

**Business Isle of Man Agency
Board Meeting Minutes**

Date: 8th of March 2023

Time: 3:00pm until 5:00pm

Venue: Conference Room Floristry Centre, Ballapaddag, Cooil Rd, Douglas, Isle of Man IM4 2AF

INVITED ATTENDEES - VOTING MEMBERS			
Steve Pickett, Chair, Business Isle of Man	SP	Janna Horsthuis, Sector Champion, Local Economy	JH
Alex Fray, Sector Champion, Biomed & Medicinal Cannabis (Teams)	AF	Ollie Neale, Sector Champion, Drink Production	ON
Carol Glover, Sector Champion, Small Business & Entrepreneurship	CG	Stephen Smyth, Sector Champion, Construction	SS
Dave Hester, Sector Champion, Engineering & Manufacturing (Apologies)	DH	Mr Tim Johnston MHK, Minister for Enterprise	TJ
Findlay Macleod, Sector Champion, Food Production (Apologies)	FM	Tim Cowsill, Head Of Business Isle Of Man, DfE	TC
Ieda Yell, Sector Champion, CleanTech	IY		

INVITED ATTENDEES - NON-VOTING	
Mark Lewin, Chief Officer, Department for Enterprise	ML
Hira Modan, Marketing Manager, DFE	HM
Thomas Richardson-Hall, Business Development Co-Ordinator, DFE	TRH
Melanie Beattie, ACE Committee Chair	MB

Please note all available members of the Business Agency Team are able to join on Teams to support where required.

Timing	Agenda item
15:00 - 15:05	<p>Chair's Welcome & Introduction</p> <p>SP welcomed the Board and thanked JH for use of the Conference room.</p> <p>The Board warmly congratulated the Minister on his appointment.</p>
15:05 - 15:20	<p>Standing items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Apologies - DH, FM b. Code of Conduct - Nothing raised. c. Declarations of new/potential conflicts of interest - Nothing raised. d. Additions to Gifts/Hospitality Register - Nothing raised.



	<p>e. Previous minutes for Board sign off - Jan 23 - Nothing raised, minutes approved. TC confirmed the minutes will be published on the Business Agency website.</p> <p>f. Action tracker taken as read, any issues - Approved</p>
<p>15:20 - 15:30</p>	<p>Initial Briefing:</p> <p>a. Chair: Economic Strategy Event & Agency Programme SP gave summary of the activities from the start of the year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February Board workshop • Creation and release of the Business Agency Programme • Planning for an Economic Strategy Event in May. <p>New Action - Create a schedule of events for 2023- Owner RH</p> <p>b. DfE Chief Officer</p> <p>ML summarised the current National concerns around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of Living • Energy Costs • Island Air Service's • Recruitment Issues. <p>ML continued and summarised the current Departments focuses as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Strategy publishing in 4 weeks • Work Permit consultation due for release imminently • Economic Strategy Event Planning <p>ML continued and summarised the current activities of the Agencies including:</p> <p><u>Visit Agency</u> First whole year without border restrictions and a new TT schedule, desire is to see increased visitor numbers. Operationally a new Chief Executive has been appointed and a UK based Business Development Executive recruited to help with the presence at trade shows and build commercial connections.</p> <p><u>Digital Agency</u> E-gaming industry is still a focus and going strong, big event program for this year including a focus on the emerging market of South America. Locally the national broadband strategy is making good progress and is now starting to reach some of the more challenging areas due for upgrade.</p> <p><u>Finance Agency</u> Finance industry is also going strong, the Agency is looking to develop a physical office in South Africa based on the strong connections and a common need to travel to business partners. The innovation challenge had good responses over 40 applications from a wide spectrum of countries.</p> <p>The Board asked if there is a method to speed up applications within the immigration process.</p> <p>ML answered that the immigration process involves a queue within the UK part of operation. When an application is in this queue it can be prioritised if the department is informed, however this can only be done where industry flags the delay as they are not visible.</p>

