



Rural Development Strategy
Steering Group

OPEN MINUTES

Held at 13:30 on 12th February 2020
in the Liberation Room, Stanley

These minutes are draft until confirmed at the next meeting of the Steering Group

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|-----------------|-------------------|-------|--|
| Present: | MLA Mark Pollard | (MP) | Chair, Portfolio Holder |
| | Barry Rowlands | (BR) | Chief Executive |
| | Keith Heslop | (KH) | Managing Director, FIDC |
| | Tom McIntosh | (TH) | Senior Agricultural Advisor, FIG |
| | Mike Evans | (ME) | West Falkland Representative |
| | Lewis Clifton | (LC) | Chair of the RBA |
| | Ben Berntsen | (BB) | East Falkland Representative |
| | Louise Pole Evans | (LPE) | Islands Representative |
| | Neil Judd | (NJ) | FLH Representative |
| | Andrew Gaule | (AG) | Director of Policy & Economic Development |
| In attendance | Louise Ellis | (LE) | Business Development Officer, FIDC |
| | John Hellowell | (JH) | Business Development Officer |
| Invited | Simon Fenton | (SF) | Standard Chartered Bank |
| | Cheryl Bonner | (CB) | Standard Chartered Bank |
| Minutes: | S Steen | | |
| Public & Press: | None | | |

1. Welcome and Apologies for absence

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed Mr Simon Fenton and Cheryl Bonner from Standard Chartered Bank to the RDS Steering Group meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from, MLA Teslyn Barkman

2. Declarations of Interest in items

2.1. General interests were declared in rural issues.

3. Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2019

3.1 The minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate account of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd of July 2019

4.1 4.1 Education support for Camp: MP informed the group that a policy paper regarding education provision in Camp and proposal from the Education Department was to be submitted to Executive Council. He confirmed that the position of Camp Education Manager had not been successfully filled at this time. MP agreed to update the group on any progress. **Action MP**

4.2 4.2 Ramps and Jetties: LPE queried if a schedule of works had been issued and if a date for commencement of works had been set. BR suggested the question be raised with the Director of Public Works. **Action JH**

4.3 4.4 Sustainable Housing Development: BR informed the group that the National Housing Strategy was close to completion, with a Camp Housing Strategy included in the document.

14.15 BR & AG left the meeting

4.4 4.5 Water Infrastructure: LE confirmed that an article was published in The Wool Press. FIDC will continue to promote the scheme through social media.

4.5 5.4 Improved Skills Level in Camp: LE Confirmed the FIDC Development Assistant has added the RBA email to the list of businesses targeted for promoting FIDC upcoming training events..

4.6 6.1 Wool Storage Facility: JH confirmed a Wool Storage Steering Group is in the process of being implemented with members to be approached to be appointed shortly.

4.7 6.4 Fox Bay Village: MP advised the group that a first draft of The Fox Bay Village Plan was expected in April 2020. This would include a housing strategy and a proposition for the Fox Bay Mangers House. LE had spoken with Director of Public Works who updated her on the housing situation with a potential tenant identified and renovation work being carried out in another property. The group suggested that the Director of Public Works be approached to discuss the scope of works being carried out within the village. LE also agreed to speak with Planning and Building about any areas of land in and around the village available for purchase and private development. **Action LE/JH.**

- 4.8 6.8 Bench Marking: LE advised that an article had been published in The Wool Press focussing on the impact of the AWEX and current trends in the wool market on modelled farm businesses. TM advised that The Department of Agriculture have been investigating potential for specialist consultants to assist farms increase their profitability.
- 4.9 6.10 RDS Capital Development Grant: LE advised that information regarding the scheme had been circulated and would continue to be publicised via social media.
- 4.10 6.11 Horticulture: LE advised that due to commercial sensitivity that the group could not be updated on any potential new entrants to the market, The Group discussed commercial viability and funding available thought the scheme, with a review of the scheme be carried out alongside an update of vegetable import data and the Retail Price Index.. In addition, the period of 1 year before and applicant could approach for funds under Grant schemes with FIDC. **Action LE**
- 4.11 6.12 Agricultural Apprenticeship Scheme: JH advised that the working group had met and a number of flaws with the scheme had been identified. A review of the scheme was to be carried out. Members raised concerns around safeguarding issues preventing businesses from participating.
- 4.12 6.13 Proactive Promotion of Camp Life: LE advised that she had some initial discussions with stakeholders and potential partners including the FCO. MP suggested that FIDC liaise with the FIG PR department. **Action LE.**
- 4.13 6.15 Waste Management: MP informed the group that the Waste Management Strategy was looking into effective ways of disposing of hazardous goods. LE informed the group that the strategy was currently focused on Stanley rather than island wide and implementation was some years away.

5. **Presentation from Simon Fenton (SF) of Standard Chartered Bank**

- 5.1 SF presented a PowerPoint presentation on the services provided by Standard Chartered Bank.
- 5.2 SF invited feedback from the group regarding options for Standard Chartered Bank to engage with the rural community. Specifically focussing on representatives from SCB visiting rural areas and services they could provide to the rural community during these visits.

The topic of land valuation was raised and how land is valued in the rural area. It was suggested that FIDC, Standard Chartered Bank and AJEX Engineering (SCB official evaluators) should meet to develop an official farm valuation framework. **Action LE.**

14.09 SF & CB LEFT MEETING

6. Action Plan 2018-21 - Update 501-020/20

- 6.1 4.1.1 Wool Storage Facility: correction - seven models were presented to the RDS Steering Group.
- 6.2 4.1.4 Digital Connectivity: JH advised that the request made to Sure FI Ltd to provide an update on telecoms infrastructure improvements in Camp has to date not arrived. LC advised that he had meet with Director of Development and Commercial Services FIG, and the Managing Director of SURE but was unable to disclose information until it came into the public domain. The group suggested that statement should be released once the information became available to the public and that a statement on the current position of Camp connectivity be made by FIG. **Action MP**
- 6.3 4.1.6 Transport Links Policy: LPE Expressed concerned about the over stretched service being provide by Concordia Bay and FIGAS and the restrictions to economic growth of the rural community that this was causing.
- 6.4 KH drew attention to the strategic objectives of the RDSSG and queried how these were to be measured against the outcomes of the RDS Action Plan. KH also drew attention to the fact that not all discussions during the meeting were being related back to RDS targets set, nor any discussion on of the status of performance against targets. The group agreed that further work on identifying the top three priorities, with a renewed focus on how these should be actioned going forwards, and how the successes should be measured. **Action LE**

15.47 NJ left the meeting

- 6.5 7.1.3 Renewable Energy at Fox Bay: The Group agreed that funds from the RDS Budget earmarked for this project be utilised by the Director of Public Works to contract a third party to create a complete design specification for a Renewable Energy System for Fox Bay Village, with emphasis on a fit-for-purpose system that was future-proofed for any further development and growth of the village. **Action LE**

16.05 Meeting Ended