

RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY STEERING GROUP

MEETING HELD in the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AT 1.30-4PM
ON MONDAY 29TH OF OCTOBER 2012

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

Attendees

- Hon. Ian Hansen	(IH)	MLA, RDS Portfolio holder (Acting Chair)
- Keith Padgett	(KP)	Chief Executive, FIG
- Marc Boucher	(MB)	General Manager, FIDC
- Jamie Fotheringham	(JF)	Head of Policy, FIG
- Andrew Pollard	(AP)	Senior Agricultural Advisor
- Nuala Knight	(NK)	RDS Coordinator (minutes)
- Ted Jones	(MJ)	East Falkland Representative
- Mike Evans	(ME)	West Falkland Representative

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Mike Summers MLA.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1 No interests were declared.

3. Approval of minutes from meeting held 18th July 2012

3.1 The minutes were approved.

4. Matters Arising and actions carried forward

- 4.1 **4.1 Agricultural college/training farm**- This project requires some clarity and some definition. There followed a discussion about the merits of vocational training versus academic training and an acceptance that the Falklands needed young people undertaking both.
- 4.2 **4.2 The 2 metre set system in Camp** –This item was discussed as agenda item 9.
- 4.3 **4.3 RDS Open Day at FIDC**- It was agreed that as JF's paper on "Special Economic Zones" would be a key part of any dialogue with Stanley businesses, the Open Day should take place when the details of the paper had been agreed.

ACTION: KP to discuss the paper in its current format with Members at one of his weekly meeting for initial feedback. This feedback will be provided to JF who can then concentrate on pinning down the detail of the paper and identifying a timescale for "going live".

- 4.4 **4.4 Fox Bay Road Gang site-** NK reported that Simon Catton and Mark Jones seemed to have found common ground on the issue of expanded use of the cabins and the issue of access was moving forward.
- 4.5 **4.5 Access to water in Camp-** This is being addressed through a new grant scheme.
- 4.6 **4.6 North Camp Community Hall-** Not currently included in the RDS Action Plan for this year and therefore not a priority at this time. However, work is on-going.
- 4.7 **6.2 Release of RDS funds**
ACTION: NK to seek confirmation from Nicola Granger with regards to the format of applications to draw down funding i.e. should papers follow the current FIDC Board paper template or is another more appropriate template.
- 4.8 **6.5 RDS Minutes-** These have been placed on the FIDC website and will be placed on the RDS website. JF asked if the Strategy and Action Plan could also be made available in a similar way.
ACTION: NK to ensure the Strategy and Action Plan are made available on the FIDC and RDS websites.
- 4.9 **ISLANDS MEETING-** Matters Arising
 Some items from this section are addressed as separate agenda items.
- 4.10 **Purchase of an island based livestock crate-** discussed under agenda item 11
- 4.11 **Purchase of an islands based digger-** discussed under agenda item 10
- 4.12 **Internet-** It was noted that an announcement about the expected improvements to the internet service had been made shortly after the September RDS meeting as anticipated.
- 4.13 **Power-** The Steering Group agreed that the proposed Power Seminar, once rescheduled, should help identify a way forward and address the gaps currently in the RDS plan.
- 4.14 **FIGAS-** KP confirmed that Simon Fletcher is reviewing this area and work is still underway.
- 4.15 **TV Spare Parts-** There appears to be a need to identify a suitable alternative for the failing part of the satellite dishes in the first instance. It was agreed that the RDS would not have a role importing or selling these parts, as this is an opportunity for someone in the private sector.
ACTION: MJ to speak to Dick Sawle about the particulars of the part and to find out if an alternative is being sourced.
- 4.16 **WBS-Increasing frequency of outer island trip from 6 weeks to 4 weeks.**
ACTION: NK was asked to check the status on this given that any such change would need to be formally approved.
- 4.17 **Fiscal incentives- this had been discussed under 3.3 above.** JF will wait for feedback from KP before undertaking further work on this paper.

5. Matters carried forward from previous minutes

- 5.1 It was agreed that the following Actions as listed in the "Actions carried forward" from the September minutes should be deleted because they are either no longer relevant, are duplicated elsewhere, have been superseded or have been actioned: 1,2, 3,4,5,6,7,8,9,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,
- 5.2 **Actions 1 & 2:** JF reported that the establishment of a Senior Immigration Policy Advisor position had been approved by ExCo and that under this role the Immigration system will be reviewed to ensure its compatibility with the EDS and RDS. It is anticipated that this position will start in January. This individual will be able to address the points raised through the RDS re. Immigration.
- 5.3 The remaining actions were discussed, progress was reviewed and a decision to retain them was agreed.

