



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

**HELD IN STANLEY
ON 27 MARCH 2014**

**RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
HELD IN STANLEY ON THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2014**

The Speaker of the House
(Keith Biles, JP)

MEMBERS (Ex-Officio)

The Honourable Chief Executive
(Keith Padgett)

The Acting Financial Secretary
(Lydia Morrison)

Elected

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

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

The Honourable Dr Barry Elsby
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Michael James Poole
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Phyllis (Phyl) Mary Rendell MBE
(Elected Member for Stanley 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
(Charles Peter Judge MBE)

Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands
(Air Commodore Russell La Forte CBE)

CLERK: Claudette Prior MBE

PRAYERS: Reverend Richard Hines

APOLOGIES: The Honourable Ian Hansen – Overseas
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

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**The Record of the meeting of Legislative Assembly
held on Thursday 27 March 2014**

Prayers

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, I wish you good morning and my usual request please, for telephones to be turn off, or at least silenced.

Clerk of the Assembly

Oath of Allegiance - Charles Peter Judge MBE and Lydia Eneida Morrison.

Clerk of the Assembly

Confirmation of the record of the Legislative Assembly held on the 27 February 2014.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, I have before me a record of our last meeting. Is it your wish that I sign this as a true record?

Honourable Members

Aye

Clerk of the Assembly

Papers 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 35(1) of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance 1977.

- Coins Order 2014
- Stanley Common (Megabid Spoil Tip) Regulations 2014

Falkland Islands Government Financial Statements and Audit Reports Laid on the Table in accordance with the provisions of Section 57 of the Finance and Audit Ordinance for the year end 30 June 2013.

- Annual Governance Statement
- Falkland Islands Government Currency Fund
- Insurance Fund
- Pensions (Old Scheme) Fund
- Capital Equalisation Fund

And for the year ended 31 December 2012

- The Retirement Pensions Equalisation Fund

The Honourable Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I hereby lay the aforementioned papers on the table.

Clerk of the Assembly

Questions for Oral Answer.

Question number 04 of 2014 by the Honourable Gavin Short

The Honourable Gavin Short

Can the Honourable Mike Summers please state if there is a policy in place for assisting families in the repatriation of persons who pass on whilst overseas on medical treatment.

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is not a written policy in place for the repatriation of a person who has died overseas. The Falkland Island Government Office in London makes all the arrangements between the hospital, the funeral home and Brize Norton and covers all the costs if the person has deceased in the United Kingdom. Generally the arrangements take between to 2 and 3 weeks to put in place.

The arrangements if a person is deceased in Chile are less clear and perhaps the purpose of the Honourable Member's question was to make sure that there is actually a written procedure in place and having discovered that there is not, I would be happy to undertake that such work should take place in due course.

The Honourable Gavin Short

I thank the Honourable Members for his reply. It was the purpose of my question to see whether there is such a procedure in place for people who pass on whilst outside the Islands receiving treatment at Governments expense, so I thank him for his reply.

Mr Speaker

Are there any supplementary questions?

Clerk of the Assembly

Question Number 05 of 2014 by the Honourable Gavin Short.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Can the Honourable Mike Summers please indicate if there is a policy for patients to be accompanied overseas at Falkland Islands Government expense when they are sent for medical treatment or diagnosis? If there is policy please explain what it is and if it differs between those sent to South America and those sent to the United Kingdom.

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a policy in place regarding relatives accompanying patients overseas. It is set out in the Medical Treatment Overseas Policy which was last approved at Executive Council in December 2013 and is therefore relatively current. A further amendment has since been made to this policy to clarify the arrangements for both parents of severely disabled children to accompany their child in specific circumstances. There is no difference to the arrangements between South America and the United Kingdom.

The Honourable Gavin Short

I thank the Honourable Member for his reply.

Mr Speaker

Are there any supplementary questions?

Clerk of the Assembly

Question Number 06 of 2014 by the Honourable Gavin Short

The Honourable Gavin Short

Thank you Mr Speaker, and I do apologise to the Honourable Member who thinks I probably have a vendetta against him this morning.

Can the Honourable Mike Summers please confirm whether it is true that the time that the opticians will spend in the Falklands has been reduced and if so, why was this visit shortened.

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are always happy to provide information to Members in the Assembly and to members of the public. I welcome the Honourable Member's questions.

In respect of opticians there is a visit by the optician for five weeks starting on 8th May and finishing on 10th June, 2014. The last visit was shorter and was curtailed even further because of a delay on the airbridge. Generally there are three visits a year depending on the optician's availability and the needs of the service. The next

visit will be closely monitored to check it is meeting the needs of all those who need to see the optician.

The Honourable Gavin Short

I thank the Honourable Member for his reply. This question was, or indeed as all three were, driven by questions that were posed to me by the public so I thought it better to ask them in the House and get them out in the public. I do thank him for his replies.

Mr Speaker

Are there any supplementary questions?

Clerk of the Assembly

Motions.

Motion Number 6 of 2014 by the Honourable Michael Poole.

“That this House recommends the adoption of the Draft Islands Plan 2014 -2018”

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have the privilege of introducing this Motion today really on behalf of the Assembly as a whole. Members of the public will likely be familiar with the Islands Plan and the concept behind it, however I will just take a few moments to talk through its role generally, and the process that was adopted in producing this draft document that we are looking at today.

This Islands Plan was first produced as such in 2002. It has continued in some form or another since then and has now spanned four different Governments by my count.

This Government, I think, has been one of the quickest in getting a draft to this stage and bringing it to the Assembly quite early in our term, which I think is to everybody's credit, and I would like to thank the Honourable Chief Executive, Directors and the Head of Policy (in particular) for the hard work that has gone into achieving that.

This draft document is a culmination of almost four month's work between Members and the civil service. Whilst previous versions of the plan were perhaps in part focused on an external audience, this document is much more domestically focused, it's really a manifesto for this Government so that our local constituents can see what we plan to achieve over the next four years, and can hold us to account if we don't. That is the theory behind it.

We made a very conscious decision that this draft is a combined vision for the Islands, but also has some practical detail in there as well. This draft was produced based on individual Members' manifestos during the election process and also was combined with the policy priorities of the civil servants themselves. Therefore it's a very collaborative process and naturally includes a degree of compromise, and looking at how we can combine a longer term vision into some practical details. So whilst it may not be visionary enough for some, it may not be practical enough for others. I think it strikes a good balance between the two. It certainly helps to give us a sense of direction and gives the civil service an idea of what this Government, what this Assembly, is about.

The document itself, once formally adopted, will be made to look much prettier and much more readable. However, the draft currently contains 19 pages, with 10 different sections. I won't list those all here, but I will summarise very briefly the key changes from the previous version of the plan. I think those cover four main areas.

Firstly we have removed the section on the Government budget, and really that is because we have given more emphasis to Economic Development in this plan, I think, so that section on the budget has been changed slightly. We have also included a specific section on Infrastructure Development, which is clearly a priority over the next four years. Personally, I am very pleased to see that we have added a section on Community & Cultural development as well, which really focuses on our commitment to ensuring that we have an equal society, and also that our national heritage is protected. Finally, the fourth main change is that we have produced a separate section on the Environment, really showing our commitment to sustainable environmental practices within the Islands.

I think it is only right that I note that Members have discussed this draft in depth twice already. This was done privately within Gilbert House really because it would have been impractical to build such a document in its entirety within the Assembly itself. This is also our document as an Assembly, so I think it's right that we had a lot of input to it first before it got to this stage.

No public consultation has occurred to date mainly because I think we were elected to lead and this is really a culmination of us trying to do that. Today however, I do hope that you will hear some debate on why certain things were included, why certain things were excluded, and really get to hear individual Members' views on this document as a whole.

I think it is a good way to end this brief introduction by reading a section from the foreword to the Islands Plan, which says:

"None of us underestimate the challenges that lie ahead. We know that we will have to make difficult decisions, but we are all committed to an ambitious programme that will deliver high quality services and a secure economic future for the Islands".

Whilst we may differ on a number of practical details and our interpretation of some priorities may be very different amongst the eight members, I think this document clearly outlines our general vision for the Islands.

Thank you Mr Speaker, I propose the motion.

Mr Speaker

Seconded by the Honourable Jan Cheek.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very happy to second this Motion and hope that in due course Executive Council will approve the adoption of this draft plan.

I, too, would like to add my thanks to Jamie Fotheringham and the Policy staff and the Directors for the work they have done on it.

I am also indebted to our work placement student, Byron Steward-Reid for some very thoughtful and useful comment on the draft plan. In particular, his timely reminder of potential threats to our environment. I hope that he and others will be reassured that we on the Mineral Committee, Environmental Committee and Government as a whole have safety and the highest standards of environmental regulation at the centre of all our planning. I would also like to quote Byron in full on what he says about our Health & Safety Section:

In terms of safety, I think that much like in Brazil, we should have zero tolerance for drink driving as it is a major problem in our Islands. I also reckon that placing speed cameras at major accident points along the Mount Pleasant road would reduce the number of speeders, reckless drivers and thus reduce the number of accidents. And he is obviously a man after my own heart, he says - I also believe cigarette and alcohol taxes should be increased, moreover, I see underage smokers openly smoking around town, this is wrong and highly unhealthy. I think stricter rules should be set for underage smokers.

He also agrees with the plan to keep improving the local Falkland Islands Defence Force.

And he says *I also see it as very important and a good idea to continue implementing updated and modern plans for safeguarding of children.* I am sure we can all echo that.

