



**RECORD OF THE MEETING
OF THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

**HELD IN STANLEY
ON 14 JULY 2011**

**RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
HELD IN STANLEY ON THURSDAY 14 JULY 2011**

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

(Mr Keith Biles, JP, B.Sc., ACIB)

MEMBERS (Ex-Officio)

The Honourable Chief Executive
(Dr Timothy Rupert Thorogood)

The Honourable Financial Secretary
(Mr Keith Padgett)

Elected

The Honourable Janet Lynda Cheek
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Emma Jane Edwards
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Roger Anthony Edwards
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Sharon Halford
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Gavin Phillip Short
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Michael Summers OBE
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

PERSONS ENTITLED TO ATTEND

The Attorney General
(Mark David Lewis)

The Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands
(Brigadier William Aldridge CBE)

CLERK: Claudette Prior MBE

PRAYERS: Reverend Richard Hines

APOLOGIES - OVERSEAS

The Honourable William Robert Luxton
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Richard (Dick) Sawle
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

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**The Record of the meeting of Legislative Assembly
held on Thursday 14 July 2011**

Prayers

Clerk of the Assembly

The Oath of Allegiance, the Honourable Mike Summers OBE and Brigadier Bill Aldridge CBE.

Clerk of the Assembly

The Election to Executive Council for one Member.

Mr Speaker

I appoint the Attorney General and the Honourable Financial Secretary to be tellers for the purpose of this election.

Voting took place

Honourable Members the result of the Election of the Member to fill the vacant place on Executive Council is as follows: The Honourable Gavin Short is elected.

Clerk of the Assembly

Confirmation of the record of the Legislative Assembly Meeting held on 25 and 27 May 2011

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, I have before me the record of the meeting of 25 and 27 May 2011, may I sign these minutes as a true record.

Agreed.

Clerk of the Assembly

Papers to be Laid on the Table by the Honourable the Chief Executive

Copies of Subsidiary Legislation published in the Falkland Islands Gazette since the last sitting of the Legislative Assembly and laid on the table pursuant to Section 34.1 of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance 1977.

- The Capital Equalisation Fund Order 2011

In accordance with the Public Accounts Committee Ordinance 2009 Clause 11(b) the report of Public Accounts Committee on the:

- accounts for the Falkland Islands Museum and National Trust for the year ended June 2010

and in accordance with the Public Accounts Committee Ordinance 2009 Clause 11 the reports of the Public Accounts Committee in respect of the Falkland Islands Government Internal Audit Reports on:

- Infant and Junior School and Camp Education Follow up Report
- Investment Management
- Main Accounting system
- Cash and Bank

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I lay on the table the papers as listed by the Clerk.

Clerk of the Assembly

Questions for Oral Reply

Question number 5 of 2011 by the Honourable Emma Edwards

The Honourable Emma Edwards

Mr Speaker, could the Honourable Gavin Short please advise this House if there is a procedure for Members of the Public to report street lights that are not working? Is there a customer service charter that ensures street lighting is repaired within a certain period of time?

The Honourable Gavin Short

I am indebted to the PWD for their answer; and I will go at this in two parts. If we can take the question about procedures for members of the public to report street lights that are not working. The initial procedure is to call the power station section on 27149. As this line is not permanently staffed, in the event that the call cannot be taken, a call can be made to 27193 where a message can be taken and passed on. Alternatively an e-mail can be sent to BGilbert.power@pwd.gov.fk.

The second part of the question; is there a customer service charter that will ensure street lighting is repaired within a certain period of time? There is not a customer service charter that states a specific time period for repairs to be affected. This is because of the need to balance the various demands against available funds and resources; but the aim is to have most of the street lights working most of the time, with a higher priority being placed on this element of work when daylight hours are shorter.

The Power and Electrical section are currently short of two electricians and a technician. One electrician post has been vacant for over a year and remains unfilled despite repeated attempts to recruit and another post holder has recently resigned. Even aside from this the overall demand on the section has increased whilst

theoretically staffing resources have not. The highest priority has to be given to power generation and the main distribution systems, than other works.

Street lighting is seen as important but it is very often not just a matter of changing the lamp. It may be the lamp, fitting, switch controlling and supplying a group of lamps or that the conductor within the column has failed; each of which requires a different amount of time to find and then remedy.

Even where it is the lamp, this may fail again very quickly; perhaps in days or weeks as wind induced vibration has been found to cause a variety of faults, some of which are consistent across a number of fittings, which may result in some of those on one area regularly being out, although replacement of individual lamps may have been affected several times.