6. Agenda Items 5: Livestock fencing at Port Howard and Fox Bay (Paper 12/10-001)

- 6.1 This funding was APPROVED on condition that Mr Lee submits a fencing plan of the two areas prior to the draw-down of funds. This fencing plan is to be sent to MJ and ME for comment and approval.

7. Agenda item 6: Capital Development Fund (Paper 12/10-002)

- 7.1 This funding was APPROVED. The following comments were made:
- Applications for the scheme should be channelled through FIDC Business Advisors in the normal way to ensure robust business assessment
 - Clear eligibility guidelines need to be produced to ensure application process is clear, straight forward and leads to quick decisions
 - Agricultural businesses focused on primary processing i.e. the production of wool and meat would not be eligible. Other agricultural businesses would be entitled to apply.
 - Normal maximum grant available per applicant will be £15,000
 - Projects would need to be supported by a robust business plan
 - Grant funding will only be available against capital development costs i.e. revenue costs would not be eligible
 - Grant funding will be available at a rate of 50% of eligible project costs
 - The proposal would need to be able to show the creation of a new jobs or jobs
- 7.2 It was noted that the budget of £25,000 would not support many business proposals if maximum levels of grant aid were applied for. Should there be a high demand for the scheme, this budget will be reviewed in the next financial year.

8. Agenda item 7: RDS Coordinator Update (Paper 12/10-003)

- 8.1 The content of the report was noted.
ACTION: NK to include a review of the RDS budget in this report at RDS meetings to allow project spend to be reviewed.

9. Agenda Item 8: Depreciation on turbines (Paper 12/10-004)

9.1 The e-mail received from the Taxation office was noted and accepted. It was agreed that no further action would be taken.

10. Agenda item 9: Two metre sets (Paper 12/10-005)

10.1 The e-mails from Len McGill and Sharon Halford which contained information about a) radio frequencies and b) the condition and status of the 2metre repeaters and masts, were noted.

ACTION: KP agreed to find out where responsibility lay for the costs of spare parts and maintenance of the system.

11. Agenda item 10: Provision of plans and machinery for the Islands (Paper 12/10-006)

11.1 The content and recommendations of the paper were discussed. It was agreed that the proposal for FIDC to own and manage the machinery was not the best way forward for the reasons set out in the paper.

11.2 The option of perhaps using a PWD machine at the end of its life was discussed. However, since responsibility for ownership and management of the machinery would still be with FIDC, the problems as noted in the paper would still apply. In addition, some concerns about safety implications and fitness for purpose were raised.

11.3 It was agreed that whilst the option suggested at the meeting didn't seem feasible, that the problem was relevant and that alternative options should be sought, if possible. The Group agreed to give this issue further consideration.

ACTION: NK to feed this discussion back to Islanders and to assess whether there might be alternative solutions.

12. Agenda item 11: Trailer for the Outer islands (Paper tabled at meeting. Paper titled 12/10-007 AFTER the meeting))

12.1 The content of the paper was discussed. It was apparent that a livestock trailer was not a solution to the different problems of livestock transportation reported from the Outer Islands. The difference in tidal variation and jetty/ramp infrastructure on each of the islands makes finding one solution that addresses all problems, difficult. AP will continue his dialogue with the islands experiencing problems with livestock transport to try to find a common denominator and a way forward.

12.2 The Steering Group agreed that whilst a livestock trailer might not be the solution, this project was worthwhile and should be pursued.

ACTION: AP to work with the Outer Islands residents to try to find a solution which helps to address the differing problems of livestock transport from the islands.

Actions carried forward from previous meetings:

31st May 2012 (Goose Green)

1. **Action:** NK and MJ to try to assess interest and re-establish the North Camp Community Hall Working Group if support is found.

2. **Action:** AP to circulate a positioning paper on the agricultural apprenticeships/agri college idea including reference to costs of the current scheme and the possibility of a parallel option for more focused FI based practical/vocational agricultural training.

3. **Action:** MB to discuss the potential of tourism lodges and tourism development with SD

18th July 2012

4. **Action:** KP to discuss how to incorporate health into the RDS with David Jenkins.
5. **Action:** ME and TJ to assess support addressing problems with the 2m system in Camp.
6. **Action:** KP to investigate where the responsibility for managing the 2m masts/system lies.
7. **Action:** NK to contact Darren Christie to assess whether the FIG website has an “employment” section

12th September

8. **Action:** NK to work with Mark Jones on the extended use of the FB road gang cabins