



**RECORD OF THE MEETING
OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
HELD IN STANLEY
ON FRIDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2008**

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THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
(Mr Darwin Lewis Clifton OBE)

MEMBERS (Ex-Officio)

The Honourable Chief Executive
(Dr Timothy Rupert Thorogood)

The Honourable the Financial Secretary
(Mr Derek Frank Howatt)

Elected

The Honourable John Birmingham
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Dr Andrea Patricia Clausen
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable John Richard Cockwell
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Ian Hansen
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Mike Rendell
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Janet Robertson
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Richard James Stevens
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

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

PERSONS ENTITLED TO ATTEND

The Attorney General
(David Francis William Pickup)

The Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands
(Brigadier Nicholas Roy Davies MBE, MC)

CLERK: Claudette Anderson MBE

PRAYERS: Reverend Richard Hines

CONTENTS

Prayers	2
Oath of Allegiance	2
The Honourable John Birmingham Dr Timothy Thorogood (Chief Executive)	
Confirmation of the Record of Legislative Council Meeting held on Friday 23rd November 2007	2
Papers to be Laid on the Table	2
Questions for Oral Answer	
Question number 01 of 2008 by the Honourable John Birmingham	3
Allowable Expense travelling to or from Camp for work purposes	
Question number 02 of 2008 by the Honourable John Birmingham	4
<i>Post of Exercise Referral Practitioner</i>	
Question number 03 of 2008 by the Honourable John Birmingham	6
Post Graduate Qualifications requirements in the Civil Service	
Question number 04 of 2008 by the Honourable Mike Summers OBE	7
National Strategy for Tourism	
Question number 05 of 2008 by the Honourable Mike Summers OBE	7
Policy for Immigration Control to the Falkland Islands	
MOTIONS	
Motion number 1 of 2008 by the Honourable Dr Andrea Clausen	10
Principle of Positive Discrimination in Favour of Falkland Islands Status Holder but not the current Policy of Preferential Treatment of Falkland Island Status Holders in the Workplace	
ORDERS OF THE DAY: BILLS	
The Supplementary Appropriation (2007/2008) Bill 2008	17

The Planning (Amendment) Bill 2008	19
MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT	
The Honourable Mike Summers OBE	20
The Honourable Ian Hansen	21
The Honourable Richard Cockwell	21
The Honourable John Birmingham	22
The Honourable Richard Stevens	23
The Honourable Mike Rendell	24
The Honourable Janet Robertson	25
The Honourable Dr Andrea Clausen	26
The Honourable Financial Secretary	27
The Honourable Chief Executive	28

**The Record of the meeting of Legislative Council
held on Friday 22nd February 2008**

Prayers

Oaths

The Oath of Allegiance was taken by the Honourable John Birmingham and Dr Tim Thorogood, Chief Executive.

Clerk of Councils

The confirmation of the record of the meeting of Legislative Council held on Friday 23rd November 2007.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members I have before me a record of the last meeting, is it your wish that I sign them as a correct record?

Agreed

Clerk of Councils

Papers to be laid in the table by The Honourable the Chief Executive

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

- The Elected Councillors (Allowances) Amendment Order 2007
- Payment on Account of Tax (Employees Deductions Amendment Regulations) 2007
- Immigration (Suspension of Issue of Permanent Residence Permits) Order 2008
- General Development Order 1991: 25 Ross Road East, Direction 2008
- Taxes and Duties (Defence Contractors' Employees) Exemption Order 2008

Laid on the table pursuant to Section 57 of the Finance and Audit Ordinance

Annual Public Accounts for the year ended 30 June 2007 for:

The Falkland Islands Government
The Currency Fund
The Pensions (Old Scheme) Fund
Insurance Fund
Capital Equalisation Fund

and for the year ended 31 December 2006

The Retirement Pensions Equalisation Fund

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I have the pleasure of laying on the Table the papers as listed by the Clerk.

Clerk of Councils

Questions for Oral Answer

Question number 1 of 2008 by the Honourable John Birmingham

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if a Stanley resident travels to Camp for work, this expense appears to be allowable if you are a sole trader, partnership or limited company against the income that you generate. But if a person from the Camp flies to Stanley for work, the same travel expense does not appear to be allowable. Could the Honourable Andrea Clausen please explain the difference?

The Honourable Dr Andrea Clausen

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if a sole trader, partnership or limited company incurs costs that are wholly and exclusively for the purpose of their trade then those costs will be allowable deductions against the business profits. This rule applies to all businesses, so to answer your question there is no difference between Stanley and Camp residents if the travel costs are deemed to be wholly and exclusively for the purpose of the business trade.

However, there is a difference between sole trader, partnership or limited company and an employee. If an individual incurs travel costs which are wholly, exclusively and necessarily for the purpose of the duties of his or her employment then the employer may reimburse the employee for those costs. The employer can claim that cost against the business profits and the employee will not be charged a benefit for the reimbursed amount.

I believe the question from the Honourable John Birmingham has been raised due to confusion between self employment and employment and the differences in tax treatment. Furthermore, an individual can be both self employed and employed, for instance, some individuals living in Camp may be self employed for the majority of the year but take up employment for part of the year in Stanley. The cost incurred to travel to Stanley to take up that employment are not allowable deductions against the individual's taxable income because this is deemed to be "home to work travel" in the same way that a person working at Mount Pleasant but living in Stanley would not be allowed the cost of travelling to and from Mount Pleasant.

It is a personal choice where an individual chooses to live and take up employment. Income from employment does not normally start to be earned when a person leaves home but rather from when that employee arrives at the work place. The nature of a contract would determine whether a person is self employed or employed.

If a self employed individual travels to Stanley and part of the trip is for business purposes and partly for personal purposes then part of the expenses may be allowable. If one business pays an expense on behalf of another business that cost may not be wholly and exclusively for the purpose of its trade i.e. one business pays the travel costs for an employee of another business, the paying business may not be able to claim the expense for tax purposes.

As with all tax issues, each case is assessed on its own merit. If any expense claims are disallowed then an explanation is provided as to why they have been disallowed. The individual has 30 days from the date of their assessment to object to any decision made by the Taxation Office. I do not know if you are aware, Honourable Mr Birmingham; there are some guidelines available to the public, which explain this very subject. There is a rather more substantial guidance that the Tax Office uses if you seek further detail that can be provided.

Thank you.

The Honourable John Birmingham

I thank the Honourable Andrea Clausen for that brief answer to the question.

Clerk of Councils

Question number 2 of 2008 by the Honourable Mr John Birmingham

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, can the Hon Mrs Janet Robertson confirm that the new post of Exercise Referral Officer will be self-funding and can she please give the rates to be charged?

