



Formal meeting of the Ascension Island Council

1630 on Thursday 22 August 2019 at the Court House

MEETING SUMMARY

Present: HE Dr Philip Rushbrook, HE Governor
HH Steven Chandler, HH Administrator
Gareth Morris, Director of Resources
Aine Hurley, Acting Attorney General
Councillor Keturah George
Councillor Nicholas John
Councillor Alan Nicholls
Councillor Terence Young

In attendance: Dr Diane Baum, Director of Conservation & Fisheries
Nicola Canty, Crown Counsel (Marine)
Jane Disley, Clerk of Council
Apologies:

Minutes of the formal Council meetings held on 27 Jun 2019 were agreed. These minutes would be placed on the AIG website/noticeboard and circulated. Matters arising from the meeting on 27 Jun were discussed. The Waste Management Plan would be followed up at a future meeting, whereas other matters had already been actioned via informal meetings (hydroponics, Ordinances and Income Tax Order adoptions, Election arrangements, medical complaints policy, Body Worn Camera notice). Updates were provided on the following topics: Georgetown swimming pool, the AIG website and the MUGA nets.

The main topic of the meeting was Marine Protected Area (MPA) Designation. There was some detailed discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of designating a 100% no-take MPA at this stage, while longer term UK government funding was still to be confirmed. While there could be no confirmation of UK Govt funding support at least until the Spending Review next year, there were some potential benefits of designating early. For example, early confirmation of Ascension's intent would demonstrate Ascension's desire to be a good partner to the UK Govt and could be of wider benefit to the Island by banking valuable credit with UK ministers and NGOs which could unlock other funding and support. It would also help Ascension Island to position itself to have more influence by stepping onto the global stage and showing its intent to formally protect its marine environment. It was noted that Blue Belt funding for the current level of monitoring activities, eg against illegal fishing, was in place until March 2021. Councillors agreed to recommend to the Governor to designate an MPA provided that the necessary legislation gave the Governor powers to adopt an MPA management plan only once conditions had been satisfied. Importantly this should include the necessary funding which would safeguard AIG against any obligation to fund the MPA. The legislation would also make it explicit that the Governor would, at the appropriate time, consult the Council about arrangements for management of the MPA.

Four items were discussed under Any Other Business (AOB): the reported inability of Sure to apply a cap on the download limit for domestic customers; a proposal to have a discussion at a future date about how to best guide/monitor the proper management of members' clubs; AIG's Fire service provision MoU with the MOD; and the proposed locations for testing the solar street lights.

This was the last formal meeting of this Council ahead of its dissolution on 1 Sep. The Administrator thanked elected Councillors past and present for their commitment and dedication to good governance and decision making in the interests of those who live and work on Ascension. The meeting closed at 1805hrs.

J Disley

Jane Disley

Clerk of Council