



Economic Development Committee Minutes

Date: 02 October 2014

Venue: Council Chambers

Time: 09.15 am

<u>Present:</u>	Chairman:	Hon Lawson Henry
	Deputy Chairman:	Hon Derek Thomas
	Members:	Hon Bernice Olsson Hon Leslie Baldwin Hon Gavin Ellick Hon Financial Secretary, Mr Colin Owen Director ENRD, Mr Trevor Graham Director of Enterprise, Mr Robert Midwinter
	Apologies:	Acting Financial Secretary, Mr Dax Richards Government Economist, Mr Ian Smyth (Overseas)
	In Attendance:	Head of ANRD, Mr Darren Duncan Dr Jill Key, Pest Control & Biosecurity Officer Mr Vince Thompson, Tourism Association
	Secretary:	Mrs Connie Johnson

OPEN SESSION

12.1 Attendance and Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all present to the Economic Development Committee (EDC) meeting.

12.2 Declaration of Interest

The Hon Derek Thomas declared his interest as an Accommodation Provider.

12.3 Confirmation of Open Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting of the 04th September 2014 were confirmed without any amendments.

12.4 Matters Arising

- Trevor advised that the land at Head O'Wain is privately owned.

12.5 Update on Enterprise St Helena - Mr Rob Midwinter

Rob reported that members would have already received the August report and highlighted the following:-

- a significant increase in grant applications
- the launch of the first mountain bike event and the Keane to clean culmination
- the exciting media coverage of the Enchanted Isle and working together with the Bank of St Helena, ESH & SHG
- their commitment to up-skilling saints and working in partnership with Prince Andrew School
- grant applications and the numbers approved
- Executive Council's plans for No 1, 2 & 3 Main Street, Hotel Development

Councillor Olsson asked when maintenance on the Market would begin and was informed that subject to approval it would begin next year.

Rob continued reporting that:-

- discussions had taken place with SHG regarding surplus assets
- the first digital brochure on St Helena is being finalised and will be available as an application for Smartphone's and tablets
- the Tourism website has now been revamped to be accessible via Smartphone's
- the number of entries for this year's Governor's Cup Yacht race
- landings and fish catches of the Extractor
- refurbishment of the John Mellis, which is now almost completed
- the final report relating to the Review of the Fisheries Corporation which has now been presented to ExCo

Councillor Olsson asked whether it was true that the Extractor crew was on strike and Rob advised that he would be happy to make a brief statement on this in Closed Session.

The Chairman thanked Rob for his report.

Councillor Thomas asked if the apprentices on training were engaged by the Private Sector and Rob replied he was not sure but he would check.

Action: Rob Midwinter

12.6 Draft Bio-Security Policy - Head ANRD, Mr Darren Duncan

Darren started by informing members that there had been another outbreak of **Newcastle disease** in the New Ground area and they had imposed the quarantine and culled but needed the approval from the EDC to extend the period to eight weeks.

Darren also inquired if in future, further outbreaks could be dealt with by e-mail approval and not in person with the EDC members and the Chairman asked Darren to ask for legal advice from the Attorney General.

Action: Darren Duncan

Darren further clarified that there are no facilities currently on Island to test what birds are actually carrying the disease so the best solution is to try and protect the poultry stocks because they cannot eradicate all wild birds. He said that while they have set up foot baths in infected areas there is no guarantee other family members are entering the coups without taking the necessary precautions and spreading the disease around on their clothing as well.

The Chairman asked Trevor if he could work with the Public Health Directorate at an operational level, to address concerns raised by Councillor Thomas on the appalling conditions some poultry is kept in and Trevor advised that there is close dialogue with Public Health on many issues since the outbreak but it is the matter of how to deal with them all.

Rob re-iterated that ESH will not compensate anyone on the loss of poultry but will give assistance with providing wire etc for poultry housing.

The Chairman asked Darren that following the continuing outbreaks, would they consider **ramping** up the information provided to the Public and Darren advised that they have been on the Radio to promote the vaccinations and Jill and Ken also discussing this in their Country Matters programme as well.

