



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

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

THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2025

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HELD AT THE COURT AND ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS, STANLEY
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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)

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

PERSONS ENTITLED TO ATTEND

The Attorney General
(Mr Simon Young)

Commander British Forces, South Atlantic Islands
Group Captain Adele Stratton

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE ASSEMBLY: Mrs Claire Law

PRAYERS: Revd Hayley Argles-Grant

APOLOGIES

The Honourable Chief Executive
(Mr Andy Keeling)

Clerk Of The Assembly
(Mrs Cherie Clifford)

CONTENTS

Prayers	5
Oath of Allegiance Group Captain Adele Stratton	5
Confirmation of the Record of Legislative Assembly 27 February 2025	5
Papers to be Laid on the Table by the Acting Chief Executive	5
Questions for Oral Response	
Question Number 06/25 by Honourable Mark Pollard	7
Can the Honourable Peter Biggs update the House on the progress of the Solar Trial at Sand Bay? When it is likely to be complete, what we have learnt so far and what still needs clarification?	
Question Number 07/25 by Honourable John Birmingham	8
Can the Honourable Peter Biggs please update on the provision of a standby generator at Tussac House, and the timeline estimated to actually putting one in place ready for use.	
Portfolio Reports	
The Honourable Teslyn Barkman	9
The Honourable Peter Biggs	19
Order of the Day: Bills	
Coins Validation Bill 2025	27
Loans (Amendment) Bill 2025	28
Motion for Adjournment	
The Honourable John Birmingham	29
The Honourable Peter Biggs	31
The Honourable Leona Roberts	31
The Honourable Mark Pollard	32
The Honourable Gavin Short	33
The Honourable Jack Ford	34
The Honourable Teslyn Barkman	35

**Record of the Meeting of the Legislative Assembly
Thursday 27 March 2025**

Prayers

Mr Speaker

Oath of Allegiance Group Captain Adele Stratton.

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Confirmation of the Record of Legislative Assembly 27 February 2025.

Mr Speaker

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

Yes.

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

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.

- Animal Health (Emergency Measures for Outbreaks of Infectious Diseases) (Amendment) Order 2025

In accordance with section 61 (3) of the Maritime Ordinance 2017

- Annual Report of the Falkland Islands Maritime Authority

The Acting Chief Executive

Mr Speaker, I hereby lay the aforementioned Papers on the Table.

The Honourable Teslyn Barkman

Mr Speaker, under Standing Order Section 41 (3) I move that the Animal Health (Emergency Measures for Outbreaks of Infectious Diseases) (Amendment) Order 2025 be noted.

This Amendment Order amends the Animal Health (Emergency Measures for Outbreaks of Infectious Diseases) Order 2022 (“2022 Order”). The Amendment Order is made under the Animal Health Act 1981 in its application in the Falkland Islands. The 2022 Order provides for legal powers to implement the National Contingency Plan for Emergency Animal Disease. Experience from dealing with the outbreak of Avian Influenza, has revealed that the 2022 Order needs further amendments.

The proposed amendments will enable the veterinary service to more effectively deal with outbreaks of infectious diseases and rationalise processes. The Amendment Order establishes a clear process after notice is given of suspected premises and a declaration of temporary control zone. An investigation under article 5 and actions allowed under that article will follow. A further amendment to article 3 is to extend its application to premises that are a public place. Currently article 3 only applies to premises that are not a public place.

Mr Speaker, there's further detail on the articles and their amendments, but that in summary, this, is what the amendment order presents. Thank you

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker, I second the Motion.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, the Motion is that the Animal Health (Emergency Measures for Outbreaks of Infectious Diseases) (Amendment) Order 2025 is noted. Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion? *There is no debate.* Is there any objection to passing this Motion? There is no objection. The Order is noted.

The Honourable Jack Ford

Mr Speaker, under Standing Order Section 41 (3) I move that the Annual Report of the Falkland Islands Maritime Authority be noted.

This report follows previous annual reports and provides a summary of the activities of the Maritime Authority over previous year. The report covers a number of topics, including, but not limited to personnel and training, maritime legislation, vessel inspections, the beginning of the process to establish a maritime committee, coastal state responsibilities covering vessel incidents, harbour safety and harbour controls.

The Honourable Roger Spink

Mr Speaker, I second the Motion.

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, the Motion is that the Annual Report of the Falkland Islands Maritime Authority is noted. Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to the Motion? *There is no debate.* Is there any objection to passing this Motion? There is no objection. The Report is noted.

