

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING (OPEN SESSION) HELD AT 09:00HRS ON  
WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2020, IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE HEALTH DIRECTORATE

<b>Present:</b>	Hon. Derek Thomas	Chairman	
	Hon. Anthony Green	Member	
	Hon. Cruyff Buckley	"	
	Hon. Jeffrey Ellick	"	
	Mr. Edward Rayment	Director of Health	
	Mrs. Helen Lawrence	Assistant Director of Health	
	Mrs. Peta M Henry	Secretary	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Hon. Brian Isaac	Deputy Chairman	
<b>Invited:</b>	Ms. Kate Heneghan	Health Promotion & SM Lead	(item 29.03)
	Mrs. Georgina Young	Senior Env. Health Officer	(item 29.04)

**OPEN AGENDA**

**29.01 Welcome & Apologies**

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present and conveyed apologies on behalf of Cllr Isaac. It was noted that there was one member of the public present for the meeting.

**29.02 Declaration(s) of Interest**

There were no 'declarations of interest'.

**29.03 Introduction to New Staff**

**Ms. Kate Heneghan (Health Promotion & Social Marketing Lead)**

Ms. Heneghan was welcomed to the meeting, introduced to Committee and vice versa. In an overview of her background she commented on her qualifications and experience and confirmed having been based in London (UK) for a period of 10 years, prior to her arrival in St Helena. In speaking of her on-island role, Ms Heneghan informed Committee that she hoped to make a valuable contribution throughout her tenure and would essentially build on the work already done by her predecessor. She advised that with a background in Food Science, she was keen to work with the community on Food & Nutrition etc. Sustainable wins in the instance of drought and the alternatives to fresh fruit and vegetables where availability is limited, was discussed at length. On behalf of Committee, Ms Heneghan was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting at 09:25hrs.

**29.04 Home Slaughtering Concession**

The SEHO joined the meeting at 09:25hrs. The Chairman advised that all would be aware of composition of the Home Slaughtering Policy and the fact that there was an 'exception' to the Policy for both the Easter and Christmas period(s). He went on to explain that in light of the current drought a number of animal-owners had been asked to remove their animals from pasture-land owned by ANRD, due to over-grazing. In light of this, the requirement(s) to slaughter had increased significantly, resulting in Registered Slaughter Houses becoming overwhelmed, hence an application for a concession during the drought period. In discussing this, the SEHO advised that whilst a drought had indeed been declared, animal owners had been given advanced warning (by ANRD) of the need to remove animals from pastures, which ideally should have resulted in the slaughtering of animals in a phased approach. It was also noted that the provision for home slaughtering was for animals intended for 'own-use' and not commercial sale. Committee noted that provision was also in place for slaughtering in emergency situations. It was therefore agreed that to provide a further concession, especially as animal-owners had been provided adequate notice of the need to remove animals from pasture-land, would set a precedent; and on the basis of this, the application was denied. The Chairman undertook to communicate this to the applicant.

**Action: Chairman**

On behalf of Committee, the SEHO was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting at 09:50hrs.



#### **29.05 Confirmation of Minutes**

Minutes of the 'open' session of the Public Health Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 15 January 2020, were confirmed and signed.

#### **29.06 Matters Arising Health & Safety**

The Chairman advised that the subject matter had been discussed at Chairpersons Assembly on Tuesday, 4 February 2020. He commented that whilst the outcome of the bid for TC support was awaited, the urgent need for updated legislation to manage H&S in St Helena had been acknowledged.

##### **Primary Care Facility (Sundale)**

It was noted that this work was headed-up by the Senior Design Draughtsman Surveyor (Julian Benjamin) in absence of the Chartered Civil Engineer (David Goodrich) from the Island. The Chairman undertook to seek an update on progress to date and report back at the next scheduled meeting.

**Action: Chairman**

##### **National Health Insurance Scheme Project**

The Chairman advised that all would be aware of the need for TC support to move this project forward. It was envisaged that once proposals were in place, public consultation would follow.

##### **Proposed Amendment to Mental Health & Mental Capacity Ordinance**

Cllr Green confirmed having written to the Director of Adults & Social Care regarding the need to progress the addition to the legislation as a matter of urgency. He advised that as there had been no further progress, he had asked that the matter be listed as an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting of the Social & Community Development Committee. In discussing this, Committee agreed that due to the risk(s) associated with such deficiency (i.e. deprivation of liberty) within the legislation, the Secretary should also correspond with the DoA&SC advising of the need for an update as soon as possible.