The Chairman asked if members supported the proposal to extend the quarantine period for eight weeks and all members gave their approval to the extension.

Returning back to the Agenda item, Darren said that hopefully it would be the final discussion around the Bio-Security Policy; he said they came to the EDC earlier in the year with their Policy Statement which was approved and much of this is now developed in the Bio-Security Policy along with the implementation plan and key actions as to how they will progress with the implementation policy at an operational level and so as not to bombard members with too much paper, the implementation plan will be given to members to take away for future reading.

Today, he said they were seeking approval for the Final Draft to be endorsed so that they could start in earnest with implementation of actions arising from the Policy. He said Jill would further explain the work that had been carried out and asked members to highlight to Jill any issues they may have with regards to the Implementation Plan.

Jill said she would keep her talk quite brief to allow the opportunity for questions and said that the Policy Statement endorsed earlier was the result of extensive stakeholder and public consultation.

Jill said that the purpose of Bio Security St Helena is to provide the framework for mitigation against the risk of introduction of new potentially harmful pests to St Helena Island. She said the main purpose is to make us Airport ready but beyond up to 2020.

Jill explained how the vision was developed the overarching outcomes, guiding principles, core elements and strategic objectives. Jill advised that current legislation is out of date and names countries that no longer exist. Jill spoke about compliance and enforcement of the regulations, staff recruitment, better training and education.

The Chairman thanked Jill for her detailed overview.

A question was asked about Bio-Security at Rupert's and the Basil Read containers and Jill and Darren explained in detail the procedures and environmental management plans that Basil Read must follow which are very stringent fumigation rules and procedures and non compliance could mean that containers or vehicles are not allowed of the ship.

The FS informed Darren that the Customs Ordinance is on for Legislation changes every year so there is the opportunity for ANRD to piggy back on that as well.

The Chairman asked if members supported the proposal to endorse the Bio security Policy, so as to be able to continue to protect the Island in the face of increased risk of introduction of pests, weeds and diseases which will come with air access and all members gave their approval.

The Chairman thanked Darren and Jill for attended the meeting.

12.7 Viewing Points and the Capital Programme - Vince Thompson

Vince Thompson thanked the Chairman for allowing him the opportunity to attend the meeting and bring these discussions to Committee. He said that viewing points had been a subject of discussion and concern for Tourism Association members for some time now and at last it had come to a more formal arena and he thanked the Chairman for his support in moving the process along. He said the main concern is that there are several areas where it is good to view the Island but some facilities could be improved for both Saints and Tourists alike.

Vince highlighted the places that had been submitted to members in his report:-

- The Depot
- Green Hill
- Sandy Bay Beach
- Bottom Woods
- Silver Hill
- High Knoll Fort

His major concern was the lack of toilet facilities in the Blue Hill area but he was still to discuss the possibility of publicly opening the toilets in Silver Hill with the proprietors, Solomon & Co.

Members voiced their concerns to the issues raised and agreed there was a lack of communication especially with regard to road maintenance and upgrading because they felt that the Tourism Office should also be consulted in this matter because the parking issues could also be addressed. The long term upkeep and maintenance of the public toilets were also a cause for concern and members discussed what other options were available to maintaining them in future.

The Chairman asked Trevor if he could pursue the possibility of providing toilet facilities in the Blue Hill area and look also at another use for the Bus shelter because he felt this is a priority and it would be a start.

Trevor said this would come down to priority and funding but he would have a look and have a discussion with the Tourism Association.

The Chairman thanked Trevor for his reply and said he appreciated him taking this on board.

The Chairman thanked Vince for coming in and said that as informed by Vince, ESH would be taking forward some issues and Trevor would try to resolve the Blue Hill toilet issue.

12.8 Confirmation of Open Minutes Special Meeting of 26 September 14

The minutes of the last meeting of the 26th September 2014 were confirmed without any amendments.

12.9 Matters Arising

- There were no matters arising.

The items on the Open Session of the Agenda were concluded and Committee moved onto the items on the Closed Session of the Agenda.

Minutes Approved:

Date:

Chairman