

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Remote Meeting Via Teams
25th February 2021
0915 hours

PRESENT:

Mr W Abel, Chairman (left 12.40)
Mr C Harris
Mr S Roberts
Mr G McKinley
Mr I Carter
Mr A Snowdon
Mr R Jenkins
Mr K Gentle
Mr B Kelly
Ms A Burgess (left 10.30)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr R Nash, Deputy Chief Executive (CE);
Mrs S Pengilley-Price, Executive Officer to the Chief Executive (EO);
Mrs L Baines, Committee Secretary
Mr P Veron, Strategic Adviser (SA)
Mr Stephen Taylor, Strategic Financial Advisor (SFA);
Mrs E O'Toole, Finance Manager (TREASURY)
Mr C Le Ray, General Manager, Ports & Public Services (SoG) for item 4.1
Mr R Coppolo, Chief Operations Officer (SoG) for item 4.1

Apologies: Nil

AGENDA ITEM

ACTION

PART 1

01/02/2021

Minutes and Matters Arising

1.1 Minutes from the meeting held on 26th January and 3rd February 2021 – tabled and approved. It was also agreed for the minutes from Special P&F meetings to be published on the States website. Noted.

CE OFFICE

1.2 Matters arising from previous minutes (other than on the agenda)

1.2.1 Data Breach & Confidentiality – BBC News report

The Committee were advised that this was still with the Data Commissioner for investigation. **Noted.**

1.2.2 Economic Development Committee – status as significant Committee (below)

Members recognise the importance of Economic Development, and agreed that this Committee should mirror that of Guernsey's Committee for Economic Development, as a fully constituted States Committee. The ED Chairman advised that their next meeting is 10th March, and they are currently working on a mandate for the Committee. Publication of the minutes have been agreed as part of the Committee's process. An advert for expressions of interest for two non-States members to join the EDC is currently being written ready for advertisement. It was noted that further discussions are needed to determine what powers the Committee will have, including budgetary responsibility for the Economic Development Fund. A full review of the Economic Development Fund (EDF) is to be completed, with an initial review at the March 2021 meeting.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved for the Economic Development Committee to drive the process forward for becoming a fully constituted States Committee.

A request for funds for the small start-up grant for small businesses via an emailed document from the EDC Chairman was discussed.

The Policy & Finance Committee requested for this to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting as a formal report for consideration.

EDC

Further discussion to be undertaken regarding the level of reporting from sub committees to P&F. This item to be placed on the agenda under Matters Arising for the next meeting. Noted.

MATTERS ARISING

1.2.3 Bailiwick Council Membership – Chair of P&F (+ 2 members?) and President

The Committee were advised that a request has been made regarding the requirements of the constitution of the Bailiwick Council. Deputy CE to circulate to members once received. It was agreed for this item to be placed on Matters Arising for the next meeting.

DEPUTY CE/MATTERS ARISING

1.2.4 Fort Tourgis Project – date for report and presentation

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that he is in liaison with Chris Brock on the matter, and a date will be organised once restrictions are lifted for a face-to-face presentation. The Committee expressed their concerns regarding the budget spent to date on this project. It was noted that this piece of work is ongoing, and a report to P&F will be tabled at the next meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

1.2.5 Alderney Property Tax Communications - feedback

The Committee members advised that no major comments had been received from the public on this matter to date. **Noted.**

02/02/2021

Administrative Matters

2.1 P&F Meeting Dates 2021 – Changes & Additions

It was advised that currently there are no further changes or additions to the Committee meeting dates for 2021. Dates are published on the SoA web site. **Noted.**

2.2 Forthcoming meetings and visits (External)

The following forthcoming meetings and visits were noted:

- Catapult & Tiger Project – 8th March (TEAMS)
- Affray Submarine 70 Year Memorial – 16th April Braye Harbour
- GFSC Visit – 29th April. **Noted.**

2.3 Website/Members Laptops/Access to SharePoint – Progress

The Committee was advised that this is ongoing, with a range of ways being explored for accessing SharePoint. It was noted that a report from Guernsey will be brought to the Committee in due course. This will remain a standing item on the agenda. **Noted.**

STANDING ITEM

2.4 The Role of Non-States Members on States Committees/Groups - Note – Report from Ian Carter dated February 2021 tabled and considered.

