

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING (OPEN SESSION) HELD AT 08:45HRS ON WEDNESDAY, 4 MARCH 2020, IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE HEALTH DIRECTORATE

Present:	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
Apologies:	Hon. Brian Isaac	Deputy Chairman
Invited:	Mr. Nicholas Yon	Assistant Financial Secretary (item 30.03)

OPEN AGENDA

30.01 Welcome & Apologies

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present and conveyed apologies on behalf of Cllr Isaac. It was noted that there were no members of the public present for the meeting.

30.02 Declaration(s) of Interest

There were no 'declarations of interest'.

30.03 Review of Fees & Charges

The Assistant FS was welcomed to the meeting. He commented on previous discussion around the subject matter and gave an overview of the various options outlined in the PHC Discussion Paper (*Private Sector Expatriate Workers – Health Revenue Impact Estimation*) by way of a recap. Discussion around each of the options followed. Committee noted that whilst there were 'pros' and 'cons' for each, in order to claim from medical insurance under Option 5, an invoice would need to be in excess of £100.00 (as a minimum). Composition of the Labour Market Strategy was noted, as was the need to ensure 'freedom from discrimination' in compliance with the Island's Constitution. The Chairman undertook to obtain legal advice prior to discussion at the next PHC meeting. The Assistant FS was thanked for his attendance and left the meeting at 09:30hrs.

Action: Chairman

30.04 Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of the 'open' session of the Public Health Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 5 February 2020, were confirmed and signed.

**30.05 Matters Arising
Health & Safety**

The Chairman advised that the next meeting of the H&S Working Group was awaited.

Primary Care Facility (Sundale)

It was noted that both the design and cost-related work remained on-going.

National Health Insurance Scheme Project

The Chairman advised that there was nothing of significance to report.

Proposed Amendment to Mental Health & Mental Capacity Ordinance

Cllr Green commented on discussion at the last PHC meeting and confirmed having been advised that the matter was with the AG's Chambers. In noting this, Committee agreed that a formal response to correspondence the Secretary had sent the DoC&ASC on behalf of Committee, would be kept in view in the interim.

Action: Cllr Green/Secretary

Update – Mental Health Unit/PICU

The Chairman advised that he was pleased to report that both the design/cost-related work and planning approval process had been finalised in respect of this project. He commented that as the project had been valued under £50,000.00 it could be funded as a micro-project.

Port & Aerodrome (Health) Regulations

The Chairman advised that he was yet to follow-up on progress; but undertook to do so, with a view to providing an update at the next scheduled meeting.

Action: Chairman

Public Consultation Plan (Tobacco Control Legislation)

See note at 30.06 below.

Update - Visiting Delegation from Mauritius

The DoH advised that there had been no feedback as yet on progress of the MoU. In discussing this, it was noted that the Island of Mauritius had confirmed a number of Covid-19 cases within its territory, which might have accounted for the delay. The DoH undertook to follow-up and report back in due course.

Action: DoH

Home Slaughtering Concession

The Chairman confirmed having written to the person concerned.

30.06 Tobacco Control Legislation (Feedback & Next Steps)

It was noted that the public consultation was now complete. The Chairman thanked all for their support and advised that the sale of 'single sticks' had essentially been the only issue of contention. He commented that a £10 registration fee had already been approved by Committee and in light of this, it was necessary for this to be legislated. The Secretary was asked to confirm the process for this.

Action: Secretary

Personal identification was discussed at length and the need to agree a process for obtaining this (i.e. ID Cards for 16 to 19 year olds). The DoH and Chairman undertook to draft a Policy document, and explore the possibility of the relevant ID's being generated by the Customer Care Centre/Prince Andrew School, respectively. The ADoH was asked to finalise 'notes' from the Public Consultation sessions that had taken place.

Action: DoH/Chairman/ADoH

30.07 COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

In an update on Covid-19 preparedness, the DoH commented on the Press Conference held on Tuesday, 3 March 2020. In discussing this, Committee noted that the questions from the Media had been omitted from the edited version, which had resulted in the Panels answers being aired only. Feedback suggested it would have been useful to have heard the questions as well.

It was noted that Covid-19 had become a 'hot' topic within the Island's community and was of national importance, hence the need for regular updates to ensure the public is reassured. The DoH commented also on the importance of ensuring information is accessible to travellers either from, or having visited/transited Category 1 countries; regarding the possibility of being quarantined upon arrival in St Helena. Committee supported this.

The work being done within the Health Directorate was discussed at length, as was the need to share the burden and essentially work with a collaborative approach. A Member commented on the Command Structure in comparison to an overall strategy and whether such a document was already in place. He advised that triggers would then be known and essentially direct 'what would happen and when' (i.e. at what stage will schools close or care facilities close its doors to visitors etc). In discussing this, the Chairman commented on the need to both ensure and be able to show that we have done all possible by way of preparedness, even if the disease reaches St Helena. The DoH confirmed having notified PHE of the Island's vulnerability and the resources required, but was yet to receive any form of commitment to date. The Chairman commented that whilst the PHC has political oversight for Disaster Management he was not fully confident that Members had been brought up to speed on essentially what had and was yet to be done by way of preparedness. In light of this, it was agreed a special meeting of the PHC be convened at 11:30hrs on Thursday, 5 March 2020 for this purpose.

30.08 Chairman's Update

The Chairman advised that his visit to the JMC remained on schedule and would 'go ahead' unless there was a significant change in Covid-19 preparedness that required his presence on Island. The ADoH was thanked for compiling the itinerary for the visit to Pretoria.

30.09 Director's Update

Medical Staff

In an update on Medical staff, the DoH informed Committee that Dr Carlos Soto would be employed in the capacity of Surgeon, on local contract, within the coming week. He advised that the post of Senior Medical Officer (SMO) would subsequently be undertaken by Dr Kamar Tanyan in a temporary capacity. It was clarified that the post of SMO would be abolished once the post of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) had been advertised and substantively filled.

Medical Referrals Data

It was noted 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.

Upcoming Visit to New Orleans

The DoH informed Committee that he had made a personal decision to cancel his visit to New Orleans, in light of Covid-19 preparedness and the importance of supporting St Helena at such a critical time. Members commented that this was a responsible decision and demonstration of the DoH's commitment to the Island's community. The DoH was thanked for this.

Medical Case (Coroner's Office)

The DoH advised that he was pleased to report the upcoming visit of a Professor in April 2020, specifically to undertake the work necessary.

30.10 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 11:40hrs.

Signed: _____



Date: _____

6 May 2020