

Business Isle of Man Agency
Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 24th of May 2023

Time: 2:00pm until 4:30pm

Venue: Isle of Man Creamery Ltd, Ballafletcher Farm Road, Cronkbourne, IM4 4QE

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 (Apologies)	ON
Carol Glover, Sector Champion, Small Business & Entrepreneurship	CG	Stephen Smyth, Sector Champion, Construction	SS
Dave Hester, Sector Champion, Engineering & Manufacturing	DH	Dr Michelle Haywood MHK, Political Member	MH
Findlay Macleod, Sector Champion, Food Production	FM	Tim Cowsill, Head Of Business Isle Of Man, DfE	TC
Ieda Yell, Sector Champion, CleanTech (Teams)	IY		

INVITED ATTENDEES - NON-VOTING			
Mark Lewin, Chief Executive, Department for Enterprise	ML	Matthew Gardner, Business Development Manager, DFE	MG
Hira Modan, Marketing Manager, DFE	HM	Rob Green, Business Development Manager, DFE	RG
Thomas Richardson-Hall, Business Development Co-Ordinator, DFE	TRH		

Please note all available members of the Business Agency Team are able to join on Teams to support where required.
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Timing	Agenda item
14:00 - 14:05	Chair's Welcome & Introduction
14:05 - 14:20	<p>Standing items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Apologies - ON b. Code of Conduct - Nothing raised c. Declarations of new/potential conflicts of interest - <p>CG potential conflict on UCM renewables zone plan and the BRP program</p> <p>IY new potential conflict will update with TRH for the Conflict Register</p> <p>SP confirmed that ON/FM are conflicted on the BB20230527 paper for Food & Drink, FM will be invited to share his thoughts and then leave the room for the final discussion and vote.</p>

	<p>d. Additions to Gifts/Hospitality Register - Nothing Raised e. Previous minutes to be signed-off by board Mar 23 - Nothing raised, minutes approved. f. Action tracker taken as read, any issues - Approved</p>
<p>14:20 - 14:30</p>	<p>Initial Briefing:</p> <p>A. Chair;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Strategy Event Feedback <p>SP gave a summary of the event and highlighted that 73% of feedback received was positive.</p> <p>ML added that based on feedback there will be a follow up event, additionally Government Conference is due to happen on the 20th & 21st of September.</p> <p>B. DfE Chief Executive;</p> <p>ML summarised, 100 days with the new minister and is keen to visit all of the Boards, welcome to DR Haywood as political member for the Agency. With regards to updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department Plan has now been approved by Tynwald • Finance are still prioritising the opportunities in South Africa • Digital is still seeing strong performance from the E-gaming sector as well as starting to conclude the Fintech challenge in collaboration with Finance. • Visit has a new CEO and is focusing on the visitor numbers, first quarter of the year is showing promising improvement on last year. • TT moving closer now and the new racing timetable is in place. • Locate consultation on work permits closing and results to be released shortly. • Enterprise support are reviewing applications for the Island Infrastructure scheme. • Employment legislation is now finalised post the consultation and is due to come in to force around July. <p>C. Head of Business Agency;</p> <p>TC summarised lots of activity in marketing with the ‘Meet your Street’ and diversification video campaigns underway. Business Development is taking a lot of officer time up currently to land large off island businesses. The papers today are about building strategic picture of our sectors.</p>
<p>14:30: 15:15</p>	<p>Papers for Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BB20230524 - Local Economy Strategy Update <p>MG summarised, this paper summarises and builds on the workshop last month that laid the groundwork creating a framework for the Local Economy strategy via three strategic themes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The use of key data to underpin the reason for taking action and evidencing their effect, examples of this data are footfall and vacant properties. 2. Provision of support routes such as a local economy fund for local authorities to access for improvement projects similar to the UK models. 3. The infrastructure covers a wide range of town resources from parking facilities to incubation models for helping businesses start up. <p>TC added it was very clear from the workshop that the Local authorities are the best for understanding how to improve their urban areas. Currently they are under pressure to deliver improvements, Business Agency could be a conduit here to help them access support.</p> <p>A Board member added we are self-defeating on issues like road works which are risking business closures, for example East Quay promenade in peel.</p> <p>Action: Explore the impacts on businesses of the East Quay roadworks in Peel and review possible support options.</p>

The board highlighted several individual views on the framework including; the need for an overarching vision for the Island’s highstreets, the need to compare our Local Economy offering with areas on the CACI report and the importance of incubators for start-ups.

ML clarified we can be ambitious but first we need to build our data to inform our strategy.

TC added this will also provide a hierarchical structure of what is needed for our highstreets from which initiatives can be built to match this including a careful approach with regards to bringing UK businesses over to ensure they compliment and do not harm existing businesses.

SP clarified that the ask here is to agree the framework and the three strategic themes.

The Board then conducted a vote on the suggested approach for the Local Economy Strategy.

Vote supported unanimously.

- BB20230525 - Island Wide Footfall Tracking Solution

MG summarised the idea of footfall tracking came to the board in 2021; the idea was to cover commercial areas within towns on the Island to monitor footfall levels. A request for information from potential suppliers has been completed and upon reviewing the submissions there is a range of technological options and costs. One solution stood out on both its value and its potential benefits with a three-year contract, it would produce reports which can be used to benchmark directly against the UK. Additionally it is not just the Business Agency that would benefit but also the Visit Agency, DOI and DHA.

The Board asked a selection of questions on the technicalities of the potential contract including; exploring a shorter licence than three years, the timeline for installation, potential income streams and the availability of a break clause after 1 year?

MG confirmed a shorter contract is possible but a 3 year contract provides value for money as it balances the initial infrastructure costs for which installation would take 60-90 days.