**Action: Cllr Green/Secretary**

##### **Update – Mental Health Unit/PICU**

The Chairman advised that it was his understanding the relevant cost-related work was now complete. It was noted, however, that this was yet to be received by both the DoH and PHC. The Chairman undertook to follow this up.

**Action: Chairman**

##### **Port & Aerodrome (Health) Regulations**

The Chairman advised that there was nothing of significance to report by way of progress but undertook to follow-up.

**Action: Chairman**

##### **Public Consultation Plan (Tobacco Control Legislation)**

Due to other pressing commitments, little progress had been made in pulling together a Public Consultation Plan. The Secretary was therefore asked to assist with this work. It was envisaged Public Consultation would commence in various districts, beginning in Jamestown on Monday, 17 February 2020. Provision was to be made for 'written' representations to allow persons unable to attend scheduled sessions to essentially 'have their say'. It was also agreed a Press Release and Radio Talk would be advantageous in advance of the consultation period. Potential target groups (i.e. Cancer Awareness Association, Youth Parliament at PAS and New Horizons etc) were discussed at length.

**Action: Secretary**

##### **Update - Visiting Delegation from Mauritius**

The Chairman advised that in his view the visit had been a success. On behalf of Committee he thanked the DoH for the work he had done in preparing for the visit and asked that sincere thanks be extended to the Directorates Senior Management Team and their staff also. Buy-in to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the process for this was discussed at length. The DoH undertook to follow-up with the Government of Mauritius on progress of any work they might have done since departing St Helena.

**Action: DoH**

#### **29.07 Chairman's Update**

The Chairman advised of his upcoming departure to the Joint Ministerial Conference (JMC) during the period 15 to 28 March 2020. He advised that he would be accompanied by Cllr Green and in view of this, it was important to ensure there was a quorum during the period in question. To

this end, Cllr Lawson Henry had agreed to be a temporary Member of the Public Health Committee and Cllr Buckley would be appointed Acting Deputy Chairman. Committee was content with this arrangement. It was agreed provision would be made for both the Chairman and Cllr Green to visit the Unitas Hospital, patients and service providers in Pretoria on Monday, 16 March 2020, whilst in transit via Johannesburg. The ADoH undertook to finalise the necessary arrangements.

**Action: ADoH**

In an update on the Audit Review recently conducted on Council Committee's, the Chairman advised that he had been made aware of the fact that Disaster Management fell under the portfolio of the Public Health Committee. In view of this, he had asked the Deputy Chief Secretary to apprise the Chief of Police, as whilst Chairman of the St Helena Resilience Forum, matters of significance would need to be routed through PHC.

**29.08 Director's Update**

**Medical Referrals Data**

The DoH informed Committee that the paper around Medical Referrals, inclusive of comparative figures and projections moving forward, would be forthcoming.

**Action: DoH**

**First Responders Training Centre**

There was nothing of significance to report.

**Covid-19 (Coronavirus)**

The DoH informed Committee that the Directorate, in liaison with other agencies, were taking precautionary measures to ensure the island is kept as safe as possible, for as long as possible. He gave an overview of such measures which included increased vigilance at the Sea/Airport and the questionnaire being used as a means of screening passengers on arrival. It was noted that test-kits were being procured to enable on-island testing for influenza (essentially as a ruling-out process) in light of the inability to test for Coronavirus at present. The DoH undertook to update Committee on developments as and when they occur.

**Upcoming Visit to New Orleans**

The DoH informed Committee that his visit to New Orleans had been confirmed for the period 7 to 21 March 2020, and was being funded by Public Health England (PHE). He advised that he had been asked to make a presentation at the Conference (Nicotine and Tobacco Control) he was to attend and undertook to provide an update on his return.

**Fishing Issue(s)**

The DoH confirmed having met with the St Helena Fisheries Association as a result of the various issues that had arisen following closure of the Fish Processing Plant in Ruperts' Valley. He commented that whilst the meeting had been positive overall, many issues had been raised, one being the sale of fish without a licence; which the SEHO had been asked to investigate.

**Medical Case (Coroner's Office)**

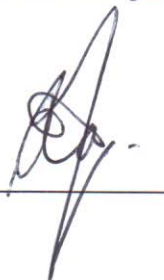
It was reported that a doctor able to undertake a root-cause analysis of the case in question, was yet to be identified. The DoH undertook to keep Committee apprised of progress.

**29.09 Any Other Urgent Business**

There were no items for discussion under this classification.

There being no further business for discussion, the Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the 'open' session of the meeting at 11:10hrs.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4 March 2020