I can also understand the unease that people, and it is reflected in Byron's report, unease people may feel regarding the extra immigration that may occur. And that is why we want to be sure that our immigration system is tweaked to ensure that it serves the needs of the Islands without putting our way of life at risk. I am happy with the fact that the new Islands Plan does look at things like quality of life and the

culture in the Islands, but our challenge will be the delivery of that plan in the next few years.

Finally the previous Islands Plan, in its small booklet format, went down extremely well at Party Conferences and other overseas visits that we did. I believe this document is sufficiently concise so that we can do something similar. I have had nothing but favourable comments from people on what we used to produce before and I am sure this fuller plan will have the same effect. I am happy to support the Motion.

Mr Speaker

Does any member wish to speak?

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support the Motion on the Islands Plan I actually do have a slightly jaundiced view on the Islands Plan. Having sat through months and months of Islands Planning in the last Assembly, the will to live did leave me on some occasions, and there was time that I just knew I was never going to get back. I started wondering how on earth did we get from 1833 until the first Islands Plan, but we did, we survived, the Islands progressed and thrived without it. However, it is a good thing to have a laid down vision of the way we want to go, certainly during the life of this Assembly and I think it's possibly through the suffering of the last Assembly that we managed to do it so quickly this time.

Just would like to pick up on a couple of points if I may. Roads is one of course (and it's almost a throw-away line under infrastructure in the Islands Plan) and that is to improve the quality of our road network through an ongoing Capital Works Programme, but really that does, I think, capture everything. I think that is our intention. Where we can, we must probably invest more than we already have been, in trying to do further works on rural roads. Even just investing a little bit of money will mean we will only stand still rather than going backwards at high speed as we are.

Immigration is a bit of a prickly issue, I agree, and I am still slightly bothered that I don't think anywhere in here there is the phrase that I love which is: "to protect the resident population", which surely must be the basis of any immigration system.

Apart from that, the only other thing that I would welcome which has been included in here is the section on Population and Workforce, and it says in here that we will "ensure that our employment laws are modern, flexible and fair, and prevent the exploitation of workers in the Falkland Islands." Something that I want to see come through this House during this term is a complete rewrite and review of the Workers Protection Ordinance, which I think now should go further than it did in the past, and include statutory sick pay and leave entitlement. Something that I know that quite a few of the lower paid do not get anymore.

On the whole though, I do support the Motion and look forward to seeing the glossy booklet when it comes out.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support this motion on the Islands Plan, I too accept that we have very many challenges ahead. Over the years I have seen the plan change many times, but then with my military background I recognise that a plan is only a basis for change anyway. I think we do need to change, and to continually look at the plan and make sure it is fit for purpose at any one time. I do agree with my Honourable Colleague Gavin Short, I think, roads and more importantly Camp tracks, are deteriorating and far more investment is required if we are to see them being brought up to anyway being in a safe and better state than they are currently.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Honourable Members, the Honourable Michael Poole was correct to observe that the Islands Plan has been through a number of iterations in its lifetime. The fact is the idea of Islands Planning was first introduced in this House by myself in 1996 when I was first elected. It took quite some time before the first Island Plan appeared but it did set the basis for some more formal business planning in the departments of the Government and deferring to my colleagues' scepticism for the whole idea of planning, I think we have actually seen a much better ways of working in Government as a direct result of it. I commend the process.

What the Islands plan should actually look like has been the subject of a huge amount of debate over the last several years and it depends, of course, what you want to use it for. If you want to use it as a public diplomacy document that's one thing, if you want to use it to guide the Government that's another, if you want to use it as a manifesto for the Assembly having come together as eight individual Members then that's another thing as well. I think what we have done with this Islands Plan is very much the latter. That what we have tried to do is to collect together the aspirations of all Members and create a sort of collective manifesto for the life of this Government and I think that's a good thing. It's now going to go to Executive Council if it's agreed here and then it will become Government policy. So it will be policy, the overriding policy, for the rest of this Government so I think in that context it has a real purpose.

I would just like to touch on a couple of issues that affect my portfolios directly.

Health & Social care is important in the Falklands and we have all made much of it over time, and there were regular and lengthy debates in the production of the Islands Plan about how many times we put in a reference to "it is affordable to do so", or

“where we can afford to do it”, because that condition is almost all of the aspirations that we have and none more so than in Health & Social care.

We are at a position now where the Health & Social Services budget is approximately 20% of the national budget, and we are at a position where the Medical Treatment Overseas budget is approaching 20% of the Health & Medical Services budget, 4% of the national budget. That’s a real challenge, it’s going to be a huge challenge for Members in the budget sessions going forward, and it’s going to be a huge challenge for the next several years. I just take that as an example, not because it’s not something we should be doing, but something we have to keep a close eye on, and working out for ourselves how we can aid that process for the best benefit of the whole community.

There are some other issues in the Health & Social care section which I very much welcome, particularly the plans for the needs of the elderly, and we are looking forward to the construction of a facility outside of the hospital environment. Members heard this week, yesterday, possibly the day before, the first framework if you like of the Vulnerable Persons Strategy that will provide a framework to support people in phases of life in the Falklands, and that will be the key piece of work not just this year, not just writing it down on a piece of paper, but taking it into your mind and having it as a philosophy of life, if you like, in terms of how we care for our community, how we care for vulnerable people, and that’s a phrase I have used actually in the past about the Rural Development Strategy. Strategies are not things written on pieces of paper, strategies are states of mind about the way that you approach things, and I think that’s really important in this overall document.

I will say no more about Health and Social Services, but a quick word on safety and security. I am very pleased to have been able to Chair the Assembly for the first quarter of this year and had the theme of the Protection of Children, Safeguarding Children as the theme for this first quarter.

We have achieved, I think, a significant amount of work in this time. We have received the first draft of the Safeguarding Children Bill and conducted two sessions of the Select Committee on the Bill, and there will be one more after which it should be ready for sending to the Assembly. So that is a good piece of work.

There is also some very good work going on in the Safeguarding Group about providing more and better information to everybody in the community on Safeguarding of Children, and its being approached in a very methodical and planned way. I would like to have seen some of it come forward rather more quickly, but I defer to the experts on the need to make sure that when we do set out the Educational Programme, if you like, for the safety of children we do it in a proper well-structured and informed manner.

So overall Mr Speaker, colleagues, I have always been a supporter of the Islands Plan. It has a real value in a number of ways and I think the way that we have approached it

in this Assembly is of real value. It is effectively the manifesto for this Government and I therefore support the Motion.

The Honourable Dr Barry Elsby

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support the Motion I too would like to welcome the fact that we have this draft document, it's not overly long, it's easy to read, and I hope members of the public will actually take the time and trouble to do so. It's also useful for Members because I think it keeps us on track. It's all too easy, I think, over the years to get side tracked into a different avenue, and it's good to have a document to look back on and say: well, actually, this is the area we thought we were going on this subject.

Of course people in the community won't have read this document yet so I wonder if they will bear with me if I just pick up on a couple of points. Under the one on Self Determination and Governance it says "*we will agree and implement new ways of consulting with and sharing information with the community to ensure greater transparency of, and community involvement in, policy development and decision-making*" and that is something we all want, that is something we all agree with. It's not down to Members of the Legislative Assembly to make the decisions in private. We are all committed to making sure that the public are involved in the decisions that we will have to face and make. There are some very difficult decisions coming up. There are many capital programmes we need to undertake. Be that a new school, be that an old persons home, a new power station, tarmacking the Mount Pleasant Road even. Needless to say, there isn't enough money to do all of those things and we are going to need to prioritise that, and Members will have their own view. We are also committed to asking members of the public what their views are, and if you want one thing done what else are you going to sacrifice. We will be taking that process forward as time goes on.

The other point I would like to touch on is that of education, and again it's my portfolio, but I think it's worth again reading out the heading that we started with under our vision of education and training, for the next few years at least: "*we will provide high quality, accessible education and training opportunities to support the lifelong learning aspirations and ambitions of the whole community. We must prepare our young people for jobs and careers that may not even exist yet*", and the point I would like to pick out there is the lifelong learning. That education isn't just up to the age of 18 or 21, when you do a degree, it is lifelong, and as this community changes and as this community develops, there will be a growing need for people who in their 30's perhaps who want to make a career change. We have to come up with new ways of making that happen without having to take their whole family to the United Kingdom or another country to undertake that training, so I see more use of the Training Centre. The Training Centre being developed in a way that it's not used at the moment to enable people to change that career if they so wish. Of course, it refers to the whole community and as my Honourable Colleague Mike Summers has said, Camp is a very important part of this and it's even more difficult for people in Camp at the moment who wish to take extra qualifications to do that. We have to change the

way that we use the internet, we have to do different ways to enable people in remote settlements to have the same opportunities of developing as people in Stanley would.

Finally, I would just like to touch on Health and Education again, I have a role in that and perhaps if I just read out one of the bullet points: *to place renewed emphasis on health prevention and promote healthy and active lifestyles to reduce the requirement for costly treatments (at home and overseas) in the longer-term.* My Honourable Colleague has touched on that already. There is an exponential growth in the amount of money we pay to send people overseas for treatment. You must remember that by the time we send someone overseas for treatment they are ill, and we are spending a huge amount of money on the Medical Treatment Overseas budget. At the moment that's essential, but if we are going to reduce that in the long term we have to invest in health promotion. As my Honourable Colleague says, at the moment health takes 20% of the national budget. Of that health budget, 20% goes on sending people overseas when they are ill. We spent approximately 3% at the moment on health promotion and we need to change that we need to make sure we spend more money and invest more money in preventing illness in the first place.