As an example, there had been on-going problems in the East Stanley area due to wind and due to vibration and it became necessary for the Power and Electrical staff to design a modification to the fittings which have been progressively completed and is resulting in longer bulb life.

The Honourable Emma Edwards

Mr Speaker, Thank you very much and to the Honourable Gavin Short for your reply and also to everybody in the power station for the reply. I do sympathise with the fact that there are staff shortages down there but now that the people of Stanley are paying over £400 a year in service charges, I do believe that street lighting is absolutely essential. Certainly in some of the busier parts of Stanley and sometimes I see these street lights can be out for several weeks at any one time. I would very much appreciate if we could create some form of customer charter so that people can at least be reassured that their street lighting could be back on within a certain amount of time. Thank you very much.

The Honourable Gavin Short

I thank the Honourable Lady for her observations. I will certainly take those on-board. It is something that I will be returning to in the Motion for Adjournment.

Clerk of the Assembly

Question number 6 of 2011 by the Honourable Gavin Short

The Honourable Gavin Short

Would the Honourable Roger Edwards please advise this House:

1. What is FIG policy in respect of employing people with criminal records
2. In what circumstances would a criminal record bar a person from being employed and
3. Please would you provide examples of jobs and the types of criminal conviction that would bar a person from holding those posts?

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, in answer to the Honourable Member's question, here is the relevant answer from FIG's policy on employing people with a criminal record approved by Executive Council in July 2010:

The Falkland Islands Government is committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and aims to select people for employment on the basis of their individual skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and, where appropriate, qualifications and training.

The employment and management of people with criminal records has to be approached in a responsible and balanced way and so the purpose of this policy is to facilitate the Government's capacity to operate in line with recognised best practice in its recruitment of staff with a criminal record.

Aims to ensure that through effective application of the policy the Government maintains its duty of care to service users and employees whilst not unfairly and unreasonably discriminating against people with a criminal record.

In accordance with this premise the Government will consider ex-offenders for employment on their individual merits. However, it will, as a matter of course, take into consideration whether the job being applied for should or should not be exempt from disclosure.

Sensitive being implied in this case as posts that the Government considers to involve particularly sensitive areas of risk and which would therefore be exempt from any waiver regarding background checks, i.e.:

1. The post that involved working with or having unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults in the community
2. Or the provision of education, health and care services and so applicants will be required to make full disclosure with regard to any criminal records including both spent and unspent convictions.

Other Government posts that require a high level of trust and integrity may also fall into this category. Such posts will be determined by the relevant director and will only be nominated as such where a thorough risk assessment for the post has indicated that this decision is both proportionate and relevant.

Hopefully this text highlights the fact that having a criminal record will not necessarily bar anyone from working with the Falkland Islands Government. It will very much depend on the nature of the post and the circumstances and background of the offences.

We do, however, conduct a greater level of checks on staff who work with certain groups, such as children and vulnerable adults and other posts which require a significant level of trust and integrity. We will, however, consider a range of factors before making our decision to appoint:

- The nature of the offence
- The age at which it was committed
- Its relevance to the post in question
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have change since the offending behaviour
- Circumstances surrounding the offence
- And the explanation offered by the convicted individual.

We do this because it is our responsibility to protect the welfare, health and safety of the community we serve. In doing this we balance the need to prevent unsuitable people from working in sensitive posts against the possibility of discrimination against rehabilitated ex-offenders.

The type of posts which fall into the "Sensitive" category and which would therefore require an assessment would be as follows:

- All posts in the Department of Health and Education including Social Services
- All staff at the Leisure Centre
- All staff in the Royal Falkland Islands Police
- All subcontractors working in the above areas
- And any other posts within any directorate where the responsible strategic director deems it appropriate.

I have a very long list of examples of types of roles covered which I can give to the Honourable Member later if he should so wish.

In summary, we assess any employment or any work which is concerned with the provisions of Health, Education, Policing and Caring Services and which is of such a kind to enable the holder of that employment or the person engaged in that work to have access to persons in receipt of such services in the course of their normal duties. Posts involving high levels of integrity and public trust may also require full disclosure.

As can be seen from the above a criminal record could bar a person from being employed where the nature, frequency, timing, etc. of the convictions reported would suggest a significant risk to safe delivery of FIG's operational services and the wider community.

For example, a conviction for child abuse could bar someone from working in the Social Services Department. Likewise, someone who had a record and convictions for fraud could be barred from working in certain posts such as Audit or the Police. A person with numerous convictions for theft or breaking and entering could be barred from working in a position which would require them to access people's property.

