**EXCO REPORT – TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2014**

Executive Council met today, Tuesday 21 January 2014. There were four items on the open agenda.

The first item was an information paper on the Repatriation of issue of the British Overseas Territories Passport (St Helena) to the UK. Due to the need for increased security features on these passports they will be issued from the UK, starting in December 2014. This process will take longer than the former process and the Immigration Executive has agreed to give further detailed publicity nearer the time. As there will always be people who require passports at short notice for medical evacuations and other emergencies, a stock of blank passports will be held on-Island for these eventualities. This means that even after December 2014, St Helena Passports - for emergencies only - will be available within three days.

The second item was the request for removal of land from the National Forest to facilitate the relocation of the Fire Station to an area that will meet the specified response times for the Airport. In this regard, a preferred site has been identified in the Alarm Forest area, near the bus stop. The area required will be up to two acres and at present this area is classed as National Forest. There is a detailed process before a Fire Station can be built and this is the first step in identifying a suitable piece of land. Following ExCo approval, the next stage is for a six week period in which the public can make comments on the use of the land for the proposed Fire Station. These comments will then be taken into consideration by ExCo, which will decide if the land can be used for the Fire Station. Planning permission will still be required before the Fire Station can be built. ExCo gave approval in principle for the land to be used for a Fire Station and for the public to be invited to submit comments.

The third item was for the Land Planning and Development Control Ordinance 2013 Commencement Order and Transitional Provisions to be implemented from 1 February 2014. This paper had originally come before ExCo in December for implementation on 1 January 2014 - due to some administrative difficulties it has come before ExCo again.

ExCo was reassured that this had not caused any significant impact, but the consultation period on the Rupert’s Development has been extended for a further four weeks to take into account the delayed implementation.

The fourth item was to endorse a recommendation made in informal Legislative Council that Hon Lawson Henry should remain as the St Helena representative at the Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) and the EU Overseas Countries and Territories Forum during the term of this Legislative Council. Previously, a different Councillor had attended these very important meetings each year - but it was felt that for continuity and to ensure that a strong and consistent message was delivered by St Helena - that Hon Lawson Henry should attend all future meetings.

Under Any Other Business, there was a discussion on stamps and the Financial Secretary informed Executive Council that the Stamp Advisory Group was open to ideas for new designs. Important events such as the Bicentenary of Napoleon’s exile or the discovery of new species could be used to promote St Helena through new stamp issues. The public is encouraged to propose new ideas for designs to the Post Office.

The DAPM visit was very successful and all agreed that it was a very positive start to 2014.

**ExCo**

**21 January 2014**