I would like to finally, just again, mention the Vulnerable Persons Strategy. During the election campaign many people were concerned about how we provide for people who have special needs in education, or special needs in their abilities to find work, or to live an independent life. I am very pleased to see that the Director of Health has brought forward the first stage in our Vulnerable Persons Strategy, and that came to Members just a few days ago. It's been a long time in development. It's a very difficult subject, but I think that it is vitally important that we take that forward because it is the future of our Islands. We can't ignore people with problems at the moment. We need to invest heavily if we are to give them the same opportunities as we all have.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

Mr Speaker

Any other Member? The Honourable Michael Poole, as Proposer it's your option to sum up.

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you Mr Speaker. Firstly, I would like to thank my Honourable Colleagues for their comments. I think as we can see, and quite naturally with a document of this nature, it is deliberately quite high level and whether it's talking about roads, whether it's talking about the Vulnerable Peoples Strategy, Infrastructure Development or any number of areas, it is a matter of interpretation. Clearly we have a vision that we want to complete any number of pieces of work over the next four years. What that detail will look like will clearly be defined over the coming months and years. Going back to the Honourable Gavin Shorts comments regarding protection for the local workforce and local community generally, I think that does exist in the document, and

the population workforce section does refer to ensuring that there is both an opportunity for local people to sustain work, and also kind of pairing that with a greater encouragement for overseas workers to make the Falkland Islands their home and to build a life here. I think as an Assembly we are committed to what my Honourable Colleague has described there. People will, as the Honourable Barry Elsby says, take a look at this document, read into it what they will and hopefully will come and talk to us about it. We have constituency surgeries on a Thursday evening, please do drop in, talk to us about the detail and we can further define what our vision is.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members the Motion before this House is that this House recommends the adoption of the draft Islands Plan 2014-2018. Is there any objection to passing that Motion? There is no objection, that Motion is therefore passed.

Clerk of the Assembly

Motion number 7 of 2014 by the Honourable Michael Poole.

“That this House approves the Stanley Common (Megabid Spoil Tip) Regulations 2014 in accordance with section 10 of the Stanley Common Ordinance”.

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I apologise for talking so much today, but it's just these two issues fall within my portfolio structure so I think its appropriate that I introduce them both.

This Motion is being put forward so that Members can comment on this regulation if they so wish, and hopefully approve it today following the necessary comment and debate.

The work leading up to this Motion began some time back, with Executive Council approving the policy principle in August of last year. It is only now coming to the Assembly because of workload within the Attorney General's Chambers. As many will be aware, as it stands today, spoil from a variety of worksites is currently dumped at a site behind Mary Hill Quarry. This site is now becoming overloaded and it also sits in the middle of a key nature site. Therefore it was thought appropriate to move this dumping site to a new area that has been designated to the South of Megabid. There is a natural valley there that can hold quite a number of tons of spoil dumping and that has been identified as the site. Dumping at the new site will be at the discretion of the Director of Public Works and people will only be able to dump there once they have received that appropriate approval.

If this motion is supported today, then the new site will become active from the publication of this regulation in the Gazette, which is hoped to happen on Monday, assuming we receive the approvals today.

Finally, I was contacted by a constituent a few days back who had asked the question as to whether marine debris could be dumped on this new designated site. The answer to that is: yes it can. It's not envisaged that will be done in any large quantity and it will be assessed on a case by case basis. Assuming the Director of Public Works and the Environmental Planning Officer are comfortable with that happening it can occur, if necessary.

I would like to finish by thanking the Attorney General's Chambers for ensuring that this Motion was brought forward today.

Thank you Mr Speaker, I propose the Motion.

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am equally happy to second this Motion and I would like to thank the Honourable Michael Poole for driving this forward, and of course, the Attorney General's department for producing the regulations. There had been, as the Honourable Michael Poole has said, real problems with spoil disposal and this less sensitive area of Stanley Common was identified some months ago. I welcome the fact that, hopefully, today we can accept the regulations to permit its use. I hope these regulations will ensure that its use will not impinge too much on peoples' enjoyment of the Common as whole because the Common belongs to all of us.

I support the Motion.

Mr Speaker

Do any Members wish to speak to the Motion?

The Honourable Phyl Rendell MBE

Mr Speaker, I support this Motion. I am delighted to see this piece of legislation here today considering it was approved by Executive Council last August. Spoil dumping has continued on the peninsula since then, and we've had a lot of representations from the public who believe that lots of wild flowers and so on have been smothered in that area. It's taken an inordinate amount of time to get this piece of work here, but now I am really grateful to the Attorney General's Chambers and particularly the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly for making sure that we were able to bring it to this Legislative Assembly and not next month's Legislative Assembly. The whole issue of waste management and disposal is quite a massive one for us, and we must start to get realistic about it and address it firmly.

I was the author of a report on the dumping of waste in Mary Hill Quarry together with Adam Cockwell, and I am looking forward to seeing some of the

recommendations we put in that report, in November last year, actually being taken forward. It does concern me that we as legislators and policy makers make these policies, but it does seem that the actions are not taken very quickly, and I do hope in the coming months that we can see much more speedy reaction to some of these policy recommendations.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Dr Barry Elsby

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support the Motion I think I would just like to clarify that people in the community might think “gosh, there is going to be a massive mound like a big slag heap sitting behind Megabid”. That is not the case, this area was well chosen. The idea is that it is going to be filled in, it’s going to be landscaped, and at the end of the day we might actually have a better appearance to what is, at the moment, a poor area of the Common. It is going to be treated sensitively and it’s not going to be left to look like a dump.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I actually support this Motion very strongly. I guess it comes in my direction now as Public Works, if it passes through the House today. It’s come just in the nick of time for us because we are about to kick off on some pretty major works down to the East end of town. It will be good to have this spoil dump which will cut down the wear and tear on trucks having to go to Mary Hill, and also the wear and tear on the road system itself so it’s nice and close and should cut down costs for contractors who do the work.

I do take exception somewhat to the statement that Public Works go out and about smothering local flowers. Well, if we have, it was certainly inadvertently. I know down by Mary Hill, when it was brought to our attention some time ago that it was thought that we were indeed dumping on top of some sort of flower, we stopped immediately and a survey was done with environmentalists. I think we found we were some way off whatever this plant was that we were thought to be attacking. Of course, down the East end on the peninsula the ground we were covering, of course, was not a natural occurrence. That ground which looked like a lunar landscape was actually the result of a camp fire down there many, many, years ago and I think actually the job that the Public Works Department have done in trying to landscape what has been dumped down there is actually a very good one. I think in years to come, once it greens over, it will actually look very, very, good.

That said though, I am happy that if this passes the House today we will have somewhere to dump spoil that should be hopefully a lot less controversial, so I thank you.

Mr Speaker

Does any other Members wish to speak?

The Honourable Michael Poole, it's your option to sum up if you wish.

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you, Mr Speaker, just very quickly I would like to thank the Honourable Dr Barry Elsby for making it clear that this new dumping site will be treated as sensitively as possible, and will be landscaped and made to look as good as you can at a site of this nature. As has been said, it does still sit within the natural nature reserve that is the Common. It's just hopefully a less sensitive site than the current one and any impact on the natural environment will be avoided as best it can.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, the Motion before this House is that this House approves the Stanley Common (Megabid Spoil Tip) Regulations 2014 in accordance with section 10 of the Stanley Common Ordinance.

Is there any objection to passing that Motion?

There is no objection, that Motion is therefore passed.

Clerk of the Assembly

Portfolio Reports and we begin with MLA Roger Edwards.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable Colleagues, firstly let me say a very big welcome to Peter Judge our new Attorney General who is sitting here with us today and was sworn in earlier. He arrived in the Islands only last Thursday, so has hit the ground running. He has big shoes to fill but I am totally convinced he is more than capable, welcome Peter to the Falkland Islands and to this House.

We dined out our departing Attorney General Mark Lewis on Tuesday last, and without exception we all wish him well for the future. Who knows, we may see him back in the Islands in another role very shortly. Anyone who can introduce a new sport to the Islands, and even see that sport represented during Camp Sports must be doing something right. The haul of medals for the Falklands over the past year has been highly impressive. Mark, we all thank you for your hard work over the past few years and, as I have said before, wish you well for the future.

On Tuesday last, Terrienne Ormond, who was recently promoted to the position of Assistance Director of Civil Aviation, underwent practical competency tests which

she passed with flying colours, excuse the pun, to become a fully licenced Flight Information Service Officer. This follows six months of training at Stanley Airport and three written exams which she passed earlier this year, and on which I commented at my last roundup.

The Criminal Law Review is at long last coming to an end, and I must give my thanks to Sharon Halford and Dick Sawle who were the MLAs from the last Assembly to undertake this daunting task. I had no idea what an intensive task it was and still is, but it is now drawing to a close and it should be able to come to Executive Council in May before going on to Select Committee.

It really has been a monumental task so Sharon, Dick and the Honourable Mike Summers, while not forgetting the laborious detailed work by Gillian Curl and the Attorney General's Chambers, thank you all for your hard work.

I move on now to the Treasury and I see Lydia Morrison sitting in today for Nicola Granger our Financial Secretary who is away overseas training, welcome Lydia to this House.

On the 3rd April we will see the departure of Clare Mitchell. She has done some sterling work for the Treasury and will be sadly missed. Good luck to both you and your husband, and we hope to see you back in the Falklands in the not too distant future. As one leaves we must welcome another new capital accountant Kizito Buzibwa joins us on Monday 31st March and we look forward to welcoming him to the team.