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Questions for Oral Response

Question Number 06 of 25 by Honourable Mark Pollard

The Honourable Mark Pollard

Can the Honourable Peter Biggs update the House on the progress of the Solar Trial at Sand Bay? When it is likely to be complete, what we have learnt so far and what still needs clarification?

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Mr Speaker, in response to the Honourable Mark Pollard's question, I will read the following.

Unfortunately, progress with the solar trial has not been as fast as had been hoped. This was being led by the Power & Electrical team and they encountered difficulty in securing a contractor to assist with the required mounting frame.

This has now been completed and it is hoped to mount the panels and commission the system in late May, when the Windfarm Supervisor returns to the Islands.

While this delay is disappointing, it is not expected to hinder future progress. The trial was to help inform future phases of renewable energy and with Sand Bay Phase 3 due for delivery in 2027 there is still an opportunity to have at least two years of data ahead of any further phases of renewables.

The Honourable Mark Pollard

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I think, noting the fact that it won't affect the renewables project, and still should be plenty of time. I just note that we passed the Executive Council paper 2½ years ago. It was in October 2022, and sort of waiting for someone to install a mounting frame is an incredibly long time. It seems to me that it just sort of got forgotten, or sort of dropped off into the ether. I hope that there aren't other projects sort of sitting in a similar place. I think tracking the decisions we've made as Executive Council and making sure the actions get followed through is an important sort of part of governance. So perhaps I'd urge my Colleague to take to look at the portfolio and see whether there are any other sort of similar projects that you know have been approved and supposed to have gone ahead and sort of perhaps just forgotten about. Thank you. Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his relevant comments. And yes, of course, we are taking account of any unforeseen delays in these things, the current electrical department have been particularly busy for the last couple of years, really and I think that that's one of the contributing factors.

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Question Number 07/25 by Honourable John Birmingham

The Honourable John Birmingham

Can the Honourable Peter Biggs please update on the provision of a standby generator at Tussac House, the timeline estimated to actually putting one in place, and it being ready for use.

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for this question.

A decision has not yet been made on the proceeding with standby generation for Tussac House or whether it is required.

Cost estimates have been received for two options. One to supply a generator suitable to run the whole facility and a second to run the kitchen element only.

Public Works Department and Department of Health and Social Security are working together to assess the need for standby generation, the costs associated with it and alternatives which may be available to provide a level of resilience. A report will be prepared and if standby generation is assessed to be required a submission will be presented to Executive Council in June.

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker. I thank the Honourable Member for his answer. Last week there was a catastrophic failure of power at Heathrow Airport. During the news commentary, a man in the business of contingency planning made the point that it's not just that you have to have a plan and processes in place for a systems failure. He said, there needs to be exercises to show that the plan actually works in reality. Tussac House has some of the most vulnerable people in our society. I believe it would be logistically easier to bring other vulnerable people from the wider community into a safe, warm Tussac House, than to move everybody out.

The entire building need not be the safe area. If it's official policy, when the decision is made that there is no need for a backup system because there is a proven, tested plan in

the event of a major failure of power, then I have to accept that. But is that the case? It seems we'll have to wait until June, (mid-winter now). I'm aware that more than one part of FIG is involved in this, but I do thank the Honourable Member for his answers to my question.

Mr Speaker

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

The Honourable Roger Spink

Mr Speaker, I know this subject was raised during the Budget Select Committee deliberations and with the Director of Health, and actually, I think he indicated that he did have other plans that he was putting in place. So, I think we need to await those before we make any decisions. Thank you.

Mr Speaker

Any other Honourable Member wish to raise questions?

The Honourable Teslyn Barkman

I'd just like to support comments of MLA Spink.

The Honourable John Birmingham

I would just make the point, that there is again, that there is more than one department involved in this decision making. There are three, as far as I'm aware.

Mr Speaker

Any other Honourable Member?

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Reports

Portfolio Reports - The Honourable Teslyn Barkman

The Honourable Teslyn Barkman

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start at the Directorate of Natural Resources, and specifically in Agriculture. There is a live consultation on the land recovery program, and it's opened until the 4th May 2025 and it's seeking input from three key questions:

- What should the programme’s main objectives be and how much land should it cover?
- What payment models would work best to support farmers and ensure value for money?
- Who should be able to take part, and what conditions should be attached to funding?

As of last week, we've had 45 responses to our survey, and meetings and workshops are being scheduled to coincide with the end of the shearing season. Consultation on this land recovery program is incredibly important and will potentially give important diversification to landowners across the country. So, encourage everybody to take part in it.

73% of the wool clip and 69% of the farm area is currently RWS certified. DoA are seeking to facilitate participation allowing RWS, and other certification costs (e.g. Organic Certification) to be 100% funded in the newly presented Farm Improvement Programme (FIP).

