

Labour Market Strategy

2020 - 2035

St Helena Government

Six month Progress Report: January – June 2020



Background

In December 2019, Executive Council endorsed St Helena's Labour Market Strategy: 2020 – 2035 to take effect 1 January 2020. The LMS identifies programmatic targets that will be reviewed every six months as well as indicator data that will be reviewed annually. These reviews will ensure the goals of the LMS are achieved and that the Strategy continues to meet the needs of St Helena.

The success of the policies and programmes proposed in the LMS is dependent on actions by employers and individuals across the economy as well as elected members and government officials. St Helena Government (SHG) intends to lead by example by making necessary changes within government departments and influencing change in entities where SHG is a shareholder. SHG will also partner with stakeholders outside of government to ensure that other employers' interests are represented.

SHG's Corporate Policy and Planning Unit (CPPU) developed an internal implementation plan which assigns responsibility and timescales to the programmatic targets identified in the LMS. In early 2020, the Senior Economist met with stakeholders responsible for implementation of specific targets to ensure the required actions were well understood and that all stakeholders were working toward a common set of goals. Going forward, CPPU's performance manager has been monitoring progress against these targets.

The LMS presents many programmatic targets required to achieve the LMS goals. In order to avoid overloading the reader with information, this update only reports progress against targets planned to be started or achieved within the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years.

The actions outlined in this report support the goals of the LMS to improve labour market outcomes, increase St Helena's population and prepare the workforce to achieve the vision of the Sustainable Economic Development Plan. The ultimate vision of the LMS is to create a labour market that:

1. Meets the needs of St Helena;
2. Is competitive but fair;
3. Rewards hard work and incentivises aspiration;
4. Develops a workforce that is capable, flexible and resilient; and
5. Provides a strong foundation on which to build the economy of tomorrow.

LMS Progress Summary

Progress: January – June 2020

During the first six months of 2020, SHG achieved the following programmatic targets:


- Launched an Island-wide Human Resources (HR) community of practice. The HR Forum held its inaugural meeting in June 2020 and plans to meet monthly.
- Implemented changes to customs duty to ensure all individuals coming to St Helena for work are eligible for the same exemptions regardless of whether they are employed by government, private sector or as a business owner/investor. This change is intended to help level the playing field between public and private sector employers.
- Completed the workforce planning process for SHG. There is a five year Workforce Plan for the Public Service and each Directorate has its own workforce plan. The workforce planning process has led to the Fit for the Future Programme.
- Incorporated local workforce development requirements into Technical Cooperation Officer advertisements, Terms of Reference and standard interview questions. Capacity Development Records are now a required part of appraisal, contract extension and end of contract requirements.
- Published an updated Shortage Occupation List and associated guidance. SHG developed this list based on the results of the annual business survey conducted in October 2019 and the current list of positions requiring recruitment through the Technical Cooperation (TC) programme. The Shortage Occupation List will be updated annually and includes guidance to assist Immigration Officers in determining whether a position should be considered as a shortage occupation.
- Incorporated questions about skills and occupations into the 2021 Census questionnaire.
- Ensured IT skills courses were ongoing and advertised for intake twice a year. The IT suite is also open for use by the public during week days and one evening a week.


- Reviewed tax policies to identify whether there are any that create incentives for individuals to leave St Helena or keep funds off-shore. This will be completed on an annual basis.

In addition, significant progress was made toward the following programmatic targets:




- Approved funding for a Career Access St Helena (CASH) Coordinator in the 2020/21 financial year budget. CASH will be formally launched following the Fit for the Future functional review completed this financial year. In the interim, a Career Access and Economic Policy Assistant will be brought on board to develop the administrative products and processes that will form the foundation for CASH.
- Completed foundational work for key targets related to the Public Service that are expected to be delivered in 2020/21 or 2021/22. These include:
 - Development of a flexible resourcing model;
 - Development of a vetting policy and associated guidance;
 - Identification of best practices related to non-financial rewards and recognition;
 - Completion of a pay and allowances review and
 - Enhancement of the performance management system.
- Continued upgrades to the Harpers Agriculture Centre to support the delivery of agricultural education. There are currently nine students who have opted for Agriculture Studies in Year 10.