	<p>The Board noted the South Africa office could be a useful connection for marketing the Isle of Man to recruit skills from wider than just the finance industry.</p> <p>c. Head of Business Agency: Business Development Overview</p> <p>TC summarised the recent agency activities including the significant efforts to produce and release the Agency Programme. Business Development has been busy with some really big employment opportunities currently being worked on. Movement on the Built Environment reform program has also been resource heavy but the Built Environment event and roundtable with developers has been very useful.</p> <p>A Board member raised the concern that the current Agency focus appears to have moved away from export.</p> <p>TC explained that the focus is still on export but that through business development it has been found that multiple domestic issues needed resolving first to allow the developments to happen, for example the planning process. In summary a lot of ground work is being done to allow the export focus to be effective going forward in to the year.</p>
<p>15:30 - 15:45</p>	<p>Airport Technology Gateway Update</p> <p>TC summarised the ATG project began in 2015 with a total budget of £2.1 million. The ATG project was planned to develop a high-tech business park for high precision businesses in the Ronaldsway industrial estate. The current progress to date includes a number of reports which have been conducted for the site and approved planning permission for the development of the site in addition to mock up designs for factories.</p> <p>The project is now under review with the key question being whether the department continues to develop the site internally or if the reports, plans and planning permissions are packaged and marketed for private businesses to develop the site. Reasons for this change include the engineering sector diversifying outside of aerospace and the success of privately funded industrial estates still developing around the Island.</p> <p>The Department has agreed that instead of Government developing the sites and parkland setting we will instead market the sites to industry, to do this DOI will conduct some light groundworks to clean up the site.</p> <p>The Board asked if the power and water infrastructure for will be upgraded to meet private industry needs as part of this.</p> <p>ML stated that the department are not planning to prepare the site for clients that might not come however assistance will be considered to enable private development on the site at the time of giving out the land.</p> <p>The Board agreed the approach makes sense but indicated that the main limiting factor might be the speed of government in giving these sites out and that that the Department needs to focus on the simplicity of the procedure of government allocating land to private industry.</p>
<p>15:45 - 16:00</p>	<p>Presentation of Decision Paper BB20230308 - ACE Funding Request 23-24</p> <p>MB thanked the Board for the opportunity to present the case for ACE funding for the 23-24 tax year.</p> <p>MB then summarised the timeline of the ACE program since its establishment in 2007 by the STEM committee(part of the Chamber of Commerce):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original objective of ACE was to raise awareness of careers within engineering on the island by working with education institutions such as schools and UCM as well as extracurricular such as Cubs and Brownies • The result of this has been a significant cultural change towards the sector.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current objectives are now deliver STEM lessons, the primary engineer program and engagement events such as STEMFEST. • The result of this engagement has provided a strong supply of students taking up STEM based courses at UCM and 18-24 apprenticeships per year in the Engineering sector on island. <p>The current request to the Business Agency is for industry match funding for the 23-24 tax year at a value of £14,400 which is matched to the contributions due to be received from the ACE members.</p> <p>The Board noted the value of the ACE programme but questioned why industry didn't fund it 100% if the value is so apparent to the industry.</p> <p>MB answered that although the value to the industry is very high the costs of running purely from membership fees would not be sustainable.</p> <p>ML added that funding support started for ACE when the industry was facing a recruitment and skills crisis and that it represents a long-term investment. Currently this is resulting in a healthy up take of skilled and well-paying jobs for Isle of Man workers which provides a return to the Treasury through tax on wages.</p> <p>TJ added that supporting the critical mass of engineering skills on the Island is important currently as the CleanTech industry starts to develop. Additional ACE is a great example of linking employment requirements into the educational routes on Island to provide a career path.</p> <p>The Board asked why a similar program had not been created for other sectors on the Island, which are facing skills shortage.</p> <p>ML answered that they had not been approached with a workable proposition by industry for these other sectors.</p> <p>MB also added that by working closely with the education system and UCM a new career path had been created for individuals that desired skilled jobs without going to the UK for University. This close partnership with continue and where possible expand.</p> <p><i>The Board then conducted a vote on the funding support request for ACE</i></p> <p><i>Vote supported unanimously however, the Head of the Agency raised that the financial balance of the initiative should be lowered for the next round of funding it is to be noted that the sector representative for Engineering who is conflicted due to his companies membership of ACE was both absent from the meeting and excluded from voting.</i></p>
<p>16:00 - 16:30</p>	<p>Papers for Decision</p> <p>The Board suggested that for future meeting the decision papers should be put earlier in the agenda.</p> <p>New Action - Modify Board Meeting Agendas to prioritise Decision papers.</p> <p>BB20230309 - Construction Isle of Man Future Funding</p> <p>SS summarised the paper. Construction Isle of Man (CIOM) is requesting an extension to their funding to the amount of £41,650 to support them until the end of 2024 with the aspiration of becoming self-sufficient by that time. The KPI's within the paper align to those of the Business Agency Programme and include new and diverse work streams in addition to the already established activities such as the Health and Safety reform. Construction Isle of Man is on the glide path to becoming self-funding but this funding extension is vital to its continued existence and operation.</p> <p>The Board asked if the self-funding aspiration is a realistic goal for CIOM.</p> <p>SS answered that it is a challenging but achievable goal. There are more funding streams coming on line such as the skills cards. Additionally seeing a constant demand to join the</p>

industry body, including a push to diversify membership into companies that are heavily linked to the construction industry but are not classic on site businesses, for example architects.

