

**General Services Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday 16th March 2021**  
**Anne French Room**  
**0930 hours**

**Mr B Kelly, Chairman**

**Ms A Burgess**

**Mr G McKinley**

**Mr S Roberts**

**Mr R Jenkins**

**Mr R Nash, Deputy Chief Executive – Via Teams**

**Ms K Jones, Chief Executive – Via Teams**

**Mrs S Pengilly-Price, Head of Government Support**

**Mrs L Baines, Minute Secretary**

**Ms S Ireland, Programme Manager**

**Mrs E O’Toole, Finance Manager (left 1030)**

**Apologies: Mrs K Hatcher-Gaudion, Capital Projects Co-ordinator (CPC)**

**In Attendance: & Mr R Phelan, Estates, Environment & Infrastructure Manager (EEIM) for item 03/2021; Mr J Taylor, Harbour Master; and Mr Bill Abel for item 04/2021; Peter Barnes, SOG for item 6.1.**

**01/2021 Minutes from previous meeting for approval – Draft minutes from February GSC meeting tabled and approved.**

**CE OFFICE**

**02/2021 Matters Arising**

**2.1 Alderney Bird Observatory Report**

The Committee were advised that a meeting had taken place with the ABO, which was fractious. A complaint has been made through Data Protection against the Chairman, regarding the Billet item referring to the Bird Warden’s employment; as he was not informed beforehand.

The ABO have asked for the following: to keep the assistant warden flat at the Nunnery; for the States of Alderney to continue to pay the Bird Warden’s salary as a States employee; hand the hostel back to the SoA; and replace the ringing room.

A further meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday with the Deputy Chief Executive. The Finance Committee resolved at their meeting to support the GSC request for the ABO to receive a grant to cover the warden salary until the end of June 2021.

A request has been submitted for further information from the ABO.

The Committee noted that Nunnery sunroom is unsafe in its current condition, EEIM, CE to work out all dynamics involved. Noted.

**03/2021 Departmental Reports**

**3.1 Capital Projects Status Report – Report dated March 2021 tabled and noted.**

**The Chairman requested for the Departmental Reports to be separate going forwards. Noted.**

**Connaught Extension – Works have recommenced on Phase 2 after lockdown restrictions have eased. Looking at completion for Phase 2 in May 2021. Noted.**

**Road Resurfacing – it was noted that there are ongoing talks with States of Guernsey colleagues and contractors regarding potential combined works.**

**Whitegates/Old Fire Station/ Old Connaught** – site visit has been made by Members. Awaiting valuation from Bell & Co. Noted.

**Coastal Defences – Corblets** - it was noted that a local contractor has been scheduled for the works from 16<sup>th</sup> March.

**Water Board Filtration Plant** – Tour of water filtration unit – the possibility of replacing the porta cabins with a main structure has been discussed. Estates, Environment & Infrastructure Manager and Programme Manager to discuss further. Noted.

The Committee gave their thanks to the Water Board for refurbishing the unit.

**The General Services Committee resolved to note the March Project Status Report; and approved the capital grant funding of £10k for Water Board Phase 19 at La Heche.**

EEIM/PM/CPC

### **3.2 Harbour & Fisheries Report**

The Committee were advised that the new crane doesn't meet the full specification that was ordered. A snagging list has been compiled, which include safety ladders and rust on turbo. The final payment has been held until these issues have been rectified. The snagging list has been sent to Hassles, and they are working through the list. The crane engineers were not happy with their experience, mainly the process for COVID protocols. There had been confusion with GBA on the processes that were in place. A full induction was not completed, which is standard procedure. This will now not be accomplished until lockdown has eased in the UK. Noted.

## **04/2020 Harbour & Fisheries**

### **4.1 Old Harbour Crane**

The Committee were advised that the engineers did not have time to value the old crane, as planned. Expressions of interest have been sent out to the UK before the Bailiwick. The Committee requested for the advert to be extended Bailiwick wide, and to crane publications. Noted. It was also requested for the Harbour Master to provide the Committee with the logs for the past 5 years regarding the breakdown of the crane. Noted.

HARBOUR MASTER

**4.2 Second Crane Alternative – Options for consideration** – Report from Harbour Authority dated March 2021 tabled and considered.

At the last meeting of GSC, Committee Member Steve Roberts requested that investigations into the purchase of an auxiliary machine be made by the Harbour Authority. Mr Roberts requested that this crane must be as basic as possible; should not rely on complicated electronics; and does not need a “super hero” to operate it. Unfortunately modern cranes in the port and construction industries now possess electronic components in varying quantities which are involved in most of their core functions ranging from standard operations to accurate load indication.

The States procurement policy dictates that all vehicular purchases are new or close to new and this presents a problem when sourcing a “basic machine”. To locate such a machine will certainly require the purchase of a second hand model in order to ensure that it is old enough to operate without electronics.

