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PITCAIRN ISLAND COUNCIL

Public Meeting Notes

Teleconference with Governor Jonathan Sinclair

Held at the Public Hall - 1.00pm Wednesday July 27th 2017

Present:

Mayor Shawn Christian and Councillors: Cr Lea Brown, Cr Darralyn Griffiths, Cr Brenda Christian, Cr Michele Christian, Deputy Mayor Charlene Warren-Peu & Island Secretary Heather Menzies.
Governor Jonathan Sinclair, Deputy Governor Robin Shackell, Acting Administrator (AA) – Nicholas Kennedy

Apologies: Cr Leslie Jaques.

Gallery: Detective Sargent William Crowe, Dave Brown, Vaine Warren-Peu, Jayden Warren-Peu, Melva Evans, Mike Warren, Jay Warren, Carol Warren, Dr Jack Dracula & FCA Loga Crichton

The Governor and Deputy Governor joined the meeting via teleconference and the Mayor welcomed all those present.

The Governor spoke about the political background in the UK covering the last few months saying that we have ended up with a government fairly similar to the last one - it remains a conservative lead government so in many ways this is a continuation. The main focus for the government, over the next 18 months, will be BREXIT. Two extra months (57 days) have been time-tabled for parliament to sit next year and that time will be to specifically deal with BREXIT legislation. A range of new laws will come on to the statute books including a UK Immigration bill, an Agriculture bill, a Fisheries bill, a Customs bill and an International Trade bill. There will also be a need to establish the body in the UK which will sanction issues currently dealt with at the EU level. When Britain leaves the UE the British Government will need its own decision making body. That range of legislation, as it comes through, will be accompanied by a lot of political movement as the government determines how Britain will be successfully set up once we leave the EU. There will also have to be an agreement, struck by roughly October 2018, with the EU itself so as to allow a 6 month period for other countries to ratify the agreement.

The Governor acknowledged Cr L Jaques' activities with the EU in Brussels, the UK and Noumea, He noted that Cr Jaques had met with the new Minister for the Overseas Territories and was in front of the committee at the House of Lords. He said Cr Jaques had done a very good job in setting out the issues for Pitcairn given that its connectivity with the rest of the world is through the European Union and Pitcairn is geographically tied to French Polynesia.

The Mayor thanked the Governor for his update and comments, agreeing that Cr Jaques has done an excellent job conveying Pitcairn's concerns regarding the Brexit impact on it and other overseas territories.

The Governor said he is disappointed that he cannot visit the island in August as planned, due to an unavoidable, small, medical procedure. He said he will make an effort to connect with the island a little more frequently before he leaves the position of Governor.

Referring to the forthcoming facilitated workshop(s), with Kathryn Barriball and Jim Heays (Aug 17th – Sept 3rd) the Governor said he had very little to add to what has already been discussed. He said that from his perspective, he wanted to stress that this is definitively not about blame. It is about helping the island move forward. Of course, he said, it is a very important element of the facilitators understanding of what has happened and the real progress has been made over the last 3 or 4 years. The comparison now, since before he started (working with Pitcairn on child safeguarding matters) is striking.

He went on to say good child safeguarding continues to be a priority for all but what we have done together, over the last 3 and 4 years, speaks to the progress that has been made. He said, when it comes to the future of the island, we need to find peace for everybody because without that we won't really be able to move to the next level of the island's future.

He acknowledged Jim Heays (past FCA) and requested that people seize the opportunity to participate in the workshop process with the facilitators. He then thanked all those concerned for their input and said it would be great for Pitcairn to get a 'big tick' from the November 2017 CSR.

The Mayor again thanked the Governor for his comments and said he feels optimistic about the forthcoming workshops. He said that Katherine Barriball had, at the recent community consultation teleconference, assisted in clarifying some of the outcomes she anticipates will come from the workshops and he very much looks forward to getting the process underway.

He said a favourable CSR report would be excellent but what was really important is that Pitcairn can actively demonstrate that people have moved forward and they are committed to maintaining good child safeguarding practices now and in the future. He said the people of Pitcairn have moved on and it was time to prove and demonstrate this to the world.

The Deputy Governor, Robin Shackell, told the community that progress on developing the process for seeking tenders etc. for the new shipping contract and the telecommunications/internet contract has been made and he anticipates being able to share and consult with the community on these topics soon.

He went on to say that the recent international coverage of the plastics on Henderson Island had generated a number of expressions of interest. In particular PEW has signalled interest in developing a proposal that will not only take in the clean-up of plastics on Henderson, but also its ongoing management and forensic analysis plastic debris and the waste that ends up on Henderson. He said Pitcairn can make a useful contribution to this global problem and when the time comes HMG and Pitcairn should collectively consider the proposal, which will include local organisational and logistical input.

The Governor added that there are two important points to take away from this. One being that any plans are undertaken in full consultation with the island - there is no set of people who know Henderson better, than Pitcairners - other than perhaps RSPB, he said. The second point touches on Pitcairn's global reputation. The main media stories about Pitcairn more recently have been generated by the establishment of the Marine Protected Area. The rising scale of pollution and plastics in our oceans and their impact has significance for the entire planet. It is notable that there are 4 or 5 independent, crowd funding schemes in place geared toward funding the removal of plastics on Henderson. However, we know that clearing the plastics is not the single answer - it will all come back again given the global scale of the problem. Being part of an ongoing programme which can evaluate and measure this is important for the world and for Pitcairn. The Deputy Governor will be in touch with the island to further discuss these matters.

Dr Dracula reported that the island is being kept healthy and things are going well. Whilst other islands, west of French Polynesia, have been dealing with dengue epidemics, Pitcairn remains free of such things and the medical clinic is very aware of the threat and all is being done to screen arrivals.

The Mayor reported that the Water Valley harbour project is totally completed. Permanent signage has been erected and it was formally opened by the Deputy Governor in May. He added that Pitcairn is in the process of preparing procurement documents for INTEGRE and remaining EDF10 projects and the ratings if the ship to shore supplier quotes have been forwarded to the PIO Financial Controller for final selection. Once done a contract will be developed and further consultation with the preferred supplier will begin. The Governor thanked all those who been involved with implementation of the EDF10 programme and its related documentation needs.

In conclusion the Mayor spoke about Pitcairn's renewable energy requirements (as identified in the recent feasibility study report). He said Cr Leslie Jaques has done an excellent job in proposing that Pitcairn access funds to secure its renewable energy needs under the EDF11 Regional packet.

Meeting Closed: 1.45pm

Mayor Shawn Christian:  Date: 27 / 8 / 2017

APPROVED