The Committee resolved to amend the following points:

- That non-States members cannot vote; and
- That appropriate experience in the committee's remit area is required.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to adopt the draft template, subject to the revisions above and to be used henceforth.

IC

2.5 External Relations update

Nothing to report. **Noted.**

2.6 Items for March Billet

2.6.1 Appointment of Chief Executive Update – Report from Adrian Lewis dated 19th February 2021 tabled and considered.

The Policy and Finance Committee resolved to: -

- 1. Recommend to the States that, having followed the appropriate processes and having secured the approval of His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor (HE), in accordance with section 52 of the Government of Alderney Law, to confirm the appointment of Kathryn Jones as Chief Executive of the States of Alderney, and**
- 2. To authorize the Chairman of the States Employment Board to sign the contract of employment as prepared by the Law Officers of the Crown.**

BILLET ITEM

2.6.2 Appointment of States Treasurer

The Policy and Finance Committee resolved to confirm the appointment of Liz Maurice as States Treasurer of the States of Alderney.

BILLET ITEM

2.6.3 Conditions of Employment (Alderney) Law 2020

It was advised that the CE Office was awaiting a 'clean' copy from the Law Officers. The Committee agreed on the following: Proposer – Bill Abel; Seconder – Kevin Gentle.

Noted.

BILLET ITEM

2.6.4 GSC Report

It was noted that the Chairman of GSC would be tabling a report for the coming SOA meeting on the Alderney Bird Observatory (ABO) and the Crane. **Noted.**

BILLET ITEM

2.6.5 Various 'not to annul' items – Emergency Laws

The Committee noted the following items for the Billet:

- Coronavirus Emergency Powers – 3 laws. **Noted.**

2.7 Finance (Grants & Subsidies)

2.7.1 AWT Grant Applications 2021 recommendations from Finance Committee –

Report from Treasury dated 10th February 2021 tabled and considered.

The States has received two grant applications from Alderney Wildlife Trust (AWT) for 2021. These are for general operational support (£16,000) and for maintenance of the Community Woodland (£1,000). Both grants are for the same sum applied for in 2020 and the budgets for 2021 agreed by the States includes the same sums.

The grant applications were considered by Finance committee on 1st February 2021 and the award was recommended for approval to the Policy and Finance Committee.

It was noted that any grants over £5k have to come to P&F for approval. **Noted.**
The Policy and Finance Committee resolved to agree to accept the following recommendation from Finance Committee:

- a) **The award of a revenue grant of £16,000 to AWT and £1,000 for Community Woodland for 2021 in line with budget;**
- b) **That the Service Level Agreement with AWT is updated in respect of the main operational grant; and**
- c) **The 'Grant' be retitled within the States of Alderney accounts to 'Provision of Services' as funds are not for the general running of AWT.**

TREASURY

2.7.2 Civil Service Pension Scheme Update – Report from Strategic Financial Adviser dated 25th February 2021 tabled and considered.

The States of Alderney operates two pension funds for employees. The largest one (the 1982 scheme) is a defined benefit scheme which closed to new entrants on 31st December 2011. Since that date, new employees have been enrolled onto an alternative scheme (a defined contribution scheme), which holds no liability for the States. These changes were approved by States resolution at the time.

The Committee recognised that a payment will need to be made regarding the deficit of the 1982 scheme.

The Policy and Finance Committee resolved to:

- a) **Note the current Pension Fund deficit and agree that action is required in liaison with the Pension Trustees;**
- b) **Agree to seek further advice from the Actuary and Investment Advisers on all potential long-term options to meet the States obligations;**
- c) **Discuss whether the Alderney Pension Schemes can be amalgamated with the States of Guernsey Schemes as part of the current initiative; and**
- d) **Continue to request an annual update from the Scheme Trustees via Treasury.**

SFA/MATTERS ARISING

2.8 States of Alderney Work Force Plan – Report from Deputy Chief Executive dated 19th February 2021 tabled and considered.

The immediate needs of the Island's civil service workforce has been reviewed and a plan for the consolidation of staff and functions into 5 operational units was proposed. This arrangement broadly builds on existing arrangements and is supported by senior staff.

Areas where the staff structure could very usefully be strengthened in the short term have been identified and described.

