

L I R A
LEISURE ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 14 MARCH 2019
AT THE LEISURE ISLAND COUNTRY CLUB

1. Present

Approximately 100 people, comprising LIRA members, accompanying persons and other Leisure Island residents.

2. Welcome and opening

The Chairman, Keith Hollis, extended a warm welcome to everybody present. He said the meeting had been called to inform Islanders of the issues which have arisen with the fibre optic rollout and to seek a decision from LIRA members as to whether they wish LIRA to become involved with the rollout on the Island. Openserve (Telkom) and Nokia, their installation partner, have temporarily halted work on the Island as they have encountered resistance and objections from some Islanders. LIRA's proposed objectives would be to facilitate resolution of issues and to minimise disruption, visual impacts and delays in the delivery of fibre connection to residents.

He handed over to Dave Stromberg, LIRA's Deputy Chairman, to go through the detailed presentation (attached).

3. Presentation

The attached presentation is self-explanatory.

The first set of slides describe the fibre optic rollout.

The main fibre optic cables into the Island are being trenched. However, connection to individual properties is via overhead cables, using existing poles wherever possible. Openserve/Nokia estimate that approximately 50 new poles will have to be installed. It has become apparent, however, that the maps they are using are not 100% accurate.

The next set of slides show these detailed maps, which, for convenience, have been broken into manageable Island "Blocks". On the maps, blue dots indicate existing poles and pink dots indicate proposed new poles.

As can be seen from these detailed maps, some parts of the Island are more complex than others. And some proposals are simply not practical or desirable. It is around these issues that LIRA is suggesting that a "Block Facilitator" could co-ordinate suggestions for discussion with Openserve, rather than Openserve having to deal with many individual suggestions themselves.

Noted that Openserve has budgetary constraints. Their budget does not include underground cabling into individual properties.

4. Questions and discussion

The Chairman reiterated the benefits of fibre optic for the Island but warned that Openserve is on a tight timeframe for implementation in the whole of Knysna. If too many difficulties are experienced with implementation on the Island, Openserve may simply walk away from the Island or put us at the very back of the queue.

Some of the questions raised by attendees were the following:

Q. Can I request underground trenching/cabling into my house rather than an overhead line?

A. This can be requested but cost will be for the home owner. It may also affect neighbouring properties so it may be necessary to co-ordinate with neighbours. In addition, the trenching would have to be done to meet Openserve's programme.

Q. How quickly do we have to decide on the issues, where relevant?

(poles/cabling/trenching, etc.)

A. There is a very tight timeframe. Openserve have requested us to get back to them with all suggestions by 25 March 2019.

Q. Where there is an existing conduit, can they push the new cable through it?

A. In theory this is possible. However, many of these conduits have been found to be blocked and therefore cannot be used.

Q. I do not have an existing landline but I want fibre optic connection. What must I do?

A. Connectivity will be provided by Openserve to your property.

Q. Do we have to go with Telkom/Openserve? What about alternative fibre optic installers?

A. We are getting this installation free of charge as Openserve are able to use the existing Telkom infrastructure. Other network providers would have to provide all new infrastructure which may be unviable. The existing Telkom infrastructure (poles and cables) would still remain.

Q. Many people haven't had any contact from Openserve yet. Do they need to do anything?

A. Openserve have only started implementation and will move systematically across the Island. The proposed Block Facilitator can assist in this regard.

Q. How do we get the fibre optic operational in our homes?

A. Once Openserve have completed your portion of the network, your area will be shown as purple on their online map, indicating that you can then approach an Internet Service Provider (ISP) of your choice. There are various ISPs such as Seanet, Mweb, KnysnaOn, etc. The cost of connection into homes is for the homeowners as per the agreement with their chosen ISP.

At a future meeting we may provide a platform for the various ISPs to give information on their offerings.

5. Outcome of the meeting

By show of hands there was huge support and gratitude for LIRA's proposed involvement in the fibre optic rollout, as described on the relevant slide at the back of the presentation.

6. Next steps

The Chairman thanked all for their enthusiastic attendance and expression of views. He said LIRA Committee members had indicated willingness to be Block Facilitators but called for any additional volunteers.

He reiterated the urgency of gathering views/suggestions so that Openserve could continue their work on the Island as quickly as possible.

Minutes would be sent out and the names and contact numbers of the Block Facilitators would be distributed by Monday 18 March 2019.

That concluded the meeting.