Lately we have all been busy with the start of the budget process. Members met on the 28th February to thrash out the budget strategy which resulted in the approval of nine main principles and these are:

- to spend within Falkland Islands Government means;
- no public sector borrowing for operating purposes;
- a reasonable level of funds are held in uncommitted reserves (this is previously known as net liquid assets);
- an appropriate level of funding is provided to maintain efficient and effective public services;
- to ensure appropriate funding of the Falkland Islands Government special funds, this is the currency and insurance funds;
- to ensure sustainable pension arrangements are in place;
- to seek to improve the quality of life in the Falkland Islands;
- to encourage economic development in the Falkland Islands;
- to strengthen infrastructure within the Falkland Islands.

The Committee also agreed for these nine principles to be set for the term of this Assembly. On the 19th March we took our first look at the subventions for the Radio Station, Conservation and Tourism, and we are now actively preparing for the first budget session proper on the 10th and 11th April.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I would encourage everyone to keep an eye open for the little oval plaques that have been appearing all over Stanley and in front of some of our most important historic buildings. We will, in due course, have these sites marked on a map of Stanley with a short description of what you are looking at. This scheme was the brain child of the Historic Buildings Committee and in particular I would like to thank Joost Pompert for his drive and input to this scheme.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, are there any comments or questions on that report?

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Member for his report I wonder if he could make a brief statement on the further progress with regulation of telecoms and fuel which also falls under his remit.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, indeed, we have formed a Telecommunications Working Group. That group has met a couple of times. Sadly, I was not aware at the time that this meeting was taking place. The next meeting is to be held on Monday next. Sadly, it was at 11am in the morning, and I am not sure I will be in. I have asked FIGAS to make sure I get in early so I can attend it and this is prior to an afternoon meeting on Monday with one of the Directors of BATELCO who is visiting the Islands, so we will have an opportunity to discuss with him on taking our policies forward.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, any other comments or questions?

We move on then to the next portfolio report from the Honourable Michael Poole.

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is my second portfolio update, and similar to a number of my Honourable Colleagues, I intend to focus in on 3 main issues today that I didn't cover in January.

I shall begin by talking a bit about the Falkland Islands Tourist Board, which I currently Chair, but with The Honourable Mike Summers as the second MLA sitting on that board currently. I am new to the tourism industry, I knew very little about it prior to November. I still know very little about it, and I have been a bit remiss in not

visiting some of the key tourism sites over recent months, but it's something that I am rectifying at the moment.

The Tourist Board itself is currently a privately registered company. I am sure many are aware, there is an intention from the 1st July of this year, to convert that into a Statutory Corporation, very similar in nature to the Falkland Islands Development Corporation, with a few tweaks to make sure that the structure fits with the tourism industry itself. I think this is a very sensible move, because even in these early days, I think something you can see quite clearly is that the Tourism Industry really needs a higher profile within the Falkland Islands Government. There has been a lot of work done by a number of my colleagues over recent years to try and raise that profile, and make sure that Government gives the industry the focus and the support and the investment, quite frankly, that it requires. I think there is some way to go in that regard, and that is something that I think the move to the Statutory Corporation will help us to achieve. Hopefully, we can really make sure that the tourism industry is factored into our discussions in the budget in infrastructure planning and policy-making generally as well.

Just staying with the Tourist Board for a second, we did, as has been mentioned, have our subvention request recently. I am pleased to say that the Falkland Islands Tourist Board subvention request, for the next budget year 2014/15, was approved in principle. That totals just over £800,000 so a significant amount of money. That figure is a combination of their annual operating budget and also of the money that was allocated to the Tourism Development Strategy in recent years as well. I think it is sensible that those two are merged together and we have one coherent body that is responsible for national tourism development effectively which, hopefully, from the 1 July if all goes to plan, we will have.

I will just move on now to the Lands Policy, at the moment I chair the Lands Committee with the Honourable Jan Cheek as the second. At Executive Council yesterday there was discussion on Lands Policy generally, and talking about agreeing a process for reviewing Lands Policy which I think has been a bit chaotic over recent years. There has been a number of different policy decisions and discussions that don't really fit together as a whole in my view. The Policy Unit are currently leading with the relevant people on producing a new Lands Policy which we hope to have agreed by this financial year, by the end of June is the intention. I hope that new policy will be more supportive of business development and investment than possibly the current one is, but we will see what the consensus view is on that.

Finally, I would just like to note that our public diplomacy efforts obviously continue apace. Our Honourable Colleague Ian Hansen is currently overseas for this very purpose in the Caribbean, and more trips are planned for later in the year as well. It's good to see that we have had a very positive response from recent inward visitors from South and Central America, and I would just like to thank the large number of people within Government and the community generally that always make these visits such a success.

So that's all from me. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members is there any comment or question?

The Honourable Phyl Rendell MBE

I thank you very much the Honourable Michael Poole. Just a couple of comments and one question in particular.

You refer to the Tourist Board and we have heard a lot of quotes recently that the Statutory Corporation will be in place by July, I would just like to have confirmation that that is being tracked, and that there won't be any delays and we will have the legislation in place so that we will have a Statutory Corporation in place by the 1 July. It seems to have been a very long drifting period of time from when this was agreed, but not actually implemented.

I would just like to comment too on the Land Policy matter that we addressed in Executive Council yesterday. We did approve the status quo of the current Land Policy whereby there are restrictions on what people can do with land to the East of FIPASS, and in that area which I view is designated as an industrial area. I am concerned about restrictions on activities down there, and any restrictions put on our private sector. I do think we have to let the private sector have the freedom to invest and develop and I believe that in time if we build a new port somewhere else, the industry will move to that area. So I do look forward to a full review of Land Policy as was mentioned in the Executive Council yesterday. We had this interim policy and I bear with that now, but I do look forward to the full review later in the year so we can sort out what you have described as rather a convoluted mess at the moment.

Thank you.

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would just like to perhaps add to and help my Colleague a little bit on the issue of the Statutory Corporation to be responsible for the tourism industry.

There has been a sort of an ambivalent attitude in the country towards tourism over many years, and there has been a lot of hostility to tourism or the administration of tourism for some reason that's entirely unclear to me. The important thing is that it is an industry, it's as big as agriculture in the Falklands as an industry, and it has an enduring life to it because it's hopefully a sustainable industry that will be with us long after the oil industry is long gone. It's important that we do invest in tourism here, and the level at which we have been investing over the years is approximately half of that that we have been investing in agriculture, and a quarter, or less than a quarter in fact, if you include the subsidies to Falkland Islands Meat Company and the like. So, as a Government, as a country, as a nation we haven't really given the focus to tourism that we ought to have done in my view. The idea of the statutory

corporation came about during the time that I was Chair of the Tourist Board in the last Assembly because it gives more focus in the Government of the responsibilities that we all have for the development and sustainability of this industry. I am happy to support my colleague in saying that the concept of the Statutory Corporation hasn't drifted. It had to find its place in the legislative drafting process and that's where it is. There are drafts available of the new Ordinance which I am sure all Members are welcome to see and comment on.

The other thing I would just like to do is to ask my colleague the Honourable Michael Poole if he has any views at the moment, or any plans to develop views in due course, on the role that tourism plays as an element of the public diplomacy programme? I think part of the result of our ambivalence towards this industry is that we haven't really grasped the opportunities that it provides to us to enhance the public diplomacy programme and to get all these people looking at the Falklands in a different way.

Thank you.

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will just begin by answering the Honourable Phyl Rendell's question which I think has been partly covered anyway, that we are very much aimed for the 1 July for the Statutory Corporation. There is a draft bill, it was reviewed by the Board only last week. It is currently sitting with me to go back to the drafter to feed in some more policy guidance on what we want to achieve there, so we are on track at the moment, things may happen, but as it stands today, 1 July is the aim.

I would like to thank the Honourable Mike Summers for his comments. There I entirely agree, and in relation to his question about the relationship between the tourist board and public diplomacy efforts – absolutely, there is a link. I think there is some work that goes on at the moment that naturally kind of feeds between the two. The Tourist Board locally is heavily involved in inward public diplomacy visits naturally, and of course, every visiting tourist is somebody that we can try and get our public diplomacy message across to. I think some of that is already done, but there is more work to do. It's not something I have given a great deal of thought to at the moment, but now it's been raised, so clearly I will do over the coming days and weeks and talk to the Tourist Board about it, and see how we can better combine the two initiatives.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Dr Barry Elsby

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, can I just touch on the Tourism Subvention. My Colleague the Honourable Michael Poole talks about £800,000 I wonder if you could give the public some idea of how that money will be used?

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you Mr Speaker. Thanks to my Honourable Colleague for the question. I don't have the detail in front of me. The majority of it, I think in the region of 30-40%, is on overseas marketing initiatives as you would expect, attending tourist expos and sales events and such and promoting the Islands generally. A fair proportion is on the day to day operation of the Jetty Centre and the staffing levels there, but I will make sure that you receive a detailed breakdown of that. Thank you.

Mr Speaker

Any other comments or questions?

We will pass to the next portfolio report by the Honourable Phyl Rendell.

The Honourable Phyl Rendell MBE

Thank you Mr Speaker, I am going to speak today about Natural Resources. Fishery is really topical at the moment, we have a lot of fishing effort going on and it's absolutely key to our economy. I will also touch on Agriculture. I won't be reporting fully on the Falkland Islands Meat Company. I will mention Falkland Islands Meat Company, but I will take the opportunity to report fully at the next meeting of Assembly when it's my portfolio turn to report, when the export season has ended, and I will touch briefly on the Rural Development Strategy.