The annual ram sale took place on 14 March resulting in nearly all stock being sold. The remaining animals have been put out to tender, which allows their purchase using FIP funds.

The department is finalising its strategic plan and has initiated work on a strategic plan for Saladero to define long-term extension, demonstration and research goals that support resilient agro-ecosystems and precision agriculture.

The biosecurity policy is currently undergoing internal review following comments from an external expert. Due to resourcing, progress is slow, and it has been taken off the legislative drafting programme for now.

Ascension Island have requested support from the FIG veterinary service in the form of 1-2 visits a year and remote consultations, which the Ascension Island Government and Ascension residents would pay for. A paper came to March ExCo for consideration.

Fisheries Management

All Illex jiggers were inspected prior to the season starting. Numerous issues were found and a washup meeting was held with the local licence holders to discuss the findings. Vessels that had issues identified during the inspections were prioritised for boarding during *Lilibet* patrols and one was sent back to Stanley due to not providing sufficient freshwater for crew.

The Fisheries Protection team is currently carrying out an investigation into the collision between two jiggers and are working with the Crown Prosecutor to determine what action may need to be taken.

Illex licence policy development is ongoing. A report has been produced on the economics of the fishery, which has been received and reviewed by the Fisheries Department and

local fishing companies. Following receipt of the report, the fishing companies have been asked for their views on what future licensing arrangements should look like, with responses due by June. This will feed into the policy development work, with an ExCo paper on future direction envisaged for the first half of 2026.

The Fisheries Department are starting work on a comprehensive management plan for the whole department, covering all fisheries and licencing and control/enforcement processes. A programme of work has been developed, with aim of completing the work by 2027.

A report on the Fisheries Accord action plan will come to ExCo in the next few months after the individual action report updates are received at the end of March.

Fisheries Science

The annual groundfish survey and the first season Loligo surveys took place in late January and February.

The Loligo survey showed an adequate biomass for the season starting, but concerns over sizes led to an agreement with industry to delay the start of the season for a week. Sizes will be closely monitored in the second half of the season due to concerns about catching second season cohort, with the aim being to protect the second season.

Overall catches on the groundfish survey were about 12% higher than last year. In particular, higher catches were obtained of hake (which may not have completed migration at this time of year), rock cod, and blue whiting. Lower catches than last year were obtained of red cod, kingclip, and Illex and Loligo squid.

The documentation for the Salmon farming consultation is in production, including a socio-economic impact assessment and updated versions of the two reports from 2021/22 on environmental impacts/best practices and legislative frameworks, which are being expanded to include additional information requested during the public scoping exercise carried out in late 2024.

At the time of writing (mid-March) the project was still on track for the public consultation to start in April, likely at the end of the month.

Minerals

Director Mineral Resources (DMR) is currently reviewing the latest version of the Field Development Plan and the revised Environmental Impact Statement for the Sea Lion Northern Development Area, as well as several other supporting documents such as the insurance plan. DMR is awaiting revised versions of several others that it has reviewed and commented on.

Several ExCo papers are being drafted for decisions over the coming months, including proposals related to offsetting, decommissioning and petroleum valuation.

Development of the updated oil and gas regulatory legislation is ongoing, with the drafting of the Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environment Ordinance nearing completion. It will be reviewed externally before being finalised. Work has also started on drafting instructions for the Major Hazards Regulations, one of the four planned regulations that will sit under the ordinance.

Due to increased interest in onshore minerals over the last year, DMR has filled the Minerals Officer role that had been vacant for some time. The new postholder has been tasked with reviewing the existing onshore minerals legislation, identifying gaps and issues, and developing policy and eventually legislation to improve regulation of the sector.

Falkland Islands Meat Company (FIMCO)

The team at Sand Bay are into the last month of production for the 2024/2025 export season. It is anticipated that the majority of the seasonal staff will finish and leave in mid-April 2025.

All of the 2024/2025 export sheep meat production product has been sold, with shipments going into the UK and EU. It is anticipated that the cold store will be mostly cleared by the end of June or early July at the latest.

The majority of the livestock received this season has been in good condition. Most deliveries have been on time, with adverse weather being responsible for the majority of delays experienced. As of 19th March, 1,310 New Season Lambs, 3,977 Yearling Lambs and 36,124 sheep have been processed, with a further 8,300 sheep and 300 lambs remaining to be processed.

The new boning room conveyor has increased speed and efficiency of processing.

Once the season has been completed, an assessment will be carried out as to the benefits of the low surge operation model adopted for this season. The assessment will involve feedback from suppliers and also a review of any financial implications noticed.

