

23.3 Introduction to new Chief Planning Officer.

The new Chief Planning Officer, Ismail Mohammed, who joined the Environment, Natural Resources and Planning Directorate (ENR&P) earlier this month, was introduced to members.

Ismail is here on a three year contract and told members he has vast experience in planning services for over thirty years.

Ismail spoke of some quick solutions which he believes could be made to rectify issues he has identified. These include improving the quality of plans, internal procedures and services provided, together with more openness and transparency of the planning application process.

23.4 Introduction to employees of Tristan da Cunha Government receiving work experience on St Helena.

Currently on-Island from Tristan da Cunha are Riaan Repetto and Kelly Swain who are both gaining valuable work experience with the Agriculture and Natural Resources Division.

Both are being supported by Senior Veterinary Officer, Joe Hollins. Riaan is currently gaining experience working with Joe in the Veterinary Section and Kelly has joined Farmers Support teams gaining knowledge in horticulture and hydroponics. They have also taken the opportunity to work with the private sector.

23.5

Peaks National Park Conservation Management Plan.

Acting Director of ENR&P Darren Duncan, together with the Chief Environmental Officer, Isabel Peters and Terrestrial Conservation Officer, Lourens Malan, presented the draft Diana’s Peak National Park Conservation Management Plan for St Helena. This draft was compiled by Andrew Darlow and derived from work undertaken by various stakeholders including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and University of British Columbia, together with St Helena Government Directorates and non-Governmental Organisations.

Agreeing St Helena’s vision for the Diana’s Peak National Park, as outlined in the draft Conservation Management Plan, is key to being able to start raising additional funds for the Peaks.

The Committee approved that the Diana’s Peak National Park Conservation Management Plan be put out for the formal 28-day public consultation as required by the Environmental Protection Ordinance.

Action: Acting Director of ENRP

Any other urgent business.

Land at Horse Pasture.

A member said concerns have been raised by the general public about Solomon & Company (St Helena) Plc advertising land for sale at Horse Pasture, and Councillor’s are doing nothing about it.

The member was informed that this is not Crown Land. The sale of this land should be dealt with under the Immigrants Landholding Ordinance and approved by Governor in Council as it is outside the remit of the Estates Strategy Panel. It was noted that a SHG Representative sits on Solomon’s Board of Directors.

A final decision has yet to be made.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:30pm.

The next meeting of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee will be held in the Council Chamber on **Thursday 18th July 2019 @ 10:00am.**

Confirmed..........Date.....10 July 2019.....