The fishing effort is pretty much at peak activity in the Falkland Conservation Zone. At the moment we have 125 vessels fishing, and there are around 15 fishing vessels and reefers in Berkeley Sound for transportation operations.

A pre-season survey of the *Doryteuthis gahi* (*Loligo*) fishery took place in mid-February. The results showed a reasonable biomass of squid, although catches were quite average during the first three weeks of the season. Catches have increased recently and as reported on the radio, with the very blustery day of the Standard Chartered Bank Stanley Marathon on Sunday, there was a recording of the highest daily catch of *Loligo* since at least the year 2000, so certainly in this century we have had the highest catch. That was in fact 1102.3 tonnes for the day or an average catch per vessel of 68.9 tonnes.

The *Illex* fishery is proceeding steadily. Most activity is taking place in the northern areas of the FICZ/FOCZ, and again the cool conditions may have impacted on the extent of the squid's southward migration, but we are looking forward to that migration and trusting that the ships and vessels will move further into our zone.

In terms of Harbour Control; movements in Port William and Stanley Harbour have been restricted during the approach of the Noble Frontier Barge. I phoned FISHOPS this morning and they reported to me that the barge should be coming into Port William at midday today. The plan is for it to float into Stanley Harbour tomorrow, Friday, and be attached to the temporary pontoons. So that's quite an exciting day for all of us to see that new facility and that investment coming into the Falklands.

There has been quite a reasonable level of activity at FIPASS including transshipment to containers of fish by a number of vessels and companies.

The Honourable Ian Hansen, who is not here today, and I made a visit to Fortuna's brown trout fish farm at Moody Brook a few weeks ago. We have also been to Fitzroy and have seen the cages in the creek there, where the brown trout is being grown to commercial size. In addition, Fortuna will be constructing a processing plant here in Stanley. Both of us were really impressed with the investment being made by Fortuna and also the project management being carried out by Simon Hardcastle. We could see that there is huge potential for the growth of fish farming and for brown trout in particular. This could expand to the Camp and be another source of revenue and a new industry into Camp. We really are watching that project with great interest and congratulate those for having the vision, the foresight and the courage to invest in that business.

Finally, on the Natural Resources Department, there have been a couple of appointments made recently. Daniel Fowler has been recruited to the post of Biosecurity Officer in the Veterinary Section, and Dr Michael Gras has taken up the post of Stock Assessment Scientist in the Fisheries Department.

Like many of us, the Natural Resources Department is hosting Year 10 students, there are three at the Natural Resources Department this week, the Director John Barton does hope that they will be the future movers and shakers of that Department.

I will now just turn to Agriculture and speak to you about what's been going on with the Department of Agriculture. There was a successful National Stud Flock Ram sale on 8th March. All the stock on offer was sold on the day and the highest prices were on the young Artificially Inseminated (A.I.) Polwarth/Merinos, not surprisingly.

It's continued to be quite a challenging season for agriculture, with cooler conditions which is tending to put everything back from crops to the quality of stock, and in some cases it has meant that we have had some condition issues with stock going to the abattoir.

As I mentioned earlier, Falkland Islands Meat Company will complete its export season by the end of April early May and I will report to the House on the season when that's completed. When my colleagues and I were at meetings at Goose Green and Fox Bay this last weekend, farmers did express concerns about the use of the Hennessey Probe for fat scoring. We had some very technical discussions at those public meetings. There is concern out there, and I think we made it very clear that this is an issue for the producers and Falkland Islands Meat Company. It's not something for Members to become involved with unless we feel that there is some major issues there, but at the moment I do think that the two need to speak together: the new industry and the producers, and see if things can improve. Let's hope with a better season next year things will be better, but we do need to monitor and make sure that the two sides are communicating with each other.

At the recent Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting, there were several matters discussed, but in particular it was agreed that the Department of Agriculture would conduct a number of workshops this winter. The subjects for those workshops will include the National Stud Flock. We noted that we had a high demand on those rams that were sold and that perhaps we need to produce more on beef production. There is a gap in the beef market and more beef could be sold. Also, the control of CLA or boils (not the most pleasant subject to report on), but we do have, like many large sheep farming nations, an issue with boils. That impacts when the meat goes into the abattoir and we need to look at ways of trying to minimise and reduce spread of that disease. We need to continually review to see if it's relevant to what farmers are doing. Lastly we will also be supporting the Farm Improvement Programme farmers with body condition scoring on their stock so that they can check their stock closely before sending them into the abattoir, to ensure they have got the condition on that's required.

The Veterinary Section continues to deal with a number of import/export issues, but also at the moment, they are dealing with a matter of importing day old chicks, and I think we are hoping that they will arrive in the Islands shortly to be able to support production of eggs in the Islands.

Lastly on agriculture, the Rural Business Association are having their agricultural show on Saturday at Goose Green and I hope as many people as possible will go and have a jolly good day out.

On the Rural Development Strategy, a number of initiatives have been agreed by the Steering Group. One of those was the creation of provision for a mechanic to set up business on West Falkland to deliver services to people on West Falklands. I am pleased to say that David Thorsen has been appointed, and will set up a business shortly at Fox Bay. That is a good step forward. We are also dealing with the appointment of an Alternative Energy Advisor. Not only to advise people on alternative energy in the Camp, but also here in Stanley, and work is ongoing on the role of that post holder with the help of the Public Works Department.

As part of the development of Fox Bay as the Islands' first Rural Enterprise Zone, the Steering Group is reviewing the infrastructure and the needs of that village. There have already been improvements made to the water supply, and work is currently underway to establish the potential for the old Manager's House to become a focal point for new business and community facilities, and this could include space for doctor's visits, also play areas and a new business premises for people.

The Rural Development Strategy has funds allocated for projects in the Camp, and I am pleased to report that through the Falkland Islands Development Corporation (who manage those funds) around £37,000 has been awarded recently to applicants. The applicants have to match or even invest more than what the grant amount is. From the most recent applications a total of £120,000 is being invested into the Camp.

The Policy Unit is working on behalf of the Rural Development Strategy on a questionnaire on tax incentives for the Camp, and that's going to be circulated next week. The questionnaire, which I did brief people on at Goose Green and Fox Bay, will be seeking views on such things as, tax incentives for new businesses, tax incentives for additional employment of staff in existing businesses, and also on alternative energy investment and tax incentives on investment in plant and machinery and infrastructure. We really do hope we will get a wide number of views coming back and people will complete the questionnaire, not only in the Camp, but also in Stanley, and that the Chamber of Commerce members and those running businesses in Stanley can give us their views as to whether such tax incentives would be an attraction to them to investing in the Camp.

The post of co-ordinator for the Rural Development Strategy is currently not filled due to changes in the Falkland Islands Development Corporation structure, but it's expected that this will be addressed at the next board meeting in April. Meanwhile, I would like to thank Nuala Knight for all her work in support of the Rural Development Strategy Steering Group. Without a coordinator we are a little bit headless, I really thank her for her work over the last few years.

Thank you Mr Speaker

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, are there any comments or questions on that report?

The Honourable Dr Barry Elsby

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to thank my Honourable Colleague for her detailed presentation. On the subject of the Falkland Islands Meat Company I think it's a very important to Camp, it's very important to Stanley and I think we all want it to get back into a profitable situation. Would she not agree with me that it's vitally important that the Falkland Islands Meat Company be cautious about increasing prices to the local markets such that we don't arrive at a situation where consumers will end up buying imported beef or lamb because it's cheaper than the local product?

The Honourable Phyl Rendell MBE

I thank you for that question. I think I addressed this at the Assembly before last when I reported on my portfolios. I will repeat that it's really a matter of balance. If you want fresh meat in the shops in Stanley of a high quality then you have to pay farmers a realistic amount of money to produce those animals at that high quality. That means growing crops and doing many things and investing quite a lot of money to produce say beef under age three. There has to be a balance. If you don't want that quality in the shops then people can buy from the farm gate but I do feel that the general view is that quality is important and that it is affordable, and compared to other parts of the world I think our meat is extremely reasonably priced.

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there has been a significant, and I think very encouraging, development in the Fishery in the last couple of seasons and that's the number of Illex vessels transshipping at FIPASS. It's my understanding that the next two voyages of the Scout Northbound are absolutely full up, and that is a tremendous development for the Falklands. It brings with it significantly greater economic benefit and it appears that it's now as economic to tranship Illex by containers as it is by reefer vessel. I wonder if the Honourable Member shares my concerns about the ability of FIPASS to cope with this in the longer term, and whether she shares my view that there might be a need to develop further port resources elsewhere.

The Honourable Phyl Rendell MBE

Thank you very much for that question. I am delighted you have highlighted the matter of Illex coming into Stanley and being transhipped on FIPASS. One of my other portfolio responsibilities is South American Atlantic Services Limited (SAAS). I would like to report on that in a few months' time when we have a firm agreement in place for the long term future of SAAS, which I am quite confident we will have, its just a matter of time getting that together.