Each case would always be reviewed on its own merit.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Honourable Roger Edwards for that very thorough reply. I do look forward to receiving the examples he has. I would like to ask just one supplementary question. You say the policy came into force in July 2010. Was this applied retrospectively to existing employees or just started with employees who were taken on after the date of the scheme?

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, I cannot answer that question but I will find out and let him know in due course.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Thanks very much.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Response to supplementary question

In accordance with the minutes in relation to paper 136/10, Members indicated that the Criminal Record Check policy was to apply to new appointments only, but they agreed that disclosure checks should be required of all staff in the circumstances set out in paragraph 5.8 of the Criminal Record Check paper.

Paragraph 5.8 stated that “ *having gone through the initial round of the process no further disclosure checks will be required unless:*

- a) an employee moves into a post that requires a full disclosure*
- b) an employee leaves the country for a period for *3 months or more for non work related activities, or;*
- c) the employee has left Government service and is seeking to be re-employed after a period of *3 months has elapsed since their departure from the service;*
- d) it comes to the attention of the Government that further convictions may have arisen during the term of employment and that they have not been disclosed where appropriate to management by the individual concerned.*

**this timeframe may be extended in exceptional cases up to a maximum of 6 months where extenuating circumstances exist eg where a staff member has required an extended leave of absence on compassionate grounds etc. The approval for any extension will be granted at the discretion of the CE following consultation with the Head of Human Resources.”*

I can confirm that since the introduction of this agreed policy Criminal Record Checks have been undertaken for all staff who have applied to join Government for the first

time in a sensitive post, as part of the selection process, or who are covered within the terms of the above paragraph.

Clerk of the Assembly

Question number 7 of 2011 by the Honourable Gavin Short

The Honourable Gavin Short

Would the Honourable Roger Edwards tell the House why some vacancies within FIG remain unfilled? I refer particularly to the Power and Electrical Department and the KEMH kitchen in particular. Have any factors been identified as reasons for posts remaining vacant? Could the Honourable Gentleman provide a list of FIG posts to which recruitment is proving difficult?

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker thank you. I can give a very short answer or I can give a very long answer as provided. The short answer is the opportunities for jobs, especially skilled jobs is growing within the Islands, which is a good thing to see. We do not have sufficient apprentices and the like to fill those posts. Also, we have seen an enormous rise in wages being offered by people in the private sector and people are leaving Government to work in the private sector.

However, the long answer as given and the breakdown of the posts as requested are:

Power and Electrical

Electrician vacancies have been difficult to fill. A recent resignation was prompted by the need to earn more money outside FIG. Candidates are not coming forward with the skills required for appointment to this role. Recently the Head of Section of the Power and Electrical Section reviewed requirements for this role and is now looking for a wider skill-set so the individuals can be recruited into an electro-mechanical role.

A junior technician is also being considered for recruitment in order to train and develop someone in this skill-set in future.

KEMH Kitchen

There have been difficulties since December 2010 filling Cook's posts in the Hospital. This has eased recently and it is anticipated that they will be up to full establishment later this month.

It is presumed that difficulties have occurred because the posts were being advertised on a temporary basis pending a review considering the privatisation of the Kitchen. Recently it has been decided by management to fill posts on a permanent basis and this has generated suitable interest to allow appointments to be made.

A Kitchen Assistant post is currently being advertised and it is anticipated that a suitable candidate will be selected later this week.

Computer Technician

Locally it remains difficult to attract candidates to the Computer Technician Post as the salary offered is not competitive. This is being addressed and if, following a further advertisement for this post a vacancy remains, it has been agreed to advertise the post higher up the scale on a competitive rate. If this action does not attract a suitable candidate, consideration will be given to other possible solutions, which may include recruiting from overseas. There appears to be a significant skill shortage in this specialisation within the local community.

Mechanic Plant and Vehicle Section

This post has been advertised three times and there have been no suitable applicants. Competition for these posts is strong locally and FIG expects a broader skill set than perhaps candidates from the local community can offer.

Learning Support Assistants

The salary of these posts has been reduced to reflect the fact that LSAs are required to work Term Time only. They have not proved to be so attractive to suitable candidates.

Adverts for these posts, particularly at the Falkland Islands Community School, do not immediately generate enquiries from candidates with the qualifications required to be successful in role.

Social Worker

This post has been advertised both locally and overseas three times. Only one applicant was short-listed as the other 5 applicants did not meet the specifications. The successful applicant was offered at Top of Grade with a 45% gratuity but declined as she did not consider the remuneration attractive.