The Honourable Janet Robertson

The post of Exercise Referral Officer will not be completely self-funding in terms of the budget agreed at the 2007 budget Select Committee process. However, the long-term benefits associated with prescribed exercise for a number of ailments in terms of reducing the risk of developing several major chronic diseases as well as significantly improving the quality of life for those that are experiencing health problems have been noted as representing potential savings on drug expenditure, even though this has not been taken account of in the budget. The terms agreed by the Budget Select Committee were:

1. An allocation of £25,000.00 per year to be made from the Health and Medical Services Budget to fund the post for two years, with the post holder of additionally filling the function of personal trainer and mainstream exercise programmer at the leisure centre.
2. That an increased revenue target of £10,000.00 for the leisure centre will partially offset that cost.

- a. This will be made up of prescribed exercise resulting in exercise referred by the exercise practitioner
- b. Consultation and personal trainer fees
- c. And leisure centre member retention as a result of pre-service provision

Details of the fees to be charged have not yet been publicised but it was agreed in July 2007 that:

1. referrals to the exercise practitioner should be free,
2. prescribed exercise at the leisure centre should not be free and normal charges should be made
3. Charges may be raised if the person seeks consultation with the exercise practitioner without being referred by a medical practitioner

In considering the proposal for an exercise referral practitioner the Budget Select Committee note that:

- There is a substantial body of evidence to show a causal link between physical activity and reduced clinically defined depressions.
- It can delay the progression of osteoporosis in later life
- It can reduce systolic and diastolic blood pressure
- It combats obesity.
- It can make a real difference in the prevention and management of more than 20 conditions and diseases including coronary heart disease, some cancers, type two diabetes and falls prevention.
- The current expenditure on drugs in the Islands amounts to around £340K per year. Programmes which may help to offset this level of expenditure in the manner described will represent a financial benefit in the long-term.

The current expenditure on drugs in the Islands amounts to around £340,000.00 per year. Programmes which may help to offset this level of expenditure in the manner described will represent a financial benefit in the long term.

The Honourable John Birmingham

I thank the Honourable Councillor for her answer. Do I take it that in short that if you were able to have drugs, that would be free but if you opted for exercise – going the route of the Exercise Referral Officer you have to pay?

The Honourable Janet Robertson

My understanding is that your referral to the Exercise Practitioner will be free but that any prescribed exercise or course of exercise resulting from that will not be.

Clerk of Councils

Question number 3 of 2008 by the Honourable John Birmingham

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker, Honourable members is the Honourable Richard Stevens aware of any posts within the civil service that require post graduate qualifications with the exception of teachers and their PGCEs?

The Honourable Richard Stevens

There are a number of posts within the civil service that require post-graduate qualifications and these include posts such as Chief Medical Officer, Medical Officers, Senior Dental Officer, Team Leader (Social Work), Occupational Health Service Manager, Attorney General, Principal Crown Counsel, Crown Counsel, Senior Veterinary Officer, Veterinary Officer, Senior Biomedical Scientist, Community Psychiatric Nurse, Director of Education, Senior Personnel Officer and Fisheries Stock Assessment Scientist.

Please note that this list is indicative but not exhaustive.

There are a number of positions in the civil service at degree level, whilst they do not necessarily require post-graduate qualifications, the majority of these positions do require several years' post graduate experience and/or membership of a professional authority in order to take up that appointment.

The Honourable John Birmingham

I thank the Honourable Richard Stevens for that answer. As the Chairman of the Education Board, would he be able to tell me whether a person approaching the education board for funding for further education for a post graduate degree, would he be listened to sympathetically?

The Honourable Richard Stevens

We always look at representations to the Education Department sympathetically but we also have to abide by our own rules and regulations. And, at present, we do not have funding for post-graduate courses apart from the exceptions like PGCE. We do fund for core subjects in graduate qualifications. There is a route through the training centre for post-graduate qualifications but that's usually in combination with a current job.

Clerk of Councils

Question number 4 of 2008 by the Honourable Mike Summers

The Honourable Mike Summers

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, would the Honourable Richard Cockwell please advise progress towards the National Strategy for Tourism in the Falkland Islands and is the strategy likely to be in place in time to enable proper consideration for budget considerations for 2008/9?

The Honourable Richard Cockwell

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very pleased to reply to this question because as the Honourable Councillors now knows the draft edition of the Falkland Islands National Tourism Strategy 2112 was submitted by the General Manager of FITB in January to the Government Secretary along with the FITB's business plan and budget.

The strategy document and the business plan were presented to Executive Council in the February meeting, which was yesterday. And the strategy has also gone out to members of the tourist industry for consultation and feedback.

The Honourable Mike Summers

Mr Speaker, thank you for that response. Would the Honourable Member agree that this is a most important piece of work that needs to be completed with some dispatch? And, does he have some idea when the final versions of the strategic plan will be in place? And, does he have any thoughts about how the Government sectors responsible for the delivery of the tourism strategy will be able to contribute to that?

The Honourable Richard Cockwell

It is the intention of the Tourism Board to get the strategy accepted as their document as soon as possible. I am hoping that it will be well before the budget session in May.

Regarding the responsibilities of the Falkland Islands Government towards tourism issues, it is my intention (and I have been instructed, I believe, by Executive Council) to set up a tourism strategy committee which looks at the responsibilities – the strategy responsibilities – for the Falkland Islands Government, in particular we have to be looking at issues such as capital expenditure and communications, which affect tourism, which is very difficult for the board themselves to deal with.

Clerk of Councils

Question number 5 of 2008 by The Honourable Mike Summers

The Honourable Mike Summers

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, would the Honourable Mike Rendell please outline the steps taken towards the formation of a revised policy for immigration

control to the Falkland Islands and the steps remaining to complete policy advice to Executive Council? Does the Policy advice include any of the evaluation of recent census data and recommendations on the appropriate rate of population growth through immigration?

The Honourable Mike Rendell

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, since the General Election in November 2005 the Immigration Policy Working Group (IPWG) has met on 21 occasions and 19 papers on immigration policy matters have been presented to Executive Council for consideration.

Immigration control covers a wide range of matters and includes both policy work and immigration processes, i.e. how people apply for permits, the information they must apply for with applications and how applications are evaluated.

For information, a number of improvements and processes have been considered in detail and introduced. These include:

- a) New requirements for the presentation of police and criminal record checks with applications.
- b) New requirements for the presentation of health information with applications.
- c) New requirements for the holding of travel medical insurance policies by visitors.
- d) The introduction of a status pledge and ceremonies for the grant of Falkland Islands Status.
- e) The introduction of moratoria on the consideration of applications for permanent residence permits whilst the main detailed immigration policy work is in progress.