During February FIMCo's General Manager and UK sales agent undertook a successful trip to attend the 2025 Gulf Food Exhibition in Dubai. During the visit they had the chance to meet with different agencies to further aid FIMCo's ability to export to countries in the Middle East. They were also able to negotiate sales of 2025/2026 production stock at an increased rate to an existing EU customer.

The British Retail Consortium BRC9 audit is planned for 01st April 2025, with the team completing the final requirements in preparation for this.

Work continues with suppliers to reverse the downward trend in beef supply, and the Beef Suppliers Working Group have held their first two meetings. While there will be a drop in beef availability later in this year, FIMCo will endeavour to maximise, from the stock available, fresh beef for our retail customers.

Work on the new FIMCo business plan is ongoing, with a number of consultations to be held with key stakeholders before it is ready for final release.

Other areas that the team are investigating are the replacement of the plant's refrigeration system needed due to changes in the legislation on refrigerant gas usage, renewable energy, and waste reduction will also be included.

South American Atlantic Service Ltd (SAAS)

2024 closed for SAAS with export volumes considerably lower than expectation due to the cancellation of the second loligo season. Imports remained stable and the year ended with import volumes on a par against forecast.

SAAS continues to facilitate access to global markets for customers. In 2024 SAAS shipped export containers to 34 countries over 42 destination ports and import containers were shipped from 15 countries over 22 origin ports.

The 2024 yearend position for the company pre-audit shows a positive result, although the year end result reflects the reduced export volumes.

2025 has started with liner schedule disruption heavily impacting import voyages, with liner vessels omitting ports, port congestions and long delays at transshipment ports, import voyages have subsequently been delayed into the Islands. The latest import sailing from London Gateway loaded as planned and SAAS would hope to see some stability returning to the scheduling through late April and May. With the delayed commencement of the first loligo season, export volumes have not materialised to the levels forecast for the early part of the year, the delay impacted preseason transshipment planning and later than expected first loligo transshipments. The first loligo transshipment to containers was completed last week, some 11 months after the last loligo transshipment in 2024. Currently low catches in the Illex fishery have led to numerous cancellations of transshipments to containers.

A new five year agreement has been signed with our Logistic Partner Seafast Group, extending on the fourteen years of agreements already past.

SAAS continue to operate the *MV Unispirit* and are currently finalising a longer term charter with the vessel owners, which along with the five year agreement with Seafast provides security, stability and logistical support for the SAAS service for the coming years.

Export success is highly dependent on the success of the fishery, with the last two years of reduced volumes from loligo catches there are some reservations on the final export volumes for 2025.

There has been a reduction in construction related imports in the first three months of 2025, however with upcoming project discussions underway SAAS would expect to see this change during the latter part of the year.

SAAS will continue to manage the ongoing schedule challenges for the arrival of import containers and ever changing export requirements.

Falklands Landholdings (FLH)

The FLH shearing season was completed in early March. With sheep in better condition and a good growing season, winter losses were lower than expected and average fleece weights higher than last season. Approximately 125,800 sheep were shorn producing 300 bales more than last year. Winter losses were very low at approximately 3%.

FLH also had very good lambing results, with an average of 84% across the farms which is 10% up on last year and 17% more than the 5 year average.

Supply to FIMCo will be approximately 22,000 sheep and lambs. 3,000 more than last season. Carcase weights and condition have met the FIMCo target specification, again helped by the good growing season. Beef numbers to FIMCo will be reduced for the next few years as FLH holds back many of its heifers to increase the beef breeding herd.

FLH continues to review and develop its agronomy systems, and the Kline irrigation trial (which was delayed by late arrival of the equipment) will be used next season and FLH is working with DoA staff on the various elements of pasture and grazing management.

The General Manager recently interviewed two students who have applied for agricultural apprenticeships, and both have been offered places with FLH starting in October 2025. This will increase the agricultural apprentices at FLH to 3. With the apprenticeship period being approximately 2 years long. There is also, incentives to follow up training overseas if they do well. Work continues with the Department of Education to set up placements in New Zealand in particular.

FLH has had a busy tourism season although weather related cancellations affect the industry as a whole. Relocating the toilets closer to the car park at Bertha's Beach along with a new tearoom has made a much better experience for tourists and tour operators alike.

Avian influenza was confirmed at Whale Point, but thankfully at a low level, therefore could remain open with precautions. This will be reviewed at the end of this month.

Feedback on the Woolpack café has been positive, and considering it's only been open a few months and is still settling down, this is really encouraging. The café will remain open on reduced hours during the winter.

