



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

**HELD AT THE  
COURT AND ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS STANLEY**

**THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2024**

**RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
HELD AT THE COURTS AND ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS, STANLEY**

**THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2024**

Speaker of the House  
(Mr Keith Biles OBE JP)

**MEMBERS (Ex-Officio)**

The Acting Chief Executive  
(Dr Andrea Clausen)

The Honourable Financial Secretary  
(Mr Pat Clunie)

**Elected**

The Honourable Teslyn Siobhan Barkman  
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Peter Julian Basil Biggs  
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable John Birmingham  
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Jack Ford  
(Elected Member for Camp Constituency)

The Honourable Mark John Pollard  
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

The Honourable Lucila Leona Vidal Roberts (Leona Roberts)  
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

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

**PERSONS ENTITLED TO ATTEND**

The Attorney General  
(Mr Simon Young)

Commander British Forces, South Atlantic Islands  
(Brigadier Daniel Duff)

**CLERK OF THE ASSEMBLY:** Mrs Cherie Clifford

**PRAYERS:** Revd Hayley Argles-Grant

**APOLOGIES**

The Honourable Roger Kenneth Spink  
(Elected Member for Stanley Constituency)

## CONTENTS

<b>Prayers</b>	6
<b>Confirmation of the Record of the Legislative Assembly held on 31 October 2024</b>	6
<b>Election of Elected Members to Executive Council</b>	6
<b>Papers to be Laid on the Table by the Acting Chief Executive</b>	7
<b>Questions for Oral Response</b>	10
<b>Question Number 37/24 by Honourable Leona Roberts</b>	10
Will the Honourable Peter Biggs please provide an update on progress with the waste management project?	
<b>Question Number 38/24 by Honourable John Birmingham</b>	14
Can the Honourable Peter Biggs please give the Assembly an indication of how many new domestic dwellings the present Power Station could connect to the grid in its current format?	
<b>Question Number 39/24 by Honourable John Birmingham</b>	15
In the month of July of this year I asked a question on the procurement of toilet facilities for the ferry head at Newhaven. The answer given was that there would be a paper coming to Executive Council in October. Clearly this date has passed, so could the Honourable Mark Pollard please give me an update on the comparatively small but, to many, important project?	
<b>Question Number 40/24 by the Honourable John Birmingham</b>	17
Some members of the public are confused as to the definition of the term “The Falkland Islands Government”. Could the Attorney General please clarify who is the “Falkland Islands Government.” Is it, for example, “The Executive Council”?	
<b>Question Number 41/24 by the Honourable Gavin Short</b>	23
Could the Attorney General please tell the House what the regulations are, covering the importation of satellite receiving dishes for domestic use in the reception of Television programmes and also the associated decoders? Might the present regulations require re-writing after the cessation of the KTV wireless television service or are they considered fit for purpose?	
<b>Question Number 42/24 by the Honourable Gavin Short</b>	26

Can the Honourable Peter Biggs please tell the House the situation regarding grass cutting around Stanley?	
<b>Question Number 43/24 by the Honourable Gavin Short</b>	27
Can the Honourable Peter Biggs please say what roads within Stanley will be targeted for re-surfacing or other repairs during this summer season, please?	
<b>Portfolio Reports</b>	
The Honourable Teslyn Barkman	29
The Honourable Peter Biggs	36
<b>Motion for Adjournment</b>	
The Honourable Jack Ford	42
The Honourable Gavin Short	43
The Honourable Leona Roberts	45
The Honourable Mark Pollard	46
The Honourable Pete Biggs	47
The Honourable John Birmingham	48
The Honourable Teslyn Barkman	49

**Record of the Meeting of the Legislative Assembly  
Thursday 28 November 2024**

**Prayers**

**Mr Speaker**

Honourable Members, please be seated. Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to this meeting of the Legislative Assembly. My usual reminder please, that all electronic equipment must be turned to silent or turned off.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Confirmation of the Record of the Legislative Assembly held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

**Mr Speaker**

Honourable Members, I have before the record of the last meeting of the Assembly. Is it your wish that I sign this as a true record? Thank you.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Election to ExCo.

**Mr Speaker**

I appoint the Attorney General and the Honourable Financial Secretary to be tellers for this election, and we will vote first for a Stanley Representative.

Honourable Members, the result of that ballot is that the Stanley Representative sitting on Executive Council is the Honourable Leona Roberts.

We now vote for a Camp Representative, please.

And the result of that ballot is that the Honourable Jack Ford is the Camp Representative sitting on Executive Council.

The next ballot is for the third representative, from either Camp or Stanley.

And the result of that ballot is that the Honourable Mark Pollard will be the Representative from either Stanley or Camp.

So the Members sitting in Executive Council until the next election for Executive Council are the Honourable Leona Roberts, the Honourable Jack Ford and the Honourable Mark Pollard. Thank you.

## **Clerk of the Assembly**

Papers to be Laid on the Table by the Acting 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.

- Correction Order 2024

In accordance with Section 80(2) of the Constitution the update from the Public Accounts Committee in respect of internal audit reports

- 03/24 Supply Chain Resilience

In accordance with Statistics Ordinance 2010 Section 10(1)

- Falkland Islands National Accounts 2013-2023

## **The Acting Chief Executive**

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

## **The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker, under Standing Order section 41(3), I move that the Correction Order 2024 be noted.

By way of explanation, the Order is made by the Attorney General using powers under Section 93 of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance 1977. The Order corrects typographical errors in the following laws;

- Assessment and Safeguarding of Adults Ordinance 2020
- Children Ordinance 2014
- Civil Aviation (Investigation of Air Accidents and Incidents) Regulations 2019
- Communications (Radio-communications Exemption) Regulations 2019
- Criminal Procedure and Evidence Ordinance 2014
- Fisheries (Conservation and Management) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021
- Fisheries (Conservation and Management) Ordinance 2005
- Immigration Ordinance 1999
- Legal Aid Ordinance 2020
- Maritime Ordinance 2017
- Mental Health Ordinance 2010
- Organic Foods Ordinance 2000
- Pensions (Old Scheme Fund) Ordinance 1999
- Ship and Port Facility (Security) Ordinance 2004

The errors have been reported to the Statute Law Commissioner, but are not suitable for correction under the Law Revision and Publication Ordinance 2017 because the errors do not arise from the compilation or maintenance of the Statute Law Database, but derive from the original making of the relevant laws. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker**

And a seconder, please?

**The Honourable Jack Ford**

Mr Speaker, I second the motion.

**Mr Speaker**

The Honourable Jack Ford to second. Honourable Members, the motion is that the Correction Order 2024 is noted.

Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to that motion? No. Is there any objection to passing that motion? There is no objection. That Order is noted.

**The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

Mr Speaker, under Standing Order Section 41 (3) I move that the PAC Internal Audit report on the Supply Chain Resilience be noted.

This was an internal audit without recommendations, the Public Accounts Committee recently considered the internal audit 3/24 Supply Chain Resilience, which received a good rating. The PAC commented that it was good to see progress on Supply Chain Resilience and gave credit to Director of Public Works and his team. There was one Low Level Internal Audit recommendation upon which actions had been agreed with a plan in place and therefore there were no recommendations from the PAC on this report.

**Mr Speaker**

And could I have a seconder, please?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I second the motion.

**Mr Speaker**

The Honourable Peter Biggs to second. Honourable Members, the motion is that the PAC Internal audit report on the Supply Chain Resilience be noted.

Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to that motion? No. Is there any objection to passing that motion? There is no objection. That Report is noted.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, under Standing Order Section 41(3) I move that the Falkland Islands National Accounts 2013-2023 be noted.

As way of explanation, the production of the Falkland Islands National Accounts follows a prescribed and internationally validated methodology, based on the System of National Accounts jointly published by the United Nations, World Bank and IMF, and modified as appropriate for the Falkland Islands. The last methodology review of the Falkland Islands system was conducted in 2012, which then became the new baseline year.

While the National Accounts have largely been published on an annual basis there is always an interval of one to two years in terms of the data reported - this is due to the lag in availability of the source data i.e. corporation tax data. Hence why 2023 is the most recent year considered in this 2024 report.

Looking at the key findings from the report - GDP in nominal terms for 2023 was £280.4 million; an increase of 0.6% compared to 2022, nominal GDP for 2022 was £278.6 million; an increase of 0.7% when compared to 2021. Fishing was again the largest industry, accounting for approximately 59% of nominal GDP in 2023.

Non-resource GDP, that is, GDP excluding both the fishing sector and the oil & gas sectors, has shown less pronounced volatility over recent years compared to overall GDP. Excluding these sectors and estimating the net contribution to GDP of the other sectors of the economy is a useful exercise for monitoring the health and sustainability of national economic growth. Non-resource GDP in constant prices increased by 0.4% in 2023 and has been growing at a compounded average growth rate of +2.9% per year between 2013 and 2023.

Per capita GDP for 2023 was estimated at £83.9k, per capita GDP for 2022 was estimated at £83.6k, while per capita GNI, which is calculated by adjusting GDP for net foreign income and is a better reflection of income accruing to Falkland Islands residents, was estimated at £57.0k in 2023, compared with £57.1k in 2022. However, Falkland Islands GDP and GNI per capita reflect the impact of the typically volatile resource sectors, therefore, these single-year metrics should not be looked at in isolation as an indicator of the overall robustness of the Falkland Islands' economy.

**Mr Speaker**

Thank you, and could I have a seconder, please?

**The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

Mr Speaker, I second the Motion.

## **Mr Speaker**

The Honourable Teslyn Barkman to second. Honourable Members, the Motion is that the Falkland Islands National accounts 2013-2023 is noted.

Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to that motion?

## **The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker, it's just a note that this report shows that a significant portion of the money generated in the Falklands economy doesn't remain here, not a majority, but a significant portion, with the Gross National Income, GNI at 67.9% of GDP, it means approximately a third of the income earned locally, equating to 90.1 million pounds in the report, is effectively lost to the Islands. This leakage seemingly occurs as profits flow to foreign investors and wages, so paid to non-resident workers, highlighting the extent to which the income generated here is not retained within our economy.

I don't necessarily have any conclusions to draw from that, but I think it's just something that we need to keep an eye on, into the future, and see that that balance doesn't become more extreme, Mr Speaker.

## **Mr Speaker**

Thank you, does any other Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion? No. Is there any objection to passing that Motion? There is no objection. The Motion is that the Falkland Islands National Accounts 2013-2023 is noted, and there is no objection so they are noted.

## **Clerk of the Assembly**

Questions for Oral Response

Question Number 37/24 by Honourable Leona Roberts

## **The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Peter Biggs please provide an update on progress with the waste management project?

## **The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for her question. There is an updated paper on the waste management project to be submitted to the December meeting of Executive Council and this will be briefed to Members by the Director of Public Works next week. The paper is proposed for publication and therefore the details will be publicly available after the ExCo meeting.

The manufacture of the incinerator is nearing completion and will be completed early in the New Year. It is hoped to secure a shipping slot on the FIRS vessel for June or July 2025.

There were some late design changes required to the building to facilitate the incinerator final detail, to ensure the required fire protection to the building was in place and to incorporate suitable welfare and office facilities for the waste management team. These changes have led to a further delay on the delivery of the civils and building works. However, the order will be in place with the contractor in early December and they have already started the material and work package procurement process. This should now see the completion and commissioning of the facility in early 2026.

Alongside the main waste facility works are now progressing on the landfill solution near Pony's Pass and Sand Bay. The land agreement has been concluded with FIDC, in discussion with FIMCo, and the tender for the formation strip will be released shortly.