Major items of policy work that have been and still are under consideration include:

- a) The introduction of a points system for the evaluation of applications for permanent residence and Falkland Islands Status.
- b) Consideration of provisions in the Constitution relating to the acquisition of Falkland Islands Status and the drafting of amendments.
- c) The provision in the Constitution providing that the grant of naturalisation also automatically confers Falkland Islands Status. This matter has been under discussion with the lawyers from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who recently visited because it is hoped that this link between naturalisation and status can be removed.
- d) The possible introduction of an extended residence permit to replace the permanent residence permit but we note that this will only be required if the link between naturalisation and the grant of status is not removed from the constitution.
- e) An assessment of the local job market in the Falkland Islands, excluding at this stage, MPC to assess the number of jobs that are filled by residents and those which are filled by people on work permits.

This study has just been commenced with the recent sending of a questionnaire to all local employers and businesses in the Islands. It is hoped that a very good response will be received for the questionnaire as the summary information produced will inform immigration policy in relation to the granting of permanent immigration status in the future.

Linked to this (and the matter which will be considered further when the results of the survey are concluded) is the possible establishment of a “skills advisory board,” which will study the employment situation and provide advice to Executive Council for immigration purposes.

During the earlier consideration of various policy matters, census data was referred to. In addition, information was received from the Chief Medical Officer regarding the demographics of the current population and the impact of older people on requirements for and cost of medical treatment. This information has been taken into account in designing the point system. The working group is also considering medical insurance requirements for people who may wish to retire here and is trying to find a cost-effective source of medi-vac insurance for people coming to the Islands as temporary workers.

At the present time the Immigration Policy Working Group are not considering making any recommendations as to the rate of population growth, however, the job market survey and the work of the “skills advisory board” will assist in determining levels of permanent migration we might wish to see here in the different skills areas.

The Honourable Mike Summers

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for that very extensive reply. I think he would agree with me that this is a very complicated subject and one that requires close consideration in all areas because it affects a lot of people personally. I hope you would agree that the clarifications we have been able to make recently in the discussions on the constitution will help this process to move along.

If I may, I would just like to congratulate all those involved in this process so far because it hasn't been an easy process. I wish them good fortune in finishing it in the very near future so we can have our new Immigration Policy in place well before the end of this Council.

The Honourable Mike Rendell

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I support the sentiments made by the Honourable Mike Summers and wish to make it absolutely clear that I have had a very little hand in this because I have only recently become the Chair of this Committee. I would like to make it very clear that there's been a tremendous amount of work done by my predecessor as Chair – the Honourable Janet Robertson and her colleagues and Officers and they've done a really good job. There is still a lot of work to be done and there needs to be close co-ordination with the community and businesses. I should also make it known that at the last meeting we held we believed as a result of the outstanding issues that there was a lack of resource to carry on and complete the

work and, at some stage in the near future there may be a request for more resource to carry on and complete the work.

Clerk of Councils

Motions

Motion No 1 of 2008 by The Honourable Andrea Clausen

“That this House supports the principle of positive discrimination in favour of Falkland Islands Status Holders but not the current policy of preferential treatment of Falkland Islands Status Holders in the workplace.”

Proposed by the Honourable Andrea Clausen and seconded by the Honourable Janet Robertson

The Honourable Andrea Clausen

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, throughout the history of the Falkland Islands and until as recently as the 1980s Falkland Islanders have had very few opportunities to secure a good education for professional employment. As a result, of the lack of opportunities many Islanders left the Falklands in the mid 20th century to seek a better life.

1982 was a catalyst for change. There was a realisation that we needed a work force that was capable of rebuilding the country and developing the economy. In order to progress this, an aggressive programme of education and training was established, enabling Islanders ready access to free, further and higher education.

At the same time the Constitution was reviewed and the resulting 1985 Constitution made provision for positive discrimination in favour of Falkland Islands Status Holders. This allowed subsidiary legislation to be enacted, enabling Islanders to prevent the erosion of their culture and identity.

However, even subsequent to the constitutional provision, Falkland Islanders were not always afforded a fair chance, for example, in the allocation of licences in the newly established fishery in the mid 1980s.

However, more recently this has been rectified through the recently adopted Fisheries Conservation Management Ordinance 2005. The constitutional provision was made use of by requiring all shareholders of companies applying to be on the ITQ eligibility register to be Falkland Islands Status Holders.

The Falkland Islands Government currently operates a policy of preferential treatment for Falkland Islands Status Holders in the workplace. This is catered for by a public service policy and via discretion afforded to the Principal Immigration Officer under the Immigration Ordinance.

The public service policy of allows for an order of preference in making appointments and this is subsequently catered for under the Management Code.

The order of this preference is firstly, a Falkland Islander having status as described under section 17.5 of the Constitution. Secondly a person who holds a Permanent Residence Permit or their spouse who is resident in the Falklands and lastly, anybody else.

Where an appointment panel is faced with a choice between Status Holder or a PRP Holder and a Work or Residence Permit holder the person higher on the preference list should be appointed provided that he or she meets the minimum person specifications for the job i.e. so long as the minimum person specifications are met the higher Status or PRP Holder will be appointed regardless of whether or not they were the best candidate for the job. So this policy does not allow for the appointment of Falkland Islands Status Holders or PRP holders to take place only when all other things are equal.

The Governor can direct a departure from the policy in a particular case. However, there is no guidance in place to determine when the Governor might exercise this power.

Outside of the Public Service the Principal Immigration Officer deems Falkland Islands Status and PRP holders to have the same entitlement to work as they are free from immigration restrictions.

Unless otherwise directed by the Governor the Principal Immigration Officer may require any employment vacancy to be advertised in the Falkland Islands before considering any application for a work permit. The employer must satisfy the Principal Immigration Officer that it is necessary to engage a person requiring a work permit rather than engage any person having a right of residence in the Islands.

In coming to a view on whether it is necessary to engage a non resident the Principal Immigration Officer is guided by the principle that the essential minimum person specifications should be proven.

Because many employers do not have detailed person specifications like the Government, this is often based on a job advert and a broad outline of a particular post. Sometimes employers are taken to task for what is seen as blatant over-specification of the duties and requirements for a particular post.

Provision made by the 1985 Constitution and the subsequent policies of preferential treatment in the workplace have enabled many Falkland Islanders to gain the appropriate qualifications and experience to take up pivotal roles within our community, which in the recent past were occupied solely by non-residents.

However, I believe the continued application of this policy raises two significant issues which should be considered.

Firstly, are we content that the application of a minimum specification in the case of Falkland Islanders is an appropriate way to deliver the highest possible standards within our workforce in the long-term?