The Committee noted that this would need to be discussed in a single item meeting; and agreed for this to be progressed in more detail once the new Chief Executive is in post.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to note the interim report.

03/02/2021

Appointments – Elections/Changes/Additions

3.1 Economic Development Committee – Chair & Deputy – Non-States Member?

The Committee were advised on the following appointments:

Chairman of EDC – Annie Burgess

Deputy Chairman of EDC – Ian Carter

Non -States Member – currently being advertised. **Noted.**

3.2 Finance Committee – Chair & Deputy

The Committee were advised on the following appointments:

Chairman of FC – Christian Harris

Deputy Chairman of FC – Ian Carter

Noted.

3.3 Building Development Control Committee – Deputy

The Committee were advised that the BDCC had not yet met to appoint a Deputy Chairman. This is to be decided at the next Policy Meeting. **Noted.**

3.4 General Services Committee - Deputy

The Committee were advised on the following appointment:

Deputy Chairman of GSC – Annie Burgess

Noted.

04/02/2021

External Transport, Economy and Renewable Energy

4.1 Alderney Runway Briefing – Colin Le Ray in attendance – Report from Strategic Adviser Paul Veron, dated 1st February 2021 tabled and considered.

The existing airport facilities prevent the regular use of aircraft larger than the Dornier 228 NG or Viking Twin Otter.

The asphalt runway, which is near the end of its working life, is currently of inadequate dimensions and is operating on a CAA temporary variation.

Proposals to refurbish the existing 877m x 18m asphalt runway include the resurfacing of the existing length and grooving the marshal asphalt surface, installing drainage, improved runway centreline and edge lighting and reinstatement of the width to 23 metres. This work is planned to be completed during 2022 at a cost of up to £12m.

The refurbishment project is based on using the same size of aircraft, so the design carries similar load bearing capability. An option to consider heavier aircraft will be costed.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to: -

- 1. Continue to press for the Project to proceed as a matter of urgency; and**
- 2. While this is in progress to cooperate further with the authorities in Guernsey over any further work required to secure the airport's future-proofing for the next 25 years.**

SA

4.2 Aurigny PSO Update

The Committee were advised that the planned visit for 11th February has now been postponed to 29th March via Teams. The Strategic Adviser stated that a further update will be reported back to the Committee at the next meeting.

05/02/2021

Legislation, Conventions & Policy and Finance

5.1 Conditions of Employment (Alderney) Law 2020 – next steps

The Committee were advised that this is the initial part of the process. **Noted.**

5.2 Partnership (Alderney) Law 2021 – next steps

The Committee were advised that the Partnership (Alderney) Law 2021 is currently in draft form, and should be tabled for the next meeting. **Noted.**

5.3 Finance Committee Mandate 2021 for approval – tabled and considered.

At the meeting of the 1st February 2021, the Finance Committee agreed: -

- The Membership of the Committee, is amended to five members including the Chairman, and therefore a fifth member will be appointed at the next Policy and Finance Committee meeting; and
- To amend bullet point 6 on the Appendix to the Mandate to reflect the States resolution of October 2019 where it was agreed to amend the financial rules to increase the Committee capital expenditure authorisation level from £100k to £150k.

The Policy and Finance Committee resolved to: -

- 1. Appoint another member to the Finance Committee – Mr Kevin Gentle; and**
- 2. Approve the mandate as amended in relation to analysis and review of States spending proposals and capital projects in excess of £150k.**

TREASURY

5.4 Good Governance Group Mandate 2021 for approval – Report from Kevin Gentle dated 14th February 2021 tabled and considered.

The new constitution of the Good Governance Group now designates four politicians, and there is a desire to appoint an additional lay member from the community, after advertising, which requires the existing mandate to be amended.

Mandate

- 1. To appoint a working group of no more than six persons (a maximum of four politicians, one Civil Servant, and one lay member appointed through recruitment after advertisement) to make recommendations in regard to proper process; and*
- 2. Gain support from States Members to develop proposals before promoting an island wide discussion regarding effective government.*

The Committee were advised that 4 members of the public have expressed an interest to join the group as the 'lay' member. Terms of reference to be further researched, and notes to be passed to all members for information. **Noted.**

The Policy and Finance Committee resolved to approve the 2021 mandate for the Good Governance Group.