Following recent recruitment difficulties it is hoped that the following posts will shortly be filled:

- Pharmacist – is under offer
- Senior Dental Officer – 5 candidates were interviewed on 11 July and I understand that an appointment is to be offered this week.
- Community Psychiatric Nurse – under offer
- Chief Medical Officer – Under active recruitment for a second time with recruitment agency, closing the 1st of August, and interviews anticipated on 1st of September. Interim arrangements have been put in place to cover the vacancy

A common difficulty with the majority of these posts comes down to the remuneration package not meeting the level on offer in the wider marketplace. So it is difficult to

encourage suitable applicants to give up these more attractive salary packages to come to work for FIG rates.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Roger Edwards for his very thorough reply.

Clerk of the Assembly

The Motion for Adjournment

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the House stands adjourned *Sine Die*.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members the Motion is that the House stands adjourned *Sine Die*. Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion?

The Honourable Emma Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, in rising to support the Motion I would like to address the House very briefly. Firstly I would like to welcome Brigadier Bill Aldridge. I hope you enjoy your stay here in the Islands. Do get out and take all those Penguin photographs. I am sure you will have an absolutely great time.

Secondly I would like to welcome The Honourable Mike Summers back on to Council again. Congratulations; and I look forward to working with you in the near future.

Quite rightly people are asking questions about the “Golden Hole.” This is the hard standing area for containers that has been made a secure area. I must say that when Members agreed to this project it was a very different situation. We were told that the only way to retain the container contract with SAAS was to get a secure container park. We were told that where the old containers were kept was insecure and that sometimes the Reefer Containers had their plugs pulled out. This meant that the Fishing industry didn’t have the confidence to ship fish with SAAS, but a secure container park would change all this. Events changed and SAAS is not currently running a service.

Hindsight is always 20/20 and I do believe that we may have made a different decision. However, a secure container park is essential. I do believe that once a shipping link is established this area will be used. As my fellow Honourable Members will confirm the Falkland Islands Government is committed to establishing a container shipping service. This park will be used and I hope the secure facilities will encourage our fishing industry to have the confidence to use this and ship their product from this new service.

Housing is still a problem for people in these Islands. I was delighted when the plan to build plots under Sappers' Hill was approved by EXCO. I believe that this new development will provide plots for many years to come and that plots will be available for the private sector as well as some retail sites.

I do hope Government will give higher priority to housing suitable for our younger population. Government Housing was created to aid people to save for their own homes and I was very disappointed when the rents were increased. I know that this rent increase has hit some of our families very hard. I do not believe Government rents should be in line with the private sector but to be kept at a rate suitable for people to start to save to either build or buy their own homes.

Finally, I am really delighted at the progress that's being made for the move to the museum to the historic dockyards. I was very impressed with the young architect, Liz, who has been employed to design the site and I really congratulate everybody involved in this particular project. I wish them well.

Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will be very brief in restricting my statement to welcomes and visits. I, too, would like to welcome The Honourable Mike Summers and congratulations on winning the by-election in Stanley. I am sure once he has settled in he will work with us. Welcome, also to Brigadier Aldridge to the Islands and to this Assembly. I trust he will enjoy his time here in the Islands and take the opportunity to get out and about and meet both the Falkland Islanders and the Falklands' wildlife. I trust also that he will continue the purpose of his predecessor in offering more and more privatised and localised posts at Mount Pleasant and within the command structure.

The Honourable Dick Sawle and I have recently been away to attend the Committee of 24 in New York. I must say that the very brief time that The Honourable Dick Sawle and I were in the United States and myself, I carried on to Canada, that time was incredibly well spent. We were able to correct many of the misconstrued ideas that people have about the Falkland Islands. In Canada, in Ottawa, I actually sat in front of the majority of the Foreign Affairs Committee and was grilled for about an hour and a quarter and it was absolutely amazing the response we got from both the USA and from Canada. I would encourage that this type of visit is not only continued but it is extended so that we have more time to speak to the individuals concerned. My visit to Canada certainly was one day – or a very brief day of meetings but it involved about 3 nights in the air travelling to and from. In spending that much time getting there, I do think more time should be spent meeting people. And I think it is an opportunity for all Members to be involved in meeting and spreading the public diplomacy word of the Falklands and combating some of the trash that comes out of Argentina.

My final point on visits is I'd like to remind all Camp people listening this morning that we are all of us, making visits to Goose Green on the 17th of August and to Fox

Bay East on the 18th of August and I look forward to seeing as many people there as possible.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I would like to say I am delighted to see The Honourable Emma Edwards here this morning who has climbed out of her sick bed to attend to make up the quorum of this Assembly.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, in rising to speak to the Motion for Adjournment it is my intention not to deprive the listening public for FIRS too much of their morning programme. Perhaps I could begin by welcoming Brigadier Aldridge to this House. I hope he has a pleasant stay here in the Islands and I look forward to working with him.