Alongside this PWD is working with the Falkland Islands Government environmental team to identify and put in place other waste streams, including the recycling of batteries and waste electric and electronic equipment.

The collection of recycled glass and tins and cans has now commenced for the larger Camp settlements and outer islands and additional bring sites for tins and cans have been created in Stanley. Further information and public service announcements will be issued on these services shortly.

While we await the completion of the waste management facility there is an enhanced commitment to the management of Eliza Cove and Mary Hill tips. New signage and public information is being provided and permanent staff positions have been created to assist with that work. Thank you.

### **The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Thank you Mr Speaker, and I thank my Honourable Colleague for his answer, and with some apologies because this was carried over from last month when MLA Biggs was out of the Islands, and I didn't realise that this month would also be his portfolio report, so it may result in some duplication so I am sorry for that.

I am pleased to hear that there is some progress with the waste management facility, this has been a key project that has taken far, far longer to deliver than had been anticipated, I am somewhat surprised to hear that welfare facilities and fire protection, given that it's an incinerator, are late design changes perhaps, so that is disappointing.

But regardless, it's good to hear that there is progress, and I hope that there aren't any further details. It would be interesting to understand more about what has come previously, to add significantly to this programme, so if my Honourable Colleague can provide any further information on that, that would be useful, and I know this is a matter of a lot of public interest, quite rightly so.

On the other elements of his report, really pleased to see that there has been progress on the collection and recycling of the batteries, that has been an aspiration for a long time, as has the collection of tins, cans and glass from Camp, so I was very pleased to hear recently that the containers for moving those are now being distributed and that that system is in place, so I look forward to seeing the uptake on that.

This was something also that was mentioned at the last public meeting I think, was the condition of Eliza Cove tip, which I think for anyone who has been down there is so staggeringly improved that it really does deserve recognition and comment, and it does seem to largely be down to the diligence and incredible commitment of one individual, and that is Gonzalo Hobman, who has really transformed that site.

The question at the public meeting was about whether the post had been established and in my Honourable Colleagues absence I was pleased to be able to say it had, but I sincerely hope that those conversations are happening with Mr Hobman, to ensure that we can keep him down there, doing such a great job.

One further question from me, in his response my Honourable Colleague mentioned Mary Hill, I won't even start on my feelings about Mary Hill, but I do appreciate that we have limited ways of dealing with industrial waste, but there was a comment in the response about improved management of that site, so I would very much like to hear what is being intended there in terms of that improved management, and what we might, as a population, what changes we might see, around Mary Hill? Thank you Mr Speaker.

### **The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for her comments and the further question, and I would like to endorse what she said regarding the personal commitment by the staff at Eliza Cove, which is really impressive, and I understand that that position will be made a permanent position and that will be carried forward to the staffing for the main facility when it comes in stream.

But that, the increased and improved commitment to Eliza Cove and the cleaning up of the area is a great thing which was long overdue, everybody recognises, it's the interim step now between proper waste management at the new plant.

With regards to Mary Hill Quarry, if you visit, which you can, when there is nobody working there, you will see that there has been quite a lot of work done to increase the security of the capture area to stop any incidental blow-off, there is progressive covering over of the heavy metal and waste that has been deposited there already, and it is being configured for receiving more heavy metal type waste and building materials, that sort of thing, which will hopefully tide us over until we have some other means of disposing of that. Ultimately, in the future I would like to see heavy metals being exported for recycling.

### **Mr Speaker**

The Honourable Leona Roberts, are you content?

**The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Honourable Attorney General**

Mr Speaker, a point of clarification just based on one of the questions raised by the Honourable Leona Roberts, I was at a meeting where the waste management project was being discussed and I think in terms of the welfare facilities, it's not that this was an afterthought in terms of the project, I think what they have considered is making best use of the space, and providing optimal welfare facilities, so they had originally I believe, provided for those facilities to be within the main building, and actually on consideration of use of the space, and the nature of the facilities required, they have now instead made provision for that to be an additional small building, effectively attached to the main building.

So that is the change, it's not that these things were not considered and are now being added as an afterthought, it's a consideration of how best to deliver what has been considered, so I just thought that might be a helpful bit of information to understand. But I'm sure the project team would be able to answer the question more fully.

**The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Yes, briefly, that is extremely helpful to understand, thank you Mr Speaker and Attorney General.

**Mr Speaker**

Does any other Honourable Member wish to raise a supplementary question?

**The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker, I'd like to thank my Honourable Colleague for her question and my Honourable Colleague for his answers so far. I've just got in front of me the Islands Plan Delivery Plan update from earlier this year, so just over six months ago I think it came to us, and on it we were expecting the facility to be built in April to June 2023 initially, then it went to April to June 2025, just earlier this year, and now we're talking about early 2026.

I hope that's the final date that we're going to see this delivery, and I hope that there is going to be an explanation in the report coming to us next month to ExCo, on exactly what the delays have been, and giving us some assurance that the new time table is going to be delivered on. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his supplementary points, and I will ensure that there is an explanation included in the briefing.

**Mr Speaker**

Thank you, does any other Honourable Member wish to raise a supplementary question? No.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Question Number 38/24 by the Honourable John Birmingham

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, can the Honourable Peter Biggs please give this Assembly an indication of how many new domestic dwellings the present Power Station could connect to the grid in its current format?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his question. It is not possible to answer this question with simple maths; there is suitable generation capacity to provide power to a significant number of additional domestic dwellings. A simple calculation, based on single source power availability, would suggest that we have the generating capacity to add a further 175 domestic properties if all conventional generating units are operational.

However, it should be noted that restrictions are dictated by the network and where developments take place. The distribution network is split into three distinct systems, the eastern ring, central ring and western ring.

The eastern ring currently has capacity but identified developments, including the port, waste management facility, SAAS yard expansion, the museum building and the wool warehouse will limit the potential for any domestic growth on that system.

The central ring has limited capacity. There is also limited development space within central Stanley and therefore it is expected that the small amount of infill development can be managed.

The western ring holds the greatest potential growth capacity with the ability to accept at least another 120 properties. The currently proposed Sapper Hill phase 7 development will be on this ring and will use up a significant proportion of the available capacity.

The capacity on the eastern and western rings is limited by the step-up transformers. This restriction will be removed when the new power station comes online as it will have increased generating capacity. It should be noted that the figures provided are estimates and electrical distribution design has to be carried out for each development.

Other factors such as street lighting, the requirement for pump-stations and bio-discs and the inclusion of sustainable heating systems, such as air source heat pumps also have an impact on the design and the total capacity.

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Member for his very well put answer to the questions, and I'm sure it will be food for thought for any development in the future.

**Mr Speaker**

Thank you, does any other Honourable Member wish to raise a supplementary question on that?

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Peter Biggs for delivering that reply and I know you are doing a portfolio report which you of course may well touch on power during that report, but I did note at the very beginning of your answer, when you were talking about perhaps the amount of houses that could be attached to said grids, you did say if all generators are operational and, one presumes that we will never be in a stage where everything is operational, unless we had all brand new generators to begin with, because at least one, I presume, will be done for maintenance at any one given time, so that, I presume, will lower some of the figures you gave there?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

I thank the Honourable Member for his supplementary question, and it's verging into a technical area, but I think the assumption is that the statement is when all generators are operating, is when all generators are operating it would be expected other than providing for routine maintenance, that is my assumption, but I can confirm with the relevant authorities.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

I would like to thank the Honourable Peter Biggs for his reply.

**Mr Speaker**

Thank you, does any other Honourable Member wish to raise a supplementary question? No.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Question Number 39/24 by the Honourable John Birmingham

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the month of July of this year I asked a question on the procurement of toilet facilities at the ferry head at Newhaven. The answer given was that there would be a paper coming to Executive Council in October. Clearly this date has passed,

so could the Honourable Mark Pollard please give me an update on the comparatively small but, to many, important project?

### **The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank my Honourable Colleague for his question. So, whilst DCS do not necessarily hold responsibility for infrastructure works around transport terminals, they have been working alongside colleagues in PWD to look to resolve this matter. Inquiries were made with DPW in July with a view to an October paper, however the work was not progressed by the Design Office due to other commitments and as such no paper will be forthcoming in the near future, although I'll update on that towards the end.

Given other priorities within both DCS and PWD, it is unlikely that this work will progress in this current financial year. Officers recognise how important this seemingly small project is to Camp and Stanley residents alike, but simply have prioritised efforts in other areas. I know my Honourable Colleague feels strongly about this, I also know he feels he has a potential solution, so personally I would support a solution that involved siting a portable welfare port-a-cabin, or even some port-a-loos, a solution that would not require extensive design work or even much actual work.

Perhaps, would the Honourable John Birmingham wish to outline the potential solution he had mentioned to us? At the risk of deflecting the question and perhaps the Honourable Peter Biggs can indicate whether or not he supports and will push for his directorate to do this work? Although I understand they may already be working on this now, going by an email received earlier in the week, Mr Speaker.

### **The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, just a little bit of background here, more recently, if my Honourable Member would agree with me what the statistics are going to come out and show us, more recently updated statistics show us that over 72,000 people have used the ferry service since its inception, which was 16 years ago, and that doesn't include people like hauliers dropping off and picking up trailers.

It has been commented to me that people wonder why the trees are so well grown at the ferry head.

The aforementioned Eliza Cove dump and the very well-run system that's in place now, also has a welfare unit, anybody who goes down there and has a look, it is a very well designed organised unit and a similar unit would be a short term solution for what is in effect, becoming a little bit of a distraction from the major projects that FIG are undertaking.

### **The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank my Honourable Colleagues for being included in a small way in this question and debate, I think there will always be a little bit of the frontier in the Falklands, and that's one of the things I like about it, but we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and so I think that

people should have reasonable facilities, wherever possible, and with the influence I have within my directorate, I will support any move to have some facilities put at either side of the ferry operation.

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Peter Biggs for his part of answering this question. On the West they have facilities, new facilities now, Goose Green has new facilities, it is time for the Falkland Islands Government to invest a small amount of money, and I'm more than happy to explain to my Honourable Colleague where that money can come from, from savings, for this season, and so new monies would not be required. But I do thank him for his interest, and I'm sure we will see some progress now.

**The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker, it was just a point of clarification, I think my Honourable Colleague has already touched on it, there are facilities at Port Howard and I would just credit the Port Howard farm for putting those facilities in, I think they were assisted by FIG financially in some small way, but I think the main drive of it was done by Port Howard farm, so I'd like to thank them for doing that at their end, thank you.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this has been touched on just now actually, but it's just an observation I had really, which to me shows almost the lunacy of the world we live in, on the East side of the Falklands, Government seem to be going into designs, we are tying ourselves in knots and I suspect spending a fair bit of money with nothing to show for it, yet on the West side of Falklands Sound, guess what? They got on, they did it, it's done. Should we not, perhaps, be thinking about subcontracting the people from the West just to get this stuff done? Thank you.

**Mr Speaker**

Does any other Honourable Member wish speak?

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I don't believe I would be able to top that.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Question Number 40/24 by the Honourable John Birmingham

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, some members of the public, not only members of the public, are confused as to the definition of the term "The Falkland Islands Government".

Could the Attorney General please clarify who is the “Falkland Islands Government.” Is it, for example, “The Executive Council”?

### **Attorney General**

Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank the Honourable Member for his question. An eagle-eyed listener may be able to jump straight to section 100 of the Constitution, which deals with interpretation of the Constitution. Very helpfully this defines “Government” for us, and it says that the “Government” means the Government of the Falkland Islands. So perhaps this indicates that there isn’t a single easy right answer, so I apologise for drawing the answer out a little and potentially adding to the confusion, that the Honourable Member referred to in his question.

