



## Economic Development Committee (EDC) Minutes

**Date:** 25 February 2021

**Venue:** Council Chamber

**Time:** 09.00 am

**Present:**       **Chairman**               Hon Lawson Henry  
                  **Members:**       Hon Gavin Ellick  
                                  Hon Clint Beard  
                                  Hon Cyril Leo  
                                  Chief Economist, Mrs Nicole Shamier  
                                  Director of Enterprise, Mr Robert Midwinter  
                                  Director of ENRPD, Mr Darren Duncan

**Secretary**               Miss Anita Legg

**In Attendance:**               Senior Economist, Mrs Amanda Curry Brown

**Apologies:**     **Members:**               Hon Miss Christine Scipio

### **OPEN SESSION**

#### **52.1       Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting. No members of the public were present. Apologies were received from Cllr Scipio who was participating in a CPA virtual conference.

#### **52.2       Declaration of Personal Interest**

Cllr Ellick declared an interest in regards to ESH grant funding. No other personal interests were declared.

#### **52.3       ESH Updates, January 2021 – Director of Enterprise**

The Director of Enterprise provided a brief overview on the January progress and performance report and invited comments. Key points raised from the discussion were:

Closure at 31 March 2021 – It was noted ESH staff were now busy with handover arrangements and finalising activities, such as chasing down invoices for processing. A Project Completion Review was also underway with the FCDO, in order to ensure that there was a formal record of what had been achieved by ESH during the organisation's existence.

Portfolio of Strategic Assets – EDC noted the independent valuations were of those properties that had generated interest which had been below the original valuation. A paper would be presented to Executive Council in due course.

Grant Funding for Business Support – The DoE advised there had been no concerns from those who had received grant funding however the Chamber of Commerce wished to ensure that obligations were met by grant recipients, SHG was still deciding who would monitor this going forward.

Future of ESH – It was clarified that elements of ESH would either be taken over by SHG, or fall under the new Tourism set-up e.g. the Market would be taken over by SHG Crown Estates.

Future Contact – The new Head of Sustainable Development would be the future point of contact.

Dark Skies Legislation – EDC were pleased this matter had been approved at the last E&NR Committee meeting and that legislation could possibly be passed in May this year. The Deputy Chief Secretary had undertaken to arrange public communication and consultation.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Enterprise for keeping the committee updated.

#### **52.4      Investment Policy and Investment Strategy Update, Memo 2/2021 – Chief Economist**

The Chief Economist introduced the memo, asking the Economic Development Committee whether the February 2021 versions of the Investment Strategy and Investment Policy could be endorsed

With the closure of ESH at 31 March 2021, Investment would be handed to SHG therefore small administrative changes were needed to reflect this, such as the change of reference from Enterprise St Helena to the SHG Sustainable Development Team. A member also noted other minor administrative amendments and that the memo needs to state, 'effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021'.

A substantive change in the Investment Strategy related to how to deal with reductions in customs duty for any 'Approved Investor B', for capital items from 20% to 5% or a reduction in the fixed import duty for vehicles, should it be required (ref: bottom of page 6).

A member queried as to how long an asset has to remain in the business, which is brought in on an Approved Investor Certificate, before there can be a change of use. The CE later explained via email that the incentive will be available to the Approved Investor for a period of 5 years from the date of certification.

The CE was also requested to provide information to the public on the business ventures which have been awarded the AIS certificate.

**Action: Chief Economist**

Following discussion, EDC endorsed the amendments to the Investment Strategy and Investment Policy.

**Action: Chief Economist**

#### **52.5      Confirmation of Open Minutes held on 10 December 2020 & 28 January 2021**

The minutes of the open meetings held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.



## **52.6      Matters Arising**

### **52.6.1 Declaration of Quarantine**

The Director of ENRPD reported on the dogs in quarantine who were doing well. He added that the SMO would like in future for all dogs to be quarantined that are travelling from Covid-19 countries. There was no intention of changing legislation, as precautions would be taken on a case by case basis.

EDC noted there were no requirements for pets who were in home isolation circumstances and this was considered low risk, although under normal circumstances the Senior Veterinary Officer is allowed to go into homes. Nevertheless the Director agreed to check what Covid-19 protocols could be put in place.

**Action: Director of ENRPD**

### **52.6.2 Economic Development Committee Self-Assessment Checklist**

The Chairman asked for the further suggested amendments to the Council Committee (Rules of Procedure) Order, to be added to the next agenda for Chairpersons Assembly.

**Action: Secretary**

### **52.6.3 Sugar Tax Review**

EDC commented that Asycuda did not seem to be working in relation to drawing out information however noted the Senior Economist will pull out a time series of revenues and imports pertaining to the import of goods subject to the sugar tax.

**Action: Senior Economist**

In a related matter concerns were raised regarding the high cost of fruit but it was felt that affected persons could be assisted through the MIS basket. In relation to the small amount of fruit arriving to the island, it was agreed to invite the Airport Accountable Manager to a future meeting to discuss import of fruit, and also the export of fresh produce to Ascension.

**Action: Secretary**

### **52.6.4 Options for the Re-supply of Chicks for Egg Production**

The Director of ENRPD reported they had abandoned the efforts to replenish the Island's stock of layers for egg production on the March flight from the UK. Although a supplier had been secured, there was a real issue with the Boeing B-757 aircraft hold temperature, as it is fixed and not able to support the temperature requirements for day-old chicks. Feed had been ordered through a local supplier however this was able to be cancelled. However EDC noted another option is being looked at.

The current situation for local egg production was that most producers were experiencing lower production levels due to the age of their layers, layer moulting and problems experienced with feed supplies; this would continue until new layers came on stream and were laying thus the island could experience a shortage. It was noted Thorpe & Sons had advised they were importing

eggs for sale to supplement local supplies and Solomon's were importing eggs to support their bakery operations.

**Action: Director of ENRPD**

#### **52.6.5 Port Regulations**

**Action: Deputy Financial Secretary – Ongoing**

#### **52.6.6 Draft Policy for Communications Networks and Services**

EDC felt this legislation was important therefore should be pushed up Legislative Program.

**Action: Chairman/ Chief Economist**

#### **52.6.7 Company Registry Policy**

The Chief Economist advised the legislation relating to the Company Registry Policy was still to be drafted by the Attorney General's Chambers.

**Action: Chief Economist**

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

Minutes Approved: .....  
Chairman

Date: 22-04-2021