**The Committee agreed for this item to be deferred until there are no further options on other alternatives to be considered.**

#### **4.3 Harbour Crane: Storage**

The Committee were advised that the use of Fort Grosnez for storing the new crane could be done, with slight design amendments to accommodate the new crane. 2 roof beams need replacing, asbestos sheets need removing, and water ingress down the walls will need addressing. Quotes for these works were obtained 18 months ago, however will possibly need updating. It was noted that as per manufacturer's specification, the outriggers need to be in place for the boom to be lowered when stationary for stability purposes. The Committee requested a further report for the next meeting. Noted.

**EEIM/HARBOUR MASTER**

#### **4.4 Harbour Crane: Sand Grab – Options for consideration** – Report from Harbour Authority dated March 2021 tabled and considered.

The Harbour Authority removed the cranes grabbing facility from active service, limiting lifts to an essential cargo only. This was announced prior to declining the delivery of a large consignment of loose building materials at the end of 2020. The measure was enforced in order to protect the aging Harbour Crane from the accelerated deterioration associated with the handling of bulk cargoes, thus keeping the machine in service until the new crane was operational.

It must be understood that the primary function of the harbour crane is to discharge and backload unitized cargo to and from cargo ships. In essence it is the most strategically important piece of equipment on the island, and as such its condition must be preserved to ensure the continuation of its primary function as a lifeline asset. The provision of a sand grabbing service is an ancillary function undertaken by the States of Alderney due to the lack of a viable or willing alternative. Whilst the machine is indeed perfectly capable of providing a grabbing function, it presents some unavoidable issues which affect the delivery of its' primary function as the islands lifeline asset in the long term. The Harbour Authority was tasked with exploring further options for this service and outlining the cost of carrying out the service with the new crane.

The current grab has been repaired, but will require replacement in due course. Long term options will need to be considered.

**The General Services Committee resolved to approve to currently continue with the new crane and the traditional method of grabbing, providing it is safe to do so.**

**HARBOUR MASTER**

#### **4.5 Harbour Office: Vessels**

The Harbour Master advised that none of the harbour vessels are legally coded, which includes the water taxi. This will require a MC Coded Surveyor to come up from Guernsey to process any vessels that are required to be coded. Noted.

**The Committee requested for an inventory of vessels owned by the States of Alderney, and for this to including their use and current condition.**

**HARBOUR MASTER**

#### **4.6 Fisheries Update**

The Committee were advised that the States Vet is to approve the appointment of a suitably trained Alderney Officer for dealing with local hygiene certificates for catch. This is currently being worked on by the Harbour Master and Head of Government Support. **Noted.**

**HARBOUR MASTER/HoGS**

#### **4.7 AOB - Harbour**

**Water Taxi** - The Committee were advised that expressions of interest have been advertised, and that this was an operational matter. Noted.

**Expressions of Interest – Boat Lifts** – The Committee were advised that this advert was put out for soft market research. The Committee stated that a report has to come for consideration before expressions of interest are advertised. Noted.

**Mooring Buoys** – It was noted that the dive contract expressions of interest has been advertised. Local divers are unable to do it this year due to other work commitments off island. The Committee noted that this was time critical, and requested an update before the next meeting. Noted.

**HARBOUR MASTER**

## **05/2020 Water Board**

**5.1 Water Rates Challenge** – Report from States Treasury dated 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 tabled and considered.

At its meeting in January 2021, the Committee considered a report from the States Treasurer in respect of a challenge to a water rate bill by a resident.

The resident contends that they should not pay the full water rate associated with domestic premises as their property is under development. They have asked for a meter to be installed and was refused as this is not States Water Board policy. The Committee resolved to instruct Treasury to provide details of the cost implications of amending the current policy and Ordinance for 2022 for this (and other properties in the same situation).

**The Committee thanked the Strategic Financial Adviser and Treasury Assistant for the report.**

**The General Services Committee resolved to approve (Ms Burgess abstained):**

- a) **To provide a temporary water meter at the property, with the cost of installation to be met by applicant, and to be removed once the property is reassessed by Cadastre as ‘domestic’ (as draft letter attached);**
- b) **To confirm the current policy of no domestic metering including domestic properties under development;**
- c) **To instruct the Law Officers to amend the Water Rates Ordinance to align with the current policy and clarify any issues open to interpretation prior to the 2022 budget; and**
- d) **To commission a full review of all legislation related to water supply and charge to ensure that it is fit for purpose.**

**TREASURY/SFA**

## **06/2021 States of Guernsey – Annual Update – Virtual Guests**

**6.1 Virtual Update by States of Guernsey’s Environment & Infrastructure Team; Energy and Infrastructure Projects Officer Peter Barnes**

### **6.1.1 Breakwater**

The Committee were advised that 2020 was a challenging year with COVID implications. 2 months were lost for diving due to the lockdown. Plant maintenance was completed. The 3 year plan for the facing work was due to commence in 2020, but due to the delays this work was not completed. The 3 year plan will now commence from 2021. Repairs have been made, and are ongoing to damage on the lower walkway; bull nose; archways; and inner & outer coping. The Bull nose repair is to be completed. The dive contract for 2021 is to commence as soon as possible. It was noted that the programme for this year are for general/ongoing repairs; concrete facing and masonry repairs. A replacement programme for the ageing plant and equipment has commenced for this year.

