



## Economic Development Committee (EDC) Minutes

Date: 23 January 2020

Venue: Council Chamber

Time: 9.00 am

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	Hon Lawson Henry
	<b>Members:</b>	Hon Clint Beard Hon Gavin Ellick Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Nicholas Yon Director of Enterprise, Mr Robert Midwinter Acting Director ENRPD, Mr Darren Duncan Senior Economist, Mrs Amanda Curry Brown
	<b>Secretary</b>	Miss Anita Legg
<b>In Attendance:</b>		Chief Executive for Economic Development, Mrs Dawn Cranswick Agronomist, Mr Edward Whitton (Item 34.3) Director of Tourism, Mrs Helena Bennett (Item 34.5)
<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Deputy Chairman</b>	Hon Cruyff Buckley
	<b>Members:</b>	Hon Miss Christine Scipio Hon Financial Secretary, Mr Dax Richards
<b>Overseas:</b>	<b>Member</b>	Chief Economist, Mrs Nicole Shamier

### OPEN SESSION

#### **34.1 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Scipio who was on sick absence, Cllr Buckley and the Financial Secretary attending a workshop and the Chief Economist on overseas leave. One member of the public was present.

#### **34.2 Declaration of Personal Interest**

Cllr Beard declared an interest with regards to importing seeds. No other personal interests were declared.

#### **34.3 Update on Agriculture Aspects of the SEDP by the Agronomist Mr Edward Whitton**

The Chairman welcomed the ENRPD Agronomist, who proceeded with a presentation on the role of Agronomy services in relation to the SEDP; a copy of the presentation was later circulated to members. The following key issues arose from discussion:

- Water resource – the implications for island production is likely to be catastrophic if the drought reaches the point where Connect SH Ltd is unable to issue farming licences. The commercial aspect of water storage is crucial. Processes are in place for water efficiency such as using drip irrigation instead of overhead irrigation and farmers will be encouraged to use this.
- Import substitution – this was deemed negative in terms of water shortage, the island always suffers from out of season production and whilst certain products can be forced, patience is required. However relating to import data, basically there is a large shift being 75% on target for salads and 100% for leaf salads and eggs however some merchants are still importing and undercutting local products. There is no overall data for meat as yet and potatoes are uncertain for a while. EDC felt this information was encouraging.
- Collaboration with Farmers – This is key as producers and merchants need to work together. Workshops have been held with both parties and informal arrangements are in place with shops, although formal contracts have not yet been set.
- St Helena Growers – There is little activity from the St Helena Growers nor Farmer's Association. The Packhouse is in the early stages, with a desire to operate collectively as a central point. Storage needs to be improved.
- Kerrs Pink potatoes – this type is possibly outdated however trialing and finding a good seed material is ongoing.
- Organic waste collection and composting services – Waste Management Services have started issuing green waste bins under the OCTA project. A new cell has also been set up at Horse Point to take in and separate green waste, a chipper is also chipping waste that comes into this cell. Trialing compost from flax chaffing is also taking place at the Peaks.
- Intervention from SHG – ANRD would like to assist further e.g. growing potatoes all year round. The Data Producers group has produced a proposal on collaboration and sharing risks with farmers and using the Packhouse facility.
- Training – The Agronomist asked Members to assist in encouraging constituents to engage further with ANRD and to attend the upcoming training sessions on managing a farming business.

The Chairman thanked the Agronomist and looked forward to the next update, possibly in six months, Mr Whitton then left the meeting.

#### **34.4 Fisheries Management Policy Statement and Licencing of Fishing Activities Policy**

The Acting Director ENRPD advised he had intended to take the committee through the detail of the changes in the policy and the findings from the consultation. However due to the absence of various members, it was agreed this item be deferred until Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January at 8.30am.

**Action: Acting Director of ENRP**

## 34.5 ESH Updates to EDC – December 2019 – Director of Enterprise

The DoE apologised for the late dissemination of the December progress and performance report, also for the November report which would be circulated soon. A brief overview was provided and EDC were invited to send additional queries to ESH.

EDC noted that subject to a contract award, the next stage of work to pavements in Main Street namely the area in front of the Canister, should be progressing shortly, hopefully before the end of March. This would also include pavements in front of the Malabar, creating disabled access.