Secondly, is it right that the Falkland Islands Government should be able to dictate financial risk to the private sector?

I believe that we should strive to promote the best possible standards so that our workforce is capable of delivering a sustainable and flourishing economy. I also support the principle of ensuring Falkland Islanders have the best possible opportunities but not at any cost. I believe we should have a policy of preferential treatment of Falkland Islands Status holders in the workplace but I feel that this should be restricted to all things being equal.

It is appropriate that any employer public or private should be allowed discretion when considering exposure to financial risk. If an employer wishes to appoint a person to a post who isn't necessarily the obvious best candidate then they should be allowed to do so. Likewise, they should not be forced to appoint a person who they believe is going to harm their business.

The Honourable Janet Robertson

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, I support the Motion but reserve my right to speak until later.

The Honourable Mike Summers

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was shocked to hear towards the end of the Honourable Andrea Clausen's presentation that she doesn't appear to support her own motion. She said that she supports the current policy of preferential treatment. What she doesn't appear to do is to support the administration of it and with that I have a good deal of sympathy.

The issue of positive discrimination in the Falklands is critically important and I do not think that any of us could possibly object to the first part of the Motion. That is "that this House supports the principle of positive discrimination in favour of Falkland Islands Status Holders." We had a discussion on that very issue in the Constitutional discussions recently and some of us around this table have had some very active discussions with the Foreign Office and others before about the rights of Falkland Islands Status Holders to have preferential treatment in a number of areas. The issue of ITQ, I think, is a good example – one that we argued relatively strongly recently and won against some pretty stern resistance.

When you move to the issue of employment I feel equally strongly about the policy of ensuring that Falkland Islanders are afforded positive discrimination in respect of employment.

It is, I think, a key issue to do with the development of Falkland Islanders and Falklands' people and Falklands businesses and Falklandisation of things that we haven't necessarily been able to provide in the past.

Any assistance we can provide the Falkland Islands' people to do that, I think, has to be encouraged. Therefore, I think the policy of giving preferential treatment to

Falkland Islands Status Holders in the workplace and everywhere else should be thoroughly and vehemently supported and will be by me.

I have some sympathy for the Honourable Member's views about the administration of that policy in certain respects and particularly in respect of the administration of the policy for the private sector. It is relatively easy to administer in respect of the public sector but the way that it crosses over to the private sector is not quite so easy and I think some more thought and discussion would be much welcomed there.

But having said all of that, I do not think that is sufficient reason not to support the policy of preferential treatment of Falkland Islands Status Holders in the workplace and, I do not therefore support the Motion.

The Honourable Richard Stevens

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to participate in this debate and put forward my views. I think it is a very important issue and I certainly support discrimination to a degree and I think what I would like to focus on is the development of the mechanisms that we have in society to allow Falkland Islanders to understand how to achieve their aims in their own careers.

We have talked before about succession, training, succession paths, and how we would develop them so that people would know where they need to go and what they need to do to achieve those aims. There are possibilities where discrimination might work against the people that we are trying to help. If we were to promote people prematurely and then, perhaps, they weren't able to do the job and perhaps, in the longer term this would damage the very thing that we were trying to do.

Equally, it's something of judgement where you want to promote someone and you might not have all the mechanisms that you would like. People might not have the training that would be available elsewhere and at some stage there has to be a judgement and, I accept that.

I've got two children in higher education at the moment and they will be returning, hopefully, to the workplace in the next few years. I would certainly like to see them get really good jobs. I would like to think that the natural forces in the workplace would come to bear on them so that they would get the jobs because they are Falkland Islanders but they would also get the jobs because they wanted to be good at that job and achieve their aims, their dreams.

I support the principle of positive discrimination but I'm not quite sure that I can support this particular Motion.

The Honourable Janet Robertson

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think it's quite clear from what people have said, the principle of positive discrimination is something that we all agree with and, indeed the principle of positive discrimination in the workplace. What is really up for discussion here is what people think about the current policy of positive discrimination not just how it is applied but the policy itself.

There has been quite a lot of discussion in recent times. A lot of people phoned me up, it is the sort of thing that people talk about in the street. The fact is that the current policy doesn't really keep very many people happy and causes a certain amount of resentment and confusion from two angles. On the one hand there's the employer who feels they are pressured into employing staff who they do not think are best suited for the job and, on the other hand, by those who feel that Falkland Islanders have been bypassed in the workplace in favour of others due to the manipulation of the policy. There is also a further view, quite widely held, that the policy is not evenly applied by both the public and private sector in equal measure and, that the public sector on occasions bypasses the policy when it's convenient to do so.

The fact is that the current policy is not really achieving what we would like it to achieve. It is open to manipulation. We have seen a lot of evidence of this. The one that really comes to mind is the advert in recent years for a teacher of German and one of the requirements for this was experience in deep-sea trawling. There was actually one person in the community who fitted this and I don't think it was a Falkland Islands Status Holder. The fact is that adverts like this can be picked up and the employers in question can be challenged and made to re-word their adverts.

But firstly they have to be spotted and secondly it does require an in depth knowledge of wide-ranging disciplines on the part of the authorities to enable them to accurately access the objectivity of an advert and to know whether certain specifications are required for the job or not.

There is another drawback that Councillor Clausen has mentioned and this is quite simply that if the policy is applied rigidly, Falkland Island status holders might rightly be of the view that they don't need to meet with the best candidates for the job but only with the best Falkland Islands Status Holders.

We know that Falkland Islanders are capable enough and increasingly sufficiently trained, educated and experienced enough to satisfy a great deal of our skills requirements in the Islands. They also generally have an added advantage of being able to provide local knowledge and continuity and I think that should not be underrated.

It is a disservice to these people as well as to the Islands as a whole, if the ability to get the best service and the highest standards is compromised due to a policy which does not encourage all applicants to be highly competitive.

I think there are a number of issues, if the motion were to go forward, that we could prove that the current policy needs revisiting. There are a number of areas that I think we could take into account when we do this. And any preferential policy should certainly note it.

Firstly is the need to have an effective careers advisory body in the Islands.

Secondly that in situations where a Falkland Islands Status Holder may not be the most competitive person for a particular job but provides evidence of the ability and

skills to develop into that job at a later date that advice and guidance is provided so that the applicant is clear what skills and particular experiences might be lacking. This provides the person with the opportunity and the encouragement to develop in relevant areas. There is a practice and I don't know whether it's got a legal basis, but generally a standard letter to someone who has applied for a job and doesn't get it is, "I regret to say, on this occasion, your application was unsuccessful." This doesn't tell the person who is applying for the job anything about why they did not get it, what they might be lacking in terms of experience or skills whatever it is. I think it is important for us to be able to incorporate within the policy at least have the view and actively pursue it that those Falkland Islanders who quite clearly are moving successfully in a certain path and in a certain career should be given the right guidance and the right encouragement. We have had situations recently where some guidance in this matter would allow that person to progress to very top positions here in the Islands. We really need to do something more active about it.

