

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TOP LINES - TUESDAY, 2 MARCH 2021

St Helena World Heritage Status

- **Executive Council considered the recommendations presented in the Business Case and supported the recommended Option 3 - Analysis carried out by Steering Committee supported by an expert consultant to determine the benefit to the Island of applying for nomination for World Heritage Status**
- **Executive Council approved the draft Terms of Reference for the World Heritage Steering Committee and advised to proceed with the next phase in the process of exploring St Helena's full application for World Heritage Status (WHS)**

Background:

- In 2019, a Scoping Group was established to review St Helena's current position in relation to the Island's 2012 UK Tentative Listing for World Heritage Status (WHS) with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). UK Tentative Listing is the first step to designation of WHS.
- The World Heritage Status Scoping Group Report, July 2019, was presented to Executive Council in February 2020.
- Executive Council expressed interest to proceed with the process of developing the WHS application process and because funding will be required to support the next step in the process: developing a full analysis of the implications and obligations of the options, requested additional information from the Scoping Group about the costs involved and the requirements of a Consultant.
- A Business Case was developed which explains the rationale and provides indicative costs for the recommended option to enable a WHS Steering Committee to be established and investigate the feasibility of proceeding with the process of developing a full application for nomination for WHS with assistance from an expert consultant

At the meeting:

- Dr Rebecca Cairnswicks, who led the World Heritage Status Scoping Group, was invited to the table to answer any questions from Elected Members
- It was recognised that the recommended Option 3 in the Business Case (analysis be carried out by a Steering Committee supported by an expert consultant) would require funding in the region of £41k, which currently had not been made available
- Members supported this option and advised that funding options be looked into to move forward with this work
- It was recognised, in terms of funding, that World Heritage Status may be an area of interest for the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office, as well as the UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

- Members suggested that if funding could not be raised through donor schemes that this should come back to ExCo for further discussions around how this could be funded
- It was recognised that there is uncertainty around what WHS would mean for the Island, but that work on a full analysis should be taken forward so that it can be determined what benefits WHS might have for the Island, especially in terms of our economic status
- Dr Cairnswicks suggested that St Helena was probably in a better position now to move forward with this work than in 2012, with momentum already with the Island in terms of some of the other heritage works taking place with regards to Liberated Africans and the Napoleonic Bicentenary
- It was stressed that local buy-in for achievement of WHS is essential
- Members supported Option 3 and urged for works to move forward by the Steering Committee
- Members thanked the Scoping Group for all of their work to date, a lot of which was voluntary, and the tenacity they demonstrated in driving this work forward

Second Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2021

- **Executive Council noted the draft Supplementary Estimates and advised that the Second Supplementary Appropriation (2020/21) Bill, 2021, be printed, published and presented as Government Business at the next formal meeting of Legislative Council**

Background:

- This Supplementary Appropriation Bill is the second supplementary appropriation for this financial year and follows the work undertaken by Corporate Finance, Accounting Officers and their finance teams to forecast the revenue and expenditure outturn for each directorate and the St Helena Government (SHG) as a whole.
- The projected outturn for SHG is a surplus of £549,523
- The total supplementary appropriation required is £749,000, comprising £465,000 for Recurrent Expenditure and £284,000 for Capital Expenditure.

At the meeting:

- It was recognised that part of the Supplementary Appropriation of £749,000 could be financed through existing budget allocations under capital and recurrent and additional revenues as follows:
 - A withdrawal of recurrent budget from Head 13 Corporate Human Resources of £80,000;
 - A withdrawal of recurrent budget from Head 15 Police of £50,000;
 - A withdrawal of recurrent budget from Head 17 Corporate Finance of £450,000;
 - A withdrawal of recurrent budget from Head 21 Access of £100,000;

- A withdrawal of recurrent budget from Head 26 Environment, Natural Resources and Planning of £8,000; and
- Additional revenues generated within Head 27 Infrastructure and Transport of £61,000.
- Members supported the Second Supplementary Appropriation Bill and were pleased that the majority of this could be funded through existing budget allocations
- Concerns were raised with regards to the amount of expenditure of certain directorates, particularly Children & Adults Social Care, though it was recognised that much of the work of the C&ASC is complex and necessary to care for those persons on-Island who need their assistance, especially children and young people
- Members felt more work needed to be done within directorates to make expenditures more apparent, noting some small expenditures spread throughout the directorates resulting in a large sum when put together at the end of the year.
 - The Financial Secretary advised that from 1 April 2021, each directorate will use the same format to report their performance against budget at Committee meetings
 - Members were pleased to hear this
- Members said they hope that directorates with money left in their budgets do not now go on a 'spending spree' due to their being a few weeks left before the end of the financial year
 - The Financial Secretary advised that the Withdrawal Warrant would ensure we limit expenditure now towards the end of the financial year
- Members expressed a need for committees and directorates to have a closer look at finances and expenditure going forward
- Members supported and approved the Bill to be presented as Government Business at the next formal meeting of Legislative Council

**ExCo,
2 March 2021**