06/02/2021 Items for Development/Discussion

6.1 AEL Report

6.1.1 Current management and organisation; completion of the power station upgrade; progress on HoT with Simec-Atlantis; and its renewables strategy

Item deferred.

6.1.2 Transfer of States Infrastructure & Updated Concession

Note: The Concession Agreement needed to be updated, and should reflect the conditions related to the SOA Loan to AEL for the upgrade of the Island Distribution Infrastructure.

Item deferred.

6.2 The Employment Board – Functions, Structure and Role

Item deferred.

6.3 The Open Forum – Adherence to Rules of Procedure – Does it serve the community; and consideration of monthly surgeries as an alternative

The Committee discussed how the current process could be improved, or other methods could be adopted.

Mr Snowdon expressed his concerns at removing the Open Forum, as the public have a right to raise issues in front of the media. This was also supported by Mr Roberts and Mr Gentle.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to agree for the current guidance to be circulated to members for comment.

EO

07/02/2020 Any Other Business - For Information & Noting

7.1 Meeting with Guernsey P&R held on 12th February

The Committee had received an update after the meeting on 12th February, therefore there was nothing further to report.

7.2 Letter re Abortion Law - Letter from Committee for Health & Social Care dated 7th February 2021 tabled and noted.

The Law currently has force in the islands of Guernsey, Herm and Jethou and while abortion provision for Alderney residents is provided in Guernsey by Health and Social Care, the CfHSC asks the States of Alderney to consider whether it wishes the legislation to be extended to the island of Alderney as part of a Bailiwick-wide law.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to approve the draft legislation to be extended to Alderney as part of the Bailiwick-wide law.

CE OFFICE

7.3 Plan in place in the event of 3rd COVID wave in Bailiwick

Mr Gentle raised the question, is there a plan in place if another COVI lockdown was to be enforced, with Alderney being Covid free.

The Committee were advised that this was already being considered by the Tactical Co-ordinating Group in Guernsey and is currently in a very draft form. Draft to be tabled at April P&F meeting. **Noted.**

APRIL MEETING

7.4 Potential relief for businesses re Alderney Property Tax

The Committee were advised that there are comprehensive schemes available through the States of Guernsey, where certain criteria have to be met to qualify for assistance. Mr Abel to seek clarification from the President regarding the Helping Hand Funds.

This issue was agreed to be deferred to the Strategic Financial Adviser and Finance Committee for further discussion and consideration (on a case-by-case basis), with the assistance of the Helping Hands fund or the current COVID budget that was available.

FC/SFA

7.5 Route de souffrance – issue raised at GSC

An issue was raised at GSC regarding disputes with routes de souffrance access. It was advised that this is a private dispute that could have a wider implication.

The Committee resolved to seek Law Officer's advice on the issue, before it could take this matter further.

MATTER ARISING/ DEPUTY CE

7.6 Sheltered Housing Policy – Future Requirements

This item to be tabled at the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM

7.8 COVID Update

The Committee were advised that there was a CCA meeting today to discuss the move to Stage 2 for Alderney. **Noted.**

PART 2

08/02/2020 Reports from Committees/Groups/Projects

8.1 General Services Committee – Report from GSC Chairman dated 16th February 2021 tabled and noted.

8.1.1 Crane – Old & New

It was advised that the crane engineers are set to arrive tomorrow to build the new crane.

An option paper for the old crane has been requested for the next GSC meeting for consideration. Options to include expressions of interest/current valuation/ cost of refurbishment/ and obtaining a basic reserve crane.

8.1.2 Marina

It was advised that this project has been passed to Economic Development Committee to progress in the development stage, but will return to GSC's remit at a later stage if progressed. No further expenditure is to be spent on this project.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that he was meeting Mr Brock next week regarding an update on this project.

Letter that was sent to the developer last year to be circulated to members for information. **Noted.**

8.1.3 States Asset Group

The Committee were advised that this is covered through Heritage/Visit Alderney/GSC, and is currently being worked on. **Noted.**

Moorings – It was advised that the advert for expressions of interest for the contract has been circulated to the media outlets. **Noted.**

Insurance Claim – It was advised that this issue is being dealt with by the States of Alderney insurers. **Noted.**

8.2 BDCC

Nothing to report.