Thirdly, that the immigration policy provides for a system of skills and jobs analysis in the Islands which will allow the authorities to balance skills shortages against fluctuations in the labour market. This essentially means that at times when unemployment is identified as occurring work permits may be restricted despite identified skills shortages. Quite simply, if you perceive that there is a growing problem of unemployment in the Islands, it doesn't seem likely at the moment but if that should happen, even if there are identified skills shortages, which you would want to take or import from abroad we would really have to look at that and see what you could do within your current labour market to fill those skills shortages.

That FIG specifies that job specifications stipulate adequate minimum requirements for the job to be done well and actively avoid over-rating skills and experience, which are not relevant. Really what I mean by this is that when young people very often have to start fairly lower scales and they hope to move their way upwards, if those jobs at the lower end are being advertised and requiring skills that are beyond the young person then quite clearly that young person is always going to feel at a disadvantage to someone that is already doing that job for many years. We must be careful when advertising jobs that you are not demanding of the applicants more than is actually necessary and that people who are more qualified than the job requires should not necessarily be seen as having a preferential, being in a preferential situation with regard to that job. At the end, what matters is they fit the job specification not that they have more than what the job requires.

In considering all angles, I do obviously support the Motion. I would like the current policy to be revisited and I would like to have further discussions on how we might achieve this.

Thank You.

The Honourable Ian Hansen

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it's become very obvious from what my colleagues have said that this is a far more complex issue than actually the Motion suggests as written down. I think to avoid being repetitive, Councillor Stevens mentioned a few things I definitely would support as did Councillor Summers.

I take Councillor Robertson's point of it is a wider issue and perhaps we should be concentrating on the policy and how it works.

But to be brief, Mr Speaker, as the Motion stands, I cannot support it.

The Honourable Richard Cockwell

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, I, too am confused. The Motion says that we do not support the current policy of preferential treatment of Falkland Islands Status Holders in the workplace. The Honourable Janet Robertson has herself recommended that we revisit the policy. That is a very different issue than not supporting the policy. I think because of that I believe, yes, we should revisit. I think that we should look at the application of the policy and clarify it both for the benefit of the private sector and for the public sector. But the way the motion is proposed, I cannot support it.

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will be very brief. It seems simple to me that on the one hand of course we must push forward with the opportunities for Falkland Islands Status Holders. Of that there is no doubt. My own experience tells me that sometimes you have to make a decision as an employer and it isn't always that easy but sometimes you do have to make a difficult decision and justify that to the Immigration Department. Eventually there comes a judgment. I do not support this motion but I also think that we should revisit the current policy. The new, proposed skills board, I really hope it would not be too top-heavy with members of the Civil Service. The private sector is a large and ever-growing part of the Falkland Islands economy. I wouldn't like to see the day coming when an employer was having his case heard by a group of civil servants who do not have any experience outside of Government. I repeat I do not support this Motion.

The Honourable Mike Rendell

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I agree with the Honourable John Birmingham's sentiments that I was going to make as a former, fairly large employer. I have always found that the item that seems to be missing from this conversation is, who's the best person for the job? That, I think, is what the employer is looking for, the best person for the job, whether they are a Falkland Islands Status Holder or not. That's the natural inclination and, I think one's personal view is that you get the best person in fact you try to get someone better than the job specification that you are looking for because you would be looking in the long term to that person developing.

This is the practical side of it that we tend to overlook the broad principles. Whether that person is a Falkland Islands Status Holder or not is, unfortunately for the employer, of secondary importance. All we can hope in all this is that if Falkland Islands status holders can see that they are competing for the job because they have the skills to carry out the job rather than the fact that they are a Falkland Islands Status Holder if that can be achieved then I think we are getting somewhere.

I'm not sure, in lots of cases, whether we are actually doing that. I think the message needs to be fairly clear that we do need Falkland Islands Status Holders to strive to fulfil all the requirements that are required of senior positions in particular, rather than what some might or might not do, sit on their laurels and assume they are going to get the job anyway.

I think that is not the way we want to go. So, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Andrea Clausen

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, firstly I would like to thank everybody for enabling me to bring this relatively sensitive subject to the floor of the House for discussion. That's actually the main aim of my motion. It would not surprise you at all that it took me ages to come up with the words which have, nonetheless, resulted in some significant confusion.

I am not terribly concerned about that, actually because the aim is to have the debate and listening to what everybody has said today, in actual fact, I think my aim might well be achieved, which is that we all support the principle of positive discrimination in favour of Falkland Islands Status holders and we all support a policy of preferential treatment of Falkland Islands Status Holders in the workplace but not necessarily the current one. Or, we need to think about ways of administering the current one better. That gives me some hope because actually that's what I would like to see us do next is to talk some more about that.

There has already been a paper gone to Executive Council which is out for public consultation. I, myself, have been contacted a number of times. I don't know if other Members have but it is a large subject and I hope that we can take it forward and try and – if nothing else – better administer our current policy.

I don't think I'll add any more than that. Sir, I support the motion.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, my checklist here there were five against the motion and three in favour.

Agreed.

Clerk of Councils

Orders of the Day – Bills

The Supplementary Appropriation (2007/2008) Bill 2008. This Bill requires a first reading.

The Honourable Financial Secretary

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is the second Supplementary Appropriation Bill to be presented for the current financial year. Its purpose is to authorise the

withdrawal of an additional £511,000 from the Consolidated Fund to meet supplementary expenditure approved by the Standing Finance Committee for the following reasons:

1. £350,000 for Health and Social Services to supplement the Medical Treatment Overseas Budget to meet the expenses of patients currently undergoing treatment overseas, for patients with set referrals and patients with new referrals.
2. £7,000 for the Registry for the estimated cost of the recent by-election
3. £12,000 for Courts for additional work carried out by the Chief Justice
4. £10,000 for central administration to enable an ex-gratia payment to be made.
5. £132,000 for the transfer payments. Of this sum, £17,000 was approved to fund additional claims for energy grants in Camp and £115,000 was approved for the Falkland Islands Development Corporation to fund the purchase of four additional animal transfer crates to be used by the ferry service in support of the meat industry.

I beg to move the first reading of the Bill.

The Honourable Chief Executive

I second the Motion.

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that the Bill be read a first time is there any objection to the Motion? There is no objection to the Motion the Bill will be read a first time.

Clerk of Councils

The Supplementary Appropriation (2007/2008) Bill 2008

The Honourable Financial Secretary

I beg to Move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that the Bill be read a second time. Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion? No, in that case Honourable Members may we adopt the short track procedure?

