

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING (OPEN SESSION) HELD AT 09:00HRS ON WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 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	Deputy Director of Health	
	Mrs. Peta M Henry	Secretary	
Apologies:	Hon. Brian Isaac	Deputy Chairman	
Invited:	Dr. Tshinyambala Mbaie	General Practitioner	(item 31.03)

OPEN AGENDA

31.01 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.

31.02 Declaration(s) of Interest

There were no 'declarations of interest'.

31.03 Introduction to New Staff (General Practitioner)

Dr Mbaie was welcomed to the meeting, introduced to Committee and vice versa. He joined the Health Directorate as a new member of staff in the capacity of General Practitioner. Dr Mbaie informed Committee that he was originally from Cornwall and had worked in Zambia for a period of 10 years. He advised that his attraction to St Helena had been the result of having worked in remote areas throughout his career. Dr Mbaie is employed on a two-year fixed-term contract and is accompanied by his spouse and three children. Following much discussion, he was thanked for his attendance, wished well in his role and left the meeting at 09:15hrs.

31.04 Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of the 'open' session of the Public Health Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 4 March 2020, were confirmed subject to an amendment under sub-sections 30.5 (Matters Arising: Update – Mental Health Unit/PICU) and 30.09 (Director's Update: Medical Staff).

**31.05 Matters Arising
Health & Safety**

The Chairman advised that there was nothing of significance to report, by way of progress.

Primary Care Facility (Sundale)

The Chairman undertook to follow-up progress and report back.

Action: Chairman

National Health Insurance Scheme Project

It was noted that little progress had been made in moving this project forward.

Proposed Amendment to Mental Health & Mental Capacity Ordinance

The DoH gave an overview of the correspondence received from the Director of Children & Adults Social Care, by way of an update. The correspondence confirmed contact with the AG's Chambers and having agreed the 'wording' of the proposed addition to the legislation; however, a meeting to determine timescales was considered necessary and would be scheduled shortly. Committee agreed progress be kept-in-view.

Action: Cllr Green/Secretary

Update – Mental Health Unit/PICU

The DoH undertook to contact the Programme Management Unit at Corporate Services to determine 'next steps' in the process of getting the project awarded.

Action: DoH

Port & Aerodrome (Health) Regulations

The Chairman confirmed having met with the AG who had advised that work associated was this had been reprioritised against requirements under Covid-19 preparedness, and would subsequently be kept-in-view.

Update - Visiting Delegation from Mauritius

It was confirmed that there was nothing further to report in light of the workload generated by Covid-19.

Action: DoH

Review of Fees & Charges

Discussed under 'closed' session (sub-section 31.16)

31.06 Tobacco Control Legislation (Feedback & Next Steps)

The Chairman advised of the need for a paper to be compiled for submission to Executive Council outlining the outcome of the public consultation process, with a recommendation that the relevant Legislation be progressed in time for the next formal sitting of Legislative Council. He informed Committee that as there was potential for the registration fee to change annually (if considered necessary) it would be legislated under Regulations to the Tobacco Control Ordinance, as opposed within the Ordinance itself.

Committee recalled the fact that sale of single sticks had been the only issue of contention raised in public consultation. The evidence that access to single sticks enabled smokers to essentially 'smoke more', was noted; as was the advice from Public Health England (PHE) against the sale of 'single sticks'. Committee considered it important that St Helena is viewed as 'being serious in shaping its future' and subsequently agreed, with the knowledge that 'smokers' were worse affected by Covid-19, that sale of single sticks would not be entertained.

The subject of Personal Identification generated much discussion by way of follow-up to that at the last PHC meeting. The requirement to present a Birth Certificate as part of the application process was considered a possibility. It was subsequently agreed the Health Promotion team be asked to explore various options for obtaining an ID (and the requirements against each) with a view to presentation to Committee in due course.

Action: Chairman/DoH/HP&SML

31.07 COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

In an update on Covid-19 (Coronavirus) preparedness, Committee was given an overview of work that had been done and work that was yet to be undertaken. Much discussion followed. Committee acknowledge the efforts of all involved, which included agencies outside of SHG and cooperation from the wider public. Committee agreed this was to be commended and was a testament to the Islands community spirit. The need to continue to work in a cohesive and coordinated manner to ensure the Island remains COVID-free for as long as possible, was noted.

31.08 Chairman's Update

The Chairman advised of a teleconference with the Overseas Territories, being hosted by Baroness Sugg shortly; and asked the DoH to provide a written update on 'testing' and whether there were options to improve testing capabilities in St Helena, moving forward. The DoH undertook to arrange this.

Action: DoH

31.09 Director's Update

Discussion with Medical Referral Patients

Following an overview of discussions that had recently been coordinated with Medical Referral Patients in South Africa, Committee acknowledged the need for a conduit for messaging to ensure consistency of the information given; in an effort to minimise anxiety. Irrespective of this, however, it was noted that all patients were being monitored and supported throughout the lockdown period. Committee agreed this was extremely pleasing to note.

Medical Referrals Data

Committee was informed that a Paper around Medical Referrals, inclusive of comparative figures and projections moving forward, would be provided shortly.

Action: DoH

31.10 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 10:10hrs.

Signed: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long vertical stroke extending downwards.

Date: 3 June 2020