I would also like to congratulate the Honourable Mike Summers on his win in the by-election and welcome him to this House. I very much look forward to him making a valuable contribution to our deliberations. I think he is joining one of the most independently minded and socially aware Councils that we have seen for quite some time.

Although we are independent in both political outlook and thought, we have found a huge amount of common ground.

You join us in a very exciting stage in the proceedings, a stage with some really interesting things that we have been quietly working away on and are just about to start to come together. If we are brave enough and forward thinking enough to make the right decisions then we will, I believe, really propel our country forward. And I sincerely hope that we will make the country a better more politically and economically secure place for our people.

The projects I allude to cover both domestic and foreign policy issues. As you will have seen from last week's briefings, the foreign policy initiatives as worked on by that group are all but formulated and are really far reaching and proactive. I am sure that he will actually take great delight in joining us in delivering them and going on the offensive against those across the water who have had it a little bit too much their own way for a bit too long.

I would like to take this opportunity to pass on not just my thanks, but also those of quite a few members of the public who have spoken to me, to the Honourables Roger Edwards and Dick Sawle for their speeches in the United Nations a couple of weeks ago. You could almost say this was our opening salvo; and what a salvo it was! So my grateful thanks to you both, not just for your C24 work but the other meetings, which I hope will have opened the eyes of one or two people to the absolute tissue of lies and fantasy that is spread by that lot across the way.

Of course it is not just countering the Argentine lies, important though it is. Other groups have been working away on projects as far apart as air and sea links, tourism

strategies through to import substitution; all of which will, in their own way, make us more secure; and it is to be hoped, a more prosperous community.

There are going to be some tough nuts to be cracked and it may be that some of the work will have to be passed on to the next Council. But I hope that by the time of the next election we will have delivered a great deal of what we set out to and leave the rest in a state where the next group will have an easier time should they wish to continue with the same policies.

The Human Resources Department is much maligned within FIG and I suspect in about every other organisation that is lucky enough to have one. Sometimes criticisms are unjustified due to a lack of understanding but at other times, richly deserved. At times (and I think this is the trouble in our case) organisations become that constricted by bureaucracy and red tape in which they have buried themselves that they almost find it impossible to do anything.

I asked one of the questions that I did today to try and highlight that we are really getting ourselves into a right mess. I must thank the Honourable Mr Edwards for his most thorough reply, a reply which I think has almost broken the record for length of any reply given in this House although I think the record is a reply given by a former Attorney General.

We seem to be getting more and more posts that we cannot fill, or if we do we cannot hang on to staff. Why is this? I am guessing that there are a myriad of reasons. People like to try different things and move on, and who can blame them. It's good to broaden your horizons and try new things. Maybe they find they don't actually like what they do. In that case it is better to move on rather than stay and become miserable. However, I suspect, at least with the mid-range people such as our tradesmen and, indeed our good all-rounders which every organisation really does need, it comes down to money, good old fashioned moo-lah. I was told on a visit to a department once that good will doesn't put food on the kids' plates. That person was right. That's what appears to be one of the main reasons why we cannot fill posts and why people are drifting off.

There are better offers down the road at MPA or with the oil sector. I cannot blame people for going for better conditions and salaries. Good will does not put food on the kids' plates. With that said, I will give this House two examples where we are running short of people. The Government Garage presently finds itself running at half strength. I believe that one of their latest losses was at the Power Section, which I will touch on in a moment. The Garage fully expects to lose more people if the oil sector ups its pace of exploration which looks likely to happen. I will not for one second criticise them for leaving the employment of FIG. They must have opportunities to better their salaries; and indeed if they return to our employment, they will in all probability be better tradesmen.

However it does mean that come the summer when things start to happen they may not or they may have to happen at a slower pace or if something breaks, there isn't going to be anyone to fix it. Also, if too much pressure is put upon too few people for too long, funny things start to happen. This, of course, would be a health and safety issue. We have a problem waiting to happen and can we fix it?

I replied to an oral question earlier about the state of the street lighting here. Once again the basic problem that we have is that we have not got enough people and what people we do have need to be kept working on the important infrastructure of the power generation and distribution. So the lights in Stanley go out one by one. The gloom that this causes also reflects upon the population here in Stanley and leads to a feeling of malaise. A feeling that the infrastructure of our capital is slowly degrading, and to be brutally frank with you, it is. What for me compounds this problem and makes it all the more harder to understand is that I am given to believe that the inability to retain electricians has been known about for over two years.

