

## **May – June Report 2013**

### **Dr Justin Fenech – Deputy Mayor**

Presented in part at the Local Council Meeting held on the 6th of June and in part at the Local Council Meeting held on the 27th of June 2013.

### **Matter Arising out of the Minutes**

1. Minute II.3 (regarding the Tennis Court and paving in Triq il-Qasam):
  - Has the UIF Board been established by MEPA. If not can we perhaps have a meeting with the officer in charge? If it has been formed let us organise a meeting at their earliest convenience.
  - The architect had to prepare a UIF application related to the paving in Triq il-Qasam. Has this been done? If not, could the Secretariat please follow it up.
  
2. Minute II.4 (regarding bring-in-site at the bottom of Triq il-Qasam):
  - Noel Muscat, Alex Chetcuti and I met up with the residents. They appreciated the fact we met up with them and we discussed the situation. They informed us that the land on which the bring-in-site was established is private land. The person owning the land contacted us and confirmed the land belonged to her. On this basis our suggestion is that the bring-in-site be removed. We should also set a deadline for an alternative place, after which, if no suitable place is found, the bins should be removed from the locality. I would request the Council to take a decision on this matter.
  
3. Minute IV. 3 (regarding Forum Hotel):
  - Regarding the Forum Hotel, Noel Muscat, Architect Dietre Falzon and I met up with the Contractor. We discussed the programme of works, traffic management and the piazza of Triq L-Uqija. The architect of the contractor had to send a number of documents to Dietre. Could the secretariat check if this was done and if so, could we get a copy of the documents?
  - An independent surveyor is to be appointed by MEPA, can the secretariat ask Dietre to check who is being nominated. Once this person is appointed it is imperative that we meet up with him/her.

### **New Matters to Report**

#### **1) Wardens**

- As delegated by the Council, I attended the meeting of the Regional Council and informed them about our decision against increasing the number of hours of warden patrols in Swieqi. I stressed upon the point that the Council and residents were unhappy with the service rendered. I concluded by asking for concrete action in order to tackle the hot spots in Swieqi.

- The Mayor of Pembroke concurred and added that they would only agree with an increase if their own issues would also be addressed. He suggested we meet together and discuss the possibility of having wardens patrol the locality in the evening, during weekend, in order to control the overspill from Paceville. On this matter the Regional Council agreed that a pilot project would be put in place to see the viability of such a route. The pilot project will consist of two wardens patrolling on a Saturday night – from 9pm to 1am – throughout the streets of Swieqi and Pembroke that border Paceville.
- A meeting was held on Monday the 10th of June between the Pembroke Local Council, the Swieqi Local Council (Noel, Alex and I were present) and LES representatives, Mr Borg Caruana and Mr Soler, in order to discuss the issues related to wardens in our locality. We once again explained the problems and our position.
- I was sent a proposal for a rotation of wardens between Swieqi and Pembroke. I have forwarded this to the Council for discussion. We need to take a position on this and come forward with a proposal by the next Regional Council Meeting.

## **2) CCTV Cameras**

- I took Mr Borg Crauana and Mr Soler to the sites pinpointed by Kenneth DeMartino and I got their feedback on the matter.
- I then met up with Kenneth DeMartino and we concluded that he will be sending a proposal that will include all details and costings related to installing 4 CCTV cameras in the locality. Once i receive the proposal I will forward this to you for discussion.
- Once we have agreed upon a proposal we should meet with the Public Order and Security Working Group for preliminary feedback. We should then call a public meeting and present the proposal to residents. Based on feedback we should take a final decision and then approach the Regional Council in order to settle the matter.