Agreed.

The Motion is that the Motion be read a third time and do pass. Is there any objection to the Motion? There is no objection, the Bill will be read a third time and passed.

Clerk of Councils

The Supplementary Appropriation (2007/2008) Bill 2008

The Planning (Amendment) Bill 2008. This Bill has been published in the Gazette therefore we go to the second reading.

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, this Bill repeals Section 112.2 of the Planning Ordinance. At present this section forbids the Planning Officer from attending the consideration of a planning appeal at Executive Council. This means Executive Council cannot benefit from the professional advice and knowledge of the Planning Officer when considering an appeal. There is no real justification for this, as the planning Officer has no real vote on the Planning and Building Committee and so is not party to any decision taken by that Committee, which has been appealed.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

The Honourable Financial Secretary

I second the Motion.

Mr Speaker

The Motion is that Bill be read a second time, is there any objection to the Motion, does any Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion?

The Honourable Janet Robertson

I was just wondering if the Honourable Chief Executive might not consider that, in cases of appeals that the appellant might feel that, as they are not represented at all, that Government's point of view is well represented and well defended in Executive Council.

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, yes, I can understand that point of view. Nonetheless, the fact remains that the Planning Officer has not been party to the decision that was taken initially. Of course, they have given professional advice. We need to consider that Executive Council does need professional advice on each decision. Unfortunately, here in the Falkland Islands we only have a limited number of people who can undertake that role and for this reason I remain of the view that this is a sensible Bill.

Mr Speaker

Thank you Chief Executive, does any other Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion? May we therefore adopt the short track?

Agreed.

The Motion is that the Bill be read a third time and do pass. Is there any objection to the Motion? There is no objection the Bill will be read a third time and passed.

Clerk of Councils

The Planning (Amendment) Bill 2008.

The Motion for Adjournment

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this House stands adjourned *sine die*.

The Honourable Mike Summers

Mr Speaker before I speak to the Motion for Adjournment, if I may carry out a pleasurable task. It has been the tradition of this House that Members that have attended are given a Falklands CPA tie, effectively the Legislative Council time at the end of their tenure. In some discussions recently we thought that was a slightly odd idea because it means you can't wear your tie all the time you are a member of the Legislature but once you have left you can. We have reversed that policy, I'm happy to say and we will now pass ties to the new members of the Legislative Council. This is the first appearance of the Chief Executive; this is the second appearance of the Attorney General and the umpteenth appearance of the Commander British Forces, but it gives me pleasure anyway to pass these ties (conservative blue for the Chief Executive, maroon for the Attorney General and an appropriately maroon one for the Commander British Forces).

Mr Speaker, if you wish I will continue with the Motion for Adjournment. I am going to be very brief, not least because there is a very important golf match going on today and it's important that we don't drag on too long.

I have just two things to say. First is to congratulate my Honourable friend for bringing the Motion on Positive Discrimination. It's unfortunate, I think, that it got sort of slightly confused but it's important that we have these debates in the House. The administration of the policy is clearly very important to all of us going forward.

I only want to raise one substantive issue and it is this, that it's come to my, and I guess other people's attention in the last few days and weeks that some people in the community seem to think it's appropriate to carry offensive weapons and knives in particular. It is not, I mean, absolutely it is not. Not only is it a bad thing to start with but it presages, perhaps, in the sort of thing that's going on in the United Kingdom, where there are children murdered almost on a daily basis and half of them these days aren't even reported because it becomes so common.

We have a zero tolerance policy here on drugs. It's my view we should also have a zero tolerance policy on people carrying offensive weapons and knives in particular in the community where there is absolutely no need to do so.

It is regrettable, I suppose, but inevitable that it is kind of a cultural thing and it is regrettable at the moment, it seems to be some members of the Chilean community who are carrying knives. They might not be the only offenders but those are the ones

that I have heard about. Perhaps it is a cultural thing in their country. It is not a cultural thing in our country. We don't approve of it and we should not put up with it.

So I would like to encourage all Members to support the sentiment and to encourage the Chief of Police to ensure that if there is any carrying of knives in our community, outside of people's legitimate work requirements that he stamps on it very, very firmly and make sure that it does not continue to happen.

Mr Speaker I support the Motion.

The Honourable Ian Hansen

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support the motion I would just like to add my welcome to our new Chief Executive, and his family. Having looked at his schedule over the next year or so I am not sure he is going to get much time to socialise but I hope he finds a few minutes to find his way around our community a bit.

I would also like to welcome back Councillor Birmingham to this assembly and congratulate him on his by-election win.

I was quite pleased to hear that the issue of freight rates, both land and sea for the new coastal shipping service were under discussion at the last TAC Meeting because this is of undoubted interest to the people to whom the service will provide. I believe that those involved in setting initial rates do now have some indication as to how much or to how charges will be made, how much they might be and how they are to be implemented. If this is the case, I would really urge that these initial figures be put out to the public as soon as possible before rumour control and mis-information actually cause more concern to the customer.

There was a remark, I am not sure if it was a remark made somewhere or something I saw written down along the lines that the Falkland Islands Government did not want to create a service that required even more of a subsidy than the existing one. On the face of it, that's a perfectly sensible position to take. But it isn't realistic because it does beg the question as well, even on broader issues, I guess, but specifically on the matter of providing services to Camp, which is something that has always been subsidised. It begs a question that should Councillors priority be to save money by reducing subsidies to services, and therefore in all probability actually reducing the services currently on offer. Or should their first consideration be to not only maintain the current services but to actually improve on them? There is a bit of a balancing act there and always keeping in mind there is a fundamentally important thing that I keep saying time and again and I will say it once more, that the cost to the customer has to be affordable to the customer.

I will just leave you with that thought. I support the motion.

The Honourable Richard Cockwell

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, In deference to the Honourable Mike Summers, I would hate him to miss his golf match so I will be very brief. I too, would like to

welcome the new Chief Executive. I look forward to working with him in the next two years, anyhow and also it is good to see my colleague, the Honourable John Birmingham who has been with me most of the time while I have been on Council.

Just brushing very briefly on what the Honourable Ian Hansen had to say about freight rates, I think people need to stop looking at what they think they see and actually trying to see exactly what is being said. I know it is confusing at the moment but I think people really, instead of going into the paper and writing long condemnations of things which turn out to be fictitious, they actually try and get the facts. I do agree that we need more publicity on these issues and I believe in the long run the Camp will be served well but it needs to be very clear exactly what's being proposed.

