

Progress made on the commitments in the 2012 Joint Ministerial Council communiqué

St. Helena

Jobs and Growth

With the St Helena Airport due to open in 2016, the St Helena Government (SHG) is working to facilitate growth and encourage investment.

As part of this work, a new investment policy and other enabling instruments (such as a revised Immigration & Land Holding Ordinance) were implemented during 2011. Support for Significant Investors has also been discussed and agreed in principle with Councillors at Executive Committee sessions and with the committee responsible for Economy and Finance. What form this support for investors will take is still being considered, but it is likely to be centred on taxation breaks and other fiscal incentives.

Developing entrepreneurship and small businesses

Fostering a strong spirit of entrepreneurship and developing small businesses is vital if St Helena is to reap the full benefits of increased access through the airport. Enterprise Saint Helena (ESH) has been established to provide support, advice and guidance to small business to encourage growth and investment. ESH have supported the creation of a new hospitality training centre and run a variety of training courses designed to up-skill those interested in running their own business.

In addition to this, SHG are reviewing taxation policy towards small business in order to further aid development.

Infrastructure investment

Significant investment is underway to improve the Island's infrastructure including work to roads, utilities and healthcare provision. This will further support the economic development of the Island by creating jobs and increasing confidence for future potential investment.

Meeting international standards on tax co-operation and financial sector regulation and combating financial crime, bribery and corruption

St Helena does not have an international financial services industry and as such the risks relating to financial crime, bribery and corruption remain very low. St Helena shares information on tax issues with Ascension Island and further work is being considered with the other South Atlantic Territories for the future.

The Environment and Green Growth

Management and protection of the natural environment

St Helena Government takes its responsibilities for the management and protection of the natural environment seriously. The new Environmental Protection Ordinance is now in the final drafting stages. It is anticipated that this will be brought into force in early 2014. A National Environmental Management Plan (NEMP) has been established. This includes a series of targets that set a blue print for effective environmental management (our National Goal) over the next 10 years. The Environmental Management Division (EMD), other SHG Directorates, NGOs and organisations are actively working towards meeting these targets.

The NEMP includes the establishment and implementation of a robust environmental assessment framework, which will streamline the environmental assessment of policies, plans, projects and activities and feed into other forms of decision making across government. It will also incorporate the already well established Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, which forms part of the statutory planning process under the Land Planning and Development Control Ordinance.

Further information on St. Helena's EIA process; policies and plans that have been developed e.g. – NEMP, Solid Waste Management Strategy; and EMD's monthly and quarterly newsletters are available online at www.sthelena.gov.sh

Sustainable fisheries

In collaboration with the FCO there is now a more robust fisheries licensing policy for the issuing of licences to foreign vessels who apply to fish in the EEZ's of St Helena and Ascension Island. A work plan for exploratory fishing within the St Helena EEZ has also been devised to ensure that any effort of exploratory fishing is spread throughout the EEZ and not directly targeted to the seamounts. With regards to monitoring and patrols, this is only carried out on the occasional visit of RN vessels to the island, the last being in August 2013 when it was reported that no vessels were sighted. ESH liaises with both DFID and the FCO on matters pertaining to fisheries development in our waters, involving both parties in the recent recruitment of a Commercial Fisheries Development Manager within ESH, and also in the development of a fishing plan and international observer for an exploratory fishing proposal by a foreign interest.

Renewable energy

Solar pilot schemes have been expanded and now cover the roofs of Connect Saint Helena Ltd. offices and the Power Station. It is anticipated that approximately 0.7% of the islands electricity will be generated from these panels. The construction of an additional six wind turbines is underway. The wind turbines have been delivered to St Helena and await the completion of the concrete bases which are currently 50% complete. It is anticipated that the project will be complete before the end of the financial year with the new wind turbines contributing an additional 10% of the islands generation requirements.