The Solar energy systems project to compliment the wind power at each of the 4 settlements is now complete across the 4 settlements and working well. The wind turbines annual maintenance for the current year is almost completed. The impact of the solar energy system installed across the FLH settlements in 2024 to complement the wind energy is being monitored over this summer.

The sheep genetic improvement programme for 2025 includes an AI programme using some stock and imported semen along with some purchases of live animals from the National Stud Flock. The new sheep handling equipment, including sheep conveyors at Goose Green and North Arm have assisted the team with sheep and wool selection and drenching etc. It is planned to install conveyors at Fitzroy and Walker Creek next season.

The outgoing General Manager John Ferguson retires from FLH at the end of this month and Paul Phillips takes over from 1st April.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank James Wilson and his team, David Roberts, Jill Ford and John Ferguson, for their assistance in the preparation of this report to the House.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to highlight my thanks to John Ferguson formally in this House for his dedication in the role of general manager of Falklands Landholdings. He's also been a dedicated leader of the company and a great guide to the board.

I would also like to remark that James Wilson has officially taken over the role of Director of Natural Resources during this time, and I wish him well in the new post that he holds, which is the Falklands most extensive directorate, leading the economy of the Falklands.

Our outgoing Director of Natural Resources, Andrea, as we know, is not lost at FIG as our incoming Chief Executive. But it would also not be appropriate to not acknowledge that she took over the role of Director of Natural Resources at period which inherited her awful lot of work, not least the challenges of delivering ITQ B. She grew into the role so well that she outgrew it, and I wish her very well in the running of the civil service. Thank you, Mr Speaker. That concludes my portfolio report.

Mr Speaker

Thank you. Does any Honourable Member wish to raise a question or a comment on that?

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. I thank the Honourable Member for her portfolio report, and I, 100% would like to align myself with the remarks at the latter end, thanking all those people for their contributions, and especially the remarks about John Ferguson,

who has been exceptionally involved in agriculture for many years, and FLH prior to that, the running of FIMCO. And also, especially, and also the change at the head of the Resource department, Mr Wilson.

The Honourable Roger Spink

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I'd like to thank my colleague for her report. A couple of questions and a few comments.

The first was I wondered how the Loligo catches are comparing with previous years and the Illex catches and whether or not we're past the period where we are likely to have to pay refunds?

On FIMCO, I'd just like to congratulate FIMCO on the movement of their stock. That was one of the issues that they had in the past, where they ended up at the end of the year with everything in stock and nothing sold and cash flow issues. They seem to have got on top of that. So, I'd like to congratulate them with the work that they've done in that area.

I think, on SAAS. I know there's been a lot of talk about shortages in shops, but I think that's down to retailers, they need to factor in delays in shipping into their stock holdings, and I think it's very important that they listen to what's going on in the world and they stock their shelves accordingly.

On avian flu as well from the Agricultural Department, I'd like to congratulate them. It's one of these things that goes a bit unnoticed because it's gone so well, the control and the designation of areas for avian flu has enabled the tourist industry to keep going this year. I think, it's something that we should all acknowledge as being a job well done. Thank you very much indeed.

The Honourable Teslyn Barkman

Thank you, Mr Speaker, especially my Honourable colleague, particularly for the acknowledgements that he's made throughout there about the hard work and efficacy across DNR, specifically DoA and FIMCO, as well.

Taking his first question on reporting back on catches compared to previous years. It would have helped to have had that that that question little bit in advance, because I don't have the historical data with me here today, but I do know from discussions with the Director that the first seasons are looking of the Loligo looking on par with round about the 2018 results, and that that data is obviously from last week, but that's the most up to date that I have, and there's been no mention of Illex refunds. And so, I would be surprised that if that's brought to bear, but can certainly pass on those questions for an updated response from the Director of Natural Resources, James Wilson.

On his other point that he made about shipping, you know, I would agree there's a lot of complexity there. This is a question that we've taken to the Chamber of Commerce to

understand what the causes of some of the empty shelves around town are, I know more information on that is being requested by MLAs as well.

The Honourable Mark Pollard

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I was going to ask a question about empty shelves and shipping and just whether or not there was a deeper reason, but I shall leave that. It's already been explored.

I would like to put on record my thanks for John Ferguson in particular. I had a portfolio last Assembly that many dealings with John and his advice and support, to be honest, Mr Speaker, he stepped into areas where he didn't really want to but did it more out of a feeling of service, rather than, rather than necessarily wanting to do it, he helped us out in all sorts of areas, and stepped in where he probably wouldn't have wanted to. I would like to put on record my thanks to John and good luck for whatever's next.