## **3) Meetings with the Police**

- Paul Fenech, Hugh Zammit and I met up with Inspector Micallef. We discussed the various issues related to our locality including (a) theft, (b) vandalism, (c) drug use, (d) patrols, (e) traffic management, (f) contraventions by cars with foreign number plates, (g) the Police Station. With regards to patrols we were informed that these are being conducted throughout the weekend. We gave him our feedback on these patrols and also directed him to the hotspots (particular streets and public gardens) which needed more vigilance.
- Paul Fenech, Hugh Zammit and I met up with the Drug Squad. We raised the issues relative to our locality and singled out the areas that are in need of more vigilance.
- On the 19th of June we met up with the Commissioner of Police. The Council was represented by Noel, Alex, Paul, Hugh and I. The Commissioner explained that manning a police office was expensive and he proceeded in giving us a breakdown of costs. Noel Muscat replied that we understood this but we believed that a locality of 9,000+ residents needed adequate protection and that currently we felt that we were not properly covered by the police station is Saint Julians. The Commissioner

told us that he would be willing to invest in running a Police Office if we were ready to invest in the project as well, in terms of installing CCTV Cameras. I replied that the Council was working on a proposal with regards to CCTV Cameras but it was imperative that we adopt a holistic strategy involving CCTV – Police Office – Neighbourhood watch. The Commissioner agreed and is now waiting for our proposal. We also briefed the Commissioner on the need of more foot patrols in order to better protect residents from crime in the locality. The Commissioner replied that he will soon be introducing Rapid Intervention Units which will be able to be on site with 5-10min. When not in action, the Units will be patrolling the localities.

#### **4) Meeting with the Hon. Minister Mallia**

- The Meeting with the Hon. Minister was attended by Noel, Alex and I. Also present at the meeting were the Police Commissioner and the Assistant Police Commissioner (from Sliema Police Station). The Hon. Minister started the meeting by saying that he was not in favour of having a police office in Swieqi. He explained that the plan they were currently working on was one where there would be regional police stations which would dispatch out foot patrols and Rapid Intervention Units. I explained that as such we were already under the jurisdiction of a regional police station and it was not working. He replied saying that he would be doing things differently. He also said he wanted to introduce CCTV cameras in the locality. I said we were working on a proposal following our meeting with the Commissioner but as such CCTV was not cheap - we were aiming at covering the capital investment but the running costs were great and it was difficult to make the system sustainable. I also repeated the need of taking a holistic approach and therefore CCTV needed to be back by a Police Office and a Neighbourhood Watch. We agreed we would forward him our proposal on the matter.
- We also raised a number of issues related to crime in the locality, most of which were raised by residents.

#### **5) Love your Dog – Respect your Neighbour.**

- The Campaign was launched with a Press Conference held at the offices of the Local Council on the 24th of June. All partners (SPCA, Dog Trust, Trixie & Pedrigree) were present. The campaign was explained to the press and the first mailshot to residents will be sent in the July. Residents will be able to subscribe for free dog poo bags and a do poo bag holder from the Council. This campaign will be a first in Malta and I hope other Councils will try something similar.

#### **6) SwieqiFest**

- This will be held on the 6th (Friday), 7th (Saturday) and 8th (Sunday) at the new Civic Centre.
- The proposal is as follows:
  - i. Youth Festival – Friday 6th, 7pm to 11pm.
  - ii. Community Festival – Saturday 7th, 3pm to 11pm.
  - iii. Sports Festival – Sunday 8th, 9am to 12.30pm.

- iv. Water Festival – Sunday 8th, 4pm to 11pm.
- The Community Festival will include promotion of the “Swieqi Going Green” and the “Love your Dog – Respect your Neighbour” campaigns.
- “Swieqi Going Green” will be organising an Energy Fair throughout Swieqi Fest.
- The Water Festival will include a number of fun games for children and all the family. Outdoor Mass will be celebrated as usual.
- I will be coordinating the Festival again this year and we already have a good number of residents who are ready to help. I believe that every Councillor should be involved so that the workload can be properly shared. Therefore I am suggesting the following task division:
  - i. Youth Festival – Justin Fenech & Rene Rossignaud
  - ii. Energy Fair – Paul Fenech
  - iii. Community Festival – Alex Chetcuti
  - iv. Sports Festival – Noel Muscat
  - v. Water Festival – Mario Fava
  - vi. Entertainment for Sunday Evening – Carmen Said
  - vii. I will be allocating tasks to Alfred Curmi and Mary Anne Abela at a later stage.