We had the first shipment of Illex last season and it went extremely well and the owners of the vessel were really impressed as to how quickly the transshipment was conducted. In fact, faster than transshipping onto reefers in Berkeley Sound. I hear his concern about space on FIPASS and I think that the fishing industry have raised that a number of times. I think the good news is that we have a Noble Energy barge floating through the narrows today that will ensure that, when it's in place, all the oil industry activity will operate off that facility and won't be working off FIPASS. Since about 2010 we have had a very, very, active oil industry using FIPASS as well, so that's going to take the pressure off I think for the coming years. I have no problems with supporting long term development of port facilities, if they are cost effective. I think we need to monitor the growth of the industry, and the growth of activity coming with fish being transhipped on ports, which of course is good for our economy and we need to plan ahead for that, perhaps after the life of the Noble barge is over. Thank you.

Mr Speaker

Are there any other comments or questions?

We will move to the final report then, from The Honourable Gavin Short

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as is normal, I would like to start with a brief gallop around the Public Works Department giving some headline issues that have happened over the past few weeks before concentrating on one section. I do apologise if this is a slightly long report, Mr Speaker. If I do stray outside your time

span and your very fine timepiece chimes I will try and finish it in the Motion for Adjournment.

The Water Section have had a pretty torrid time of it lately with three mains leaks being detected, found and repaired, over the last couple of weeks. I would like to thank Craig, his staff and all those others who have been involved. They put in some pretty long hours in some pretty unpleasant weather finding and repairing those leaks.

Staffing in the section has improved with us only now being short of an operator in the filtration plant itself, and the advert may already have gone out for that position, if not it will be happening very shortly.

The Power Section also had to attend to a problem with an underground cable fault a week or two ago on John Street around the area where Jens' Cottage used to be. Again they dealt with this quickly and did their very best to keep disruption to consumers to an absolute minimum. All this at a time when they are stretched on other projects such as the MPA wind farm.

I am happy to report that the new primary crusher at Pony Pass has been fired up and fed and performed wonderfully well. That takes away one area that I was extremely nervous about, as with many things in the Falklands, we were only one deep and if the primary crusher had failed at any stage we would have been in a very unhappy place. We have had a couple of large orders recently, and the quarry continues to work steadily to fulfil these orders, and also to maintain stockpiles which will give a slight buffer when we get more large orders for stone in the future, as I am sure we will. There will be further equipment on the way for the quarry and I will report on that in another report.

We actually took the opportunity with the core drilling rig being down here for the Noble Port, to borrow the thing and use it off the end of the Public Jetty to have a look at the sea bed there, but also at the quarry at Port Harriet because there is some very good material there. We didn't know how much we have so we have taken cores there, and we will be analysing those and it will give us a better idea of the resource that we have. We also were using the rig at Rumford looking at the material out there for borrow pits for the roads out that side of the East Falklands.

Together with MLA Rendell I have just returned from a couple of days on the West taking a look at some of the roads out there, this follows on from a similar exercise on the East. Obviously I would like to thank everyone who was so hospitable to us on our visits, taking time to talk to us and let us know how they see things. The person though who deserves special mention is our Assistant Roads Engineer, Sebastian Reid, who uncomplainingly chauffeured us around both East and West and had to contend with many questions. I have never met anyone who could get so excited over borrow pits and material types. He also told it to us like it is, and I for one am very grateful for that. I also got the impression that people on East and West appreciated seeing someone from the roads section taking the time to talk in depth with them and listen to their points of view.

The Wreck Point causeway rebuild has been completed and, from the photos I was shown yesterday, actually looks to be an extremely good job of work. I believe that drainage works were also carried out at the swamp close to the causeway which should have helped greatly.

We should start next week on the track to the Alternative Water Supply.

Work will be started this Friday in black topping the road up to the old butchery housing. There have been a few delays on that, but the paver has been in action on Sapper Hill, St Mary's car park and in doing patch repairs in other areas during this time, so production and the paver have been active. We haven't been sitting around doing nothing and just waiting.

I would like to publicly thank the paver and production plant crews, truck drivers and indeed everyone else involved with this season's asphalt programme. There were times, as we approached this year's laying season, that it looked like as if it may not happen at all as we were probably one resignation away from everything coming to a shuddering halt. We actually did have a heart stopping moment very, very, close to the beginning of the season, when one of our main players took extremely ill. Thankfully, we were able to find a skilled person from outside the Islands and bring them in. It is costly, having such an experienced person here, but it means that we can get skills transfer to our own folk which, of course, can only be good.

We have, I believe, just recruited a cemetery caretaker and I would like to welcome Juan Campos back into the Public Works Department family. I know that the cemeteries both here in Stanley and in the Camp, and War Memorials for which Falkland Islands Government are taking responsibility, will be in good hands.

Winter has as always brought the normal reports of street lighting being out. I would plead with people who have spotted a non-functioning street lamp to report it either directly to the Power Station or preferably to the young ladies in the Public Works Department General office on 27193. What I am asking you not to do, please, is to head off down the pub or get on Facebook and have a rant about lights being out without actually telling the folk who need to know (even though I admit a good rant is a fun thing to do, and I have been known to enjoy the occasional rumble myself from time to time). I do realise that 27193 is office hours only, and if you think you may forget by the next day or on Monday, then by all means give me a call on 51075 or e-mail me or message me on Facebook, and I will be more than happy to make sure that your report is passed on. We are short staffed and I know the Power Station boys are trying their best to get the ones sorted out that have been reported.

Now, if you head down the bypass road towards Stanley airport, you will see at Megabid a very large shed. This is the home of the Municipal Section who used to live in the dockyard before they moved out of town to make way for the Museum. In this Department lives a whole host of services and skills from carpentry to housing to funerals services, to the control of contracts such as cleaning and grass cutting, and engineering advice on projects, plus planning maintenance of Falkland Islands

Government assets, both through direct labour and contracted companies and staff. This section also looks after the much loved pumped sewage system in Stanley, as well as general repairs to said sewers, and a whole other raft of miscellaneous jobs that all help to keep things running here in town.

The budgeted headcount for Municipal and Housing Sections is 26 and that's divided as follows: four in management; 11 municipal staff; six carpenters; one in the plumbers' shop and four in housing.

Municipal, and in particular the carpenters shop, has been affected by staff shortages since October 2012. Normally there are five carpenters, one skilled handyperson and two full time apprentices, but for the majority of 2013 we only had two carpenters and one apprentice. This has resulted in numerous planned works being delayed or postponed as we were required to deal with reactive works only.

Municipal also suffered shortages in staff, and at one point we were down a total of eight staff including the shortages in the carpenter's shop that I alluded to earlier.

The majority of the resignations, I believe, came as a direct result of pay levels in the private sector compared to that of Falkland Islands Government, and the demand for tradesmen of course, and skilled and semi-skilled handymen from the private section. We just could not compete.

Despite staff issues, the Municipal Services continue to provide a better than expected service and some staff have continued to work over and above what is expected, including working weekends and evenings to meet the demands placed on us by housing for example. We also continue to provide an excellent funeral service which can often be difficult in such a small place. Camp funerals are becoming more common and, despite the additional works involved in providing that service, we always try to accommodate the wishes of the deceased's family.

Recruitment has improved on the Municipal side with only one vacancy to fill, however, we are still three short in the carpenters' shop which will continue to adversely affect our ability, but it is hoped that a new recruitment drive will begin this week, which I think it already has, and we hope this will encourage new blood to join our organisation.

Like a lot of Departments, the work of this Department goes largely unnoticed and uncommented upon until something starts to go wrong, and a lot of what we run is highly visible, such as the grass cutting contracts.

The contracts and the amounts were printed in the Penguin News and are public knowledge.

Even before the season kicked off there were problems. For one reason or another the contract was late in being let and the grass managed to get a head start. Further difficulties followed and there were adjustments made to the contracts during the

season which did make things run a bit better. To be honest we were playing catch up all the way through the season in some areas.

Another area to cause some angst was that of spraying of grass and weeds and the dreaded thistles alongside properties and in the joints of roads and pavements. Normally the spraying was done in-house but due to staff shortages and illness we just could not deliver, and it was only very late in the day when the work was contracted out.

I am happy to inform the House that Stanley Nurseries have done all of East Stanley over the last couple of weeks, and is about to do the rest of the vegetation in joints in the Centre and West, and then go back and clean off what had been sprayed at the East end.

Returning to the subject of grass, the main areas that we know we are behind on, in terms of actually not having done them at all this season yet, are the top of Philomel Hill, Dairy Paddock Road and Dean Street, and of course, the bank in front of the Town Hall. We have indeed urged our contractor who has responsibility for those areas to leap into action and indeed they might have even started.

There are some other areas that need cutting again and the works orders for those are being sorted now. Growth has slowed down and this will hopefully help us to finally catch up.

With the thistles, the plan is to do something like a 'litter pick' to remove the plants and bag them and then burn them, to try and reduce seed spread from this year's crop, which should commence shortly.

Two weeks ago I actually walked every street in town so that I could see for myself just what the picture was, and to be honest just about every road outside of central Stanley required attention in one form or another. As far as the grass went along those roads, I did form the opinion that with a few guys and a run of good weather you could probably blitz the whole town in about a week.

It would be improper of me to comment, or indeed enter into discussions, about the merits of one contractor over another. What I will say is this, after the season ends there is always a review done as to how the season went and what if any changes need to be made for the new season. I will require assurances that next season will not be the same as this one, and that whatever changes that are required are made to make sure that those who hold the contracts have the equipment, staff and whatever else is needed to be able to deliver on their contractual obligations. I fully accept that we cannot control weather or major breakdowns, but there has to be resilience both in matters of machinery and staff, for example. The same goes for the spraying. I will need to be assured that this coming season it will be done in a timely manner whether in-house or by contractor.

I thank you.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members are there any comments or questions on that report?

