

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Open Minutes of the Meeting held
Thursday 29th April 2021 commencing at 3pm
at the Public Accounts Committee Office, Reflections Building, Dean Street

Present: Mr Andrew Newman (AN) (Chair)
Mr Owen Betts (OB)
Ms Teslyn Barkman MLA (TB)
Dr Barry Elsby MLA (BE)
Mr Sacha Cleminson (SC) (Deputy Chair)

Minutes: Mrs Nancy Locke (NL) (Secretary)

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Philip Honeybone Chief Internal Auditor FIG
Jack Ford Trainee Internal Auditor FIG
Ronnie MacLennan Baird
Lee Summers
Paula Fowmes FITV
Traighana Smith Falklands Radio
Amanda Fowler Falklands Radio

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting in particular the members of the press and public in attendance.

2. Declarations of Interest

Sacha Cleminson declared an interest in Item 6.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th January 2021

The Open Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2021 were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising from the Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th January 2021

None.

5. Responses to the PAC from the Legislative Assembly

a) Response to PAC from Legislative Assembly regarding FIMCo Accounts

The response from FIMCo confirmed that the recommendation regarding the rental agreements on cabins had been completed and that the work on the staff contracts would be completed by March 2021. The PAC were content.

b) Response to PAC from Legislative Assembly regarding Internal Audit on Social Welfare.

The response indicated that Legislative Assembly upheld the recommendation that a firm date be set for the outstanding work on the Attendance Allowance. It further noted that

Single Income Supplement will be actioned in April 2021. The PAC had no further comments.

c) Response from Legislative Assembly regarding FIDC Accounts

The Legislative Assembly upheld the recommendation regarding rental agreements being accurately recorded. The FIDC had confirmed that all rental agreements are now being accurately recorded after a full review of rental agreements which was completed satisfactorily. The PAC had no further comments.

6. Falkland Conservation Financial Statements 2020

Sacha Cleminson was excused from the meeting for this item having declared an interest.

The members reviewed and discussed the accounts for Falkland Conservation for 2020 and were content, it was noted that despite a challenging year good efforts had been made on fundraising activities.

Sacha Cleminson returned to the meeting after this item.

7. Falkland Landholdings Corporation Financial Statements 2020

The members reviewed and discussed the accounts for Falkland Landholdings, they noted the significant increase in the debtors figure at year end which reflected FLH's decision to support FIMCo in the short term but there were no further comments and the PAC were content.

8. Falkland Islands Museum & National Trust Financial Statements 2020

The members reviewed the accounts for the Museum and National Trust for 2020 and were content.

9. Media Trust Financial Statements 2020

The PAC noted that the accounts had been received in a timely manner and that the high debt figure represented the withholding of the FIG subvention due to non-provision of financial statements, this issue has now been resolved. The PAC had no further comments.

10. Stanley Services Financial Statements 2020

The Chair asked for comments, overall it was agreed that the financial statements showed the company is healthy. Discussion followed regarding the profits and depreciation and there were questions which would be followed up directly with the company.

ACTION: AN/SECRETARY

11. Falkland College Building project Interim Draft Report

The Chair introduced the Draft Interim Report into the Falkland College and invited comments. BE noted that the PAC has an important role in looking at public spending and that in a meeting with the Chair of the UK PAC, Meg Hillier, she was very clear that her role includes pushing against resistance and the Falklands PAC were encouraged to do the same. This includes inviting FIG Officers to Public Hearings.

The Chair explained that he had met with the outgoing CE and AG and discussed how the PAC and FIG can work together. He noted that FIG departments have to cooperate in providing information to Internal Audit and the External Financial Auditors, Mazars, and the PAC should be treated in the same manner. TB agreed that the PAC should be able to extract information in a timely manner. AN noted that FIG are good at lesson learning and are now using tools such as Project in A Box, and was hopeful that traction would gather after the meeting particularly as the PAC is the only organisation to scrutinise on behalf of the public. SC noted that the Draft Interim report and was impressed with R MB's work however was disappointed to note the slow process in accessing the documents and was surprised at the lack of engagement. SC endorsed BE's thoughts on planning a Hearing if it short circuited the gathering of information. The Chair had a meeting with the new CE and would like to get the information without resorting to a Hearing.

SC moved on to raise the issue of the legislation being un-commenced meaning that the PAC powers to summons or fine were not available to the committee. The Chair noted that the AG's office were aware and it is hoped this will be rectified before the end of the Financial Year.

The Chair closed the discussion by saying that the Interim Report has shown how long it takes to get information in terms of the level of reporting to the committee. He also commented that the Draft Interim Report doesn't necessarily reflect what the final report will look like.

ACTION: SECRETARY

12. Confirmation of dates & times for next meetings

The following dates were proposed for meetings during 2021/22 (to be confirmed):

Mon 7th June – 3pm

Thurs 29th July – 3pm

Thurs 9th Sept – 3pm

13. Authority for documents from this meeting to be published

Members of the Public would be advised that copies of the minutes of the previous meeting and all accounts would be available from the PAC's office and published on the PAC's website www.pac.org.fk.

The Chair requested that members of the public leave the room for the consideration of the following items in accordance with the Public Accounts Committee Ordinance as amended by the Part 9 of the Committees (Public Access) Ordinance 2012.

I confirm that these minutes are an accurate record of the meeting

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(Chairperson)

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(Date)