Every time I ask the question about what is happening I get the same reply – it's with Human Resources. Now it could be that Human Resources is innocent. There may be finger pointing between Human Resource and Public Works Department or whoever as to where the blame may lay. I don't care where the fault is. I want the problem sorted. It beggars belief, that in over two years we have been incapable of finding a solution. If this was the private sector I am sure a solution would have been found. Even companies without a Human Resources department would have sorted it. Just what is going on? Have we become that wrapped in bureaucracy and red tape that we can no longer function? It certainly seems that way. It isn't rocket science. Let's get it sorted and if it can't be sorted at the appropriate level, let's put things back to the departments and let them sort the problem out. You know, I suspect we would probably see mechanics and electricians if our departmental heads were left to sort these issues out and a competitive salary is offered.

Another tale that I have been told is that some of the scales that the jobs are on are all out of kilter. This would seem a little surprising after Hay Management but maybe it's the truth. Let's get this sorted.

Finally, I always like to end on a little positivity. This is a story that I would like to tell our Chief Executive. A while back I had a wander around some of my departments talking to staff. I was actually impressed with their commitment to their jobs. But there were problems. Some of the unhappiness was being caused by a perceived lack of a real wage. In other words, it was not keeping up with inflation, whilst others were very much a Human Resources nature; and to be honest weren't really big problems, which I think actually could be sorted out with the application of a little common sense. Small problems are the ones that tend to stay under the radar but they niggle away and cause dissatisfaction. I had a wonderful idea and I don't think it's that revolutionary. Why can't a Human Resources Representative do as I did and wander around the departments on a normal working day? There wouldn't be especially called meetings but one would plonk themselves on a corner of a desk and have a yarn with people. Find out about their jobs and perhaps what might be bothering them if indeed anything. I know that not all problems can be cured but I suspect a good many could, even if it had to travel up the long and winding river of bureaucracy until it reached us. If it takes a country's government to make decisions then so be it. Go on, let's give it a go. You may end up with a happier staff or, at the very least; you will get to know what makes them tick.

One small point before I slide back into my seat, at the last EXCO we happily passed a paper dealing with how the extra monies would be spent that were voted for

succession planning, etc. and what skills we were looking for in the mid to long term. Plus a “B” list of occupations that we would like to localise if we couldn’t get people interested in core positions on the “A” list. I was contacted by a local who is currently outside the Islands and I said I would put him in touch with the relevant people. Imagine my dismay when whoever I called didn’t seem to know too much about it. I am indebted to our Chief Executive for putting me straight on what the plans are. I hope I got this right. The project is being run by Human Resources and Education. An announcement will be forthcoming, I hope in the very, very near future. As to the posts that we are looking for and the terms and conditions and the mechanism for applying, etc. I very much look forward to seeing this in Penguin News, the FIG websites, etc. and also, of course, on the radio.

Let’s get this particular show on the Road. The quicker it is the quicker we can start working towards localising posts. I still hang on to the dream of seeing a fully localised Falkland Islands Government from the Chief Executive down to the Road Sweeper, who by the way is equally as important, before I am carted off down east, should there still be room for me.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Sharon Halford

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Now that we have eventually been able to make this meeting of Legislative Assembly after waiting for the Island Games to finish and then the weather to clear to allow flying, I must say that never before have I had to get up in the middle of the night to attend such a meeting.

That said, now I welcome the Honourable Mike Summers to this Assembly and look forward to him working with us in continuing to do what we believe to be in the best interests of the Falklands and its people, whilst taking the Islands forward. I am sure we will have many challenges ahead; and not all decisions will be easy to make.

Brigadier Aldridge has recently arrived in the Islands. I would like to welcome him to this Assembly also. I am sure that many of my Camp constituents will look forward to meeting you over the coming months as you travel around the Islands familiarising yourself with our country whilst at the same time enjoying our spectacular scenery and wildlife and experiencing our friendly hospitality.

I would like to take this opportunity in thanking all our participants who took part in the Island Games and represented the Islands overseas and also congratulate them for the results they achieved. A thank-you must also go to the many supporters who managed to attend the games, too and no doubt were a boost to the morale of the participants.

As we recently have had a by-election, I would now like to make a few comments on the election process. I was not involved in any way in this election as living out in Camp I was unable to vote for a member of the Stanley Constituency. A point worth considering later this year when we will be making a decision as to whether or not to remain as two constituencies or whether we should change to one. With one constituency we would all be able to vote for all Members and would therefore perhaps have a greater choice. I say perhaps as after hearing some of the comments

flying around in the run-up to this election, it made me wonder why anyone would want to stand in the first place and if anyone would consider it in the future.