Clerk of the Assembly

The Motion for Adjournment

The Honourable Chief Executive

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

The Honourable Jan Cheek

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to comment first of all on the fact that we have got the biggest audience I can recall for some years, and to welcome especially the students who are in that audience.

One of the things I missed from Byron's comment on the Islands Plan was his wish for more local staff in the schools. We have had this in train for many, many, years. I can confirm that I was probably the first qualified local teacher to return in 1969, fairly swiftly followed by the Honourable Phyllis Rendell a few years later. I believe that we still have this in train, and a mark of the success is that I believe we have two more Islanders, (I notice the Honourable Barry Elsby nodding) so that's correct, two more Islanders returning to teach in Stanley later this year and possibly another next year. As I think I have said elsewhere, they will be more great role models for our young people of whom I think we are justly proud.

I have only one other issue to raise this morning and it's really a public plea. We have had two instances in the last seven days where well intentioned members of the public have taken up cudgels on behalf of others who they think are not being treated fairly or something that's not happening. Unfortunately, they are not always in possession of all the facts and, in at least one case, they have ended up embarrassing the very people they aim to help. So, if you are going to start a campaign, be it speaking to Members, on Facebook or wherever, please speak first to the subject of your campaign and ascertain first that they want you to take it up, and before launching the campaign, that you have all the facts.

I support the Motion for adjournment thank you.

The Honourable Phyl Rendell MBE

Mr Speaker, in rising to support the Motion I just wanted to say a few words about our visit to the West Falkland and to Goose Green over last weekend. I have spoken at length about my portfolio so you have heard enough of that. I just really would like to thank everybody who turned up at Goose Green at the public meeting last Friday afternoon, and then again at Fox Bay on Saturday evening. At Goose Green we had

people travelling from as far away as Salvador and Port San Carlos, and at Fox Bay we had people from Dunbar, Hill Cove and Port Stephens. Fantastic of them to turnout and drive those distances to be at a public meeting and to speak with us.

The discussions and the questions that were asked were very informative and I take those away, and will follow up on many of those and then, as my colleague the Honourable Gavin Short has referred to in his portfolio, update. We did travel a good distance on West Falkland last weekend across South and West. We got down to Port Stephens and Albermarle, Port Edgar and also across to Dunnose Head and Shallow Harbour. My Honourable Colleague had his first flight in a FIGAS plane for many years coming out of Shallow Harbour, which I think was great that he was willing to go down there and fly from that location.

I appreciate that when we were driving on the road that it's summer, certainly has been for the last couple of days, and the conditions were pretty good and I appreciate that they are not like that in winter, but it did give us a good understanding of the distances and the problems and the issues. We can't change infrastructure very rapidly, it does take time, but certainly I support the Honourable Roger Edwards' comments about roads. We are committed, I believe, as an Assembly to ensure that we do continually put in a resource to improve those roads because so many peoples' lives and businesses depend on them. We need to work towards better conditions particularly during the winter months so they can be utilised.

What I would like to finish by saying is that to the people on West Falkland and on Islands and on the East, is that we are here at Gilbert House during the week and if they are coming to Stanley they can also make appointments as Stanley people do to see their Members. If you are coming into Stanley and you have got 10 minutes to spare, even if you haven't got much to say but you would just like to come and have a chat, please do get in touch and whenever possible we will meet with you.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Mike Summers OBE

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just wanted to talk today about some overseas issues.

There has been a lot of discussion recently in the UK press about European Union and the United Kingdom position in the European Union, and indeed Members undoubtedly will have seen the debate yesterday between UKIP and the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party. It may seem a bit remote to some, but actually the European Union to the people of the Falklands Islands is really important, really matters, our access to the European Union for our fisheries products and for our agricultural products is critical to our economy and the continuing development of our economy.

I would just like to encourage colleagues, whenever they are in touch with any Members of the UK Parliament, that this is made clear to them and perhaps those Members who are attending the Joint Ministerial Council towards the end of this year might like to put this issue on the agenda so that those attending the Joint Ministerial Council on behalf of the UK Government can be clear in their own minds what the affect might be, not only to the Falklands but all the Overseas Territories, of considerations of leaving the European Union.

The second issue I wanted to address is really an issue of public information, but it is the very difficult and possibly dangerous position in Crimea. There have been lots of attempts in recent weeks to link the referendum in the Falklands with the international communities' rejection of the referendum in Crimea. Just so that the public are fully aware of our Government's position on this issue, we always support the right for people to be open and to vote on issues and to make their point known. The issue in Crimea compared to the issue in the Falklands is very, very, different because in the Falklands we had a referendum that was properly organised to international principles and standards, was fully observed by independent observers, and was carried out in an exemplary fashion according to the observer team.

The contrast in Crimea, which is what most people are complaining about, is that it was rushed and it wasn't done in accordance with international principles and all those sorts of things. So when you hear mainly our neighbours trying to compare the two, the issues are quite different. The issue for us isn't about whether the people of Crimea should be allowed to vote or not, of course they should. They are allowed to do that, it's part of their fundamental human rights, it's how the thing was done.

There has been a great long stream of people from Latin America heading towards the Vatican City recently, and indeed Her Majesty will be having an audience with the Pope very shortly and whilst we have said, I think, quite clearly in the past, that we have no wish for a mix of religion and politics, I rather wonder whether in fact it isn't important that the Vatican City understands all the issues that are in play, and when in fact our neighbours call for a zone of peace and tolerance, etc., that the Vatican City is aware of the economic blockade that's put upon the Falklands by Argentina, and the aggressive and hostile nature of that country towards the people of the Falkland Islands. So, I will be commending to my colleagues that we might drop a note to the Vatican City to make sure they are apprised of that.

Finally I wanted to thank publically, it seems an odd thing to do, but I wanted to thank publically the Foreign Minister of Australia for their very supportive remarks recently about the right of the people of the Falkland Islands to self-determination. Comments of countries like Australia do matter, and we very much appreciate that, and just to note that, as I think one of our Honourable Colleagues did earlier, that our colleague Ian Hansen is currently in the Caribbean on a public diplomacy mission and according to his email this morning he and Emily are in full charm offence, so that must be something to be seen.

I support the Motion.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to support and speak to the Motion for Adjournment I am probably going to get myself into all sorts of trouble here, because I am going to be doing things that you should not do, like repeating subjects that have been spoken on. I don't think it's actually passed yet, so I shall make hay while the sun shines, that and the fact that my short term memory is that bad I have actually forgotten what has been said.

I actually had a couple of supplementary notes on the matter of thistles because I was expecting a couple of questions on that very matter, and I don't want to let good notes go to waste so I will drop them in at the end.

Just really observations that, I hold my hands up, we were late getting into gear this year attacking thistles and the weeds in the joints of roads, but it's just this, even if we and we will, by jove we will, we will get ourselves into position where we will attack these thistles, but even if we do attack them and all the public areas in town under our control, there is a huge amount of non-Falkland Islands Government land inside town and also outside of it, and if you have a look in some of that land it is breeding colonies for thistles. I don't think really that's the Falkland Islands Government job to go into private properties and root out said thistles, and I know there are some on, for example, Stanley Services' property very close to Gilbert House. I think really it has to be joint approach right through the community if we are going to attack these things. Everybody has to do their part.

I believe the environmental folk to have a limited programme in controlling the spear thistle, which I am told is the one with the purple flowers, in Stanley and perimeters, plus a couple of areas on the Common, and utilise local gentleman to do that spraying. I believe we have had some discussions with the environmental folk who, I think, have almost given up on the yellow flowered thistles, and they are the virulent ones which spread very, very, quickly, simply because they are almost overpowering us. So as I say from the Public Works Department, we will do our part, but we really need this to become a community driven campaign otherwise, of course, the little blighters are going to be breeding on private property and coming back onto the verges again.

I would like to welcome the students who are here today, and if this hasn't put you off politics, nothing ever will. Byron is, of course, with us at Gilbert House. On Friday morning I was due to take him out on a tour of some parts of my Public Works Department kingdom and I was actually going to show him the nicer bits, but after his comments about putting cigarettes up I think we may spend all day looking at the sewerage works.

In rising to speak to the Motion I really would like to return to the trip that we made out to Camp. Yes, that was actually my first ever proper trip on FIGAS in an Islander aircraft. I had been on the Beaver the only other time, even though I worked for FIGAS for many years. The other flight I had on a FIGAS one was at MPA where you paid £5 for a ten minute jolly.

I know working down at FIGAS, when I used to look out the window, which I suppose I shouldn't have been doing, when there were cross winds you used to see the Islander come into that strip sideways and they would whip her around and bang her down at the last moment and that always impressed me. It impressed me even more on Sunday when it happened to me twice, once at Pebble and once in Stanley, and I really do take my hat off to those pilots, they are good.

I suppose shouldn't really say this, but I actually thoroughly enjoyed getting out and about into the Camp and looking at the roads and meeting those who work and live there. I now can put my hand on my heart and say that even though if I walked past a Hennessey probe I wouldn't know what it looked like, I most certainly know what it is and does. I apologise to the good people of the Camp, and indeed the Falklands in general, for the appalling weather that they have to endure which seems to have been caused, once again, by my attempt to make it to the West, and the weather is only now recovering, now that the weather gods have realised that I am back in my box in town.

It hasn't been the best of seasons for those in the Camp who are trying to fatten their animals ready for the abattoir, just as this season has not been kind to us in our attempts to do works on the camp road system, and I take my hat off to those people who have tried their best all season to make progress in capping and reconstruction works.

