



Economic Development Committee (EDC) Minutes

Date: 02 August 2018

Venue: Council Chamber

Time: 9.00 am

Present:	Chairman	Hon Lawson Henry
	Members:	Hon Clint Beard Hon Gavin Ellick Hon Mrs Christine Scipio-O'Dean Hon Financial Secretary, Mr Dax Richards for item (8 – 13 only) Government Economist, Mrs Nicole Shamier Assistant Financial Secretary, Mr Nicholas Yon Director of Policy Development, Mr Robert Midwinter Director ENRD, Mr Derek Henry
	Secretary	Mrs Connie Johnson
	In Attendance:	Mrs Delia Du Preez, Business Development Co-Ordinator Miss Andrea Timm, Agricultural Development Officer Mr Joe Hollins, Senior Veterinary Officer
	Apologies:	Hon Cruyff Buckley

OPEN SESSION

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Delia, Andrea and also to Rob who was sitting in for Martin.

There were no members of the public present.

2. Declaration of Personal Interest

Hon Scipio-Odean declared her interest for agenda item no 13 being a member of the St Helena Fisheries Board and also item no 3 because her father is a part time farmer.

Hon Ellick said that he did not declare any DOI because on the agenda item 13 was to agree a date only; the Chairman confirmed this was correct.

3. ESH & ANRD Update on Agricultural Development Programme - (Delia Du Preez and Andrea Timm)

Delia said the launch of the Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) this year was progressing really well, it started with the launch on the 28 April at Kingshurst Community Centre which was a business and social event that was well attended.

On the 14 July at Harford Community Centre there was a farmers market and social consisting of fourteen stalls plus two information stalls. The big finale, a Country Fair is planned for 27 October at Francis Plain and will consist of competitions, district stalls etc and it is hoped that the whole Island will come on board to make this another successful event.

The Pack House is now opened and is run by Mr Colin Thomas (Solely) of Longwood and it was really encouraging to see all the vegetables he has there for sale. She added that ESH is working on the Agriculture Investment Strategy which is in draft but they are working alongside of the beekeepers and might be providing some funding for experiments and equipment.

Andrea advised that the Farmers Association (FA) is not currently active but there are plans to call a meeting with the existing committee to close their tenure and revive a new committee, the date had been planned for 6 August but was not yet confirmed but she would continue to work towards having the FA up and running with the aim of getting producers to work with the merchants and encourage more producer groups. Letters had been sent to covered producers and the large commercial producers but not all had responded but there were plans to arrange an evening meeting on Darren Duncan's return to the Island and the main aim would be to work with the local merchants to have a collective approach and bring on-board the smaller producers in the near future.

The Chairman asked if the pack house would be included in discussions and added that it was critical to have the FA up and running noting the EDC had met with them in May and the enthusiasm was there but there was still a lot they could do for themselves. Andrea confirmed it would be included.

Hon Ellick asked about the producers in Blue Hill and how they would be getting to the pack house. Rob advised that this is a private sector operator so they will need to make their own arrangements but they are thinking about resources moving forward and will be engaging a resource consultant but want to ensure that they look at the whole supply chain.

The Chairman added that the initiative should be that these outlying producers can now sell the whole of their produce in one place or have a contract in place with one of the merchants.

Hon Scipio-Odean asked if any of the existing members of the FA had indicated a willingness to go back on the committee and Andrea replied that a few had plus at Harford a few had also expressed a willingness to join and form the committee.

Hon Scipio-Odean expressed her personal disappointment that the categories for the Country Fair only included children bringing in small animals and thought there were other possibilities to involve them such as allowing them to turn up and do flower arrangements, bring plants they had grown or goods they had baked as she felt this would have encouraged them more. Delia noted Christine's comments and replied that it was very difficult selecting the competition categories but there was the opportunity for all to enter goods etc with the district stalls as there was no age limit and she would include this point when doing future radio interviews.

Hon Ellick said there was nothing about fish on display and Delia advised the competition was for the Agriculture and Livestock sectors but different types of stalls could be set up.

The Chairman asked if a radio talk and extra publicity was needed to reach all farmers but Andrea advised that all the letters had been hand delivered and at this particular time they only wanted to contact the commercial ex ADA potato producers who they felt could then approach the small holder to buy directly from them because if the group was too big it would dilute what they were trying to achieve. She said that she would contact those who had not yet responded and explain to

them what they were trying to achieve and invite them to the first meeting without them having to commit to anything.

A discussion then arose regarding the date of the Country Fair as it was noted that the Francis Plain had already been booked by the Football Association and football matches would also be held on that day. Delia advised that they were still in discussions about where the stalls etc would be situated but the aim was to work together and bring together as many people as possible for that one day.

The Chairman thanked Delia and Andrea for the very informative updates.

4. Update on Import of Live Chickens to St Helena (Senior Vet Officer)

Joe said there was a shortage of eggs on Island and they were trying to improve this situation by getting in some chickens so looking at all options such as using the MV Helena to bring chickens that were ready to lay on arrival but issues around EU standards and South African regulations were complicated even though it should be possible. Another option was to import day old chicks who can fly around the world for seventy two hours without food the advantage would be that they would all be female and taken straight to the quarantine for four weeks, issue them from Rupert's and tell the growers to import chicken feed. If allowed, the day old chicks import is booked for 1 September and they are now doing up the Quarantine Station. They are using a Western Cape poultry unit which is Bio secure so that is promising but there are problems booking in on the plane, they did try booking via Solomon's but they have no contract so went direct to Airlink but there are still issues. There is a possibility of importing embryonic eggs which have been done before but this will be the backup plan and one thousand day old chicks is now booked by air for the 1 September.