The Honourable Leona Roberts

Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank my Honourable Colleague for her very interesting and full portfolio report. I too, was going to ask a question about the empty shelves, which I think is something that's on everyone's minds at the moment. I note comments of my Honourable colleague, Roger Spink and the effort that the Honourable Teslyn Barkman is putting into trying to draw out some answers, recognizing very much that it is an issue for private sector and businesses to be looking at how they order and stock, but it is something that is of significant concern. I do take the assurances that it's not a SAAS issue, to be really helpful.

A couple of things for me too. I would add my congratulations and thanks to the officers across my Honourable Colleague's portfolio. There's an awful lot of work going on there that isn't always clearly understood perhaps by the general public, what goes behind and underneath a few lines of comment is a huge amount of work and, the avian influenza element is just one part of that. I would very much thank the veterinary service for their approach to this. I think they have done incredibly well, and also in the fact that we saw the amendments coming forward earlier this morning, they have responded brilliantly, to dealing with it and, where issues have arisen and amendments have been needed, they have tackled that and just keeping completely on top of this, which I think is probably more than anyone dared hope for really.

My other comment was around FLH, and I too would add my thanks to John Ferguson and also congratulate Paul Phillips in taking up the role. I think it's wonderful that they are supporting the agricultural apprenticeship scheme so well. I think for FLH to take on three agricultural apprentices is really notable and worthy of commending. I understand that there's been little interest from the broader agricultural community in taking up these apprenticeships, and I appreciate that it's something that hopefully will come over time, because I think we all have concerns about the future of farming in Falklands, and that this

is a scheme that can make a real difference in the long term. So, thanks to FLH and hopefully others will look at it as well in the future.

That is, it for me Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker

Any other Honourable Member wish to speak?

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I like to thank my Honourable colleague for her report, and the Honourable Spink to my left here, ripped the carpet out from underneath me with some of the questions I was going to ask to thank you for doing what saved me a job.

I just like to join everybody else in thanking John Ferguson for his service to the farming community over the years, to FIMCO, I wish him very all the best for whatever he's going to do. A big shout out to Paul Phillips, as he now joins, and also say thank you on my behalf, to Paul, of course, from the FIDC angle, for stepping into the big shed and overseeing that for us.

I would like to say thank you to the veterinary department I did so when I was speaking to Penguin News yesterday. But again, I'd like to publicly thank them for having such a pragmatic and sensible way of dealing with the avian flu over this season, which has caused the least disruption possible to the tourist industry, and I'm very, very grateful for that.

And finally, I was going to speak about also the empty shelves around Stanley, although it doesn't seem to be having much effect on my waistline yet, maybe they need to be slightly emptier.

The Honourable Teslyn Barkman

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I think it's really humbling to hear all the comments, because particularly this is something that I feel is like as portfolio holder in this area, the amount of effort and the amount of care that's taken into that, to hear that it's reflected and appreciated by everybody. This is a directorate that knit so many ambitions together, and a lot of that also then finally falls under food security, which is, as everyone would agree, incredibly important, whether it's in the shipping of what companies order and delivering it to the Falklands through SAAS, through to the preparation of the chops, which are keeping Gavin's waistline expanded during these times of budget at FIMCO, and the production of those animals through FLH and regulation, the oversight and the generation of wealth in this country that's happening through the Directorate of Natural Resources. But there is a lot there at play, and I would just like to take the opportunity again to kind of pull all of that amazing support back and note how it leads to the first part of my portfolio report, which is acknowledging the land recovery program consultation, because it starts

with the land and it also starts with the farmers and making sure they've got the right tools available to use the land properly in a way that doesn't just provide for our future, very literally, from the farm to the table in the Falklands, but also, enables them to keep that going in a sustainable model, and gives them more options to ensure that. It's all connected, and it's all knitted together, and I'd like to thank my colleagues for their support in all of that, and also acknowledging that the personal dedication that it's taken of some people to deliver all of that.

The only other thing I'd say, I mean, it's been mentioned a few times that there's a lot more to understand about where some of the import shortages have been and, while I know that Jill Ford works tirelessly at SAAS, and she's passed information on to the media about what the unprecedented disruptions in some of the ports and sailings has been, from my knowledge and analysis of what's there, it's very clear that there are no containers missing that shouldn't be here, other than the advised delayed. Trying to understand the full picture of what's caused the current situation in the shops is going to take into bit more work. But it's obviously really important that we remain aligned. I think, it was MLA Roberts, who said, this is for this for the companies sort out. I think MLA Spink said the same, but we need to be sure that there is enough there to provide for the Falklands, we'll lean in as appropriate, but we don't want to also interfere with our commercial processes as well. Making sure we can understand the causes is essential. Thank you. Mr Speaker.