8.3 Finance Committee

It was noted that the next meeting is 15th March where the end of year accounts will be tabled and discussed.

8.4 Economic Development Committee

8.4.1 Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) Briefing - report from Chair, Economic Development Committee dated 13th February 2021 tabled and considered. The Economic Development Committee (EDC) had been tasked with responsibility under its mandate for transport and has therefore provided this report to P&F on the progress made to date with the implementation of the agreed priorities within the ITS policy document.

It was noted that the EDC are working through the action points from the January meeting, and will advise when liaison with Guernsey Politicians is needed, as formal consultation will be organised with Deputies.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to note the following: -

- 1. EDC will satisfactorily conclude consultations with the stakeholders and amend the ITS report for P&F and then the States to consider later in the year; and**
- 2. Provide clarification as to whether the consultation with stakeholders should be done remotely or face to face.**

EDC

8.4.2 Ferry – 2021 & Long Term - Update – verbal update

The Strategic Adviser reported that 4 responses had been received from the expressions of interest advert. The EDC met yesterday and identified 2 expressions of interest that could potentially be operational for 2021. The potential service provision; timing; and level of subsidy required to be established. Discussions are being held with the Harbour Master regarding legislation for a larger vessel (12+ seater). A further report on this to be discussed at the March EDC meeting. The potential dates for the ferry season would be 1st May to 30th September.

Discussions with Aurigny and the STSB are being held at officer level.

The Committee were concerned that this expressions of interest process has only started now and should have commenced in September 2020, in preparation for the coming season, resolving to start any process in autumn 2021 for the 2022 season.

Noted.

8.4.3 Heritage

8.4.4 WW2 Task Group Report – Report from Ian Carter, Graham McKinley and Alex Snowdon dated 22nd February 2021 tabled and considered.

The Committee agreed that the States of Alderney should take the position that there may be undiscovered Second World War burials on the island, for example on Longis Common, and that protection should be put in place to prevent the disturbance of such sites. The use of protective orders similar to that put in place for the Lager Sylt area in the recent past should be implemented through the appropriate Committee and States procedures.

It was also discussed that the States of Alderney should put in place protection for any sites in the short term and communicate this as part of a process that will be carried through pending further investigation and in preparation for appropriate designation under the next Land Use Plan (LUP) review.

8.4.5 States Assets - The Committee were advised that GSC have started work on the asset register, and are in discussion with Visit Alderney and the Alderney Society. It was also noted that BDCC would be involved further along in the process.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to approve the following:

- **That the WW2 Task Group should investigate the protection of sites for Longis Common, and to report back to P&F for final approval.**

- **To note that the General Services Committee are reviewing all aspects of the island's heritage assets;**

IC/AS/GM

8.5 Policy & Finance Committee

8.5.1 Island Plan – Terms of Reference – Report from Ian Carter dated February 2021 tabled and considered.

It was noted that a high-level strategic plan is needed to move forward. The Plan would be a brief overview where everything else feeds into – Economic Development; Land Use Plan; Transport etc.

Mr Carter to circulate other island plans to members for information, and members to provide feedback.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved to defer the Terms of Reference for the Island Plan Task Group, to the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM

8.5.2 Communications – Task Group Report on Communication Policy – Report from Ian Carter dated 4th February 2021 tabled and considered.

The communications task group (Annie Burgess, Ian Carter and Richard Nash), with input from Alistair Forrest, current PR adviser and Rob Moore (Senior Media Officer SoG) has met once. The Terms of reference were agreed and consideration of a range of external media and communications policies and procedure documents was undertaken with key points in an Alderney context highlighted. Potential staffing implications and the interaction with Visit Alderney were discussed along with procedural mechanisms of action for press releases ensuring the proper cascading of information flow to those concerned across a range of media. Action for next meeting 25/02/21 was to consider a draft policy and procedures document.

It was noted that the Communications Group are meeting tomorrow to discuss the draft policy.

The Policy & Finance Committee resolved for the draft policy to be brought back to P&F for final approval.

CG

8.5.3 Energy Policy

Update deferred.

8.5.4 Good Governance

It was advised that the Good Governance Group have met once without civil service support. Mr Gentle was elected as Chairman. Nothing further to report. Noted.

Meeting closed: 1.26pm

Signed: Bill Abel

Date: February 2021