I think it is helpful to understand the separation of the various different roles in the “governance” of the Falkland Islands.

In the British-model of Parliamentary democracy there are usually said to be three different branches of the State – all having their roots in the Sovereign historically, but all having grown and evolved, delivering certain functions independently of the other branches. There is the judiciary which provides a mechanism for the resolution of disputes between people, and also between people and the State. The judiciary traditionally interpret the law, but in doing so also in effect make some law. That, however, is subject to Parliamentary sovereignty of the Legislature - the Houses of Parliament at Westminster. Parliament makes laws, and approves Government expenditure. There are then the executive functions, and it is the delivery of those executive functions, including the delivery of public services, which constitutes what we would understand to comprise the Government. So in the case of the UK, the Prime Minister, Secretaries of State, and their various Departments and Agencies, the Treasury, the Home Office, the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office etc.

So really then the Civil Service is part of that overall definition of Government, and whilst there is reference to the separation of powers between the different branches, the British model has always involved some considerable overlap, so the executive branch in the form of Ministers, is always by convention drawn from the legislature and needs to be able to command a majority in the legislature if they are able to govern effectively, so that is different for example from the United States model where the executive functions under the office of President are much more independent from the legislative functions held by Congress. Until the reforms introduced in 2005 the Lord Chancellor had a foot in each camp, he was a member of the legislature, and it was usually a he, in the House of Lords, a member of the Cabinet of the Government, and was also the head of the Judiciary at the time.

So if we try to translate that model into a Falkland Islands context, we also have a system that is based largely on that British model. We have our court systems, with a functionally independent judiciary. We have a legislature, and we have an executive. The allocation of those functions under the Constitution still does allow for a degree of shades of grey in the allocation of those functions, particularly involving the role of Governor, and the way this interacts with the Legislature and the Executive functions. On the one hand, the Governor

takes on something of the role of the Sovereign, a more ceremonial role, but on the other hand can actually be much more directly involved in decision-making in the Falkland Islands.

I think sometimes it is also helpful to draw a distinction between the legal form of the exercise of the various functions and the “real” practical exercise of those functions.

So, in relation to the legal form of functions:

Firstly, laws are made by the Governor, usually with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly (see section 37 of the Constitution).

Secondly, executive authority it said, vests in His Majesty, but is exercised by the Governor, either directly or through officers subordinate to her. However, in formulating government policy and in the exercise of functions, the Governor shall consult with the Executive Council and, subject to certain safeguards, shall accept the advice of Executive Council (this is in section 66 of the Constitution).

So in relation to the real practical exercise of those functions, the primary legislative functions are exercised by the elected Members of the Legislative Assembly in this House, with the safeguards the Constitution contains, see section 55, for example.

And the primary executive decision making functions are exercised by elected Members of the Executive Council, again with the safeguards contained in the Constitution – see sections 66 and 67.

In practice, the elected Members who are not on Executive Council are able to discuss and express views on all matters, even if the ultimate decisions are made by the three Members of the Legislative Assembly who sit on Executive Council.

With all that said, I think the “Government” in practice can comprise the office of Governor, as well as the elected members of the Executive Council and the public officers who deliver those public functions, public services. The primary decision-makers in most cases, both in setting policy and determining what public services should be delivered and how, are the elected Members. So thank you Mr Speaker, I’d be happy to answer any supplementary questions any Honourable Members might have, but I hope that gives some indication certainly of my interpretation of what constitutes the “Government”.

### **The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Attorney General for his very, very well put together answer to that, and I’m not sure about mud, so when it comes down to it, in the United Kingdom setting, a newly elected government can overturn policy as set by the previous government, and we have seen this over recent months.

Now, I’m sure you’ll put me right when I say this, if we accept that Executive Council is the Government of the day, so a policy as set by a previous Executive Council of a previous Legislature, therefor just after a general election, that means that it’s a new Government,

does that mean then that the new Government can overturn the policy set by the previous Executive Council, in the previous Legislature? If that makes sense.

**Attorney General**

Mr Speaker, yes, I think the simple answer for that question is yes, absolutely, a new Government after an election or even during a term of a Government can change its mind on policies of the Government and can decide to do things differently. Sometimes, however, that is constrained by if there is Legislation in place with a particular issue.

So, whilst policies can be changed, services can be changed, sometimes there is a time-lag before that can actually be done in practise, because it may be that there is a need to change the Governing legislation, but certainly, yes, that can be done.

And then, also, it is worth high-lighting that obviously, if the Government has entered into contracts and things like that, the Government will be held to contractual commitments that it has made so it is certainly not as easy for Governments to change tack in those sorts of areas, where there are existing deeds, documents, licences, etc, that have been entered into by the Government.

But on the whole, yes, a new Government can change policy direction and can change decisions. Thank you.

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

I thank you very much for that, and the other part of my supplementary if I may Mr Speaker, would be now that we have elected three members of the Executive for this final year, and congratulations to those three, am I, and other Members of the Legislature, part of what is recognised to be the Government? If we accept that Executive Council is the Government? We're part of the Legislature, but are we Government?

**Attorney General**

I think, as I say Mr Speaker, I think this depends to some extent on the distinctions between the legal forms of decisions and the real, practical ways that decisions are made, so whilst I think, yes, strictly speaking, the Governor is making decisions based on the advice of the Executive Council, and that would be the three Elected Members on the Executive Council, that is not without the scope for all other Elected Members to be able to express views and help guide their Honourable Colleagues on the Executive Council, because obviously of course, this Assembly, if it did not have confidence in the Members of the Executive Council, can change which Members are on Executive Council, in the same way that our system mirrors Parliamentary system in the UK, governments can be changed if the Legislature ceases to have confidence in those.

**The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

If my Honourable Colleague wishes to finish his point?

### **The Honourable John Birmingham**

I was just going to thank the Attorney General for his answer.

### **The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

Thank you, I would just like to outline, I suppose this conversation might be really helpful for people who haven't got a really great insight into how Falkland Islands Government work, and particularly for those thinking about whether or not they want to stand in the next general election, which I would encourage people to do.

If people have any questions about how our governance system works, we're all available to explain that, there is also a very clear Standing Orders booklet, which includes Code of Conduct and Roles and Responsibilities of each Legislative Assembly member which explains this all out very clearly and hopefully in layman's terms as well.

I would also say that, while of course, representative democracy means that people have the ability to change their minds, Governments have the ability to review their decisions and make new ones, we saw this most recently with a petition that was brought to the House, which has led to an effective change from a previous decision, one that we are contracted to, and that is something we will work through sensibly.

Power, I would say, in representative democracy is in the people, and the politicians that they choose reflect those decisions that they wish to see made, and that's why manifesto commitments need to be clear and upheld, but then there is also a clear route for direction of accountability, and all Honourable Members are subject to that, and should be. That could be an area that future Governments wishes to strengthen as well.

But please do get in touch if you have any questions about how our governance systems works, we live in it every day so we know it quite well, but we understand that it could be a little bit of an unknown to most people out there.

### **The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker, and I understand why my Honourable Colleague was asking this question, but I think for people listening out there, may be slightly confused, it is complex, I think ours is even more exacerbated in the complexity by the fact that we have a portfolio system, which goes to each member of the legislature, rather than the executive, we're not ministers, but having that portfolio system anywhere else in the world, that would generally fall within the executive, but our executive is only three, so to put all eight portfolios into three, would make a ridiculous work load for those three and not very much to do for the other five I would suspect.

But I think, just for me, in terms of the exact machinations and does it really matter in terms of the general public, then I think as long as we have a joined up operation, then I think for

members of the public it doesn't really matter exactly who is Government and who isn't, and whether it's the Civil Service or Executive Council or the Legislature.

I do think a problem comes when we're not joined up, when either people duck or avoid conversations, and I think that's the issue, so if members of the public can't get the answers to the questions that they are asking because they're not sure who to ask and how to unpick this complex system, I think the answer is to go to your elected representatives, your MLAs.

Now, we make the laws, we elect Executive Council, Executive Council set the policy, the one thing we do not ever get involved in, and shouldn't do, is the judiciary, and that separation is absolute, that is the only one sort of absolute separation that I see in our system, but other than that, if you're unsure of who to contact, you're unsure of exactly how it works, go to your MLA, ask them, preferably the portfolio holder, but either way it doesn't really matter, so I would just add that Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker**

Does any other Honourable Member wish to raise either a comment or a supplementary question?

**The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Thank you Mr Speaker, it's actually been quite an interesting discussion, though I won't repeat everything that has been said, as my Honourable Colleague Teslyn Barkman mentioned, we live in this and you forget sometimes that it's not always wildly clear to other people. But I agree with the comments made, I think the only area that hasn't really been touched on is this House, particularly. I am a firm believer and sometimes criticised for asking too many questions or for going into too much detail, but I think that the way our system works is strengthened by the scrutiny of this House, and that means asking questions that we might already know the answer to, because we've been in a meeting somewhere, but that is very often behind closed doors and not visible to the public.

I think that ability to question each other, even when it might seem redundant has value and has merit, and is something that I would encourage everyone to participate in. I do think that we could do better in that respect, I know that scrutiny and post-legislative and post policy scrutiny is something we have spoken about before, and it is difficult, because we lack capacity all over the place, and priorities knock that sort of thing down the line sometimes, but I hope that the day will come when we have the capacity to do more of this, and in the meantime I think we should continue to question each other and to bring the answers out in public, so that they can be understood by our electorate. Thank you Mr Speaker.

**Mr Speaker**

Does any other Honourable Member wish to comment? No. Move on.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Question Number 41/24 by the Honourable Gavin Short

### **The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, could the Attorney General please tell the House what are the regulations covering the importation of satellite receiving dishes for domestic use in the reception of television programmes and also the associated decoders? Might the present regulations require re-writing after the cessation of the KTV wireless television service or are they considered fit for purpose?

### **Attorney General**

Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank the Honourable Gavin Short for his question, and also the Honourable Jack Ford, who first raised this issue with me. This is an issue principally covered by the Broadcasting Ordinance 2004, so that ordinance makes provision for the issue of licences for “re-broadcasting” services, under which a licensee may re-transmit any broadcast in the Falkland Islands, with a view to that transmission being received in intelligible form only by persons subscribing to that re-broadcast service.

It also makes provision for the issue of licences for satellite broadcast reception, under which a licensee can provide to subscribers apparatus, including the sorts of decoders that the Honourable Member is referring to, which then enable the subscribers to receive, again, in an intelligible form the programmes transmitted or relayed by satellite in that encrypted form.

So KTV was the only licensed re-broadcaster and satellite broadcaster in the Falkland Islands. I do not know if anyone might propose to offer similar services and that is something that perhaps might be worth exploring.

Section 4 of the Ordinance, dealing with the Satellite Broadcast Reception Services Licenses provides that a person who does not hold a license, but offers to provide such services within the Falkland Islands would commit an offence.

Section 5 is the provision that deals with “unauthorized decoders”. Under section 5 a person again, will commit an offence if they:

- (a) make, import, sell or let for hire or offer or expose for sale or hire any unauthorised decoder;*
- (b) have in their possession for commercial purposes any unauthorised decoder;*
- (c) advertise any unauthorised decoder for sale or hire,*

and in this context unauthorised is defined in Section 2 that it is a decoder that’s designed or adapted or used to enable an encrypted transmission to be accessed without payment of the fee which the person making the transmission charges for accessing that service, or is in a place, for an example, in a country other than that which the person entitled to the payment of the fee has agreed that the decoder may be used.