TC added that the data would show initiative effects in an area and help guide future decisions to ensure the best use if made of funding. Additionally a break clause can be looked at to reassure the board in the event delivery is below the desired quality.

Action: Footfall Tracking project, explore options for a 1 or 2 year contract and yearly break clauses

Action: Footfall Tracking project, explore other income streams for this project

SP concluded no need to vote but we will await an update on the agreed actions.

- BB20230526 - Full Re-Launch of the Domestic Event Fund for 2023

MG summarised feedback from businesses was very clear on the value of this initiative. Previously it was launched as a response to COVID and then to the cost of living. In the most recent phase, 160 individual events were supported during a quieter period of the year stimulating domestic footfall and spending in towns centres. The critical feedback was that organisers need longer than the 6 months to properly access the fund. Currently £170k remains, the ask is whether the Board is happy for us to request an extension.

The board were supportive of this being a year round accessible scheme and asked if the focus would still be to support events held in town centres to encourage domestic spending.

MG confirmed that this was the case and highlighted that we have supported a few individual out of town events but only where a large number of businesses are involved.

The Board then conducted a vote on the paper

Vote supported unanimously.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BB20230527 - Food & Drink Export - Alleviating Problems and Exploiting Opportunities • BB20230528 - F&D Exports - A Framework for Engagement (Supporting Paper for BB20230527) <p>RG summarised the aspirational target for Food & Drink export per capita should be to achieve parity with the UK figure. This is achievable by focusing on the markets the Island can compete in around the world, namely high quality products via focusing on the unique proposition of the authentic stories the businesses within their brands. Our role is to help with marketing these stories and providing exporting guidance. To achieve this a development group is to be set up with a limited number of members, focusing on businesses ready to deliver on the exporting potential, these businesses will be asked to share their data with us to understand the impact of initiatives such as individual.</p> <p>The Board noted that the approach is similar to that explored by the aerospace cluster previously and could require significant investment. They also highlighted that products like shellfish need additional care due to limited allowable catch and cannot exceed that limit.</p> <p>RG agreed but highlighted the opportunity is to maintain the quantity and push them into focusing on the quality of the catch and develop it in to a shelf ready 'labelled' product.</p> <p>The Board asked two questions; why the paper does not mention sustainability messaging and the need for care in export products, which have also domestic market supply issues.</p> <p>RG answered that for sustainability messaging the controls don't exist on the use of this labelling which is needed to give credibility before it can be utilised. On the supply concern, only export ready businesses will be targeted so it should not cause supply issues.</p> <p>A board member flagged that import substitution should be considered as we are developing the sector.</p> <p>RG agreed the point is valid but import substitution is not the focus of this paper and project. This is a larger piece of work that we are due to assist DEFA with on this.</p> <p>SP clarified the request here is to approve the framework plan and next steps.</p> <p><i>FM left the room in advance of the vote. Due to conflict of interest.</i></p> <p><i>The Board then conducted a vote on the approach.</i></p> <p><i>Vote supported unanimously.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Papers for Noting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BB20230529 - BIOM April Marketing Dashboard • BB20230530 - LovelOM April Marketing Dashboard • BB20230531 - Economic Strategy Update Event - Review • BB20230532 - Isle of Man in Numbers 2023 - Statistics Isle of Man • BB20230533 - Procurement Policy Review - Action Plan and Exec Summary • BB20230534 - Report on Waste Strategy Tynwald July 22
15:15 - 16:20	<p>Project Tracker Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built Environment & Construction • CleanTech • Engineering & manufacturing • Food & Drink • Local Economy • Marketing • Medicinal Cannabis <p>The Board flagged they would like go through the project trackers at the next Board Meeting</p> <p>Action: Review project trackers at the June Board Meeting.</p>



16:20 - 16:25	Standing Item: Budget Update
16:25 - 16:30	<p>Standing Item: AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IOM Post Office loss of next day/special delivery <p>A board member raised this as a significant loss for businesses who send perishable, time-sensitive goods off-Island, in addition to impacts on quality of life for the population.</p> <p>ML confirmed the department are preparing a response but more data on the potential impacts to businesses would be useful.</p> <p>Action: Explore the business impacts of the potential cancelation of next day mail plane and review similar available services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MHK Clare Barber quote on lower freight rates <p>TC confirmed on this point that Minister Barber has asked DFE to look into this possibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities around the Freeport <p>TC flagged the plan to bring in a consultant about the opportunities for this site.</p> <p>Action: Paper on opportunities for the Freeport to be brought to June Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crown Dependencies agree joint approach to global minimum tax rules <p>A board member flagged that the rate change was expected but 2025 is a short timeline.</p> <p>ML explained the agreement reached was not to align with the Channel Islands, most of the world is implementing 2024 and the Channels Islands and IOM are doing 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility study on Ramsey Shipyard <p>TC added land is owned by government and there is a changing of controller of the current business which gives a good opportunity to look at the options for the site.</p> <p>Action: Paper on opportunities for Ramsey Shipyard to be brought to June Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any additional questions or other business <p>A board member highlighted a paper is due from Chamber of Commerce on the harmonising of living and minimum wage is due shortly</p>
16:30	Meeting Close

Actions

Action	Owner
Explore the impacts on businesses of the East Quay roadworks in Peel and review possible support options.	MG
Footfall Tracking project, explore options for a 1 or 2 year contract and yearly break clauses	MG
Footfall Tracking project, explore other income streams for this project	MG
Review project trackers at the June Board Meeting.	TC
Explore the business impacts of the potential cancelation of next day mail plane and review similar available services.	MG
Paper on opportunities for the Freeport to be brought to June Board	KG
Paper on opportunities for Ramsey Shipyard to be brought to June Board	TC