#### **7) Swieqi United**

- It's with great pleasure that I can report that Swieqi United will be inaugurating its new ground and have launched its youth academy and Minors Team. The Council will be invited to the opening.

#### **8) Phoenix Sports Association**

- Noel and I met up with the Phoenix Sports Association. They are interested in bringing their Handball team in Swieqi and calling it Swieqi Phoenix Handball Team. I will be drafting a proposal to see how we can collaborate.

#### **9) Swieqi Going Green**

- I am helping Paul with the PR of this campaign. I have created 4 logos – these were shared on Facebook to get feedback. The working group wishes to organise some public meetings with residents and I will help them coordinate these.

#### **Issues raised by Residents**

- Residents in Triq FX Ebejer have been complaining that contractors in their street are leaving rocks in parking places. The executive secretary was sent and informed the contractors that they need a permit if they want to keep the parking spaces cleared. At first the contractors obeyed but have relapsed. The executive secretary has informed the police to take action. We need to increase our pressure on contractors – unfortunately a number are ignoring the law. Once warned we should take stronger action.
- A resident in Triq il-Gizimin has requested that the street lighting in the street be assessed and more lights be added if necessary. He believes this will reduce crime in

the said street. Once the street lighting is assessed we should inform the residents and if need be coordinate with EneMalta. Residents in Triq il-Keffa and Triq l-Uqija have forwarded similar requests. I have gone on site and will be presenting a proposal at next Council meeting.

- Residents complained about a dogs barking in Swieqi Road. I visited the owners of the dog on the 7th of June together with SPCA and Dog Trust. The owner was given some educational material and the issue was discussed. Following this, it was decided by the partners of the “Love your Dog - Respect your neighbour” campaign to include “barking” as a topic of the campaign. I suggest that any complaints related to barking are forwarded to me so I can forward to SPCA and Dog Trust.
- Residents have rightly asked that we apply with Transport Malta for the road marking in the newly surfaced part of Triq it-Tiben. In the meantime we should paint a stop sign next to the entrance to the petrol station in the same road.
- Residents were raising a number of issues on Facebook. It is important that Councillors reply when they have the chance. This dialogue will help both Council and residents build a stronger relationship. I have been raising most issues directly with the Executive Secretary for the quickest response possible.

### **Requests**

- 1) I would like to request the Councillors responsible for “Businesses and the Self Employed” to set a meeting with the Businesses and Self Employed in Triq il-Qasam and its side roads.
- 2) I would like the Council to set a meeting with all Language Schools that operate in Swieqi. We should contact FELTOM and they should direct us on this matter.

### **Meetings Attending:**

- 1) 10th May: “Maltese Libraries – What Future”. Conference organised by MaLIA
- 2) 16th May: Meeting with Residents
- 3) 20th May: Meeting with the Police
- 4) 23rd May: Meeting with Contractor at the site in Triq il-Keffa regarding trenching works
- 5) 27th May: Regional Meeting
- 6) 31st May – 1st June: Meeting of Mayors and Deputy Mayors in Gozo
- 7) 3rd June: EU Funding Debate
- 8) 4th June: Pembroke Athleta
- 9) 5th June: Launch of the “Swieqi Going Green” Campaign
- 10) 6th June: Meeting with Pheonix SC
- 11) 6th June: Local Council Meeting
- 12) 10th June: Joint Meeting between Pembroke LC, Swieqi LC and LES regarding Wardens
- 13) 18th June: Meeting with Guard and Warden Limited
- 14) 19th June: Meeting with the Commissioner of Police
- 15) 20th June: Meeting with Residents
- 16) 20th June: Site visits to Triq il-Gizimin, Triq il-Keffa and Triq il-Uqija regarding Steet Lighting.
- 17) 24th June: Launch of the “Love your Dog – Respect your Neighbour” Campaign

18) 25th June: Meeting with the Hon. Minister Mallia