This is not the first time that we have heard this kind of rhetoric at election time. But take a step back and think seriously. What would you do if no one were to stand and where would we be then? We regularly hear from people who know exactly what we should be doing in some areas and how we could be doing better in others. It does therefore pose the question as to why the critics did not themselves come forward and stand for election.

The turn-out on election-day could have been better, but I suspect that by not voting many people thought they were making a point. I take a different view. If you are not prepared to put yourself forward for election or to vote, in other words, stand up and be counted, then how can you reasonably criticise the whole process and what follows on from it.

We have spent considerable sums on education over the years and have many well educated and trained youngsters returning who will hopefully one day consider taking up the political baton to take our country forward. Before they do this they will no doubt think long and hard about it as it is a huge commitment to make. And, probably candidates at an election do not always realise this until after the event when, if they are lucky, they have won and reality kicks in.

Although it is an honour to be elected and serve your country, it can at times also be a thankless task, as no matter how hard you work or whatever you do it is impossible to please everyone all of the time.

I would like to add my support to what the Honourable Gavin Short has said in relation to recruitment. I will be heading home after this, I think it appropriate to mention the state of the MPA Road, which is much criticised especially at this time of the year. Those of us who use it often are aware that it can change on a daily basis and know that the winter months are not when it is at its best. However, I do think we should be very grateful to the Highways section for their hard work in keeping the road graded and maintained when weather permits, as it did recently when they achieved excellent results.

We seem to be very good at moaning and complaining but not very good at saying thank-you or “well done.”

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, I would like to join in the welcomes given to Commander British Forces. Glad to see you back again and I hope you will enjoy your stay. And also welcome back on to the Assembly to Mike Summers. I am hoping that the fact that he’s now a politician again won’t preclude him in his involvement in the Overseas Games Association because I know some international associations ban politicians from their ranks. However, it shouldn’t affect the Overseas Games Association from here.

On the subject of the Games in general, and Island Games in particular, I think we were all tremendously impressed by the performance of all our competitors and enjoyed – those of us who were able to – watching them on the excellent coverage by FITV and those who heard some very excellent commentaries on the radio. Finally, on that I hope the injuries, particularly of the various footballers, are healing fast and that they are fit again two years hence because I think actually they will do us proud.

Referring to one of the answers to questions regarding the inability to fill certain posts, a group of four of us spoke to some of the students who have just finished their GCSEs and I was rather saddened when we asked how many people were going for apprenticeships and only one hand went up. We are offering apprenticeships in all kinds of areas now and we've extended that to Agriculture as has been our wish for a long time. I do hope those apprenticeships will be taken up. But more importantly, I hope those apprenticeships will be of a standard that is respected and appreciated by employers.

It became evident in meetings of the Education Board early in this Assembly that both Government and the Private Sector employers had some reservations about the new apprenticeship schemes but I heard that's been addressed now.

One of the other areas where employment is said to be difficult and interesting that the Honourable Roger Edwards was the one giving us this particular answer, because he was one of the two who opposed me when I pointed out that employing LSAs during term time only would not be an attractive proposition if you want the kind of skilled people who are needed to deal with children with complex educational needs and, in some cases, difficult behaviours.

Before being elected and during the life of this Assembly, I have become aware of the increasing strength of feeling about the destruction of the character of what we call "Old Stanley" by over-development. Apart from over-crowding sites, and leaving little room for gardens for safe playing for children, it's impinging on people's privacy. Parking and access problems are exacerbated leading to disputes. We have now gone a long way in keeping up with the demand for new building plots, yet it seems not a month goes by without some attempt to stretch the rules out of all proportion to the need. We constantly struggle on the Planning Committee when we find that people are renewing planning permission they were given two years ago for an unsuitable development. There is very little we can actually do about it as long as they renew it in time.

The real questions we need to ask ourselves are, firstly, is there any need for over-crowding when the one thing we have more than enough of is space? Secondly, what do we want our town to look like? And, finally, do we really want the unpleasant consequences and congestion we see elsewhere with the resulting effects on people's quality of life.

Turning to international matters, I think we have been pleasantly surprised by the vehemence of the British Government's responses to some of the nonsense emanating from Argentina. And despite a certain amount of scare mongering we heard during the recent by-election campaign, we have, in fact, received more robust public and

practical support from the UK Government than I can recall for many years. I think we should express our great appreciation for that.