**Post Meeting Note:** The DoE later provided further information on the Investments section in the December report:

### *Investments Secured*

- a. AIS application approved relating to an Amusement / Entertainment venture – new T&H services offering (not currently available on-island)
- b. Estates Strategy Panel (ESP) approved commitment to divestment of a Strategic Asset for investment purposes – private new Health & Wellbeing T&H offering (subject to final approval by ExCo)

### *Timing of Capture / Notification*

We are currently counting investments as being “secured” where the authority has either awarded an approval, or notified the applicant that they have been successful in securing an asset. In the case of item 1b above, this was via the ESP as result of a formal tender panel whereby the clients were informed of their successful tender albeit that this outcome was then subject to being sent to ExCo for final endorsement of the ESP decision. We do however recognise that until such time as ExCo has endorsed the decision, there is a possibility that the investment itself is not secured, so it would be pertinent to agree with the relevant stakeholders (EDC, IAC, and ESP) as to what point we capture this data. We can look at this in terms of AIS as well, as data is currently captured where there is a formal investment commitment established, however AIS can be awarded but at any stage the client could actually change their mind and not invest the sums that have been captured. If we were to instead capture this data as at the point an actual transaction takes place, this could be spread over a protracted period of time which then becomes a challenge to track investments / payments. The ESH Investments Team will certainly give this item further thought.

### *Additional Statistics*

- a. Number of downloads and hard copy distributions of Investment Prospectus since 19<sup>th</sup> October: 196 downloads and 31 distributions - A combined distribution of 227 copies.
- b. Number of enquires in system: 30 ‘real’ enquiries
- c. Number of enquiries deemed serious i.e. have visited or submitted proposals: Total - 13
  - Active enquiries who have submitted a proposal – 6
  - Active enquiries where proposals are still to be submitted – 7

- d. Key areas of interest: Tourism & Hospitality – 6 (3 x Strategic Assets), Fisheries – 4, Agriculture – 3

The Director of Tourism also provided an overview of activities, which included:

The numbers of visitors, in particular Saints who were visiting family and friends, had picked up significantly from November through to January, including full planes during December – EDC suggested the Tourist office should connect, for their viewpoint, with large numbers of visitors such as had arrived in December; an interpretation stone and signage on the Zulu story was still to be finalised; a Dark Skies application has been submitted and a response was awaited; Green Flag Accreditation Organisation were visiting the island, assessing Post Box walks for international accreditation – they were also training contractors to develop and maintain these walks to an acceptable standard; the Tourist office is supporting the LAAC who had received funding from FCO for a Project Coordinator to assist in producing business cases; training had been approved to assist tour guides and DMC packaging; a familiarisation visit was planned for March whereby a walk and tour company would carry out a reconnaissance, in order to sell packages to their clients; the visit from Dan Snow, a popular UK TV presenter was continuing well.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Tourism and she left the meeting; the CEED also left the meeting at this point.

#### **34.6 Confirmation of Open Minutes held on 28 November and 9 December 2019**

The minutes of the open meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

#### **34.7 Matters Arising**

##### **34.7.1 Update on Dark Skies**

The Deputy Chief Secretary advised it would be beneficial to hold a joint meeting with the E&NR Committee, to discuss legislation and whether consultation would be needed; to be held during the February meeting. It was noted a Communications Strategy had been drafted and circulated for perusal.

**Action: Deputy Chief Secretary**

##### **34.7.2 Meeting with Chief Statistician**

It was agreed the Chief Statistician would be invited to an EDC meeting in the New Year, to discuss tourist numbers.

**Action: Chief Economist**

##### **34.7.3 Consultation on the Licensing Process for Permanent Earth Stations (pes) and Receive Only Earth Stations (roes) in St Helena**

An update would be provided shortly on feedback from consultation, also on the TORs being drawn up for a consultant to develop a telecommunications policy.

**Action: Chief Economist**

**34.7.4 Update on Labour Market Strategy**

It was noted a draft strategy had been provided to the Student Council at PAS. PAS staff informed the Senior Economist that the students would respond if they had any comments.

**34.7.5 Supplementary Feed for Livestock**

The Acting Director, ENRPD reported there had been good uptake on supplementary feed and another shipment was expected in January.

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

Minutes Approved: .....  
Chairman

Date: 27-02-20

