Economic Development Committee (EDC) Minutes

Date: 07 September 2017

Venue: Council Chamber

Time: 9 am

Present:	**Chairman**	Hon Lawson Henry
	Members:	Hon Cruyff Buckley
		Hon Clint Beard
		Hon Gavin Ellick
		Hon Financial Secretary (FS), Mr Dax Richards
		Hon Attorney General (AG), Mr Angelo Berbotto – (Items 1.4 & 1.5)
		Director ENRD, Mr Derek Henry
		Director of Policy Development & Social Enterprise (DPDSE), Mr Robert Midwinter
	Secretary	Miss Anita Legg
Apologies:	**Member**	Hon Mrs Christine Scipio-O'Dean
Overseas:	**Member**	Government Economist (GE), Miss Nicole Shamier

OPEN SESSION

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed all present to the first meeting of the EDC. Apologies had been received from Councillor Christine Scipio-O'Dean who was unwell and it was noted that the Government Economist was presently overseas. One member of the public and two members of the media were in attendance.

1.2 Declaration of Personal Interest

Councillor Ellick declared his interest in relation to his fish retail business. Councillor Beard declared his interest in relation to importing goods to the island.

1.3 Update on ESH Report, March 2017 – Director of Policy Development & Social Enterprise

The DPDSE reported that the Tourism office had been heavily involved in facilitating visitors that arrived on the recent SA Airlink proving flight, with much positive feedback. The only criticism related to accommodation standards and ensuring there were sufficient quality rooms for tourists. Comments had also been received in relation to the high costs of travelling to St Helena.

The July report had been circulated for advance reading and the DPDSE invited comments. The following key points arose from discussion:

- *Buying Local - Mantis Hotel* – The FS explained that the new chef was looking to set up a number of supply chains with local producers, with the intention of sourcing as much fresh produce as possible however recognised that there would always be risks e.g. availability of fresh fish. No knock-on effects on the wider community were foreseen. ESH was also working closely with ANRD in terms of support for local businesses and it was noted that a grant assistance program for inshore boats had already been taken up by commercial fishermen.
- *Marketing-Website* – Approximately 42,000 (Reach 40,205, Shares 21, Likes 772) people had visited the tourism blog, in relation to the recent flights to St Helena; people in niche markets had commented that the island had a world class product but it was just difficult to access physically. The DPSE confirmed that links, connecting dive and other businesses to the website, were already in place.
- *Hotel Bed-nights* – ESH indicators would not commence until the next financial year however Members noted the demand for good quality accommodation, as up to mid-August, Mantis hotel had already sold 250 bed-nights.
- *Independent Grading Body* – There is no independent body on island however the Tourism office is working with the private sector to implement a type of local accreditation scheme to meet certain minimum criteria, for accommodation standards. EDC noted that Mantis has set their own four star standards to which they will work, based on their international experience.
- *Tourism Data* – Numbers in terms of international visitors were readily available although these would obviously change with the advent of commercial flights. ESH are able to analyse these figures and will continue to monitor.
- *Release of Information* – ESH recognised the need to be cautious regarding air access expectations and the need to constantly update information; they advised they were working with Airlink, Mantis and Tour Operators on joint promotional activities. In terms of future international marketing events the Tourism office monitors any exposure that St Helena receives and is currently writing a policy to include the involvement of local operators at these events.
- *Tourism Director* – Once the new director is in post, it was agreed to invite him/her to EDC.
- *Liability Insurance* – Whilst international visitors would want to know this is in place, ESH was unable to regulate on island therefore it was up to Members if they wished to introduce legislation. The Chairman reported that ExCo had recognised this monopoly and intended to request that ESH draft a paper, in relation to introducing another service provider. The FS advised BOSH is also working on this issue.

The Chairman thanked the DPSE for keeping the committee updated.

1.4 Update on Progress with Fisheries Legislation – Attorney General

The Attorney General reported that he had met in the UK with a team from Seafast (fisheries organisation) and Martin Collins, who had previously worked in St Helena on the Fisheries Strategy, with the aim of getting technical assistance to update the fisheries legislation. This would bring St Helena in line with standards of other British Overseas Territories. A document had since been received, which the ANRD Fisheries Sector had commented on and sent back to Martin Collins for his input; this was expected back on island within six months.

EDC therefore proposed that the sub-committee, formed last year to review fisheries legislation, be reconvened in six months. In the meantime it was noted that fisheries policies were still work in progress. A timescale for completion was anticipated for May 2018.

Action: Attorney General

In response to a query, it was noted that droppers were being prohibited for reasons of sustainability and this had been requested by the Fishermen's Association. It was agreed this matter should be clarified with the Head of ANRD and brought back to EDC if necessary.

Action: Councillor Gavin Ellick

It was felt that the Maritime sector also needed a complete review of its framework and legislation. The FS advised he was currently drafting TORs for Mr Graeme Harding to visit the island early 2018 to carry out this review. Members felt that any adoption of policies needed to be tailored to fit St Helena. In terms of reintroducing Maritime studies at Prince Andrew School, Councillor Ellick agreed to have a discussion with the Chair of Education.

Action: Financial Secretary / Councillor Gavin Ellick

EDC noted that the Ports Regulations was still work in progress.

Action: Attorney General

1.5 <u>Terms of Reference for EDC</u>

The TORs for the EDC were discussed and adopted after the following amendments were made:

- Under Responsibilities, Fisheries and Agriculture need to be added, in line with the Council Committees (Constitution) Order 2013;
- Under Responsibilities, Shipping and Access should also be added. The AG advised that within law, the word "shipping" also implies "air access" until it is changed implicitly in the Constitution;
- Administration of Justice Ordinance, 2007 – to be removed;
- British Nationality (Fees Etc.) Ordinance, Cap. 41 – to be transferred to S&CDC;
- Elections Ordinance, 2009 – to be transferred to S&CDC;
- Electricity Ordinance, Cap 107 – to be transferred to ENRC, in line with the Council Committees (Constitution) Order 2013;
- Friendly Societies Ordinance, Cap. 113 – It was felt that all charities should be transferred to EDC, to be consistent;
- Lay Advocates Ordinance, Cap. 13 – to be removed;
- Water Ordinance, Cap. 55 – to remain, as this is a cross cutting matter;
- To provide more clarity, it was suggested that TORs be colour coded, in particular cross cutting matters;
- It was agreed to add "wherever the policy comes for consideration of EDC and implications to other committees are identified, then the EDC must refer this policy to those other committees";
- The following was agreed under "Membership – Non-voting members" –
  (a) Financial Secretary to be removed as this was already stipulated under "Potential attendees"; Director of ENRD to be added under (g); persons under b, e, f and g would be appointed as

members by the Governor; persons under c and d would only attend meetings as necessary; Chamber of Commerce would attend only by invitation;

- Under Membership of statutory or corporate boards, to add that an Elected Member of EDC was also a member of the Fisheries Corporation, currently this member is the Chairman.

It was agreed that EDC would issue a press release after each committee meeting and on occasion arrange meetings at more convenient times, to accommodate public attendance. It was also agreed to establish a different day for committee meetings, as Thursdays was proving inconvenient.

Action: Chairman

There being no further business, this session of the Agenda was concluded and the Committee moved to closed session.

Minutes Approved: ..... Date: 2-10-17

Chairman