And I apologise if this isn’t terribly clear to everyone, so, an encrypted transmission is effectively regarded as only being lawfully received if the decoding equipment has been made

available to the members of the public by the authority of the person making the transmission.

There are powers within the Ordinance dealing with search warrants and with forfeiture of unauthorised decoders.

So, in a situation where there are no licensed broadcasters under the Ordinance within the Falkland Islands, Honourable Members could make the policy choice, I suppose this comes back to the question asked by the Honourable John Birmingham, so Honourable Members could make a policy choice to change, to repeal some or all of these provisions. I would suggest at the moment that the work on-going which I think members of the public will be aware of, by Cambridge MC, which is in part, looking at the regulatory environment around communications, and I think in part that will cover broadcasting as well, so that might be a good opportunity to look at a broader review of the policy.

However, if Honourable Members wished to make it easier for individuals to import decoders and use them here, that absolutely is something could be considered and that could be as simple as repealing some or all of sections 5, 6 and 7 of the Ordinance, to, in other words, allow decoders to be imported without there being any criminal offences committed. I think we would though need to look at that in a little bit more detail to ensure that there weren't any unintended consequences there.

There is the question of, those provisions are there principally to protect the rights of licensees and broadcasters, so there is the underlying question of the rights and remedies of broadcasters and the holders of intellectual property, the copyright, etc, in the transmissions. Often those rights, copyrighted TV or film programmes are licensed on a geographical basis, so if a satellite broadcaster is broadcasting into a particular area, they will be licenced only to do so, and people will only be lawfully able to access those signals in that geographical area.

So, repealing the provisions in the ordinance allowing decoders to be imported, would make it easier for people to infringe copyright protections. Now, those are two separate issues, there is the issue of the broadcasts etc, and there is the issue of copyright, and we wouldn't be suggesting changes to copyright laws, or intellectual property laws, but I'm sure we're all aware that there are devices available for purchase globally which can access paid services unlawfully for free, once the device has been purchased. And in some cases, it would be very difficult then for broadcasters to take action to enforce their rights.

So I think it is really a political, rather than a legal question, as to whether you would wish to open the market in the Falkland Islands, including to service providers who aren't based here, and whether the advantages that that might offer to individuals outweighs the harm that could be caused by making it easier for people to make the dishonest accesses to services, which the ordinance currently operates to help prohibit, but I think that is largely a political question for Elected Members to consider, I'd be happy to try and answer any supplementary questions the Honourable Member may have.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Attorney General, I really do, for that answer, I would say it was slightly less convoluted than “who is the Government?”, apologies. But yes, perhaps, I was basically trying to get at, with the cessation of KTV, or at least part of their service, somebody who, whatever reason best known to themselves, just wanted to fetch in a dish that could look for a satellite and a box that, if it exists, could receive free to air transmissions, certainly I do understand that any souped-up box which receives something that is not intended to be received in the Falklands is quite another matter, but that really was the thrust of my question. It may not be perhaps as simple as I or the person on the street thinks it might be, to do something like that?

### **Attorney General**

I think Mr Speaker, it could be that simple, it could simply involve the repeal of some of those provisions, which were very clearly put there in order to protect a situation where you did have a licenced broadcaster within the Islands, if that is no longer the case, if there was to be no broadcaster within the Falkland Islands and Honourable Members felt it was appropriate to allow members of the public the freedom to then access whatever services in whatever way they choose, obviously, hopefully, lawfully, then that would be a political issue for Honourable Members to determine, and yes, we could take action to implement that.

### **The Honourable Gavin Short**

I just want to thank the Attorney General for his reply.

### **The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank my Honourable Colleague for his question, and the Attorney General for his answers as well. I didn't like this legislation when it was put in, I wasn't an MLA at the time and I thought if anything, it would stifle innovation, it would prevent people from being able to bring in equipment to actually look to see what was available and to see how they could progress that.

I suspect the ship has probably already sailed in terms of the internet streaming services you now get, and the devices that enable that, which aren't, I don't believe, fall into this category, so it may be a little bit too late for people who do want to innovate, but I certainly would support asking our consultants that are here, Cambridge MC, to consider this bit of work as part of their package, and see if there are any unintended consequences of doing it, but I would certainly support repealing that legislation or changing it, to allow people to actually experiment and innovate within this space, I think that is how we move things forward and as a Government, we shouldn't be looking to constrain those things, I don't think, ever. Well, not without really good reason anyway. Thank you Mr Speaker.

### **Mr Speaker**

Does any other Honourable Member wish to raise a supplementary question?

### **Attorney General**

Mr Speaker, just perhaps a clarification, so yes, as the Honourable Mark Pollard said, over the top internet streaming services are certainly not captured by these provisions, and I think he is quite right that in all likelihood, that's how lots of people receive content these days, but certainly we could consider repealing these provisions.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Question Number 42/24 by the Honourable Gavin Short

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a much simpler question. Can the Honourable Peter Biggs please tell the House the situation regarding grass cutting around Stanley?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his question and the simplicity of it as well. The current contract has expired and a tender process to appoint a new contractor has been undertaken. The tender is closed, and the evaluation process will be completed this week. It is then hoped that the contract will be awarded at the beginning of December and the contractor will be able to mobilise immediately.

While this process has been on-going Stanley Growers Limited agreed to carry out works on an order by order basis and it is hoped that more areas will be completed over the next two weeks.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Gentleman for his reply; there may well be good reasons, of course, that I am not aware of, but to me, it would make more sense if say, a contract that is left, when it expires, it expires basically at the end of summer, which gives you plenty of time to get everything in place before the beginning of the spring season. This one, I presume, must have ended much closer in to spring and summer, thus we are kind of left almost in a situation where its one-off jobs with Stanley Growers. But I do thank you for the reply.

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank him for his observations, and agree with the logic of that, but I don't have the full details of the expiry dates etc, but I support the concept of the logical sequence.

**Mr Speaker**

Does any Honourable Member have any supplementary questions?

**The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that question raises a memory of the last public meeting, at which the Honourable Member Peter Biggs was not at, due to being overseas on business, when a member of the public asked the question, do we not have any civic pride? And I think that the numbers of tourists that come to Stanley, certainly now, expecting to see a city that is well run and well kept, can be nothing other than a growing number, and I think in the future perhaps, we might get it together a little bit sooner than mid-summer.

**Mr Speaker**

Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

I fully support my Honourable Colleague in his comments, and I would love to see our civic pride exercised more widely and I am going to suggest a clean-up Stanley campaign at some point in the future which I hope will be a kick-start to some of the more neglected areas of Stanley. Thank you.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Question Number 43/24 by the Honourable Gavin Short

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, can the Honourable Peter Biggs please say what roads within Stanley will be targeted for re-surfacing or other repairs during this summer season?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his question. While it is hoped that there will be some re-surfacing works, asphaltting works within Stanley will be completed this summer limited due to funding availability and resources. Approximately 10Km of capping and grading works have been completed on the Eliza Cove, Boxer Bridge and Coastel road and the roads towards Gypsy Cove and Yorke Bay. The majority of the remaining Stanley roads budget is allocated to the works taking place on Ross Road.

Additionally the asphalt resources are currently being focussed on the MPA road, with an ambitious 7km to complete this season and it will leave limited time for other works.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, sorry, well, I thank the Honourable Pete Biggs for his reply, I may of misheard him – is he intimating that there will be basically nothing done within the envelope of Stanley apart from a bit of capping and grading done towards the tip and the other places, but actually within Stanley itself where some roads seem to be deteriorating at

high speed, is he intimating that there will be nothing done this season, because there seems to be no funding for it?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

I'll just repeat the first part of my response, which was; while it is hoped that there will be some re-surfacing works, asphaltting works within Stanley will be limited this summer due to finding availability and resources. I interpret that as being that there will be some small pieces of work using asphalt.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his reply, and I must admit I didn't quite catch what you said at the beginning, so there we are; everything is clear on that one. What you haven't done though is named anything? Have you been given any information as to perhaps what roads might be done?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Thank you, I thank the Honourable Gavin Short, no I haven't been given any information or detail on the priorities, but I will enquire.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Gentleman for his reply. If and when you do get it, perhaps could that be disseminated to the public, because it is something that is quite of interest to people, and seems to cheer people up when they see a bit of action.

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Thank you yes, I completely agree.

**The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker, does that not generally feature on the TAC agenda? The roads programme?

**Clerk of the Assembly**

I'm just about to forward it to the Honourable Peter Biggs.

**Mr Speaker**

The Honourable Pete Biggs, I think you're about to receive the information that has been asked for?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Yes, yes it does.

**The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

Mr Speaker, perhaps we could update the House at the next sitting?

**Mr Speaker**

I think that would be a good idea. We'll pend that until the next sitting of the Assembly.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

Portfolio reports - the Honourable Teslyn Barkman

**The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

Thank you Mr Speaker, so this portfolio report covers the period of July to November 2024, starting at Agriculture.

The consultation document and questionnaire for the Land Recovery Programme are complete and will be launched at a joint workshop with the Rural Business Association in February 2025. Our goal is to launch a first round of the programme by the end of spring 2025 and an ExCo paper and budget request are being drafted accordingly. Initial plans are being developed with SAERI, Falkland Conservation and other partners to identify key knowledge gaps related to the effects of changing land-management practices and stocking rates.

Fortunately, 2024 has been wetter than a number of previous years which has resulted in improved water availability on farms and suggest support enhanced productivity. Nevertheless, farmers continue to report general drying trends and significant concern about changing land-condition and livestock carrying capacity. It is evident that many areas may have surpassed environmental "tipping-points". Significant unknowns exist regarding how to meaningfully address such issues to maintain the production, biodiversity and ecosystem services associated with rural landscapes.

Shearing is complete at Saladero and lambing is underway. Pregnancy scanning revealed a large number of twin lambs and specific attention is being paid to their survival and performance. The new grazing management advisor has developed a series of demonstration trials to focus on renovation and effective management of reseed pastures – a critical issue on many farms across the Islands. A number of infrastructure and needs have emerged and capital bids will be submitted to address these issues accordingly.

32 farms remain in the Responsible Wool Standard scheme and internal and external audits are complete for 2024. The Department of Agriculture had several productive meetings with Control Union which is the auditing and certifying body and this led to a much improved external audit process this year. A survey will be circulated to all farmers asking them to feedback on their experience. Preliminary analysis of a limited set of wool sales data suggests

that RWS membership may be associated with increased chances of getting an offer for wool sales. Farms needing to address non-conformities are being offered additional assistance through the Farm Improvement Programme. Lamb-marking age emerged as a significant issue for a small number of farms and the Department will collaborate in on-farm trials to assist in addressing some of the critical issues.

The DoA and Veterinary team completed an initial, internal review of the Farm improvement programme eligibility requirements and funding policies. These focus on expanding access to encourage innovation, diversify the farming sector, stimulate the “restoration economy” and better support financially-challenged farmers. Proposals will be taken to the next Agriculture Advisory Committee and a strategic “root-and-branch” review of FIP will occur in early 2025.

Members of staff have visited farms on both the East and West and farms have hosted visits from the wool, grazing and land-recovery representatives. Key services provided include the provision on wool classing training and ewe pregnancy scanning by qualified experts as well. Initial conversations have been held with the College regarding the development of local training capacity.

The Department collaborated with SAERI and four private farms on a successful bid to the Environmental Studies Budget to evaluate and map the extent of diddle-dee dieback.

The Quality Falklands Wool scheme is being finalized and draft handbooks have been prepared – the scheme has garnered attention from wool buyers overseas and some QFW-certified wool attracted a small premium in recent sales.