The Board indicated they would be interested to see a three-year plan to show this diversification of membership and the activities planned prior to the next election.

TC confirmed they were working with the manager of Construction Isle of Man manager on a longer-term plan.

SP asked whether CIOM is facing running into debt if the support isn't granted.

SS answered that the on-going staff costs would result in a negative cash flow and ultimately debt.

The Board then conducted a vote on the funding support request for Construction Isle of Man

Vote supported unanimously, it is to be noted that the sector representative for construction abstained from the vote as they are conflicted due to both his companies membership of Construction Isle of Man and his Board member position within the organisation

BB20230310 - LoveManx - Non-Festive Period Activity

TC and HM introduced the paper and highlighted that this is a reallocation of the remaining LoveManx Xmas budget plus an additional £1,000 in order to run a promotion video series based on the 'Meet the Street' campaign pioneered by Douglas Town Centre Management. The aim of this campaign is to re-inforce the shop local messaging through the year.

The Board asked if towns outside of Douglas will be included and what feedback was received from Douglas's campaign.

HM responded that all 8 towns will be covered from around the Island and that the public engagement with the initial campaign was phenomenally positive.

The Board then conducted a vote on the LoveManx Non-Festive period activity paper. Vote supported unanimously

BB20230311 - Local Economy Strategy Implementation Plan 2023

TC introduced the paper and explained that this was a plan on how to approach the challenges of the local economy strategy. The key priority is to focus on data gathering first before strategy and support mechanisms can be developed. In summary this paper is asking the Board to approve the £50,000 of budget allocation which will be used for data tools to gather the information required to implement a strategy correctly.

TJ added that this plan will also feed into the town and centre regeneration schemes.

The Board highlighted several areas within the local economy and town centres that needed attention and wanted to know if they are included in the scope of this work.

ML added that this was not an easy task with a clear solution and would need a commitment from the Board to help with this difficult journey.

The Board then conducted a vote on the Local economy strategy implementation plan 2023 paper.

	<p><i>Vote supported unanimously</i></p> <p>Papers for Noting</p> <p>BB20230312 - Formalisation of the Department’s Concierge Service</p> <p>BB20230313 - Business Isle of Man Feb Workshop Report</p> <p>BB20230314 - Medicinal Cannabis Planning Policy Statement</p> <p>BB20230315 - Domestic Event Fund Update</p> <p>BB20230316 - BIOM February Marketing Dashboard</p> <p>BB20230317 - LovelOM February Marketing Dashboard</p> <p>BB20230318 - Future of LovelOM Gift Card Scheme</p> <p>ML highlighted that the LovelOM project was set up to support the recovery from the effects of the Covid Pandemic on the local economy via creating a platform for incentivising spend. The project has achieved this and now it is being reviewed to establish if it is still needed.</p> <p>The Board agreed the project appears to have done what it was intended to do and acknowledged the successful speed of implementation the project demonstrated. They also asked what the feedback from industry had been on the project.</p> <p>TC answered that it has been mixed, some businesses have seen a good uplift while others have seen very little difference from the project. It did prove successful at keeping corporate gifting spend on island for Christmas bonuses as it provided an alternative to online vouchers such as amazon.</p>
16:30 - 16:45	Standing Item: Project Tracker Updates
16:45 - 16:55	<p>Standing Item: Budget Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision for 23-24 Budget Framework <p>TC summarised that as previously discussed there is a budget increase for the agency and that it was now to be reallocated to the sectors specifically as per Board feedback.</p> <p><i>The Board supported the suggested allocation of the 2023-2024 budget.</i></p>
16:55 - 17:00	<p>Standing Item: AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any questions or other business
17:00	<p>Meeting Close</p> <p>SP closed the meeting at 17:10</p>

Actions

Action	Owner
Create a schedule of events for 2023	TRH
Modify Board Meeting Agendas to prioritise Decision papers.	TRH