

Minutes of the Meeting of Executive Council held on Friday, 18th December 2020 at 8:30am
in the Council Chamber

Present: His Excellency the Acting Governor (Mr G R Gibson)
The Hon Chief Secretary (Mrs S O'Bey)
The Hon Financial Secretary (Mr D L Richards)
The Hon Attorney General (Mr A T Cansick)
The Hon C R Beard
The Hon C G Buckley
The Hon A A Green
The Hon L A Henry
The Hon D F Thomas

In Attendance: Acting Clerk of Councils (Miss A R Legg)
Head of Corporate Support (Mrs C A George)
Acting Head of News (Mr L Yon)

OPEN SESSION

93.1 Welcome

The Acting Governor welcomed all to the meeting. One member of the public and three SHG officers were present.

93.2 Draft Water Resource Strategy (ExCo Memo No 83/2020)

The Director of Environment, Natural Resources & Planning Directorate was in attendance for this item. The Chairman of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee introduced the memorandum and briefly explained that the draft strategy had been to public consultation therefore the next stage was to develop a Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP). He extended congratulations to the Water Strategy Working Group and invited comments from Council.

Members were reminded this work grew out of a Legislative Council motion. It was felt this was a good piece of work and a WRMP was important however it was acknowledged the development of a plan would have serious cost implications thus should be subject to accessible funding and budget prioritisation. There would also need to be dialogue with Connect Saint Helena Ltd.

The Director advised he would need guidance on the next steps in the event of a submission to EDIP i.e. a business case or a consultancy.

The Council advised and the Acting Governor agreed, the final draft Water Resource Strategy for St Helena should be endorsed, subject to available funding.

(Action: Hon Chairman of Environment and Natural Resources Committee)

93.3 Development Application: Rehabilitation of Field Road and Side Path Road: Selective Widening by cutting into the Hillside, improving the Field Road/Side Path Junction (ExCo Memo No 84/2020)

The Director of Environment, Natural Resources & Planning Directorate and the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) were in attendance. The Chief Secretary introduced the memorandum and stated Executive Council were sitting as a Planning Authority for this item. The CPO was then invited to deliver a presentation and the following points arose from discussion:

- The CPO advised that mitigation on Side Path road to protect residents below that area, would form part of the application for construction works.
- In response to concerns on the widening of Field Road, whether it would create a visual impact to the landscape or should it be balanced against the long term future needs, the CPO explained that widening would allow, for example, sufficient space for two lorries to pass rather than cutting into the hillside for a strict two-lane traffic way; he also believed further laybys were unnecessary.
- The CPO confirmed Field Road would be flattened and repaired, with new safety barriers installed.
- Members felt the final decision on the Brow Junction should be presented to ExCo, although no details were available as yet and Members were advised discharge of all conditions are normally dealt with by the CPO.
- Members supported the development of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) but recognised it would be challenging therefore also felt the proposal for decision should come before ExCo. It was noted the TMP would also include a risk assessment on any roads used whilst construction is underway, such as Alarm Forest and Constitution Road. Following discussion the Attorney General advised that conditions regarding the TMP would involve the Highways Authority, for which the applicant does not have control – three options were suggested on how to proceed. In agreeing Condition 5 on TMP, Members advised that the period for the preparation of the TMP should be 12 months from the date of construction and also 12 months for implementation from the date of the new port freight container becoming operational.
- The Director clarified the terminology of the screening opinion; the decision letter (which is already a public document) is the screening opinion, whether it requires a full EIA or not and should contain the summary information that the public requires. The other document referred to was the checklist and is the opinion of officers and is not for publication document.
- It was agreed, in going forward there needs to be a robust Communications Policy, noting the Programme Management Unit is responsible for communications, this should include how SHG will support residents during the time the road is closed.
- The Financial Secretary reminded Members they should keep in mind the financial implications of this project.

The Council advised and the Acting Governor agreed to grant full development permission, subject to conditions, for the Rehabilitation of Field Road and Side Path Road: Selective Widening by cutting into the Hillside, improving the Field Road/Side Path Junction.

(Action: Acting Clerk of Councils)

SHG officers left the meeting at this point.

93.4 Development Application: Proposed Construction of Pet Care Centre, Merrimens Forest (ExCo Memo 85/2020)

The Director of Environment, Natural Resources & Planning Directorate and the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) were in attendance. The Chief Secretary introduced the memorandum and stated Executive Council were sitting as a Planning Authority for this item. The CPO was then invited to deliver a presentation and the following points arose from discussion:

- Members supported the idea in principal but expressed reservations in relation to the location, being in close proximity to Plantation House, Cape Villa and surrounding neighbours. The CPO advised that noise impact had been deliberated previously however it was felt the forest itself provided a barrier.
- Originally, on an SPCA recommendation, the idea had been to provide kennelling for pet owners who travelled overseas, also to provide a home for abandoned cats and dogs however this was now a much scaled down building.
- Thus Members suggested the application should be advertised again to gauge the views of the neighbours.
- Alternatively it was suggested the developer seek a different vicinity, or that the building be made soundproof however members recognised the cost might not be viable for the owner.
- Should this venture not prove successful, the CPO advised that the building could be demolished and the area returned to its natural state, as any other use would need to be considered on its merit through a planning application.

Members in the majority did not support this application, under the current conditions, however tasked the CPO to ask the developer for more information on how he intended to mitigate noise.

The Council advised and the Acting Governor agreed that full development permission, for the development application for the proposed construction of a Pet Care Centre, Merrimens Forest, as recommended by the Land Development Control Authority, should be deferred pending further information from the Chief Planning Officer.

(Action: Acting Clerk of Councils/Chief Secretary)

The Director of Environment, Natural Resources & Planning Directorate left the meeting at this point.

93.5 Development Application: Demolition of Existing Single Garage and Construction of a Double Garage, Wood Vale, Blue Hill (ExCo Memo 86/2020)

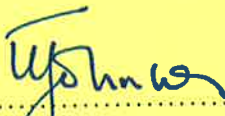
The Chief Planning Officer (CPO) was in attendance for this item. The Chief Secretary introduced the memorandum and stated Executive Council continued to sit as Planning Authority for this item. The CPO was invited to deliver a presentation, following which, Members were content with the information and supported this application.

The Council advised and the Acting Governor agreed to grant full development permission, with Conditions, to demolish an Existing Single Garage and Construction of a Double Garage at Wood Vale, Blue Hill as recommended by the Land Development Control Authority (LDCA).

(Action: Acting Clerk of Councils)

The Chief Planning Officer and the member of public left the meeting at this point.

There was no any other business for discussion in the Open Session.


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for Acting Clerk of Councils
20.01.21


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Acting Governor

20.01.21
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Date