Progress Against Programmatic Targets




Action	Target Year Start	Progress Comments	Progress status
2020-2025: Current Labour Market Challenges			
Develop flexible resourcing model for SHG to include part-time staff, flexible working, short-term assignments and casual labour.	2019-20	<p>Developed and rolled out through the Fit for the Future Programme. Each functional review, across the whole of the Public Service, will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do our processes, working patterns, pay, allowances and contract types support efficient working; Could we reduce the number of full-time posts to offer staff additional part-time hours or auxiliary working; Does everyone have meaningful work and does working time outweigh downtime and Are we flexible and agile enough (multi-skilled) to respond to shifting demands across the organisation or are we working in silos? 	 in progress
Design a communication campaign to help raise awareness of employee rights under the law.	2019-20	A draft poster has been developed and will be reviewed by AG's Chambers.	 in progress
Review all job postings to ensure that they do not imply specific academic qualifications are required except in those circumstances where specific qualifications, or the ability to learn and apply skills and knowledge at a specific qualification level, are essential to performance of a job	2019-20	Within the Public Service some improvement has been made, with guidelines issued to Directors and HR Colleagues, but this will be fully addressed by the review of the application of the Job Evaluation Scheme which is taking place in September/October 2020.	 in progress
Develop a vetting policy and issue guidance on the vetting process for all roles.	2019-20	Within the Public Service this is being developed as part of the Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice and is due to complete by the end of 2020.	 in progress

Identify best practices in non-financial rewards and recognition (e.g., press releases about length of service) and more consistently implement those across SHG.	2019-20	Within the Public Service, a recognition policy has been drafted but needs to be taken through the Public Service consultation process for finalisation.	 in progress
Hire CASH Coordinator and Officer.	2020-21	Funding approved for CASH Coordinator in the FY2020/21 budget. CASH will be formally launched following the Fit for the Future functional review completed this financial year. In the interim, a Career Access and Economic Policy Assistant will be brought on board to develop the administrative products and processes that will form the foundation for CASH.	 in progress
Initiate placement service. Work with the benefits office to facilitate those under or unemployed claiming benefits into a work placement, volunteering or skills training.	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
Implement casual work registry to facilitate placements.	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
Develop and maintain centralised calendar of career-related training on-Island.	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
Identify gaps in career-related training.	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
Coordinate with occupational therapy programme to identify appropriate placements.	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
Coordinate with apprenticeship and work placement programmes to identify appropriate placements.	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
Develop terms of reference and launch HR Community of Practice	2020-21	The HR Forum launched in June 2020 and will meet on a monthly basis.	 done & ongoing
Develop formal qualification frameworks.	2020-21	Within the Public Service, this will be fully addressed by the review of the application of the Job Evaluation Scheme which is taking place in September/October 2020.	 in progress

Organise/support specific career-related courses not already on offer.	2020-21	Meeting to be arranged for early August 2020.	 in progress
Seek guidance from the Police Directorate regarding how to best assist individuals who have prior criminal convictions seeking training through St Helena Community College or using the workshops at Prince Andrew School	2020-21	Meeting to be arranged early August 2020.	 in progress
Undertake pay and allowances review.	2020-21	Within the Public Service, this will be developed and rolled out through the Fit for the Future Programme. A pay policy is in development and will be completed during September/October 2020. Phase Three of the Programme will focus on pay and allowances, meaning this action will be completed during 2021/22.	 in progress
Engage the UK Department for International Development to explore options for using the TC programme to retain talent in St Helena.	2020-21	This action has not started, however it links to the action above.	
Explore options for enhancing the performance management system based on best practices applied by other organisations globally.	2020-21	Within the Public Service, this action is scheduled to commence in January 2021.	
Work with supervisors to ensure they understand existing processes for addressing performance issues and have the support needed to take action when necessary.	2020-21	Within the Public Service Corporate HR has moved to a Business Partner model to provide coaching and support directly to line managers on all employee relations issues. A new Performance Management policy has been drafted but needs to be taken through the Public Service consultation process for finalisation.	 in progress
2020-2030: Growing St Helena's Workforce			
Propose relocation assistance loans through Tax and Revenue Working Group.	2019-20	There was not sufficient funding in the 2020/21 budget to implement this. Options will be developed for a future financial year.	

Propose customs duty changes related to relocation assistance through Tax and Revenue Working Group - on vehicle import and goods necessary to set up households - for a level playing field.	2019-20	Effective 27 March 2020, a single set of customs duty exemptions will apply for all individuals moving to St Helena for work regardless of their employer.	 done
Design and implement Graduate Scheme	2019-20	The development of the Graduate Scheme is due to be completed by January 2021.	 in progress
Include a proposal for a permanent resident category in the revised Immigration Policy and Ordinance.	2019-20	Pending completion of draft Immigration Policy.	
Develop online registry for St Helenians overseas to register interest in receiving job lists.	2020-21	Pending implementation of CASH	
Develop email digest of jobs available on-Island.	2020-21	Pending implementation of CASH	
Identify employer needs that could be met by a volunteer or working holiday scheme.	2020-21	Delayed due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions.	
Design approved scheme for volunteer and/or working holidays.	2020-21	Pending completion of Immigration Policy.	
Market volunteer and/or working holiday scheme through appropriate channels.	2020-21	Pending design of volunteer/working holiday scheme.	
2020-2035: Building the Economy of Tomorrow			
Complete workforce planning process.	2019-20	Within the Public Service the five year Workforce Plan has been completed and each Directorate has an individual workforce plan. The Workforce Plan has led to the Fit for the Future Programme.	 done