Just one other thing I would like to mention is the visit from the MPs from Britain from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association from Westminster, it was a great pleasure to have all four of them here. It was very good for us to be able to describe the Falklands, let them see life in the Falklands – what makes the Falklands tick. The more people who come from Westminster to understand that, the better understanding we will have and the better support we will have on issues which can appear to be quite confusing from the London end. I do welcome their visit. It was very good of them to come and we look forward to another visit.

Other than that, just to say that I fully support what the Honourable Mike Summers said about carrying knives. It is unacceptable, it cannot be allowed, although we do have to recognise that in the agricultural community people do need to carry knives as part of their work. But other than that if you are not carrying out your work it should not be allowed. I fully support that.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable John Birmingham

In rising to speak to the Motion, I was not aware that there was a problem with knives and I have to agree that we do not want a problem. I do not know how big an issue it is, I carry a pocket knife on occasion which is very useful for taking stones out of golf balls.

I am allowed, as Mr Speaker said earlier on to speak for 45 minutes. The issue of a very important golf match fills me with excitement in the same way that going for a swim in the bay would at the moment but I won't keep Members waiting.

I would like to welcome the Chief Executive to the Islands and I notice he walks around, now that's a thing, isn't it somebody who walks? I also walk as well. Perhaps he will get a bike next the same as I have.

Since I have been re-elected six weeks ago I have been trying to catch up on things – trying to get my head around the new committee system. I am still trying to do that. I am holding back on saying anything about the new system publicly and actually in private too much, because I think it needs a few months at least half a year to get up and running. But my initial thoughts are that there really needs to be a balance between more involvement by elected representatives, balanced out with allowing

managers to actually manage their business. But I am sure we will come to that later on.

At the moment there's a lady visiting from Chichester College which I think may be the third, possible the fourth visit from that college to which we have been sending students for some years. She's been doing some talking to parents of students, who are at the college, also parents of potential students.

I think the next time somebody comes from there or Peter Symonds we might actually have an open meeting for parents and students who are a little bit younger. I do declare an interest, having someone in Year 10.

I was asked at the public meeting the other day about Boxer Bridge. I can advise the public that the Director of Public Works has assured me that the bridge itself is safe and that it's constantly under review. The approaches to the bridge need some works doing. But, of course, there will be, at some point in the future, the question of replacement and whether it would be replaced or not.

On Monday I accompanied the visiting MPs and Lords from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to Mount Pleasant and we had a very, very interesting day and I would like to thank the Brigadier for that. The trip onto HMS Clyde was quite exciting and, of course, it's the newest ship in the Royal Navy and a heck of a lot more efficient than the previous one. What struck me was the competence and confidence out at MPA at the moment. I have to constantly remind myself, although when the Tornados do fly over you sometimes think of this how, important the base is out there and it's very easy to become a bit complacent, and I try not to. As a community I think we should perhaps, remember how it came about that there is a Military base out there and the reasons for that.

Other than that, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Richard Stevens

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also like to welcome Tim. I think you will be my 5th Chief Executive with whom I have had a working relationship with. It seems appropriate this morning after such an interesting debate about opportunities for Falkland Islanders that I can say how pleased I am that Karen Steen has got the Deputy Head's position at the Infant/Junior School. It is great news and I wish her well in her new appointment.

I would also like to briefly talk about the issues of Camp and we probably will be living in a greatly changing world in the Falklands over a number of years and probably in Camp greatly changing over the last 10. And, when change comes along people do become apprehensive and during the by-election and also reading the Penguin News there are people that think that's negative or perhaps we are not doing enough. Perhaps it's because we are not getting our views across that things are happening. For instance, BFBS we are working towards a reliable, quality service that's direct into the homes. It hasn't happened yet but we are working towards it, which would be a great improvement on what we have, especially if you're a number of points along links from main positions like Mt Maria. Even Mt Maria does have its

off moments and we have snow-vision which is not novel but it's not really great for people to watch. It has served us well and it was a great provision from nothing but hopefully what we have planned will be the next generation, it will be an improvement and I hope it comes sooner rather than later. It is in the pipeline.

Cable & Wireless, again, things are beginning to happen roads are being built, the infrastructure is being built and people are making good use of the remaining good weather of this year. Hopefully the work will carry on when weather permits but at the end of the day we all want things to happen sooner rather than later but we have to be patient. We have to hope that being patient everything will go in and we'll have a quality system, we'll have a system that's as good as people have had in Stanley for some little while. It will be a great advance. Also the possibility is that in the near future, mobile phones will be considered. This will be a great benefit to people that live in the rural community for things like emergencies. It will be a great thing for people that travel through Camp for breakdowns or emergencies. So, there are positive things happening, there positive things on the move.

I know the Ferry has become rather controversial and Councillor Hansen has spoken about getting information out and I agree with that sentiment. I also think that it's a community effort and we might not get it right the first time but we've all got to work together for people that are providing the service and the people that are receiving the service. We have had to look at bettering what we are providing and we are trying to be flexible enough but in the end that we are providing something that's better to the majority of people. We might have to change some of our thinking about the concept of a ferry where there is a regular link between East and West for family and friends and the new opportunities it will bring for people who perhaps would want to move to Camp from Stanley, from elsewhere and have a viable living. Whether that's brought about by broadband, it possibly is. Although I have heard over the years, many people thought about they'd love to go to Camp, perhaps these facilities we are providing will make it possible for people to move from talking about it to actually doing it. I know of at least two people that are in the process of actually doing it once broadband is in place.

Another area, of course, of concern is FIGAS and isolated communities do feel very vulnerable when they talk about a restriction or a reduction or a service being withdrawn that they relied on and we have worked very hard in trying to sort this problem out.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Mike Rendell

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support the Motion, first of all, I would like to welcome the Honourable Chief Executive to our table and to the immutable style of the Honourable John Birmingham returning to entertain us from time to time. We need a bit of livening up sometimes, don't we? Let's face it.

I'd like to add on to some of the comments that my colleagues from Camp have made the Honourable Richard Stevens made his last comment about FIGAS and the way it operates. We will all have seen within the last week or so the report in the Penguin

News showing the ASSI (Air Support Safety International) teams view of how things can move forward. I think we all view this as being very positive. We were about to see that those three strips could have been closed down completely. ASSI believe and we should be quite clear at this stage that it's not all done and dusted, but provided we can go through the hoops which we are told we have to go through, those three strips should be able to remain in operation and fulfil the requirement which FIGAS does for everybody else around the Islands. I think a major contributing factor towards the ASSI recommendations is that they can see that FIGAS is operating in a very professional and well managed way. I think that was a crucial part of it from the discussions that we had with them.