We should also note the successful visits in Washington and Canada by FIG representatives after the UN Committee of 24. And my hearty congratulations go to The Honourable Dick Sawle and The Honourable Roger Edwards on that.

Finally, I note and agree with a lot of The Honourable Gavin Short's frustration. I said after my previous 8 years on the Assembly that I would probably die with the words "get on with it" engraved on my heart. I spoke earlier in this Assembly about the amount of bureaucracy which is now in place and I hope we can make a serious attempt to cut through some of it and get on with it.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Mike Summers

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it's not my normal practice to comment on what other Members have said in the Motion for Adjournment. I consider it unfair for those going early in the discussion but I would just like to thank all Members for the forbearance shown in allowing us to complete the Island Games before I came back and by postponing this meeting for a few days. Thank you very much for that. But I will come back to the question of the Island Games.

But firstly I would like to thank those people who exercised their democratic right to put me back onto the Assembly. I hope that I will do what you are expecting of me and contrary perhaps to some expectations, I am actually quite a good team player and I can work with everybody to achieve what is best for the Falklands. I will be strong and I will be robust but I can work together with everybody else and I look forward to doing just that.

I particularly look forward to taking up the Agricultural and the Rural Development Strategy portfolios which are very close to my heart. I hope I can help people in the Camp move their lives forward in these next couple of years. Equally I think the challenges in Education are going to be interesting and exciting and remain an important part of our public service.

Although just having arrived back myself I would like to welcome Commander British Forces to this House. It's always a great pleasure to work with successive Commanders to make sure we are all on the same side and all doing the same thing and I am certain that is the case.

Just a couple of comment on the By-Election since they have been raised, I am no stranger to rhetoric in by-elections. I had a bit of it myself over many, many years. People don't always understand the circumstances surrounding Government when they are standing for election. That is probably understandable and I think you have to allow them a little bit of latitude but it is irritating, I have to say. But there we are, that's part of democracy and openness and free speech. We put up with it and get on with it.

But if anybody either on the other side of the water or in any other institution around the world who is interested in democracy and self-determination was in any doubt about what the Falklands thought about our right to determine our own future I think that not only the last election but the by-election should leave them in absolutely no doubt that the people of the Falklands have no wish to have any relationship whatsoever with Argentina and the Argentine Republic and, indeed, as things go on these days, the Argentine people.

We have much work to do and I have seen some of the work that the Assembly have done. I have not had time to study it that closely, obviously, or become involved in it but I think as I said in the election there is much to do. I do commend the Honourable Roger Edwards and Dick Sawle for their work in the C24 and in Canada and in the United States. I think it's a very important beginning and some very important work that I very much hope to participate in with our Members.

Finally, on the Island Games, I don't think that I am debarred from carrying on with my role as Chair of FIOGA and I intend to do so not only because I enjoy it but because I am very firm about the role and importance of sport and competitive activities in not only health and healthy living but in the generation of spirit and competitive spirit and team spirit in the Community. I think it has a really, really important role.

The sheer enthusiasm that was generated on the Isle of Wight amongst the team was fantastic to see amongst those young people. Our task now is to take it into the next generation of younger people and get them working to represent our Islands overseas not only in Bermuda in a couple of years time but perhaps at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games and other places overseas as we go forward. A fantastic thing to see when you go to these games is Falkland Islanders representing their country not only at sport but talking intelligently and eloquently about the position of the Falklands in the world and it's a very great pleasure to be part of that.

Sir, I Support the Motion.

Commander British Forces

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you all for your kind words of welcome. I didn't join the Army to join a Government, so it is a huge and serious honour for me to have this position and this opportunity to serve this community and this country.

I have a very serious mission, which is to deter any aggression against these Territories and to support the right of self-determination of the Falkland Islanders, and I take that immensely seriously.

A part of my job as I see it is to get to know the Islands. I thank the Honourable Members for their advice and suggestions that I do get out and see this wonderful country. I started in a small way but I very much look forward to taking you all at your word and your advice and seeing far more.

May I reassure the Honourable Members that, as I said elsewhere, that in no way do I intend to change the initiatives that have been started by my predecessors and

particularly on the subject of localisation, where it is possible without detriment to our Military capability. Where we might support the development of the Falkland Islands economy then we will look to localise as many posts within the current Military community as we possibly can.

I very much look forward to my time here and I am very grateful for the warm welcome that's been extended to me thus far.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

Mr Speaker

May I, too, formally add my welcome to the Honourable Mike Summers and Commander British Forces to this Assembly.

The House stands adjourned accordingly.