Create succession policy and plans for key positions.	2019-20	Within the Public Service, a succession policy is being drafted. Plans are in place and since 2016 there are eight succession plans that have completed, with another four due to complete in 2020. There are a further eleven succession plans in progress, the majority of which will complete by 2023 and all by 2025. Through the workforce planning reviews there are a further twenty-nine posts that are in focus and have been identified for review as roles that could potentially be localised over the next five years. Work is commencing on this currently.	 in progress
Incorporate workforce development requirements into TC contracts to build upon current requirements linked to probation and appraisal.	2019-20	Capacity Development Records are now a part of appraisal and extension or end of contract requirements. Local Workforce Development requirements are also in Technical Co-operation Officer adverts, Terms of Reference and a standard question in interviews.	 done
Develop a programme to promote agriculture and fishing careers in St Helena, both in schools and in organised activities outside of school.	2019-20	The Harpers Agriculture Centre is still being upgraded to support the delivery of agricultural education and programmes of work to encompass aspects of agriculture and fishing are being sourced. There are currently nine students who have opted for Agriculture Studies in Year 10. A challenge for this project is finding a tutor to deliver the programme.	 in progress
Identify assessors locally or through remote engagement to support vocational qualifications.	2019-20	Due to low number of candidate registrations, qualifications have been withdrawn by Cities & Guilds. SHG employees/Directorates pay full cost of the course and, because of the budget constraints, this has lowered the participation rate. Continuing to assess other vocational opportunities.	 in progress
Expand curriculum through a portfolio of online resources that will be available to interested students through the St Helena Community College or at Prince Andrew School.	2019-20	A range of online resources are available but are subject to online permissions for registration, course costs and digital platforms needed. SHCC strives to accommodate interest in specific online courses if they are possible to accommodate within the current service provision.	 in progress
Update shortage occupation list based on business survey.	2020-21	An updated Shortage Occupation List and associated guidance was published effective 1 April 2020. To be updated in 2021.	 done & ongoing
Include question about skills/qualifications in census.	2020-21	Completed.	 done

SEDP sectors, positions identified through workforce planning and a regularly-updated list of shortage occupations are used to planning career-related educational activities.	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
Incorporate digital careers and remote-work jobs in career-related activities.	2020-21	The Education Directorate is in the process of reviewing the Career's Education Programme. This choice of career will be included as part of this programme.	 in progress
Complementary Policies			
SHG formalise a policy of actively working with individual students to develop a schedule for their return that is flexible and mutually beneficial.	2019-20	The Scholarship Committee will review the current policy in view of the SHG Graduate Programme to accommodate this. This work will be completed by August 2020. The development of the Graduate Scheme is due to finish by January 2021 – this action will be fully addressed through this scheme.	 in progress
Establish a community of scholarship programme 'alumni' to create a support network on-Island and abroad that can help students as they transition from secondary school to university and then into employment.	2019-20		
Address the healthcare costs for St Helenians who return to the Island, temporary workers and immigrants employed by private sector organisations.	2019-20		
In advance of the fibre optic cable, IT education and support for existing businesses will be critical in managing the transition to achieve the greatest possible benefits.	2019-20	IT beginner and Technical courses are ongoing and advertised for intakes twice per year. The use of the IT Suite is available during week days from 9am -3.30pm and Thursday evenings from 4pm - 8pm.	 done & ongoing

<p>The scholarship award process should take into account shortage occupations and projected needs from employers' workforce planning processes. In addition, consideration should be given to students wanting to study fields that have broad applicability even if they do not directly align with a specific position (e.g., business, economics, government, information technology, public policy, etc.).</p>	2020-21	Further work on this will be completed under the review of the Scholarship Process and Policy to ensure link with the Workforce Plan and LMS.	 in progress
<p>Services for disabled individuals should seek to increase inclusion and assist individuals in achieving their maximum potential. Support for organisations such as SHAPE will help increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.</p>	2020-21	Pending CASH implementation.	
<p>Assess tax policies to ensure they do not create incentives for individuals to leave St Helena or keep funds off-shore.</p>	2020-21	Completed for 2020/21. To be revisited annually.	 done & ongoing

This report was developed by St Helena Government's Performance Manager, and Senior Economist

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