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Meeting international obligations

As a co-operating party to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), St Helena, as a UKOT, continues to meet its international obligations with the submission of annual reports to the Commission and the implementation of ICCAT recommendations, where practicable. ESH and SHG are currently liaising with the FCO regarding an increase in ICCAT quotas for St Helena and a delegation from St Helena is expected to attend the upcoming Commission meeting in Cape Town during November 2013.

Annual fish catch reports are also submitted to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) for publication.

Sharing best practice

The Environment Charter and MEA targets have fed into the establishment of the National Environmental Management Plan. Ensuring that the National Environmental Management Plan (NEMP) delivers on St Helena's international targets has been an important component of the NEMP process.

The requirements of MEAs also fed into the development of the new Environmental Protection Ordinance

St Helena will provide updates on compliance to individual MEAs as requested by their Secretariats and or UK Government Departments. We completed and submitted (to JNCC) our National Report on compliance to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the end of September.

Support from International Organisations

Strengthening relationships with the EU, Commonwealth and other international organisations

St Helena continues to work to strengthen relationships with key international organisations. St Helena enjoys an excellent working relationship with the European Union. St Helena was the first UK territory to have their Sustainable Development Plan and Financing Agreements signed off by the EU.

Better Government

Developing democratic institutions

Civil Society support continues to be developed through a Community Development Organisation under the leadership of a Civil Society Support Officer.

Integrity in public life

St Helena Government has made the commitment to improve its ethical environment. A risk register has been established; identifying potential unethical risks that could occur on St Helena and within St Helena Government. The mitigation plan is currently being implemented:

- In January 2013, St Helena held its first Ethics at Work survey which surveyed St Helena Government, the large Private Sector business and Non-Government Organisation employees. The results from the survey will serve as a baseline as St Helena Government continuously seeks improvement on the ethical environment. Detailed actions as a response to the results were added to the Ethics Action Plan. The second survey is scheduled for January 2014.
- The current staff policies and procedures of St Helena Government such as; Code of Conduct, Bully and Harassment, Whistle Blowing/Confidential Reporting, Fraud and Related Negligence are currently being revised, and new policies and procedures are being created for Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality/Non-disclosure of information.
- A number of St Helena Government employees undertook the Institute of Business Ethics on-line training – Understanding Business Ethics and further in-house training will be provided as the new and revised policies and procedures are approved and implemented.

Codes of practice

A document providing Corporate Governance guidance for public servants is being finalised.

Strengthening the public service

St Helena is looking to strengthen public services to provide effective and efficient policy advice, public services and regulation. Work on this front continues to be done to modernise and rationalise Government services.

Improving service delivery, including through e-government

St Helena is committed to improving service delivery including through e-government; SHG is looking to implement e-procurement and has linked into UK Government procurement sites. Further development through the new Corporate Procurement Advisor is being implemented.

Strengthening Public financial management

Financial Regulations have been reviewed to strengthen financial management. These will be implemented by end of October 2013 and include a comprehensive review with input from Directors and Internal & External Audit Department.

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Monthly performance reports which include management accounts with commentary on the accounts are published monthly on SHG website and shared with stakeholders.

A Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) is now in the second year and major improvements in the budget process have been implemented. Councillors have taken ownership of the budget which reflects Council and Government priorities. We are looking to further improve the process and focus on budget assumptions for outer years. Management accounts are produced monthly with commentary and review of accounts carried out by Councillors through the Finance and Planning Group. The main financial focus in 2012/13 was on increasing the revenue base through a review of taxation and Customs duties, looking to generate further revenue increases in 2013/14 through a comprehensive review of Fees and Charges and further improvements to the tax base. Increased employment and raises in salary rates have had a positive effect on revenue streams, further planned investment on the Island will lead to further improvements in revenue streams

Procurement

There has been major investment in this area with a new Corporate Procurement Executive appointed from the UK for a two year period in January of this year. As a result of this appointment, a new risk based decision making process has been introduced. To support the new regulations a revised Procurement Board has been set up. Further developments include:

- A new structure has been implemented to support new ways of working
- the UK Cabinet office has agreed to allow St Helena access to the Procurement advertising portal used by Central and local government in UK
- SHG has introduced internationally recognised commercial terms into overseas contracts to mitigate risk.
- A new Contract register has been compiled and is being published on a regular basis
- A rolling procurement plan is now published on the internet every month
- SHG is still seeking to establish procurement links with Ascension and Falkland.