Matt Davies has been in post as Head of Agriculture since July 2024. Olivia Woodiwiss joined as the Land and Grazing Systems Advisor in August 2024 and Sam Miller took over the role of Agricultural Assistant in September 2024; all are well settled and making progress on identified core strategic goals.

The Agriculture and Vet team continue to work closely with FIMCo both operationally and at board level providing support as required and were involved in the recent information gathering for the updated business plan.

The DoA has completed Phase I of an audit of the current and historical farm and productivity data it holds. They have also completed a review of current agricultural statistics, procedures and policies. Revisions should lead to some simplification and streamlining of the data reporting and management procedures that will make the Agricultural Returns process simpler and clearer for farmers while supporting the Department to report back results. Changes will be discussed at the next Agricultural Advisory Committee prior to finalization

As of October 22nd, there were 2 positive sites with significant gentoo penguin mortalities, that was Volunteer Point and Lively Island, and as you would have seen from updates there have been a number declared since. The Vets team continue to respond to calls from the public, processing samples and designating zones as appropriate across the islands. Extra biosecurity resource has been contracted this season to help with the response.

There has been positive research collaboration with visiting scientists, and the team are hopeful for a more refined pragmatic approach to response and closures for 25/26 season. However, the FIG response will remain largely unchanged for the remainder of this season.

The team has been bolstered with support from two locums, and welcomed the new permanent Veterinary officer, Caroline Murray a few weeks ago: the second fulltime officer due to arrive in January 2025. Clinic has been moderately busy, and drug and consumable procurement is an on-going issue.

The FIMCo season starts mid-November and contract staff are all arranged and will arrive the week before.

The lack of 2nd loligo season meant fewer vessel inspections this last half of the year, but given the increased size of the *Unispirit* the number of health certificates issued remains the same, but this would have increased considerably if there was a second loligo export season also. This highlights the need for more support in public health across the service.

Progress on Biosecurity Policy remains slow and the work is being reviewed by a contact who works with OTs biosecurity. It is hoped that consultation with stakeholders can start in early 2025. There has also been an increased need for biosecurity at MPC, this has been due to increased number of passengers in the summer season.

Moving on to Fisheries Science, as has been well reported, the second season of *Doryteuthis gahi* (loligo) squid fishing was cancelled, well, didn't start, sorry, due to low biomass of the stock. The regular July pre-season survey of the loligo fishing zone had estimated a 95% confidence interval of the biomass of 7,704 to 19,814 tonnes. With the lower bound of this interval being well below the conservation threshold of 10,000 tonnes, and following an already weak second season the year before, opening the fishery was determined to not meet precautionary standards. The cancellation is the first on record for a loligo fishing season.

Following the season cancellation, a further survey of the loligo fishing zone was conducted in August to evaluate the possibility of a late immigration of squid. The August survey estimated a 95% confidence interval of the biomass of 4,308 to 13,585 tonnes, a level that is consistent with natural mortality and out-migration since the previous survey but precludes that any major immigration had occurred.

A third, partial-zone survey, given limited availability of a survey vessel, was then conducted in September. Results of the September survey are being evaluated, but found a squid biomass similar to the August survey. Causes of the loligo stock deficiency overall in the 2024 second season are being investigated. Factors of interest are the relatively cold water temperature and a strong Falkland current relatively close to the shore this year.

A groundfish survey was conducted in July covering the north-western to south-western side of the Falklands fishing zone. The most abundant species in the survey were common hake, rock cod, and kingclip. All three of these species showed the highest catches per unit effort compared to previous July surveys that have been conducted since 2017. Lower temperatures and chlorophyll concentration were also noted in July 2024 compared to those previous.

In commercial fishing, hake continues to represent the predominant finfish catch. A total of 54,756 tonnes of hake have been caught through the end of October in 2024, the fourth-highest of the last 36 years following the previous three years 2021 to 2023. Research is underway to examine the demography of the hake population. The second-highest finfish catch is rock cod with 2,597 tonnes taken through the end of October; the highest for this species since 2016. Toothfish reported a total of 997 tonnes caught through October, the highest since 2020.

Joining the Fisheries Science team, there is a new data manager, Claudino Joaquim, who has been on the job since July. Two new stock assessment scientists have also been recruited overseas, and have started work in respectively July, Daniel Garcia, and August, Erwan Saulnier. The cephalopod scientist, Irina Chemshirova, has completed probation and attained grade specification.

Moving to Fisheries Management; as per the Fisheries Science update the second season of loligo was cancelled due to a low biomass. This saw the 8 MRAG observers deployed onto the loligo vessels that fished out either on the High Seas licence or 'A' Licence.

Rollout of the replacement Vessel Monitoring System and electronic catch reporting systems, under Project Sirius, is underway, with an expected live date for the VMS of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 and live date for the ERS of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025.

A review of ITQ fees is underway and currently data quality checks are being conducted between consultants, the Falkland Islands Fisheries Department and industry. At the moment this is focused on Loligo data and the next phase will see a review of the finfish data.

Applications for illex licences are in process and we are expecting to see a maximum of 108 licences issued for 2025. The first jiggers in Stanley harbour for pre-licence inspections are expected on 13<sup>th</sup> January, with the bulk arriving at the beginning of February.

The joint FIG-FIFCA economic survey of the Illex fishery is underway, with visits to both Taiwan and Korea undertaken by the project providers. The outputs from the project are expected towards the end of 2024. The Fisheries Department are working closely with industry to review draft outputs that have recently been received.

We are currently awaiting the arrival of 2 new observers in early 2025 but Fisheries Management itself is fully staffed. In particular FishOps is now fully staffed, giving support for Fisheries Protection Officer Bennett who was working on his own for quite a long period.

Moving over to the Department of Minerals; all extant production licences have been extended until 31 December 2026 after consent was received from the UK Secretary of State. Licence fees were roughly doubled as they had not been increased in line with inflation for many years.

The Navitas EIS public consultation process has been completed. Around 30 representations were made during the consultation, and along with queries made by the Department of

Mineral Resources and its consultants, there were over 1,100 separate comments for Navitas to respond to. Most of these were addressed satisfactorily, but there are some outstanding issues that FIG will continue to discuss with Navitas and could result in conditions being imposed at the consenting stage. An ExCo meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November agreed that the EIS process set out by law had been followed correctly.

ExCo also agreed to continue to set aside a tract of land in the Gordon Lines area for the oil industry until 2026 and considered high-level details of a proposed new oil and gas decommissioning regime. This would provide financial cover for both early project failure via upfront security and planned end-of-life decommissioning through a decommissioning trust fund. Officers will now begin work on the detailed policy design, including tax treatment of the proposed arrangements.

Other work with Navitas is on-going, including reviewing various supporting documentation for the Field Development Plan that has been submitted for comment, including their Oil Pollution Emergency Plans, Waste Management Strategy, Insurance Plan and Financial Liability Assessment for oil spills, as well as matters such as tax clearances and petroleum valuation. A workshop is planned with Navitas for early December to discuss on-going work and any issues.

Work also remains on-going to develop the new offshore health, safety and environment legislation. The health & safety element of the planned new ordinance is largely complete and is currently with HSE UK for review. After the ordinance is finalised, the next stage is to produce the associated regulations and guidance.

Regarding onshore minerals: Warrah Resources are processing data from a series of deep ground-penetrating radar surveys carried out earlier in the year. An enquiry has been made regarding helium exploration in the Falklands. DMR are looking into the legislative framework that would cover this to see whether and how it could be accommodated within Falkland law.

The Department of Minerals is now fully staffed after the new Project Director started work in October; he has been largely working on developing the oil readiness programme timeline and risk register.

Moving on to the fish farming consultation: a public scoping exercise has commenced to seek feedback from members of the public on the plans for the consultation, including on the documents that will be used in the consultation and their contents. The scoping exercise will conclude at the start of December and will inform any potential changes to the planned content of the socio-economic impact assessment and updates of the McAllistair-Elliot and Partners reports.

The procurement process for the consultants to produce the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and oversee the consultation process has concluded and appointments have been made. It is planned that work on this report will start by the end of November.

Moving to South American Atlantic Services Limited; SAAS has experienced a mixed performance over the last few months, on the import side volumes have remained strong and we expect the final import volume for the year-end to be slightly above forecast.

We are seeing a high level of liner vessel schedule disruption and this has impacted our arrival dates into Stanley, we are managing this with our customers and keeping all informed.

SAAS saw a large increase in import cargo requirements from Montevideo during July and August, mainly due to cargo requirements for finfish vessels that transhipped at FIPASS.

On exports, volumes have been significantly impacted as a direct result of the second loligo season not commencing, the loss in volume to SAAS compared to previous years is around 27% of our annual export total, and will result in the exports being well under forecast for the year.

2025 schedules have been published, and for the remainder of the year we are looking forward to the completion of phase 1 of the yard extension and workshop, and planning is well underway for 2025, including sales and forecasting.

Moving onto Falkland Landholdings; the Falklands Landholdings shearing season began at North Arm in early October and is now well underway across the farms. Shearing was preceded with some days of woolclasser and woolhandler training by the visiting instructor from Australia, arranged by the Department of Agriculture.

Despite the very wet, cold winter, the sheep are in better condition than expected. The wet weather has had a positive effect on the spring pasture growth which is welcome.

FLH has recently managed to sell virtually all remaining fleece wool from the past 2 seasons, amounting to 746 bales and whilst the prices were not that exciting, they were overall above what they had valued them to be for stock purposes. There remains only 158 bales to sell, most of which are locks and are the lowest value wool. Clearing the backlog of wool will not only provide important cash input but clear the decks for sales of the new season.

The farms have completed a winter maintenance programme including renovation of the Woolpack café at Goose Green, and seasonal workers have arrived who are working between the farms on a slightly reduced fencing programme due to budgetary constraints. Work continues on some tourism based projects. The Woolpack café opened in late October and whilst it will take a while to settle in, the initial feedback has been very positive.

An Agricultural Apprentice began at North Arm at the start of October and a number of others have expressed an interest in this programme from October 2025. 4 work experience students started their work experience week on 25<sup>th</sup> November on 2 of the FLH farms.

Some sheep handling equipment, including sheep conveyors and combi-clamps have arrived and are already helping the team manage sheep and wool selection and drenching more efficiently.

FIMCo have been kept updated with FLH's sheep numbers planned for 2024-25 export season, with an increase on the initial cautious numbers provided during the winter period. Following the recent beef industry meeting held by FIMCo, FLH is reviewing its plans for future beef production and finishing. It will be challenging given the low numbers of beef breeding cows now available in the Falklands.

Preparations for the coming tourist season are well in-hand along with increased cruise vessel tour bookings, although the risk posed by avian flu is high; some back-up plans are being worked through.

The Solar energy systems project to complement the wind power at each of the 4 settlements is now complete and working well. The wind turbines annual maintenance for the current year has begun.

Paul Phillips has been appointed as general manager to succeed John Ferguson when he retires at the end of March and a phased handover and induction process has started. Mr Speaker, may I please take this opportunity to thank Mr Ferguson for his dedicated service to FLH and highlight that it is with regret that we see him leave, but we wish him a very happy retirement.

Moving on to FIMCo; the Falkland Islands Meat Company 2024/25 export season started on 11<sup>th</sup> November, with the first team members arriving on 09<sup>th</sup> November, the team are slaughtering one day and processing the next. This will change when the remainder of the team arrive in January 2025, when both the slaughter hall and the boning room will be operating in sync.

The current export livestock plan has 42,000 sheep and 5,000 lambs; the majority of export mutton has now been pre-sold, with only a small volume currently under negotiation. Prices for product are better than the 2023/24 season, with all sales being to the UK and EU due to the better prices being offered. This year FIMCo will be producing offal for export, which will reduce the volumes disposed of at sea.