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Portfolio reports: the Honourable Peter Biggs

The Honourable Peter Biggs

I will start my report with a report of the Public Works Department

The summer season has again seen significant works carried out by the team within the Public Works Department, both operationally, but also in relation to the capital programme.

At the power station the commissioning of number 7 was completed and brought online. Although there have been some initial teething problems it is now performing well and is a vital component of the power generation capability. Focus now shifts to other engines, also in need of maintenance and upgrade to see us through to the delivery of the new power station. This starts with a visit from Allen Diesel's (the company that provide the generators at this point in time) They are visiting to assess the number 8 engine. The team have also faced challenges brought on by the high winds that we have recently encountered. These have caused failures to section of the overhead cable network resulting in power outages. Thanks go to the teams for the rapid response in isolating, and where possible repairing the fault, and also to the public for their continued patience and understanding when these situations occur.

This season has seen the highways team tackle the final 7 Km section of the MPA road. While this has caused some delay and disruption the results are fantastic. The asphalt works are due for completion next week and that will be followed by the completion of the shouldering works, drainage works and white lining.

Other road works, completed either in-house or by contractors, include 9 Km of capping in the Stanley area, works to the San Carlos road, North Arm road and Port Stephens road. A further 5 Km of the Doyle road have been completed. Works to Rincon Grande and Riverview are currently taking place as are work on the West in the area of Doctors Creek and the hill adjacent to the Millenium campsite. Grading works are also continuing with the current focus on West roads.

This season also saw the team constructing the road and carrying out the preparation works for the new spoil tip site to the south of Stanley.

The Materials team at the Quarry are working hard to meet the demands of both the private and public sector. To date they have produced 160,000 tonnes of materials and have sold 102,000 tonnes of aggregate and 18,000 tonnes of asphalt. The asphalt plant has operated for the full season on waste oil, saving approximately 190,000 litres of diesel.

The Property & Municipal and Housing section continue to provide an essential service. Improvements in staff numbers has seen an improvement in response times. The employment of permanent staff for Eliza Cove tip has provided a notable improvement to the site. Other works completed by the team include, the completion of the renovation works to the old PWD offices, now occupied by Customs and Immigration, upgrade and refurbishment works to 6 Jersey Road Flats and the Police Cottages. There has been asbestos removal from the police station and alterations to the control room, installation of CCTV to the schools and renovation works to another house at Fox Bay is also nearing completion.

Works continue on providing improvement to the water treatment and distribution system and the team at the Water section have continued the previous good works in maintaining and upgrading the Moody Brook reservoir. The team continue to work hard to meet the Stanley demands which currently averages 1200 cubic metres or 1.2 million litres per day.

The Plant & Vehicle team continue to support all aspects of FIG. The new plant and vehicles, ordered at the start of the financial year are now starting to arrive and will be put into service.

The design and survey team are providing essential support services. With a list of more than 40 live projects, large and small, they are working to support and deliver a number of capital projects, including the MPA road, water main project, Stanley roads, Camp jetties, Sapper Hill housing and many more.

The project teams are working hard on a number of capital projects. The team are looking at the KEMH refurbishment programme, starting with a new offsite stores facility, as well

as on going works on the Pathology Labs and ED Flow. The 70 Houses project continues. While works are nearing completion in Stanley there are still a number of houses to deliver at MPC. The waste management project is moving to the construction phase while works are also progressing well with the New Power station and Sand Bay renewables projects.

While there are still a number of staffing gaps across the sections within PWD the teams have worked hard to continue to deliver services to both the public and FIG as a whole.

That's the end of my Public Works Department report, and I thank Colin at PWD and his team for this report.

Would you like me to pause now or go on.

Mr Speaker

If you want to take comments or questions now, we can do that. Yes.

The Honourable Roger Spink

Mr Speaker, I'd like to thank my colleague for his report there. I'd like to congratulate him on the MPA road. I think that's something that completion makes a big difference to our two communities, bringing Mount Pleasant closer, but also makes a significant difference to people living in Camp, getting in and out of Stanley, both from the West and from the rest of these East Falklands.

I think one of the biggest issues is the control and supervision of capital projects. I was disappointed not to see anything about that in that report, that's something as a priority. We are expecting a report fairly soon, and I know it's cross departmental, but it's of vital importance, we await those proposals on staffing and control, and that is absolutely vital. We need to stop everything until we've got that in place. It is very, very important.

The other question I had, was the houses in Stanley, the 40 houses, I wondered, when is the completion date for the 40 houses? Thank you.