Lifelabels have been installed on the entrance to the Breakwater. Swinging gates are being looked into for use where concreting works are being done to protect the area from vehicle access. Noted.

### **6.1.2 Fort Grosnez**

The Committee were advised that the buildings are being utilised by the States of Guernsey and diving contractors, however, some storage areas are being consolidated when not in main use. The Blacksmiths shed is being handed back to the States of Alderney, once discussions have been had regarding the state of return. The Committee will receive a further update in the coming months. Noted.

### **6.1.3 Old Steam Crane - Mannez**

The Committee were advised that the States of Guernsey are aware of the health and safety aspect of the old steam crane, and that there is a grade of asbestos within the structure that will need to be disposed of safely. It was noted that there have been some interest from heritage and cultural enthusiasts on keeping the structure in situ for visitor attraction purposes. Some Committee members agreed that this had been an interesting sculpture which attracted visitors, however realised that safety of the structure was no longer viable.

**The General Services Committee resolved to approve for the States of Guernsey to completely remove the old steam crane due to the increasing health and safety issues, including the asbestos within the structure; and for the States of Alderney to write to the interested parties to advise of the decision.**

SoG

## **07/2021 Recreation, Welfare and Environment (including States Land & Properties)**

**7.1 Ramsar Action Plan – Options for consideration presented by Ramsar Officer Jack Bush & Justin Hart AWT Avian Ecologist** – Alderney’s West Coast and Burhou Islands Ramsar Site and Other Sites Annual Action Plan 2021 Report from AWT tabled and considered.

It was noted that Ms Burgess and Mr Roberts are the designated GSC contacts for wildlife, where the AWT can provide updates for GSC members, including the next 4 year plan.

The 2021 Alderney’s West Coast and Burhou Islands Ramsar Site and Other Sites annual action plan describes work to be undertaken in 2021 during the fifth and final year of the 2017 – 2021 Ramsar Management Strategy. This action plan incorporates the objectives outlined in the five-year management strategy and the recommendations made in the 2020 Ramsar Review. It was developed and reviewed in consultation with the Alderney Ramsar Steering Group and States Veterinary officers where dialogue remains ongoing.

To achieve the strategic aims set out by the five-year strategy, a series of objectives are set out for 2021 that encompass the long-term monitoring of Alderney’s seabird population, the management of invasive species, rodent control, marine surveys, various outreach events and support for advisory and legislative activities. Some elements of work that were not completed in 2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic have been rescheduled for 2021.

**The General Services Committee resolved to approve the Alderney’s West Coast and Burhou Islands Ramsar Site and Other Sites Annual Action Plan 2021.**

**Signage for the protection of breeding birds under the Protection of Wild Birds Ordinance (2005) –** Report from AWT tabled and considered.

Based on advice from the States Vet, the AWT have requested that GSC create a protocol which would enable the civil service to grant permission for the deployment of warning signs where a breeding bird may be threatened with disturbance by humans, either deliberately or unintentionally.

This would be done to meet the requirements of the Protection of Wild Birds (Alderney) Ordinance (2005).

Currently, if an organisation is aware that a bird or birds may be threatened by human activity permission for appropriate signage must first be sort from the land owner, which in the majority of cases is the States of Alderney, and then from the Building Development Control Committee (BDCC). The Committee thanked the AWT for the detailed reports.

**The General Services Committee resolved to support an application to BDCC for temporary signage.**

**7.2 Longis Reserve Action Plan – for consideration** – Longis Nature Reserve Annual Action Plan from AWT tabled and considered.

The action plan details work to be undertaken in 2021 within the Longis reserve by the Alderney Wildlife Trust. The proposed actions within the plan are set out to meet the aims and objectives as outlined by the 2017-2021 Longis Reserve Management Plan, taking into consideration the recommendations made in the 2020 Annual Review. Before to submission to yourselves, the report was circulated with all relevant stakeholders (States Vet, Alderney Animal Welfare, Alderney Bird Observatory, States Works and Visit Alderney) for review.

**The General Services Committee resolved to approve the 2021 Longis Reserve Action Plan.**

**CE OFFICE**

**7.3 Crusher Site – Leases** – Report from Chief Executive Office dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 tabled and considered.

