

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING (OPEN SESSION) HELD AT 09:00HRS ON WEDNESDAY, 3 JUNE 2020, IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE HEALTH DIRECTORATE

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| 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: | Miss. Chani Montaque | Physiotherapist | (item 32.03) |

OPEN AGENDA

32.01 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.

32.02 Declaration(s) of Interest

There were no 'declarations of interest'.

32.03 Introduction to New Staff

Miss Chani Montaque was welcomed to the meeting and introduced to Committee as a new member of staff, having joined the Health Directorate in the capacity of Physiotherapist on a short-term contract. It was noted that her appointment was one of a number of appointments that had been made as a result of the need for additional resources to aid the Island's COVID-19 Preparedness. Following much discussion, Miss Montaque was thanked for her attendance and wished well in her role on St Helena. She left the meeting at 09:15hrs.

32.04 Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of the 'open' session of the Public Health Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 6 May 2020, were confirmed and signed.

**32.05 Matters Arising
Health & Safety**

The Chairman advised that the Deputy Chief Secretary was seeking to progress this matter via the Health & Safety Working Group.

Primary Care Facility (Sundale)

The DoH undertook to coordinate a meeting to discuss progress of both the design and cost-related work necessary to aid completion of the relevant Business Case. In discussing this, a Member sought confirmation as to whether the additional facility would increase the Directorates 'over-heads' and subsequently need to be recovered elsewhere. It was noted that whilst the new facility would pull all primary care services together, thereby freeing up facilities currently used by the Physiotherapy Department and Community Nursing Staff (i.e. Half Tree Hollow Clinic), resulting in better management/flow of service provision and significant savings in the medium to long term, the running costs of such a facility would inevitably increase expenditure, due to both its size and the number of different services operating from a single location.

National Health Insurance Scheme Project

It was noted that provision for the consultancy that had been considered necessary by both Committee and the wider Council, had not been made on the list for TC Support. The Chairman undertook to look into this.

Action: Chairman

Proposed Amendment to Mental Health & Mental Capacity Ordinance

Committee was informed that the relevant amendment/addition to the legislation continued to be progressed by the Director of Children & Adults Social Care in liaison with the Attorney General's Chambers, via a series of meetings. It was agreed an update be sought in advance of the next

scheduled PHC meeting.

Action: Cllr Green/Secretary

Mental Health Unit/PICU

It was noted that the Unit had been approved as a micro-project under the Economic Development Investment Programme (EDIP) for delivery in 2020/2021. The DoH advised that there were a number of technical documents to be finalised before physical work could be contracted out. He undertook to keep-in-view.

Action: DoH

Port & Aerodrome (Health) Regulations

The Chairman advised that following a meeting with the AG, it appeared charges could potentially be levied at full cost recovery. The AG had undertaken to provide written confirmation shortly. The Chairman advised that he would circulate this to Committee once received.

Action: Chairman

Update - Visiting Delegation from Mauritius

It was confirmed that there was nothing further to report.

Tobacco Control Legislation (Feedback & Next Steps)

Committee was pleased to note that the Tobacco Control Legislation had been passed by Executive Council and would therefore proceed to the next formal sitting of Legislative Council, scheduled for 26 June 2020. By way of next steps, it was agreed a Communications Strategy would need to be developed. It was also agreed options for obtaining an ID should be identified as soon as possible. The DoH advised that whilst the Health Promotion & Social Marketing Lead (HP&SML) would assist this work, it was not in his view, the responsibility of the Health Directorate to physically produce the relevant ID's. Committee accepted this.

Action: DoH/HP&SML

32.06 COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Committee was informed that the remaining cohort of passengers were scheduled for release from quarantine at mid-night on Wednesday, 3 June 2020. The period between this release and a future intake was seen as an opportunity to refine various policy documents and strategies to ensure they were both consistent and interlinked. Amongst these was the Directorate's Testing Strategy. Committee agreed that the Island's success in maintaining its COVID-free status was a testament to the hard work and dedication of all involved. It was reported that Baroness Sugg had also commended the efforts being made in St Helena. It was anticipated, however, that the situation would intensify upon the recommencement of incoming flights, given the precarious situation with which South Africa was faced in 'opening-up' despite a spike in COVID-19 cases. In discussing this, Committee agreed the prospect of people wishing to flee to COVID-free St Helena should be kept in mind.

The DoH informed Committee that an area of debate was in the case of Nursing Staff caring for patients (having tested positive) at Bradley's and whether they should be allowed home at end-of-day in accordance with PHE standards; or be required to enter a period of quarantine following their two-week shift, as per recommendation of the Health Directorate. He advised that a presentation would need to be made to IEG shortly, to ensure a definitive decision is made.

Action: DoH

32.07 Chairman's Update

The Chairman reiterated the fact that Baroness Sugg had commended the efforts being made in St Helena by way of COVID-19 preparedness. He commented on the Tobacco Control Ordinance and need for Regulations to cover the Registration Fee, to be drafted as soon as possible, given the fact that the Ordinance was to proceed to Legislative Council on Friday, 26 June 2020. Members questioned the provision for e-cigarettes within the Ordinance, having recalled a previous agreement that importation be permitted for personal use only.

32.08 Director's Update

Medical Referrals Data

The DoH informed Committee that due to other pressing commitments, he had been unable to finalise a Paper around Medical Referrals. He advised, however, that he would endeavour to do so as soon as practicable.

Action: DoH

32.09 Any Other Urgent Business

Internet Access during Committee Meetings

A Member sought confirmation as to whether it would be possible to have internet access whilst attending PHC meetings. In discussing this, it was suggested the IT Section be approached due to the fact that this would come at additional cost to the Directorate. It was noted that the Internet at Health was already utilised extensively, due to the number of weekly conferences etc associated with COVID-19 preparedness.

Action: Cllr Buckley

There being no further business for discussion, the Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the 'open' session of the meeting at 10:40hrs.

Signed:  _____

Date: 1 July 2020