



Formal meeting of the Ascension Island Council
16:30 on Thursday 09 November 2023 at the Courthouse

MINUTES

Present: HE Gregory Gibson, Acting Governor [remotely] Councillor Kerry Benjamin
HH Simon Minshull, Administrator Councillor Kyla Benjamin
David Ballantyne, Attorney General [remotely] Councillor Douglas Miller
Catherine Leo, Acting Director of Resources Councillor Alan Nicholls
Councillor Laura Shearer

In attendance: Carl Mackerras, Head of the Administrator's Office
Ailsa Hearne, FCDO Desk Officer
Siobhan Stewart, Clerk of Council

Apologies: Matthew James, Crown Counsel

1. Welcome

HH the Administrator welcomed all parties present and those attending remotely.

2. Approval of Minutes

Decision: The summary of the Informal Council meeting held on 14 September 2023 and published on 26 September 2023 was accepted and in accordance with the Council Rules these were agreed by Council members.

Decision: The minutes of the Formal Council meeting held on 28 September 2023 and published on 20 October 2023 was accepted and in accordance with the Council Rules these were agreed by Council members.

3. Matters arising

There were currently no actions on the actions tracker.

4. Public Holidays

The Administrator provided a brief update and background to the declaring of Public Holidays on Ascension Island highlighting the schedule in the Public Holidays Ordinance where the official Public Holidays are listed. Ascension Day in 2024 falls on Thursday 09 May. The Administrator proposed that Councillors may wish to consider directing that the Ascension Day Public Holiday be observed on Friday 10 May 2024 in order to provide a more efficient working week and greater flexibility to island residents.

	Proposal	KylaB	KerryB	DM	AN	LS
1	Ascension Day to be observed on Friday 10 May 2024 instead of Thursday 09 May 2024.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The Administrator invited Councillors to formally recommend directing that Ascension Day be observed on Friday 10 May 2024. All Five Councillors voted in favour.

5. Remembrance Sunday

The Administrator confirmed that the annual Service of remembrance will take place at St Mary's Church on Sunday 12 November 2023 and will be led by a visiting RAF Padre. There will also be a short briefing/rehearsal, for persons taking part in the Service on Friday 10 November 2023 at 1700 at St Mary's Church. The Administrator requested that Councillors consider who they would like to represent elected members at the Service of Remembrance. Councillors nominated Councillor Alan Nicholls to attend and lay the wreath on behalf of the Ascension Island Council.

7. Any other business

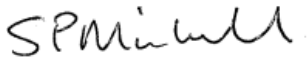
There were three items of **other business**:

- i. **Joint Ministerial Council Attendance:** Councillor Nicholls wished his fellow Councillors Shearer and Kyla Benjamin a safe journey to the UK and hoped for productive meetings and deliberations. HE the Acting Governor also wished Councillors well ahead of their visit to London for the JMC.
- ii. **AIG Guest House:** Councillor Nicholls requested an update on the AIG Guest House. The ADoR confirmed that given potential demands from the Falkland Islands this topic will be revisited soon. The Administrator recommended that this is raised separately via the Public Works Committee.
- iii. **Future of Ascension Island:** The Attorney General asked whether there was any update on the preferred operating model for the future of Ascension Island. The Administrator confirmed that as and when information became available it would be shared.

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 16:40

Siobhan Stewart
Clerk of Council

I certify that this is a true record of the meeting to which it relates.



Simon Minshull

On behalf of HE the Acting Governor, Mr Gregory Gibson