



PRESS RELEASE

Executive Council Top Lines: Tuesday 24 February 2026

A meeting of Executive Council (ExCo) was held on 24 February 2026.
The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

CLOSED AGENDA

1. Declaration of Interest
2. Confirmation of Minutes of the Executive Council Meeting held on 27 January 2026
3. Matters Arising from Minutes of 27 January 2026
4. Confirmation of Minutes of the Executive Council Meeting held on 6 February 2026
5. Matters Arising from Minutes of 6 February 2026
6. Ship Registry Policy, 2026 (ExCo Memo 03/2026)
7. Policy for Safety of Large St Helena Registered Fishing Vessels and Foreign Registered Fishing Vessels and Regulations, 2026 (ExCo Memo 04/2026)
8. Income Tax and Customs Duty Changes (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Vaping Products), 2026 (ExCo Memo 05/2026)
9. Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2025/2026 (ExCo Memo 06/2026)
10. Ministerial Updates on significant issues

NB Items marked (*) are commercially sensitive and depending on the subject matter, might not be referred to in the top lines.

The following items were considered:

2 - 5. Confirmation of Minutes and Matters Arising from the Minutes

Executive Council confirmed and signed off the minutes of the meetings held on 27 January and 6 February 2026.

6. Ship Registry Policy, 2026 (ExCo Memo 03/2026)

Executive Council approved the amendments to the Ship Registry Policy 2024, confirming that the publication of the Ships Registry Policy, 2026 will supersede all previous versions. The agreed will be used to inform the drafting of Ship Registry Regulations under section 16(1) of the Merchant Shipping Ordinance, 2021 (MSO).

7. Policy for Safety of Large St Helena Registered Fishing Vessels and Foreign Registered Fishing Vessels and Regulations, 2026 (ExCo Memo 04/2026)

Executive Council approved the Policy for the Safety of Large St Helena Registered Fishing Vessels and Foreign Registered Fishing Vessels and approved the Merchant Shipping (Safety of Large St Helena Registered Fishing Vessels and Foreign Registered Fishing Vessels) Regulations, 2026 to take effect on publication.

This will provide a modern regulatory framework for the survey and certification of large fishing vessels which are, or could be, registered on St Helena's Ship Registry. As well as address lacunae in the provision for such regulatory framework in St Helena, as previously identified, and observed during the 2025 International Maritime Organisation (IMO) III Code Proxy Audit.

Executive Council also requested that a cost benefit analysis of the Ships Registry be undertaken.

8. Income Tax and Customs Duty Changes (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Vaping Products), 2026 (ExCo Memo 05/2026)

Income Tax

Executive Council was asked to consider options for changes to the current income tax threshold of £7,000 from 01 April 2026. Executive Council discussed the options at length, noting the budgetary impact.

Customs Duty Changes (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Vaping Products)

Executive Council was asked to consider and advise on proposals for changes to the duty on alcohol, tobacco and introduction of an import duty on vaping products from 1 April 2026.

9. Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2025/2026 (ExCo Memo 06/2026)

Executive Council approved:

- a) the Supplementary Appropriation (2025/26) Bill, 2026 to be printed, published, and presented as Government Business at the next formal meeting of Legislative Council scheduled for 19 March 2026; and
- b) Subject to Legislative Council approving the Supplementary Appropriation (2025/26) Bill, 2026, Executive Council was asked to consider and advise whether the Governor should approve the Withdrawal Warrant provided to fund the supplementary appropriation.

The Supplementary Appropriation (2025/26) Bill, 2026 will be presented to Legislative Council next month.

10. Ministerial Updates on significant issues

Executive Council discussed updates on:

- The Connect Saint Helena Ltd Utilities Licence; and
- the Airport Major Incident, considerations for transparent investigation.

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03 March 2026