



Economic Development Committee (EDC) Minutes

Date: 15 September 2020

Venue: Kingshurst Community Center

Time: 7.00 pm

Present:	Chairman	Hon Lawson Henry
	Members:	Hon Gavin Ellick Hon Clint Beard Hon Cyril Leo Hon Miss Christine Scipio Hon Financial Secretary, Mr Dax Richards Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Nicholas Yon Chief Economist, Mrs Nicole Shamier Director of Enterprise, Mr Robert Midwinter
	Secretary	Miss Anita Legg
In Attendance:		Senior Economist, Mrs Amanda Curry Brown Health Promotion Lead, Ms Kate Heneghan (Item 43.3) Member of the Public, Mr Cyril Gunnell
Apologies:		Director ENRPD, Mr Darren Duncan

OPEN SESSION

43.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and explained that an evening meeting had been arranged at the request of constituents. A special welcome was extended to the only member of the public present, who was given a special invitation to ask questions on the presentations. An apology was received from the Director of ENRPD, Mr Darren Duncan, who was attending another meeting.

43.2 Declaration of Personal Interest

Cllr Beard declared his interest in respect of importing goods. No other personal interests were declared.

43.3 The Sugar Tax Review – Chief Economist/Health Promotion Lead

The Health Promotion Lead (HPL) delivered a presentation on the review of the sugar tax on St Helena, focusing on health related issues. Benefits included: encouraging less consumption of sugary drinks, cost saving on healthcare in the future, and new and more private sector opportunities.

It was noted the dental research data was recent and dental visits to schools are carried out twice per year. The HPL advised that fruit and vegetables are critical to health however members raised concern that this was not always accessible due to the current high price of fresh produce. The presentation did not recommend any amendment to the sugar tax at present, as staff needed to become accustomed with the data in the Asycuda system. It was noted the Statistician was still working on data in relation to volume and value of goods and the HPL advised that the next piece of work would include changes in behaviour.

Action: Chief Economist/ Health Promotion Lead

Following further discussion, the Chairman thanked the HPL for her contribution and she left the meeting.

43.4 Labour Market Strategy, 2020 Mid-year Progress – Chief Economist/Senior Economist

The Senior Economist delivered a presentation on progress with the Labour Market Strategy. Key accomplishments during the first six months of implementation included:

- A Human Resources community of practice was launched, including representatives from SHG and the private sector.
- Changes to customs duty were implemented to ensure all individuals coming to St Helena for work will be eligible for the same exemptions.
- A Five year workforce planning process for SHG was completed.
- Requirements for local workforce development into TC recruitment, hiring and evaluation was incorporated.
- An updated Shortage Occupation List and associated guidance was published. It was noted work on setting up a mechanism to enable Saints overseas to see what jobs were available, was ongoing.
- Questions about skills and occupations were incorporated into the upcoming 2021 Census. EDC felt there was need to link careers to succession planning and the shortage occupation list.
- A range of IT courses available at the St Helena Community College was ensured. Members were informed that basic courses are free of charge and others heavily subsidised by SHG.
- Previously uptake from students for agricultural courses was an issue however this year there was a good uptake.
- The Apprenticeship programme was considered vital, also in working towards full time employment.

Following further discussion, the Chairman thanked the Senior Economist for her presentation.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone and closed the meeting at approximately 9 pm.

Minutes Approved:

Chairman

Date: 26-11-20