

**MINUTES OF THE ASCENSION ISLAND COUNCIL**  
**FORMAL MEETING HELD IN THE COURT HOUSE,**  
**Thursday, 04<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 16:30hrs**

Present: HH Administrator Justine Allan  
By phone Lisa Honan, Governor  
By phone Allen Cansick, Solicitor General  
By phone Andrew Sigley, FCO  
Catherine Leo, Asst Director of Finance  
Councillor Terence Young  
Councillor Kitty George  
Councillor Samantha Arms-Lawrence  
Councillor Nicky John  
Councillor Alan Nicholls

In attendance: Emma Corrigan, Clerk of Council

Apologies: Mark Neale, Crown Counsel

**1. Welcome**

The Administrator welcomed all to the meeting and a special welcome was made to the newly elected Councillor, Alan Nicholls.

**2. Approval of Minutes from 16<sup>th</sup> August 2018 and 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018.**

All present approved both sets of minutes. The minutes from the formal meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> August 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. At the informal Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September Crown Counsel stated he had been in further discussions with the Asst Director of HR and would provide feedback.

**Action: This item to be moved to the next Council meeting when Crown Counsel would provide an update**

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. Acting Director of Resources 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: Acting Director Resources 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, and had discussed and collated 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.

The Director of Conservation had circulated the draft MPA document to all Councillors at the end of September and it was decided to use the next informal Council meeting scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> October to meet as a working group to review the document and options with the Director of Conservation.

**Action: The next informal Council meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> October was to be a working group discussion on the**

**draft MPA document. This meeting would not be minuted but any action points arising from that discussion would need to be noted.**

Sheep in Two Boats Village: Councillors had requested fence posts be provided by AIG, the fences repaired and residents would then drive out the sheep from the village. Cllr George had stated that it was lambing season so the Director of Operations had reported the work on the fencing would begin after the lambing season had ended. Cllr Nicholls asked who held responsibility for the sheep on the island and the Administrator explained that pets, donkeys and sheep certainly did not fall under the remit of Conservation or under any other department in AIG. It was added that there were only four places in the world where truly feral sheep existed and Ascension is one of those places. The Administrator then explained that any action taken against the animals was to be decided by the majority decision; the issue with sheep in the village had been discussed with the residents of Two Boats and this action was what had been agreed. Cllr John asked if a schedule of works could be planned so the community could be reassured that the works would take place.

**Action: Work on the fencing would commence after the lambing season had ended. Point of contact for the works was to be Cllr John who would liaise with members of CSO. Director of Operations to provide a date of when the work would commence.**

Spearfishing Ordinance /Swimming: The Solicitor General had previously reported that registration of spear guns was law on St Helena under the Firearms Ordinance; the definition of a spear gun was *“a hand-held spear or lance or a hand-held weapon designed to discharge a spear or lance”*. The Solicitor General stated AIG could adopt the Spear Guns Control Ordinance as it stood and add a registration requirement in future. This would also provide time for people to have registered their spear guns before the legislation on registration would commence. Once the Spear Guns Control Ordinance had been adopted the Spear Guns Control Order which referred to the ban on the use of spear guns in English Bay would be passed and only after both the Ordinance and the Order had been made law, then the current restriction on AIG staff from entering the water was to be lifted.

**Action: The Administrator asked for the Crown Counsel to provide an email update to the Councillors the next day on the situation with regard to both the adoption of the Spear Gun Ordinance and the Order restricting the use of Spear Guns in English Bay.**

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 but 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. The Revocation of this import control had been approved by St Helena and the restriction on the import of petrol engines had ended.

#### **4. Employment Law – Update**

This item was postponed until the Crown Counsel was present.

#### **5. Spear Guns Control Ordinance, 2018 / Spear Guns Control (Ascension) Order, 2018**

This had been covered under Matters / Action arising.

#### **6. Any Other Business**

- 6.1 Cllr George to attend JMC in December: Policy & Projects Officer was to provide a briefing pack to Cllr George ahead of her attendance in London. Cllr George reported a Sherpa meeting had been held earlier that day but had been unable to attend due to connection problems. Cllr George stated her intention was to meet with Councillors over the next few weeks to determine what issues on Ascension were to be raised at the JMC.
- 6.2 CSSF: Cllr John expressed disappointment that the Council had not been informed earlier about, nor adequately involved in discussion about, CSSF-funded projects. He asked what had been agreed to be spent on the Hospital. Acting Director Resources replied that an inspection was done last July, a list of required works produced and this work was to commence in December.

Additionally, a list of hospital equipment being purchased through the CSSF budget had been circulated to Councillors together with a comprehensive list of what building restoration works had taken place. It was agreed that Dr Hardy should attend a future Council meeting and provided an update on the planned works schedule and equipment that had been ordered. Cllr John asked about the new Rescue boat that had been purchased and the Asst Director of Finance explained it was actually a craft to be used primarily for Marine operations but had the additional advantage of being suitable for shoreline rescue. The Administrator added the previous boat had failed the last audit so had to be replaced for Health & Safety reasons; she confirmed regular updates on CSSF spend were to be provided in future Council meetings.

**Action: Clerk to the Council to arrange for Dr Hardy to attend a future Council meeting.**

- 6.3 Clerk to the Council: The Administrator stated this was the last Council meeting the current Clerk to the Council would attend before leaving Ascension so together with the Councillors thanked her for all the support and dedication she had provided to the Council.
- 6.4 Election Results: It had been requested that in future elections the results were circulated by email across the island in addition to the notice being posted on the Public Notice Board and the article submitted to the Islander. All Councillors agreed this was acceptable.

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 1710hrs.

Emma Corrigan  
Clerk of Council