Stronger and Healthier communities

Sport

A sports and play strategy is proposed in the Islands Social Policy Plan to cover a range of activities from improving play parks to participation in elite competitions. Work on this strategy has commenced.

The Island has excellent links with the Commonwealth Games and the St Helena Cricket Association is part of the International Cricket Council. The St Helena Football Association has contacted FIFA to improve links and to become recognised.

Sport at all levels on the island is progressing well with junior sports participation high and excellent engagement in school sports events. The island recently excelled at the Island games in Bermuda with one Gold medal and one Silver medal and this has created a real sense of achievement.

Elsewhere the coverage of local sport in the media has improved dramatically and this has led to increased participation and attendances at events.

The island's swimming pool now has a hoist to enable disabled swimmers easy and safe access to the pool and this has enabled bit more leisure use and physiotherapy sessions.

Work has also started to improve play facilities in the island's three primary schools. This work is being taken forward in partnership, involving the private sector, St Helena Government, parents and carers and importantly children and young people who have designed the upgrades. To maximise resource, the private sector have donated time and equipment and also items such as large tyres so that they can be recycled to benefit the Island's children.

Disability

The Social Policy Plan identifies a number of measures to enable disabled people to participate fully in society. This includes support for employers, accessibility, improving Special Education Needs provision and transition planning. Enterprise St Helena and Environment Management Department are supporting the development of SHAPE, a local social enterprise which has a focus on green initiatives such as paper recycling. The Health Directorate is also supporting people with disabilities by providing funding for the Occupational Therapy Scheme and Community Workfare Scheme through a Service Level Agreement with SHAPE. This allows for 10 clients per week to participate in work activities which would not otherwise be possible.

The Health and Social Welfare Directorate acknowledges the need for legislation or overarching statutory policy for provision for people with disabilities and has flagged up working towards this within the next three years.

Older people

St Helena Government are increasing the number of warden supervised sheltered accommodation units available for elderly frail people to occupy, which will provide 24 hour staffing. There are plans

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to build 11 new units and renovate the current units over a phased period of three years. This will allow more older people the opportunity to continue to live independently with the added security of care staff, to provide support when necessary. This is being funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) through SHG's capital programme.

Following the implementation of a Basic Island Pension, further developments are to be explored looking at a Minimum Income Standard linked pension. The Island also has a private pension scheme now.

Children

Significant work has taken place to improve child safeguarding on St Helena, under the guidance and instruction of the Island's newly created Safeguarding Children's Board.

The successful roll out of the Safeguarding Children in the Overseas Territories (SCOT) program, multi agency training initiatives and the number of recent successful prosecutions combine to provide evidence of the progress. Investment in key professionals in the field of Social Work continues and will result in better qualified staff and improved safeguarding of children. The multi-agency approach to safeguarding will continue to be developed through regular meetings of the Safeguarding Children's Board. The recruitment of the Social Work Trainer will ensure local staff receive updates in Achieving Best Evidence and other training.

Vulnerable families will be supported by increased expertise in the area of Social Services following the appointment of a DFID funded Senior Social Services Manager and a Social Work Trainer. The Social Policy Plan identifies the need for a carers' framework to support carers. The Health and Social Welfare Strategic Plan and Social Services Strategic Framework target the creation of a Children and Young Peoples Plan and a Vulnerable Adults Plan over the next three years.

The Family Centre Supervisor post has been upgraded and will be key in the delivery of early intervention programmes to prevent family crisis and to ensure that children remain in a safe and nurturing environment.

Tackling Discrimination

The Island's Social Policy Plan proposes that robust Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Legislation are introduced and work is on-going to review benefits that are paid to vulnerable groups. The island has also had a number of high profile campaigns aimed at tackling the issue of domestic violence and abuse, mental health difficulties and bullying in schools.

