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Update on Employment law

Anne Muir (Social Development Planner) provided an update on the state of progress in employment legislation.

A draft policy has still to be ratified by LEGCO/EXCO. This will incorporate four basic tenets for protecting employees, which require employers to state explicitly and comply with:

- **Written statement of employment particulars**
Including itemised pay statement and protection from unauthorised deductions
- **Maximum working week**
Including minimum rest breaks (also proposed is repeal of Sabbath Ordinance)
- **Emergency time off**
Unpaid leave for parental and dependent care
- **Limited paid annual leave**
Limited in terms of the minimum amount of time

Anne said that these principles are not threatening, as employers invariably exceed these minimum requirements already.

Anne is also working towards other aspects of legislation, such as minimum wage. Details of many of these aspects will depend on collected data to inform LEGCO/EXCO of likely workable and affordable levels. The data currently available has been taken from submitted tax return information. Anne said that some of the conclusions drawn from this data are surprising, including the apparent fact that the private sector (not including Solomons or Cable & Wireless) appear to be the least generous payers. This provoked some discussion about the reliability of the input data (recognising that St. Helena has a substantial "grey" market which would not show up in tax data). Anne said that more reliable conclusions would emerge when household expenditure data becomes available.

Paddy Perry

Paddy Perry (Senior Financial Adviser) has kindly agreed to provide SHG with some of his time free of charge to help with a range of issues related to his considerable experience.

Paddy and his wife will be on the island until 31st October. Paddy's objectives are:

- to provide support and advice in a determined number of fields to the senior officials of SHG as required.

Paddy visited the Chamber Council in October, and provided a number of insights into the SHG investment performance, the Bank of St. Helena and the current global financial crisis.

EGM and AGM 2008

The St. Helena Chamber of Commerce will hold its AGM on 11 November (see below).

The AGM will be preceded by an EGM, whose sole purpose is to table a proposal for a revision of the Chamber's constitution.

If the Members adopt the new Constitution, the subsequent AGM will proceed on the new basis, while if the proposal is rejected, the election of a new Council will proceed on the existing basis.

All Members are invited to attend.

Meadow Muffins

Repetitive absentmindedness implies that primary accountability encapsulates advanced expediency.

Annual General Meeting 2008

Presentation of reports and election of new Council

Preceded by Extraordinary General Meeting to consider a revision to the Constitution

at **The Consulate Hotel**

on **Tuesday 11th November 2008**, starting at **7.30pm**

All Chamber Members are welcome