A beef workshop took place earlier this month, it is hoped to build confidence in suppliers who have either reduced or stopped producing beef. Suppliers are being contacted to discuss future demand, the focus being on local market supply only. As highlighted earlier in my report, attention is also being given to the matter of boosting the breeding stock available.

Bookings for beef are confirmed until August 2025, with only a small gap in beef animal availability immediately before and after Christmas. This will have an impact on pre-orders and potentially reduced retail volumes in certain products, and they are advising all of their customers.

That concludes my report Mr Speaker. I am happy to take any questions on the content.

**Mr Speaker**

Honourable Members, does anyone wish to raise a question or a comment on that report?

## **Clerk of the Assembly**

Portfolio Report, the Honourable Peter Biggs

### **The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will commence with the portfolio report for the Public Works Department. Staffing remains as issue within Power & Electrical section the team continue to work hard to ensure power provision to Stanley consumers. The Generator 7 works have now been completed and the engine has been fully commissioned and is now in regular use. Residents may have noted that this engine is slightly louder than the others. The engine operates at a higher revolutions-per-minute than the other engines and therefore has a more audible frequency. While this is more notable, the noise levels are within safe limits and staff will do what they can to minimise the impacts to the surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the continued use of this engine is essential to the ability to meet the town's power demands.

The Highways team have recommenced works both on the MPA road and the Camp Road network. The culvert works are now all completed on the MPA road and the focus is now on the realignment and surfacing works with asphaltting starting last week. Grading and capping works have taken place on the un-surfaced roads in the Stanley area, including Coastel and Boxer Bridge road, Cape Pembroke road and the road to Gypsy Cove and Yorke Bay. The team are aware of the continuing build-up of sand on some of these roads and will ensure these are cleared as regularly as resources allow. Works on the MPA road and Camp roads are likely to cause some disruption through the summer season and PWD would like to thank the public for their understanding and patience.

The quarry remains busy meeting the demands of the FIG capital programme and the wider private sector developments, including those at MPC. It is expected to be another extremely busy year and that has been evident in the volume of material produced and sold through the first quarter of the year.

The Property & Municipal and Housing Departments are also working hard to meet the demands. Housing had a busy time at the start of the academic year with staffing changes requiring quick turn around on contractor housing. Demand for housing remains high with FIG currently renting 28 private sector properties to cover contractor pool requirements. The team have also managed the letting of a new waste collection contract, to see us through to the opening of the new facility, and the new landscape contract which is expected to be in place in the coming weeks. They have also managed numerous in house and contracted works to deliver the building and housing maintenance programme.

The Water Section have concentrated recent efforts on the repairs to the Moody Brook reservoir to ensure resilience as we move into the summer season. They are also working with contractors on the main upgrade works and additional tanks which are progressing on the high-level water system at Sapper Hill. The completion of these works will improve

storage and control of treated water which will then allow works to be directed at increasing and improving water treatment capacity at the plant.

The Design and Survey team are supporting the capital works. While the survey teams efforts are directed at supporting the works on the MPA road the Design team are working on numerous capital projects, including the ramp & jetties, Sapper Hill Phase 7 development, refurbishment works within the Hillside estate, Stanley roads and water treatment works. They also continue to provide support to the AG's chambers and the private sector for developments and land release.

The focus of the Project team is the waste management, new power station, the next phase of renewable energy for Sand Bay, Housing construction, industrial and housing infrastructure, road works, the development of the new cemetery, the KEMH redevelopment and the refurbishment of the FIGAS southern hangar.

The waste facility is progressing with contract works for the ground works and buildings due to be placed in early December. Late essential design amendments have added a further delay with the incinerator, but it will be shipped around 2025 and the completion and commissioning the facility in early 2026, I believe it is due to be shipped in the middle of 2025, the shipping space provided.

Good progress is being made with the power station and renewables projects. The turbine manufacture is due for completion in December 2024 and they will then be stored in Germany until the site works are completed and ready to receive the units. It is anticipated that we will break ground on both projects in Q1 of 2025. Both will start with the required access roads and laydown areas followed by the detailed construction works.

The works carried out by PWD are numerous and it's not realistic to mention all of them within the scope of this report, however I would just touch on the housing development at Bennetts Paddock, 24 houses have been handed over to date, 10 one-bed units are nearing completion and it's expected that they will be handed over in lots between January and June 2025. And a further four times two beds and two times four beds will be handed over in lots between February and April 2025. That ends the PWD portfolio report.

I will now go into the Environment report. Since the last portfolio report in June, the Environment Department have been working hard to deliver environment priorities, which I know remains very important to the Assembly, and I will share some of the highlights of these.

Our work, adapting to the impacts of climate change continues; our network of weather stations is up and running, the information that we are collecting is helping us to better understand our weather patterns and how climate change affects different places in the Falklands.

Two exciting new climate change projects are about to start; the first is an assessment of finance options for Blue-Green carbon and the second is an assessment of how climate change will affect water supply for Stanley.

We have improved the way we report on carbon-dioxide emissions in the Falklands, so we are better able to monitor reductions in the future. We have been working with the UK government on an assessment of how climate change could affect security and stability in the Falklands. And we understand that there was discussion on how the UK and Overseas Territories can work in partnership to address concerns regarding climate change at the recent JMC meetings.

We have four environmental policy projects underway, the first is the National Energy Strategy, which sets out a path towards 100% renewable energy by 2045, the second is the Pollution and Waste Management Policy which aims to manage our waste more effectively and reduce the amount of pollution in the Falklands, the third is the National Park Policy and Management Plan which aims to create a national park in the Hill Cove mountains on West Falklands, these three policies will soon be brought to Executive Council for decisions. Sorry, I think I started off by saying we had four.

The other major project of course is the Marine Managed Areas, we received the consultant's report about the Marine Managed Areas in September as planned, we are now in the process of reviewing all of the documents and are preparing a report with the recommendations for Executive Council to consider. This process has taken a little longer than expected as officers have been away on annual leave. We still intend to consult with the public and stakeholder groups before any final decisions are made about the MMAs. This will now take place early in the new year.

In addition to the MMAs and the national parks, the Islands Plan aims to improve the management of protected areas more general and to make recommendations for national nature reserves. We have started reviewing how our existing reserve network is being managed and how effective it is at protecting and conserving our wildlife. That has also helped us prioritise areas for habitat restoration, and we will be continuing our tussac planting on some of the remote FIG owned islands as well as closer to Stanley.

We are currently revising the Stanley Common management plan, with a view to finding the right balance between protecting the environment and providing an open space for everyone to enjoy. As part of this, we have worked with the Tourist Board to develop guidelines for the Yorke Bay and Gypsy Cove penguin colonies on cruise ship days. We have rebuilt the viewing platforms at Gypsy Cove and have improved the walking track in anticipation of summer visitors.

Unfortunately, bird flu has returned and it has already affected several wildlife colonies, no one knows what the rest of the season will bring, but the situation is closely monitored by the Veterinary and Bio-security teams and we thank everyone for their co-operation at this difficult time.

I'm pleased to inform that 19 new environmental studies budget grants were approved at the last Environmental Committee meeting in September, together with 6 on-going projects from last year, we are now supporting 25 environmental projects across the Falklands. Honourable Members, Mr Speaker, that concludes my portfolio report.

**Mr Speaker**

Thank you, does any Honourable Member wish to raise a question on that, or a comment?

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Peter Biggs for his portfolio report there, especially PWD, that's really what I was wanting to home in on. Thinking about PWD, it's a huge organisation, with its fingers in many pies and it has always been thus. However, I do find myself wondering is the structure of PWD correct? Is more support required? Is what we're doing and the processes and the hoops that we're making them jump through now actually causing more work and slowing everything down? Now, I don't altogether expect the Honourable Gentleman to reply to that, but he may if he wishes.

But, my actual question to him on his report, was something he mentioned right at the beginning, and that was the power, you mentioned Number 7, which is all nice and sparkly and running and doing stuff, you made no mention of Number 8, are you aware if Number 8 is a going concern at the moment, and if not, what may the future look like?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker I thank the Honourable Member for his supplementary question, I understand there have been problems with Number 8, but as far as I know it is operational, I have not been advised otherwise.

**The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his reply. Would he undertake please to find out whether Number 8 is an operational going concern or whether maybe it is somewhat unwell?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, yes, I take the Honourable Member's question and will inquire.

**Mr Speaker**

Does any other Honourable Member wish to raise a question or comment?

**The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker. I have a couple ones, really, so in terms of the renewable energy, so the turbines finish next month, so December I think my Honourable Colleague said, so in terms of the site works, are the site works currently underway, and can my Honourable Colleague please inform us as to when they're due for completion?

And the other one is the power station; can my Honourable Colleague confirm whether the design is complete? We seem to have been waiting an eternity for the design of the power station, so could my Honourable Colleague inform the House as to whether the design is complete yet please?

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his supplementaries, as far as the site works go for the wind turbines, I don't believe they have begun yet, but I shall check on that. As for the design, again, I will have to check because I haven't specifically discussed that with the Director of Public Works.

**Mr Speaker**

The Honourable Mark Pollard, you're content? Okay.

**The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank my Honourable Colleague for his portfolio report, I have to admit, I have to echo some of the concerns already expressed, but the situation at the power station is extremely worrying. We have been aware for quite some time that there are some very serious staffing issues there, there is little more critical to the running of the country than power, and I'm sure that everything is being done to remedy this, but I would urge my Honourable Colleague to press and to try and help find a solution, because I am very concerned about where we might be heading here, and the longer a very small team is under pressure, I think the more likely they are to go and find easier work elsewhere, they do such a good job for us, so I seriously hope we can get over this.

And the power station, I think we have been asking a lot of questions about this recently, so it is a bit of repetition again, but it is such a critical project for Stanley and the Islands more broadly, and again, it has been a very long time coming. I will feel much better when I've seen some plans and a schedule, so I hope that that can be forthcoming soon.

There was mention of ramps and jetties, but not a great deal of detail, is there anything further that my Honourable Colleagues could inform us on this? Again, it has been a long standing process, and I know that it has hit hiccup after hiccup, but that it is a lot of concern to members of our Camp population.

Then, one last thing and I will sit down, all my Honourable Colleagues have heard me express my worries and my fears about housing, it's good to hear that more properties from Bennetts Paddock are going to be coming online soon and that that work has been progressing steadily, but I think we all need to lean in very hard to get in the next phase of Sappers Hill underway, because even then it's going to take a few years before any new properties are available, or serviced plots available for individuals to get on with their own building projects.

I do hope that we will see some progress with some of the private sector housing, Mr Speaker, that has been spoken of in this House over the last year, year and a half or more,

because I think that those projects could really ease the situation, I think we do have a housing crisis, we do have to tackle it, it is one of the core responsibilities I think of any Government, is to provide housing for its people.

So, only really one question, it was an interesting portfolio report, but any more information on ramps and jetties would be welcome, thank you Mr Speaker.

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker I thank the Honourable Leona Roberts for her observations, and I'd also like to just go back to what the Honourable Gavin Short mentioned as well, this stuff we're talking about here, is the critical infrastructure that has been started late in relation to the infrastructure that is there, we all recognise that, we've all picked up that challenge and we're meeting it head on. But the Honourable Gavin Short did mention that he wonders whether the PWD have what they need as far as human resource to meet that challenge, and I will make a point of discussing that observation with the Director of Public Works because I think there is a huge amount of working parts here, a huge amount of projects, the vital thing, the most vital thing about those projects for me, is that we get them right. The next vital thing is that we get them done as soon as possible and I don't want to get those priorities to get mixed up.