There needs to be a multi-disciplinary approach to tackling discrimination as it is more than a Social Services/Social Development initiative; it is underlying in all aspects of island life including Business, Sports and Leisure, Infrastructure. There is much work to be done in tackling social inequalities in other areas of island life. Socio-economic risk factors include low wages, lack of child benefits, and lack of Guardians Allowances for bereaved children.

Safer Communities

Strengthening coordination on tackling crime

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements are in place on St Helena. Work continues to strengthen and improve these inter-agency links.

Prisons and probation

The FCO Prison Advisor visited in September 2013 for his regular inspection. The Prison Visitor Committee regularly provides local and independent community visiting. There has been significant development of the Probation Service in St Helena; with the Police Directorate taking ownership of the service in 2011. This integrated justice system service is in keeping with UK National Offender Management Service systems. A specialist UK trained Offender Manager has been funded by DFID and will arrive in November 2013. Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and Sex Offender Register arrangements are in now place.

The new Chief Magistrate role was introduced in July 2012 and increased sentencing capability in the Magistrates Court is proving effective.

Disaster preparation and resilience

A UK experienced Disaster Management Planner has been in post since May 2013. This role includes creating an Integrated National Disaster Management Plan that will effectively interface with DM Plans for the new airport due to open in February 2016. The first draft of that National DM Plan will shortly be available.

Health

Strengthening public health systems

The SHG Link with Northern, Eastern and Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (NEW Devon) continues to be developed to enable a more comprehensive clinical support system is enacted. The potential for more cost-effective drug procurement possibilities have been investigated with NEW Devon but now, with the support of DFID, we are currently exploring the possibility of procuring drugs direct from the NHS.

Tackling chronic non communicable diseases

Given St Helena's isolation, the care of patients with chronic diseases remains a significant challenge, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. There are a number of work strands being taken forward in relationship to this issue; these include:

- discussions about the 'Health of the Nation' (where health is seen as a concern of every person, private enterprise and wider SHG departmental attention)
- the development of more accurate data collection, collation and analysis, which in turn will aid the focussing of resources in the most appropriate manner
- the development of internal clinical and system audit tools
- continuation of health promotion activities
- some planned redevelopment of the hospital to provide a more modern facility with some better treatment and clinical diagnostic capabilities

International Health Regulation compliance

SHG have identified the need for legislative changes and additional resources to allow full compliance with the IHR, which will need to be taken further forward.

Education

Strengthening participation and attainment

St Helena Education priorities include:

- Giving children the best possible start to life;
- Increasing levels of aspiration across all age ranges;
- Raising basic skills in Literacy and numeracy across all age ranges;
- Raising participation in Education post 16;
- Improving rates of public examination success at GCSE and A level to at least UK averages;
- Improving the qualifications and academic knowledge of Teachers;
- Narrowing gaps in equality;
- Narrowing the achievement gap between boys and girls;

Since April 2013 the Directorate has renewed additional support for all phases of education including

- A new Secondary Head Teacher for Prince Andrew's School;
- A new Primary School Adviser;
- A new Early Years Adviser;

SHG remain committed to strengthening links between education institutions in the Territories and the UK and have established a number of links with UK schools and UK Higher Education providers. To improve standards, teachers are studying distance learning with UK institutions as well as visiting UK educational establishments as a part of an on-going programme.

Early childhood and Secondary education

SHG remain committed to expanding and enhancing provision of early childhood and secondary education. In 2013, Secondary attainment has risen significantly with almost 50% of 16 year olds now having a GCSE A* - C grade in English and Maths.

Tertiary education

SHG remain committed to encouraging more tertiary level students from across the Territories to study in the UK. In 2013, SHG has sent two further students to the UK Universities to study for degrees in subjects related to the skill requirements of the island.

Lifelong learning

SHG remain committed to encouraging mature learners to take part in further education in an increasingly globalised digital world.