The Chairman asked Nicholas to investigate the reason why the Vet was facing these difficulties with Airlink.

Action: Assistant Financial Secretary

Nicholas added that there is an order for what takes priority on the plane and what gets bumped so in some cases not all goods are loaded even though they are there ready so this will need to be reviewed. Joe pointed out that the certificate will be ruined if there was a break in transit so Airlink needed to know the chicks could not be bumped at any cost.

Hon Scipio-Odean asked if some feedback could be sent when the situation was resolved. Nicholas advised that he would send an e-mail to give members an update on the negotiations.

Action: Assistant Financial Secretary

Hon Ellick asked if the chicks was solely for Roddy or for other users and Joe replied they have a list for over two thousand chickens so Roddy will receive some of them. Andrea advised that they had made a commitment to the Public to supply the chicks so will honour this.

The Chairman thanked Joe and Andrea for the good news.

5. Update on ESH Report, June 2018 (Director of Policy Development)

The above report had been circulated for advance reading and Rob gave a brief update advising:-

- that with regard to the Fisheries Working Plan, the ESH board had given approval for downsizing the freezer and work should be concluded in October which will result in more sustainability
- during June the support package development for the accommodation providers had been rolled out
- they were working closely with the Brighter Group on International Promotion
- Dr Dawn Cranswick the new CEED will arrive on Saturday, 18 August.

Hon Scipio-Odean asked about the position of financials and the Chairman said that this had gone to Finance. Nicholas confirmed the financials were presented with the subsidy request at the last meeting. Rob said that he would follow this up.

Action: Director of Policy Development

Hon Scipio-Odean asked if in future, the committee could be given an update of things at the current point of time instead of referring to the contents of the report that were outdated by the time committee met. Rob said that this was possible to do going forward.

Action: Director of Policy Development

Nicholas asked if there was any possibility that regular tourism updates could be given to committee regarding the tourism strategy and number of tourists arriving on Island. The Chairman suggested that Director of Tourism, Helena Bennett be invited to the monthly meetings. Rob said that an overview of the marketing strategy is to be presented to ExCo, but Nicholas reiterated that only brief progress reports were needed for the EDC and the Chairman agreed that Helena needed to accompany the ESH Rep to give these regular updates. Rob replied that other parties such as the Access Committee receive updates and there was a need to ensure that information going out into the public domain provided a consistent message as to how St Helena was being promoted to the outside world. Nicholas said that this particular information could be reported on in closed session. The Chairman advised that the Access Committee does not have political oversight and the biggest talking point on Island concerned the accommodation providers and this would ensure the best return is achieved with regard to the Airport.

Action: Director of Policy Development

6. Confirmation of Minutes of 7 June 2018 and 5 July 2018

The minutes from the Economic Development Committee meeting held on the 7 June and 5 July 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters Arising

Issues raised following 7 June 2018 minutes were as follows:-

- **Item 10.3** - Appointment of Elected Member to the SHFC Management Board - in relation to the composition of the Fisheries Board it was noted they had produced a draft legislation to change this and Darren had a meeting with the Solicitor General and agreed to resurrect the Sub Committee which the Hon Beard will Chair which will deal with all Fisheries Legislation.
- **10.5.3** - Aerodrome Charges (Amendment Regulations 2018) - a paper was presented to ExCo and was agreed subject to the review of the Air Service Contract
- **10.5.4** - Port Regulations - Nicholas advised that this was not ready to come back to EDC but the Harbour Master had met with the Attorney General to look at this.

Action: Assistant Financial Secretary

- **10.5.5** - Telephone Kiosk - Nicholas advised that there had been no information received back from Sure.

Action: Assistant Financial Secretary

- **10.5.6** - Maps - the Director advised they were still awaiting this. Hon Scipio-Odean asked if they had slipped with this project and Derek said it was taking a lot more time to do alongside of the staff's normal work. She asked if there was any financial impact and Derek said he believed funding was there to continue to the end.

Action: Director of ENRD

Rob said that he would clarify if the funding was still available.

Action: Director of Policy Development

- **10.7** - Discussion with Adrian Duncan and Offshore Fishermen - the FS was going to look if Mr Duncan could be supported with some equipment, Nicholas advised that discussions were still ongoing with Blue Marine.

Action: Financial Secretary

- **10.9** - Investment Policy 2018 - this had been actioned.

Issues raised following 5 July 2018 minutes were as follows:-

- **Item No 3** - Discussion with Brighter Group Representative Sarah Long - Government Economist asked what would be the new creative ideas for St Helena and Sarah said that a copy of the creative ideas could be provided to EDC.

Action: Secretary

- **Item No 4** - Update on ESH Report, May 2018 - The Chairman added that perhaps Leigh Morris TOR'S could be shared with the EDC and Leigh could also be invited to the EDC one month; it was noted Leigh was currently on Ascension Island.

Action: Secretary

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

Minutes Approved: L. Adhy
Chairman

Date: 06-09-18