As far as the ramps and jetties, I know that it's all a question of resources, but my understanding is that the work on the design of those is on-going even though there isn't much action on the ground.

So, yes, you made a lot of relevant points and I'm sure I've forgotten some but we're all in the same direction with this, we all want to succeed as quickly as possible and we have to check our resources, check our supply lines, but it is progressing and I understand these things are progressing as quickly as they can. But in the meantime we have the anxiety caused by seventy year old generators chugging away in the power station.

**Mr Speaker**

The Honourable Leona Roberts, are you content?

**The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

Thank you Mr Speaker, I'd asked a question about the ramps and jetties project last month, so I can share an update that was current as of the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, which was also then later updated by the Director of Public Works himself, as he was absent during this period, it came from Tony Rundell.

As people may be aware, there are a number of different issues with the trolley on Sealion Island, the two projects, it's worth saying that are being prioritised at the moment are Sealion Island and Lively Island, so the material for the new trolley was delivered in July 2024, on Sealion Island the trolley was damaged in July and it was repaired until August 2024, when it was completely destroyed. They have now got a new design engineer in place, and they are updating drawings to suit the proper survey of the bases, which will need to be adjusted, the bases of the new trolley system but also to accommodate the new track and trolley system.

It's also very heavy so adjustments will need to be accurate, so hopefully it will avoid this situation happening again in the future.

Discussion on Lively Island with contractors who are going to complete the works has happened and the material was due to be delivered in two or three trips by Workboat Services around about now, so it said before the end of November, so it will be interesting to get an update possibly from the Director of Public Works as to whether those deliveries have happened.

The ramp was found to be too wide, which made the amount of materials that was needed significantly more than was assessed previously. They are currently making the ramp thinner, in order to better suit Workboat Services, moving the width from 12 metres to 18 metres but the full list of works I think, the full works are going to be in March next year.

Other projects in areas such as Weddel Island, Speedwell Island, George and Barren Island, it's probably fair to say that they're in the discussion stages with the landowners and the island owners in proposed potential solutions, and engaging with the design team on those. And the Port Howard high tide ramp has had minor involvement from PWD, it is actually being managed by DCS, they've been assisting with the design of that ramp and that is probably a brief summary of a very long email, which hopefully assists to answer my Honourable Colleague's question.

**Mr Speaker**

Thank you. Does any other Honourable Member wish to raise comment or a question on that portfolio report? No. I thank both the Honourable Members for their portfolio reports.

**Clerk of the Assembly**

The Motion for Adjournment.

**The Acting Chief Executive.**

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

**The Honourable Jack Ford**

Mr Speaker, I would like to note three very positive things that have happened in the last month in the Emergency Services and Islands Security Portfolio.

The first is the Overseas Territories Prison Superintendents Conference which was held from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> November. This annual conference is led by the UK Ministry of Justice as part of the Overseas Territories Justice Programme. This was the first time this conference was hosted by the Falklands.

We welcomed delegates from; Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, St Helena, Turks and Caicos Islands, as well as a team from the Ministry of Justice. The agenda included prison leadership, valuing staff and training development, Overseas Territories collaboration, women in Prisons, business planning, and reducing re offending.

I was only able to attend a small part of the conference, however from the parts I did attend and from all reports I have received, it was an incredibly positive week, allowing the Falklands to showcase the successes of our Prison and Probation service, as well as providing delegates with a very enjoyable week.

I would like to thank Ian Sargent, the Head of Prison Service, and all those who work in the Falklands Prison and Probation Service for their planning and preparation for this conference, for ensuring, that despite travel disruption and illness, that the week ran smoothly, and for the professionalism that was displayed throughout. The conference allowed for collaboration across the overseas territories, and is another positive example of the diplomacy efforts that take place across the Government and wider community.

The second being the celebration of the birthday of His Majesty the King on the 14th November; this included a 21 gun salute by the FIDF on Victory Green, followed by an afternoon tea party hosted by the Her Excellency the Governor at Government House. This marked a tremendous improvement on the previous year, which I hope will continue into future years. I hope that all involved in the celebrations had a very enjoyable day.

Finally, the Directorate of Emergency Services and Islands Security open day, which was held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November. The open day included all services across the directorate, was very well attended, and extremely positive all round. I extend my huge thanks and well done to all members of the Emergency Services and Islands Security team, the large team of volunteers, and all those that made donations and attended the day.

The raffle, bake sale, and donations on the day raised an amazing £4,394.66. This was supplemented by very generous donations from JRC Facilities, VokerFitzpatrick and Grubz Up, which took the grand total raised to £9,014.66. These funds will be evenly split between three charities nominated by the directorate, which are; FVF Liberty Lodge FI Trust, Lighthouse Seafarers Mission, and the Stephen Jaffray Memorial Fund.

Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

### **The Honourable Gavin Short**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to speak to the motion, I keep thinking about the answer given by the Honourable Peter Biggs regarding the grass situation here in Stanley, I am starting to wonder whether we should be asking the DoA to introduce a Government flock of

sheep for town, which as well as keeping the grass down and probably providing an odd stew here and there, they would be quite a tourist attraction as well, although we might then need Government shearers as well.

Anyway, I'll get back on track again, I'd just like to mention a few things if I may, as part of the "explore your archives" week that is running at the moment, along with the Honourable John Birmingham I visited the Archives on Wednesday to say hi to the enthusiastic and dedicated staff who work there, that's Chloe and Helen, along with the two work experience students Brett and Marcy, and I have to say that I was extremely impressed with their on-going efforts to both preserve our history and also to present it to the public through their website and presence on social media.

Happily, this seems to be an endless task as, as they chew through the catalogue of items that are already there, thanks to making the archives more accessible and known to people, new material is coming in as the public and businesses realise just what they might have at home or in the workplace and are sending it into the archives. For example, we are seeing more old photos being presented to the archives, the FIC collection is a good example, but they are also now getting sent slides which I remember very well, which require processing and will, no doubt appear on their website in due course.

Perhaps what was a little unsettling though is that whilst at the archives I came across one or two items and people's names that, to me anyway, are not at all old. but to the Archives they are now of historical nature so it would seem as if I may be a walking breathing historical entity of some sort. When coupled with the Historic Dockyard Museum, we do have real jewels and something that we need to support as our history is vitally important to us, and for a young nation we have managed to hang on to a huge amount of that history.

I wish to touch on something altogether more serious and that is the situation of with Chagos Islands and more especially the Islanders. Now, I am sure that a lot of people were pretty taken aback when the announcement was made that the Chagos Islands were being handed to Mauritius. This was something that was started by the Conservative government and it may be going to be finished by a Labour government.

Whilst the cases of the Chagos and the Falklands are very different, what has always made me uncomfortable as a human being was the way the Chagos Islanders were removed from their land by either trickery or force. They were treated appallingly and continue to be so as they have had no part in the decisions that were made by the British government. They have not been allowed to practice self-determination and it would seem as if the proposed deal was pushed through against the wishes of the Islanders as I understand it, something that has echoes to us here in the Falklands where this too was happening back in the 1970s, we now hear that the Island on which the airport sits, Diego Garcia is to be subject to some sort of 99 year leaseback and where have we heard that one before?

As I said, my natural position has always been to support the Chagos Islanders and I have made no secret that I think that they have been treated appallingly. However, this was made somewhat more difficult as the Chagos Islanders are a fractured population with some living in the United Kingdom and others in Mauritius. The leader of the Mauritius group was "got

at”, if I can put it like that, by the Argentines quite a few years back now and made various speeches etc in support of the Argentine claim on the Falklands. Even when the so called deal with Mauritius was announced he appeared in the Argentine press basically saying that “if we can do it – so can you”.

However, a newspaper report that I spotted last night indicates that he may not be flavour of the month with the Chagos Islanders in Mauritius who were demonstrating, claiming that he did not speak for them and that they did not agree with the deal that is being attempted.

It would also appear as if the new government in Mauritius itself is not happy, as is perhaps the new administration that is soon to take power in America.

I call on, though, the British Government to abandon this deal and to start speaking with the Chagos Islanders; they have the right to self-determination. They have been treated appallingly from the get go and this awful treatment continues. They cannot be whitewashed out of the process; it is their land and they have the right to say what happens to it. Self-determination applies to all.

Finally, another nibbly little subject is that of parades and the rather dialled down 8<sup>th</sup> of December commemoration that has caused some unease in the public. And really, rhetorical questions; are we going to walk away from these parades? Should we? Weirdly, the 8<sup>th</sup> of December still resonates with people here in the Falklands and indeed in other countries and I don't think the feelings that people have for the day have lessened that much as we moved through the generations. The direct connection to the events of that day have long gone, but the feeling about its importance hasn't lessened that much. I will be there this year, but I really don't want to be the last MLA who lays a wreath in memory of those who saved the Falklands from some real damage all those years ago. I support the motion, Mr Speaker.

### **The Honourable Leona Roberts**

Thank you Mr Speaker, yes, in rising to support the motion I've got a few things I'd like to touch on, Mr Speaker. It was a great pleasure for us to welcome and host the Minister of Armed Forces Luke Pollard earlier this year, for him to come to the Falklands so early in his tenure I think indicates how important he sees the Falklands and certainly the messages that he gave to us and to our community were very, very welcome and very clear and unequivocal in the support, so I think it was wonderful to have him here and particularly as it could coincide with Remembrance Sunday.

Recently we've also seen a visit of a delegation from Chile, organised by the Development Corporation, although we didn't get to spend a great deal of time with them, the conversations were really interesting and I think they have gone away as a new group of ambassadors for the Falklands, and I do hope that we see some of their ideas come to fruition and some of those links strengthened, but certainly new friendships were forged and I think that was a very worthwhile visit.

It's currently a pleasure to have His Majesty's Ambassador to Chile Louise De Souza here in the Islands, again, a very welcome visitor and we know that there is nothing like people

coming to the Falklands to see for themselves our issues, our opportunities and our community.

Last week Mr Speaker, the Youth Parliament took part in UK Parliament week and were amongst quite a large group of young people from across the Overseas Territories, who took part in an online question and answer session with Sir Lindsay Hoyle, the Speaker of the House of Commons. It was a fantastic event; our young people represented the Falklands absolutely brilliantly, we were quite clear that we were the best on the call, but Sir Lindsay was fantastic in the time he gave up for the session and for his responses to all the young people from across the Overseas Territories, so I would officially, and on behalf of the Youth Parliament like to put my thanks on record to Sir Lindsay.

A final point from me, November is a month when we focus on men's health and well-being, and includes International Men's Day on the 19<sup>th</sup>, there was no great fanfare around this, which, you know, I would have liked to see something, because I think encouraging men to talk about their health and their well-being and their place in modern society is very important, and I think perhaps, even more important in this day and age when we are seeing a slightly uncomfortable trend, I think, of individuals who I would not necessarily consider to be positive male role models gaining prominence whether on social media or in other areas.

And so I think that with International Men's Day, one of the pillars of it is about positive male role models, so I would take the opportunity to just give a bit of a shout out really to all the good men in our society, there are many out there; I think the majority are, but I think we need to acknowledge them, what they do and their place in all our lives and encourage them to look after themselves too – says someone who is not the healthiest person in the world, but it is troubling that the leading causes of death in men are testicular cancer, prostate cancer and mental health, are not something that men particularly talk about.