There is a huge amount of work to be done out there and I have been convinced that we must have a different way of tackling the problem, perhaps longer contracts for example, which will allow bidders to have certainty and the opportunity to think about plant and workforces that will be required. It will, of course, commit the Government to certain levels of expenditure, not just for one year but for two or three. The root of all this is good old money. To have any chance of standing still we have to spend substantially more on camp roads. In a lot of places there has been no capping. In other places on the roads the capping has disappeared and roads are down to their foundations. In a lot of places now it is not a question of capping anymore, but of complete reconstruction, which is slower and is going to cost a lot more, but we have to do it.

I know that work has already started towards trying to figure out a way of making long term contracts. One hopes, especially on the West, that this will also help with the aims of the Rural Development Strategy and may see more people starting to live in the Camp as work becomes available in the longer term.

The world of international politics, as alluded to by my colleague the Honourable Mike Summers, is a dirty one, as can be witnessed by the brazen attempts by the Argentine Government to drag the Pope into getting involved over their false claims to our homeland. I am not sure if this is yet another cunning Argentine plan that we can watch go horrendously wrong, or the thrashings of a dying government ever more desperate to save themselves from paying the price for the depths of despair and economic ruin into which they have plunged their country and people. As much as I

never ever, and never will, want to be anything remotely approaching Argentine, even I feel sorry for the ordinary working class people in Argentina. Let us hope that they learn to value and look after what they have rather than let themselves be led from disaster to disaster and be brainwashed into wanting something that never was theirs nor never will be, but I am not holding my breath.

I am an avid reader of the Argentine press, online offerings and twitter feeds from that country, (it always pays to know your enemy and what they are saying), and all that I can say is that my old Granny was quite correct, paper never refutes ink and some of the distorted statements and downright untruths that appear in both the printed media, online outlets and from direct tweets from both Filmus and other high ranking members of the Argentine Government, are quite breath taking. I am sure that even they know that they are spouting mendacious twaddle, as is the more intelligent folk in Argentina, and I am sure leaders in other countries, and if they were afflicted by the same curse as Pinocchio, they would indeed have their noses in our affairs, quite literally.

I am also somewhat confused by the Kirchner/Putin double act that we are seeing regarding the Crimean referendum and how it relates, of course, to our referendum. Putin seems not to have liked ours too much, but yet says the Crimean referendum was fair, therefore seems to be saying that referenda in general are just the ticket. Therefore it seems to me that he must then believe in the right of people to practice self-determination, which of course applies to us. The Kirchner government on the other hand says that our referendum was illegal, (under whose law it was illegal, I have never found out), but that same government sits as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and voted against the Crimean referendum, whilst at the same time telling Russia that really they are on their side and the Crimean referendum was okay. So, now we have Argentina saying that they too believe in self-determination. So all I will say is this, come on chaps, you can't have it both ways.

Thank you.

The Honourable Roger Edwards

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will be very brief. I think the Honourable Phyllis Rendell stole my notes because my jottings were identical to what she was saying. I too enjoyed our trip to the Camp with fellow Members and I too would like to thank all those who turned up to those meetings at Goose Green, Port Howard and at Fox Bay. I think there was a huge range of subjects raised, the debates were lively and, as I say, I thank everyone for their efforts in turning out.

One thing that I did pick up from those meetings, particularly at Fox Bay, were how welcome CBF's visit to the West was over a week when I believed he travelled close on 900 miles and visited 17 farms or something. I would encourage him to do more visits and I would encourage his senior staff at Mount Pleasant to also get out and visit the Islands because people do appreciate it. I thank him for his visit and the time he has taken to visit the Camp, but we want more of it.

My Colleagues keep referring to Camp roads. How can they possibly consider a thousand kilometre strip of hard core, more than half of which have never been capped, never been finished, built to take 4 ton vehicles that are now taking 38 ton vehicles. We are seeing time and time again where, when we do try and do one piece of road capping, the vehicles break through and we have to stop what we are doing and fill in that hole before we can get back to what we had intended to do. They are camp tracks, they are deteriorating and they are becoming more and more dangerous. As my Honourable Colleague Gavin Short is saying, we must find considerably more money because it's no longer a matter of capping or grading in many cases, it is restructuring that road - that track!

I take the point that my Honourable Colleague Mike Summers raised about the importance of the EU to these Islands and as my area for public diplomacy, along with my colleague the Honourable Jan Cheek, is the UK and the European Union, I will be one of the Members attending the Joint Ministerial Council later on in the year. I will attempt to have that put on the agenda, so I thank you for that.

I also agree with the Honourable Gavin Short's comments about Argentina, but if I added my own list as well I would be here until after the lunch break. I will end by saying that when we are discussing environmental problems with thistles and south thistles and prickly thistles and so on, I will remind us please to get our own house in order first, because growing nicely outside the window of Gilbert House, currently about 2" high, is a wonderful milk thistle or south thistle or whatever you call the yellow headed ones. We have a perfect example there, nicely growing, it must be a good spot to join our rhubarb and horseradish.

Mr Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Michael Poole

Thank you Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, just two very quick things from me.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate all of the marathon runners earlier in the week. In this House previously I have said some less than complimentary things about the business practices of Standard Chartered Bank, but in the spirit of giving credit where credit is due, I think that they should be commended on their sponsorship of that event and their organisation of it. I think it's a really prestigious sporting event now in the annual calendar and I would like to thank them for that.

Finally, I would like to note that I have the privilege of taking over the Chairmanship of the Assembly from next week on the quarterly basis that we have agreed. I will be taking over from the Honourable Mike Summers whose theme for his quarter was Safeguarding Children, as he has mentioned. The theme for my quarter will be the Vulnerable Persons Strategy and in particular looking at how, as a Government, we can do more to assist those earning the least within our community. It's quite a broad theme. I have started to have some discussions with colleagues, and also with

Directors and the Civil Service generally, about what this means, what we can do over the quarter and beyond to make sure that we are fulfilling our obligations as a Government to those that are most vulnerable within the community.

I welcome from constituents any comments or questions on that. If they want to give input, please do get in touch.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Dr Barry Elsby

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I too am pleased to see many students here today, and Byron, as you know, has been working with Members and with the staff of Gilbert House. I was chatting to him the other day as to how he was finding things, and I asked him if he had heard about the Youth Parliament, and he denied all knowledge about the Youth Parliament and that's a shame because it's something that we should develop here. I know a number of people particularly Krysteen Ormond and others have done some initial work on trying to get a Youth Parliament working here, and I know the Deputy Speaker who was elected a few months ago would be very keen on working with the Youth Parliament and act as the Speaker of that Parliament when they have debate, hopefully in the Chamber here. I would encourage him to go back to school and I would encourage all the students to ask more about the Youth Parliament because I think it's something that we need to develop here, I think it's very important.

The other thing I want to mention, and it's already been touched upon, is the Honourable Ian Hansen's trip to the Caribbean. He flew out on Saturday whilst the rest of the MLAs were having a very enjoyable, but very cold and very windy trip around Camp, and on the Sunday the marathon runners had an even more daunting task to get round their course. We hear from the Honourable Ian Hansen that he's working very hard, and it's not all sun and sand over there and the fact that he's drinking rum punches is just part of the culture, and he has to go along with it if he's going to represent us there. I am sure he's having a good time, and I know he is representing us very well over there because it's part of our public diplomacy campaign to get out there and tell the story of the Falkland Islands wherever we can to counter relentless propaganda that's put out by Argentina. It's not just us going out there, as my Honourable Colleagues have mentioned today, we have a lot of people coming in, invited guests, be they politicians, be they opinion formers, to come in and see what the Falklands is all about and those people are often senior advisors to the politicians in their countries. They come here, they learn a bit about what the Falklands is all about and then we hope they will feed that back into their politicians, so that they can better inform those politicians to debate things when it's appropriate. But also they are professors, some of these people are professors of international studies, they are professors of politics. Again, when they go back to their universities we hope and we believe that that will better inform them so they can tell their students, their graduate students, their Ph.D. students, future leaders in their own

country, about the realities of the Falkland Islands, and that is a long term investment that I think we are all convinced will pay dividends.

I had the pleasure last night of having dinner with another group that have just come down from Central America, again professionals, they are professors in their field and again they were very impressed by what they have seen here. Impressed by what they have learnt about the Government, how we govern ourselves, how we are self-financing, but perhaps more importantly what they told me is that they were very impressed by what they had learnt from people they had met in shops, in businesses and on the street. The people who can best tell visitors about the Falkland Islands is every man and woman and child in the street, and I think the more we do that the more our case will be heard.

I support the Motion.

Commander British Forces

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to thank the Honourable Roger Edwards for his comments regarding my visit to West Falkland last week. My wife Gillian and I had a great and privileged opportunity to visit the West last week and hundreds of miles over the roads on the West. An important visit for myself, and what's more, a thoroughly enjoyable one. I would like to take this opportunity to publically thank all those people who made us so incredibly welcome in our tour last week. As well as to take the opportunity to reassure them, and indeed all the people of the Falkland Islands, the unswerving resolve of Her Majesty's Forces here on the Islands to deter and if necessary actually defend them against any form of aggression.

I welcome the invitation from the Honourable Roger Edwards to continue the engagement on the West and, notwithstanding the fact that averaging five farms and settlements a day I am absolutely smoko'd out and I have eaten so much cake, I will nevertheless rise to the challenge and encourage my colleagues to do likewise. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and I would like to thank everybody who made us so incredibly welcome.

Thank you.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, the House stands adjourned accordingly.