Nobody's talked about the Constitutional talks yet. I found them very, very interesting and although I was, to a great extent, just listening, an awful lot of work went into that and it was a privilege to be there. I would like to congratulate the Chair of our Select Committee, the Honourable Mike Summers for the work that he put in, in particular towards the successful work that was done on the Constitutional talks. Well done, Mike.

“Hear, Hear”

My fellow Members also talked about freight rates, and the fact of the matter is that freight rates have not yet been finalised, so the discussions which you have raised will be there as part of the finalisation of those freight rates. We are hoping that they will come to Executive Council next month, we will obviously be looking at all the principles involved and coming to some sensible conclusions all things being equal.

Finally, we pride ourselves in becoming more and more energy efficient as we go on, we have got wind generators and bottle banks, but here we all are sat here, me, included, drinking bottled water. I don't know if people have been watching TV in the last few days, but the issue of bottled water has come to a head. It appears from what we hear in the media that a one litre of bottled water requires seven litres of ordinary water to provide it. So my proposal is that we as a group should set an example and should not be drinking bottled water around this table. I understand there are logistic complications with the quality of the water that is provided within this building but if we were all to take our empty bottles away with us and when we come back to the next meeting we bring our own water from our own houses we will save an awful lot of money. We do need to be saving money, don't we? The problem will be solved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members I support the Motion.

The Honourable Janet Robertson

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members I'm just trying to imagine what my bottle of water would taste like after it has sat at SFC for an hour and half, by the time it got here would be pretty horrible. Having said that I do actually agree with what the Honourable Mike Rendell is saying and of course one must always lead from the front.

I'd like to thank Councillor Rendell and Councillor Summers for their kind comments about immigration. I would like to add to that, Pete King puts a huge amount of effort into this, it has been added to several other tasks that he has on hand. That goes for Lynn Brownlee as well. This is all work that is really on top of their day job, we wouldn't have got anywhere without them.

Like Councillor Stevens I was absolutely thrilled to see that the beginning of the restructuring exercise that has been going on in the Education Department has led to two appointments, Richard Fogerty is Deputy Director and Karen Steen is Deputy Head Teacher and I'm glad that the restructuring has such immediate beneficial effects.

On the subject of Education, on Wednesday, we had GPC it was the most beautiful day and I was trying to see if I could peer out the window and see what was happening on the sports field, but I couldn't. I think there are a lot of parents around town that would have been absolutely thrilled to be able to go and watch their little darlings, running up and down the sport field. In the inspection report there was a comment made about general lack of parental support in the community for Education and I thought that was a little bit disheartening, because whilst there are things that we can do about teachers, about quality, about curriculum, any number of things about the actual structuring and management of the schools there is not much that we can do about encouraging parental involvement. That is something that really has to be borne by desire from the parents themselves to actually take issue and take involvement in what their children are doing. That is why I was thinking about the sport day, I think that is one area, Councillor Summers has mentioned in the past about how we need competitive sports, well part of the thing about competition is actually doing that for an audience, all competitive sports take place with an audience and these children put such a huge amount effort in. They are all trying really hard and yet they are only really doing it for each other because there are not really many parents who can go during the week. I was wondering if we could please think about how we might resolve that issue and see if we could not have sports events like that on a weekend.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my condolences to the family and friends of Leon Berntsen who passed away on Wednesday. He represented the best of Falkland Island farmers and his passing will leave a big hole in the south-west Falkland Islands.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Andrea Clausen

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members I have one thing I would like to mention today apart from of course welcoming the Chief Executive and also the Honourable John Birmingham back to this House. In fact it was John Birmingham who strongly encouraged me to stand for the General Election so it is quite good that I get to serve with him for the latter half of my term.

On the issue of offensive weapons, I absolutely, whole heartedly support a zero tolerance of that, we don't want to start on a slippery slope and the best way not to is to have zero tolerance and to make sure we follow it through very stiffly.

In my new portfolio I'm on a very steep learning curve. I have taken part in all meetings when I have been in the Islands of Standing Finance and two rounds of Budget, but as Chair of Standing Finance with and the responsibility for financial matters, which extends to the exciting subjects of tax and pensions, I have been getting very well briefed from those departments and have some more to go. In my new role and in the Chief Executive's new role we had an interesting discussion exchanging ideas, what shocked me quite a lot I think was when the new Chief Executive made a comment about the role of the Treasury and the perceived role of the Treasury in the Falkland Islands Government and this is no discredit to our Treasury. It is just that in other authorities where he has worked the role of the Treasury is absolutely solid and many section heads and department heads, directors have a very strong deep seated respect for the Treasury. I suppose when I sat and thought about it I wasn't really surprise that that might not necessarily be the case here given our relatively good times that we have had in the last twenty years. We have had a change in the approach I understand from the Financial Secretary that people did use to live in fear of the Treasury here, but following a restructure, department heads became more responsible for their budgets and so that fear dissipated to a degree. I don't think anybody should necessarily live in fear but I do think that everybody not just within the public service but within the community at large should have a very significant level of respect for the Treasury and for all budget deliberations. Certainly given some pressures going forward that we are going to have to deal with in terms of flat lining revenue. I hope that everybody in the community will be taking those issues seriously when we talk about them, I don't mean to try an alarm people I just want people to consider things more carefully. We have already approved the process of Medium Term Financial Plan, its important for everybody and they must recognise we are serious about this. People are going to have to make significant efforts to try and come up with options that we, Honourable Members, can consider sensibly going into this first budget process since we have approved in principle the Medium Term Financial Plan.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Financial Secretary

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members in rising to support the Motion we will soon find out if we are with the game I'm sure. I know we will have get used to it. I know a former Chief Executive referred to me as "Father Christmas" because we were so generous those days and he believed that the Falklands was the land of Father Christmas. Every day in the Falklands was Christmas day, it is a nice place. Mr Speaker, would like to take the opportunity for a bit cheeky advertising? At Standing Finance Committee today we had a presentation of representatives of HSBC, one of our investment managers and they gave a very informative presentation but there were only two members of the press in the public gallery and I would just like to inform everyone that there will be a repeat performance of that presentation in the Liberation Room at 5pm this evening and I would like to invite members of the public to share in the excitement of the presentation.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, thank you for asking me to respond to the debate on the Motion for Adjournment, I shall be brief. Can I just take the opportunity firstly to thank Members for welcome remarks but above all for the tie which I will wear both frequently and proudly from now on.

I will just pay respects to my immediate predecessor Mike Blanch who I feel achieved so much in such a short space of time of four months. They are indeed big shoes to step into.

Finally just to say how delighted my wife Alison and I are to be in the Falkland Islands again, very delighted indeed. We have already met a number of wonderful people and much looking forward to walking and many other activities over the next few years.

Mr Speaker

The Motion is carried the House stands adjourned accordingly.