I would also congratulate my erstwhile Honourable Colleague who has grown a moustache for "Movember" – we will not try to describe it for the radio, I'm sure everyone has seen it, but it has certainly been interesting to see that progress. So that's it from me Mr Speaker, I hope that maybe one day we will actually have an event for International Men's Day, I'm sure that my Honourable Colleague Teslyn Barkman and I will be starting work fairly soon thinking about International Women's Day, but the two go very much hand-in-hand, the relationship between the two is obviously very critical for our whole community. Thank you, Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

### **The Honourable Mark Pollard**

Thank you Mr Speaker, in rising to support the motion I'd like to thank my Honourable Colleague for a double segue. I, too, think it was great to see Luke Pollard down here, I think seeing politicians with the surname Pollard in the Falklands, I think we can all agree that's a very good thing.

I would just like to give a little bit of a notice really that we're heading out to West Falkland this weekend to go and meet with people out there, it's long overdue and apologies for that – there's a Farmers Q&A session that we'll be attending as MLAs I believe tomorrow at 1pm

until 3pm and then we're having a public meeting followed by a buffet at 5pm until 7pm at the Southern Cross Social Club at Fox Bay, and then we were due to have a public meeting at Hill Cove 5pm until 7pm but unfortunately some events have put paid to that, but I'm sure we'll be going and we'll meet with people out there should they want to get hold of us and contact us.

So, Mr Speaker, as the calendar approaches December, I find myself counting down the days, and not to Christmas, but to the great shaving of 2024. Yes, my "Movember" moustache, a noble if itchy banner for men's mental health has run its course, or will do shortly. And while my wife will undoubtedly rejoice at its departure, I must admit this scruffy little growth has taught me more than I bargained for.

So first, let's address the public reaction; who knew that a patch of facial hair could ignite such strong emotions? Strangers, acquaintances and colleagues alike have felt compelled to weigh in, ranging from compliments on my new-found ruggedness, there is a little intentional exaggeration here, I do possess some self-awareness, to mutterings that I look like that guy from Anchorman. And yet amidst the banter the inevitable question arises, "are you doing 'Movember'?" Queue my honest reply; "yes, to raise awareness for men's mental health." And there it is; the conversation killer. There has been more comfortable silences in dentist chairs.

Now, I always knew there was stigma around discussing mental health, but I didn't quite grasp how pervasive it was until I turned myself into a walking bill-board for the cause. The responses have ranged from awkward shuffles to outright dismissiveness, with a few brave souls engaging in genuine dialogue, the overall ambivalence is striking, it's as if mentioning mental health is akin to bringing up politics at Christmas dinner, and I'm guilty of that as well Mr Speaker.

And yet, that's the point, isn't it? The discomfort, the dismissiveness, the unwillingness to engage, this is precisely why "Movember" matters, if growing a moustache for a month can feel this socially awkward, imagine how daunting it must be for someone to admit they are struggling. My 'stache may have been a light-hearted gesture, but the reactions it elicited underscore the serious work still to be done in breaking down these barriers.

So, as I prepare to bid farewell to this bristly ambassador, I leave you with this; men's mental health isn't a seasonal gimmick, and it's not going away when my moustache does. The next time someone mentions mental health, resist the urge to change the subject, lean in to the discomfort, because every awkward conversation could be a lifeline. As for me, I'll be celebrating my clean shaven return with a razor in hand and a renewed commitment to raising awareness, this time without the itchy upper lip.

But while this glorious, undeniable masterpiece of follicular engineering occupies prime position on my stiff upper lip, at least until the first of next month, it would be Mr Speaker, a missed opportunity not to channel Ron Burgundy, and sign off with a "stay classy, Falkland Islands." Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Honourable Peter Biggs**

Mr Speaker, in rising to support this motion I must start with an apology to everybody that was involved in the Clean-up Stanley campaign on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November, how could I miss that? Well, the day before I'd returned from a very long journey, and I was totally jet-lagged and have been ever since actually, slowly recovering. But I did notice something different, I think there were a few improvements, but the things that I've been using as my markers, which were several, quite a lot of derelict vehicles, which are in public view, some of which were on public land around Stanley, then I would propose that the next Clean-up Stanley Campaign is called a "Deep-Clean-up Stanley" so we can get the remains. But I will look into ways that we could maybe help some people dispose of some of those things.

I know for some people it's a matter of recycling and I do also respect that, but it does look very ugly.

Now you may ask what my long journey was, and that is that I was returning from the 67<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, which took place in Sydney, Australia, and I've never been to one of those before, and I must admit on my way out there, I was saying "will it be worth the journey?" the very long journey; I went to the UK and then I went to Australia, but I'm pleased to say that on my way back I reflected that it was worth the journey and our feeling is that it's an old and established and worthwhile enterprise for the good of the Commonwealth and it involves such a large portion of the population of the world that it does have global significance, and the emphasis is on improving democracy, good governance and it goes really deep into some subjects that effect politicians, usually not here, but there was quite a deep look at violence against women in politics and things like that.

I could wax lyrical about this for some time, but I'm not going to. I would encourage people and listeners to look this up online, they do a very good closing report which summarises the events and the discussions and everything that takes place at that event, and it's well worth a look. But one of the highlights of it, I have to say, was the dinner which took place for all delegates in the Sydney Town Hall, at which the key speaker was the Prime Minister of Australia, the Honourable Anthony Albanese, and he did a remarkable speech, it didn't conform to the five minutes that was suggested by King Charles when he was over there, he gave them a timer for their parliament, which is a five minute timer and he suggested no politician should speak for more than five minutes on the same subject, but anyway, the Prime Minister didn't stick to that, but it was a remarkable and impactful speech, and I believe that is also available.

One of the interesting things they're trying to do there now is to restrict children from social media, that's a huge project, some other places have done it, and its food for thought for us, but anyway, I won't go on about that. Thank you.

### **The Honourable John Birmingham**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to speak to the motion, I do recall bringing a bell back some years ago for Gilbert House, to enable whoever was Chair of a particular meeting to look at their timer and ring the bell when perhaps, some people had gone on that little bit too long. Clearly, it doesn't happen anymore, there's perhaps no need for that.

In rising to speak to this motion, sometimes there are international names that come to mind, and the other day I was thinking of certain Northern Irish gentleman, by the name of Ian Paisley, who was, to those that are aware, he was a well-known firebrand of the old fashioned sort, who was very much minded that the Northern Ireland should remain part of the United Kingdom, and his constituency was actually split pretty much 50/50 between Protestant Northern Irish and Catholic Northern Irish who allegedly wanted to join the Republic, and I can remember asking a teacher here in Stanley some time ago, a certain Mr White, who was a teacher of Spanish, who was here on contract from Northern Ireland, why did this man get in? And he explained to me that although Ian Paisley was a firebrand, and although he did look at the big things, and that was one of his objectives to remain in the United Kingdom, he was also involved in small items, day to day things, and I would suggest that this Assembly, the modern Assembly is not too different to that.

We deal with, as my Honourable Colleague has just mentioned, he's just come back from a Commonwealth Conference in Australia, we send people to the United Nations, we do get involved in the big stuff, but we go from the big stuff all the way down to, dare I say, and I won't mention this anymore, seemingly smaller matters such as facilities at the ferry head, and I'm not suggesting that anybody here by the way Mr Speaker, is anything like the Reverend Ian Paisley, absolutely not.

On Tuesday of this week I had the pleasure of going into Malvina House Hotel, to hand out over forty certificates to members of the Medical Department, Social Services, for their completion of the C-SAFE, which is Caring and Safety programme, this course has been going on for some time. It's a course that advances the care and support of vulnerable adults, it's a really progressive course, and it's an initiative, and I'm going to mention them by name, because there is a lot that goes on and is successful; this initiative by Mandy Heathman the Chief Nursing Officer, Sam Lowe the Principle Social Worker for Adults, Mhari Henrys the Community Support Manager, Ellis Smith the Specialist Liaison Nurse and also many others involved in what has become a very successful programme that will be on-going and will continue in the future.

Mr Speaker, since the sitting of this Assembly, we've had the first visit by the Inspection team looking into the Medical Services in the Falklands, Honourable Members have had an initial briefing from them, and I think that Honourable Members and the wider population will look forward to their inspection report when it comes out early next year.

And my Honourable Colleague and I did go to the Archives, there's something we're not short of in the Islands, its reports and paperwork and so they will, at some point in the future need expansion. But I must add my thanks to the visit and I would recommend any body to get involved in their history and to make appointments and go have a look and see the professional way the archives are run. And with that Mr Speaker, it's been quite a long morning, I support the motion.

**The Honourable Teslyn Barkman**

Thank you Mr Speaker, in rising to support the motion I'd first like to start with a congratulations to Dr Andrea Clausen for her appointment as incumbent Chief Executive, which marks a landmark appointment I'd say for the Falklands, for two reasons, although she may not agree with one, but she's the first Falkland Islander to be welcomed into the role, but also the first female Chief Executive that we will have in the Falklands, and I'm very, very proud to say that I think she will do a very formidable job from my experience of her as Director of Natural Resources. That being said, it's been touched on by a few Honourable Colleagues that scrutiny and expectations of females in leadership roles, women in leadership roles can sometimes be very high, and I know being a Falkland Islands woman itself is a powerful role to live up to, it's a tag that many of us wear with a lot of pride and are very pleased to know so many powerful and formidable women who lead in their fields across areas of my portfolio, but also across the community.

I'm sure she will stand up to the task, but just really to note, and while she is here today it is much more poignant to do so, a sincere congratulations for that role.

Secondly, just to note on what MLA Peter Biggs noted, which was the Clean-up Stanley initiative, which I think is an excellent annual event in the calendar, me and my son took part and while I say me and my son, he became the chief cigarette butt spotter and myself the picker-upper because it is a little bit, you don't want an 8-year-old picking up somebody's manky fag ends to be honest, but I would say that that is probably a particular area that should possibly be tackled for a few reasons, not just public health reasons but also the littering of cigarette ends outside of some of our public houses in particular is quite bad, the environment team were doing a tally of what kind of rubbish was being picked up and I know that that was a significant outlier for being quite high. So perhaps a public health issue there, but also a littering issue for people to be a bit more conscious about how they dispose of their cigarette butts.

Sticking with a public health theme, I was very pleased to participate in the National Sports Council games, which started last weekend, it was an incredible experience, although very, very exhausting, the long, long days of sporting events, but I would say, the young people that had turned out performed absolutely excellently, they made up probably 50% of all of the teams across the board and is a really great signal for the amount of young people who are interested and keen to excel in sport, but also participate, take part and try new sports, which is always a nice opportunity to do and the different sporting groups and the sports council themselves did an excellent job of making sure that the day ran on time and that some of us more inept sporting people, of which I do class myself, I can run, but I can do nothing else, it would transpire, that they were patient and helped us through different training sessions as well, so thanks to them.

I'd also like to extend our thanks to the Minister Armed Forces for his visit, he was very, very open with the Assembly, as he has always been, a firm supporter of the Falkland Islands and Falkland Islanders, and he was very clear in his commitment for our defence, especially going ahead into the strategic defence review, and will obviously remain in dialogue with him and the teams, but I would agree with my Honourable Colleague MLA Roberts that it was a very strong signal that so early in his tenure he decided to come to the Falkland Islands.

MLA Pollard I think mentioned the West trip that's coming up tomorrow, I am unfortunately not able to join the planned public meeting at Southern Cross Social Club, but please do send me any questions if they can't be answered by my Honourable Colleagues, of course, I'm happy to take them away and get back to you individually or collectively. I think Mr Speaker that was all on my list, thank you; I know it's been a very long day.

**Mr Speaker**

Honourable Members, that concludes the business of the House for today, the House stands adjourned accordingly.