Mr Kelly declared an interest.

The current lease agreements from 2004 and 2006 with all tenants at the Crusher site are poor from the States perspective. The rents are low with 3 year reviews and the term at 50 years is too long.

The States should look for any opportunity to renegotiate these in the next few years.

It is unlikely that a case can be agreed to extend the current leases to 125 years. There is precedent for this when a request was refused in January 2019. However, this needs to be considered through the proper committee channels.

The permissions do not appear to be in place for the assignments to Pommier or change of use. The rents agreed between Waterscape and Pommier appear to be excessive and the reason for this is not clear.

**The General Services Committee resolved to: write to the applicant asking for their case in writing so that the Committee can consider the proposal properly. In doing this, the applicant should be advised that the Policy and Finance Committee has previously decided in 2019 not to extend the lease terms on the Crusher Site.**

- 1. Pommier and Waterscape should formally approach the States for permission to assign the lease and change use of the site;**
- 2. Pommier to confirm that the relevant licences are in place from the States of Guernsey for cannabis production on the premises;**
- 3. Pommier should provide a business case for such an exceptional lease extension. This should set out:**
  - **The business proposal for the site;**
  - **The economic advantages for the States of Alderney; and**
  - **Evidence to confirm consent from the current lessees to discuss with SoA.**

**HoGS**

**7.4 Asset Register**

The Committee noted a verbal update from the Programme Manager. A further update to come back to Committee as this is an ongoing piece of work.

**7.5 Fort Doyle – Outfall Report** – Report from Programme Manager dated March 2021 tabled and considered.

Fort Doyle is situated on the north-west side of island, near the Harbour, between Crabby Bay and Platte Saline beaches. Swimming is prohibited at both these beach locations due to strong currents. Part of the Fort is currently leased to the Amateur Boxing Club and included here for context reasons a separate piece of activity is underway with the Alderney Society, who have requested to GSC October 2020 to make the Fort a ‘public heritage attraction’, similar to the Nunnery, Longis. The Amateur Boxing Club have been engaged by the States and GSC have approved in principle Alderney Society request. It is mentioned for the purpose of highlighting potential significant increase in footfall and subsequently publicity and pictures of the Fort.

Running underground parallel to the Fort is a main drain outfall. Surface water and main drains connect to this outfall. The waste tanker (aka ‘honeypot’) also empties into drains connected to this outfall. The outfall waste is then washed out to sea via the Swinge strong currents.

In 2007 a Vallee Sewer (Capital Project) improved and extended the outfall addressing the issue of odour at low tides. In 2018 there was a proposal to extend the pipeline even further and aligned with Mouriaux to Platte Saline project and possibly Fort Tourgis. Mouriaux to Platte Saline connection to main drains was de-prioritised and Fort Tourgis has been ebbing and flowing since year 2000.

**The General Services Committee resolved to:**

- 1. note this report, and**
- 2. approve the continuation of the investigation and analysis work of this project solution, with the intention to confirm either 1) the solution will deliver the benefits at the approved cost or 2) propose an alternative solution. The option of doing nothing is not recommended.**

**PM**

### **08/2021 Roads and Transport**

**Nothing to report.**

### **09/2021 Any Other Business**

**Scout Group Request** – It was noted that the Scout Hut is currently not safe for use due to roof damage. The Scout Group has enquired if the CD Bunker could be used for their meetings. The Committee were advised that this is not available as currently in use as the States Civil Defence Bunker. Noted. It was queried why the use of the Butes Centre would not be another option. This to be relayed to the Scout Group. Noted.

**Skate Park** – Complaint and a further request for a sound barrier received. The Committee were advised that signs have been ordered, and a quote renewal from the Company is being sought regarding the sound barrier. Measures are being taken regarding radio/music disturbance. Noted.

The Committee were advised that Richard Nash, Deputy Chief Executive and Kath Jones, Chief Executive were aiming to be on island next week, Bailiwick bubble dependant. Noted.

**Excess Water from Val Longis into Val Der Mer Parking area** – SWD dealing with this issue, and a speed bump will be installed which is the quickest and cheapest solution. EEIM to advise complainant.

**Non-Elected Member for GSC** – The Chairman proposed that this would benefit the Committee on certain topics. It was agreed that the Committee would consult on specialist needs as/when required.

**Old Slaughter House** – request for purchase – negotiations have not been progressed further by the Deputy Chief Executive. Site visit and meeting to be organised.

**DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Fort Doyle** – Mr Kelly and Ms Burgess have had a tour by Dr Davenport. It was noted that the outside toilet requires replacement. EEIM to research renovation costs. Still awaiting response from Alderney Society regarding proposed works – Chairman to contact Alderney Society for a firm request for Committee consideration. Noted.

**Meeting Closed: 12.45**

**Signed: Boyd Kelly**

**Date: March 2021**