

## MINUTES OF THE ASCENSION ISLAND COUNCIL

### FORMAL MEETING HELD IN THE COURT HOUSE,

Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2018 at 16:30hrs

Present: HH Administrator Justine Allan  
By phone Louise MacMorran, Acting Governor  
By phone Allen Cansick, Solicitor General  
Charlie Henning, Asst Director of HR  
Catherine Leo, Asst Director of Finance  
Councillor Terence Young  
Councillor Kitty George  
Councillor Samantha Arms-Lawrence

In attendance: Emma Corrigan, Clerk of Council

Apologies: Mark Neale, Crown Counsel  
Councillor Nicholas John

#### 1. Welcome

The Administrator welcomed all to the meeting.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes from 28 June 2018 and 26 July 2018.

All present approved both sets of minutes. The minutes from the formal meeting held on 28 June would be uploaded on the Ascension Island website.

#### 3. Matters Arising / Action Points – update

Biosecurity Ordinance: The drafting of a Biosecurity Ordinance had been put on hold until early 2019.

Employment Law: Crown Counsel had previously reported work was on-going with the Asst Director of HR and all changes would be tracked. The Administrator asked the Acting Governor that if there was someone on St Helena with expertise in this area who could assist in the interim while the Crown Counsel was off island. The Acting Governor replied that the Attorney General could assist and the Solicitor General requested the document be sent to him. However, the Crown Counsel was to continue to lead on this piece of work.

**Action: Asst Director of HR to forward the document to the Solicitor General**

Hydroponics update: Cllr John had previously reported comments received from the public regarding the distribution of produce from the Hydroponics site. They were concerned that food was being sold to shops that were then using it for restricted use (e.g. sold to the NAAFI for exclusive purchase or consumption by the RAF). The Administrator said she had consulted the outlets and this was not the case. While some fresh produce was used for sandwiches, all items were available for sale for everyone on Ascension. This was being done by the NAAFI, Two Boats Club, Saints Club, the Rock Shop, and the Volcano Club. Cllr John had said although some purchased the sandwiches the majority preferred the raw produce. The Administrator reported that there were a lot of people on single status, with access to a shared kitchen, who preferred to purchase prepared meals and snacks and it was important to ensure everyone benefitted from Hydroponics. Cllr George stated the site's main purpose had been to provide the residents of the island with fresh produce first and foremost. The Administrator agreed and noted that the Hydroponics site was set up as a commercial venture with produce being sold to retail outlets; how they used that produce was the retailer's decision. The Administrator also noted that the site had been struck with blight in the past which had affected the quantity of crops, and it was a big site for one person to manage alone. AIG had provided additional man power to Hydroponics and the quantity of produce was beginning to increase once more.

Optician: Members of the public had raised concerns over the Optician's methods and it had been suggested another Optician be found for future visits. The Asst Director of HR had stated the medical complaints

procedure on St Helena was under review and once completed AIG would check to see if the same procedure could be implemented on Ascension.

**Action:** The Asst Director of HR reported that once St Helena had completed the review of the medical complaints procedure a copy would be circulated to Councillors.

MPA update: The Policy & Projects Officer, Alasdair Bain, had set up a small working group, which included Cllr Arms-Lawrence and Cllr George, who had met last week to discuss initial ideas on the commercial vision for the future of Ascension. The Administrator added that a briefing pack was to be produced ahead of the Joint Ministerial Council meeting (JMC) being held in London in December for Cllr George, who was to attend. Cllr George added a half day meeting was planned on environmental topics at the JMC so a briefing pack on the MPA, Waste Management and current projects on St Helena would be beneficial.

Sheep in Two Boats Village: Cllr George had previously reported the majority of Two Boat residents did not want a cull but the fences to be repaired. Councillors had requested fence posts be provided by AIG and the fences repaired. Residents would then drive out the sheep.

**Action:** The Administrator had spoken with the Director of Operations. AIG would survey the fences, quantify what materials were required and erect the fence posts. The residents would then repair the fences and drive out the sheep from the village. Point of contact was to be Cllr John who would liaise with Lee Smith and Jeff Smith of CSO.

#### **4. Spear Guns Control Ordinance, 2018**

##### **Spear Guns Control (Ascension) Order, 2018**

The Administrator explained that the Ordinance set the conditionality of the restricted area with regard to the use of spear guns, however it was noted at the meeting that the requirement for a spear guns register was omitted from the draft Ordinance. Cllr George added that on St Helena there was a register of spear gun owners that included times when use of spear guns was not permitted. The Administrator replied the benefit of having a register was that the Police could clearly explain the restrictions at the time the owner registered the spear gun. Cllr George stated that one member of the public had spoken to others and suggested the proposed restricted area was too narrow and should be extended from Comfortless Cove to Eddies Gullies at English Bay and many had expressed agreement to this suggestion. However, no-one had approached neither the Council nor a member of the Senior Management team and conveyed the preference for an extension of the restricted area. The Administrator explained the same person had met with her and asked for their concerns regarding the restricted area being too narrow be reported back to the Council.

**Action:** It was agreed that the Solicitor General would add the requirement for spear guns on Ascension to be registered and the revised Ordinance would be circulated for approval rather than present it at the next formal Council meeting. The Acting Governor agreed to this action. The three Councillors present agreed to recommend the Ordinance and Order, once the spear gun register requirement had been added, was adopted by the Acting Governor. One Councillor expressed they disagreed with the recommendation for the Ordinance and Order to be adopted.

#### **5. Customs Ordinance 2001 – Customs (import control) (Revocation) Regulations 2018**

The Administrator explained the restriction to import petrol engines had been imposed when the availability of petrol ceased on Ascension. However it was anticipated that petrol was to be safely re-dispensed in December 2018 therefore the revocation would permit residents to be able to import petrol vehicles and equipment once more. All three Councillors present recommended to the Acting Governor the revocation be adopted. The absent Councillor had not previously indicated any disagreement to the revocation.

**Action:** The Acting Governor agreed to the revocation of the import control imposed on petrol engines.

## 6. Any Other Business

6.1 By-Election: The Administrator had received the resignation from Cllr Ellick following her departure from Ascension and reported everyone was incredibly grateful for all her hard work as both a Councillor and as a respected member of Ascension's community. The Clerk of the Council explained Cllr Ellick's resignation left a vacancy on the Council and a by-election was to be held to appoint a replacement Councillor. Work had started to update the Electoral Register and suggested a by-election be held on Thursday 27 September.

**Action: The Councillors present all agreed to the By-Election being held on 27 September and the Clerk to the Council would request the Acting Governor publish the Notice of Election for this date.**

6.2 Future of Sports and Recreational Fishing on Ascension: The Administrator reported the Conservation department had planned two public consultation meetings for Tuesday 21 and Thursday 23 August to gauge public feeling on how the fisheries was to be managed in the future. Questions could be raised directly at the meeting or sent in advance to a Councillor or to the AIG Enquiries email address. It was planned to hold two sets of public meetings to allow those residents currently off island to attend in September and to be as consultative as possible. The Conservation department would then attend an informal Council meeting to discuss the best way forward.

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 1715hrs.

Emma Corrigan  
Clerk of Council