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his questions and comments. I will get back to the accepted completion date for the houses, and I notice remarks about the capital projects team and system that is going in place for management of that vital part of the Falkland Islands Government activity. We've all been briefed on that, and we all have high hopes that it will lead to efficient and effectively managed physically and financially capital projects in the future. And there will be further reports on that system, when it is actually fully up and running. Thank you.

The Honourable John Birmingham

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members. I thank the Honourable Member for his portfolio report. The Public Works Department do an enormous breadth of services, from one thing at one end to the other. I happened to go up to the water filtration plant because they had some empty containers that they were offering out. But whilst I was there, I was asked to have a look around. Water is one of those services that we just so easily take for granted until it's no longer there. The team up there work exceedingly hard, and I did ask whilst looking around, what the bulbs were in the in the large tanks, these are filtration tanks, and these where they had these slight leakages. I think the Public Works are well aware, in fact, they are aware, it's one of the pieces of infrastructure that is vital to the city of Stanley, and I'd like to make it, if not one of the top three, then certainly it has to be looked at seriously in the future. But we have had conversations, Honourable Member to my right (the Honourable Roger Spink) mentioned about oversight and overseeing on the capital spending, I don't think I would be wrong in saying this, but the general public will be watching with microscopes the next three large projects that the Falkland Islands Government is going to be undertaking. That's the port and power station, and the other one. The power station, I, along with many people, would like to know when we're going to actually see a piece of turf lifted from the ground. I wonder if the Member would be able to give us any kind of a roundabout date on that.

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his observations and comments. We were provided with the timeline on the power station, a diagram, but I don't have that with me, but I will get back to him with the information regarding the first physical signs of work on the Power Station project.

I note his remarks about the water plant as well, the management of PWD are well aware of the necessity for monitoring and getting new gear in line for procurement to fill those weaknesses in the system.

The Honourable John Birmingham

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank MLA Biggs for his answer. On the power station, it's not so much for myself, it's the general public, I constantly get questions about the power station.

Mr Speaker

I feel that since this is of public interest, can you report back to the House at the next meeting. Thank you very much.

The Honourable Mark Pollard

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank my Honourable colleague for his portfolio update. I think in terms of housing, we've seen the latest phases filling up and that's great to see. We have another phase projected further down the line, but that's some way away. We had

a briefing recently from the Director of Public Works, which was a fascinating briefing where he brought back to us where they've been looking, as a directorate, at FIG owned properties within Stanley, and where possible we might be able to build more infill within Stanley. Part of that briefing and the work coming out of it, was to look at whether or not we could actually release some of these plots to members of the public on a similar basis to subsidized plots, or to service plots that we've done elsewhere. I just wanted my Honourable colleague had an update on that, understanding that it is early days and that this was discussed fairly recently, but my colleague had a bit more insight on that perhaps? Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for his observation. Indeed, the infill project is underway now, but we didn't want to jump the gun on that before it's ready. But I will report back to the House on that and also to the Honourable Member who brought people to the House to keep everybody informed on that, because it will take us a little bit more pressure off the ever present need, we have as a government and society for the suitable plots on which to build housing.

Mr Speaker

Any other Honourable Member wish to speak?

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just like to thank the Honourable gentleman for his reply. PWD, I have a huge amount of respect and deep fondest for, I have to say. During your report, you just slipped something in, ever so quietly, something I'd like just to bring to the fore, just a little bit actually, when you were talking about the MPA Road, which, by the way, I'm one of the many who are thankful to see the back of the pot holey drive every Saturday. And I'm just so happy that it's just about joined up, but you just quietly mentioned that the tar machine ran on waste oil all season. And I think that is quite something, we're very quick at criticizing poor old PWD, if they don't get something right, but this is something they've worked on thought about, put in place, this has paid dividends. I think, they ought to be thanked for doing things like this. I really do.

Also, moving on to the control of projects, the financial control of projects, I think we're putting possibly things in place, which I'm hoping is going to help matters, and the I fully concur with what the Honourable MLA Spink and others have said about the control of projects, it seems to be almost an acceptance now that every major project we have is going to go over a budget by a fair bit, and sometimes stuff does happen along the way steel prices move or something like that, but to say, we're going to have to get control of this, because we've entered, a world where we don't have the money that we used to, and we are going to have to keep a tighter rein on things, and even if we weren't entering into a time of perhaps we're going to have to be fiscally a bit tighter on the way we do things, you still can't go around wasting public money, or to allow these overspends to happen. It is

seen by the public at times as being a waste of their money, that's one thing, we definitely have to tighten up on.

In general, thank you to everybody who works in the Public Works Department, but don't think any of them wakes up in the morning and says, I'm going to work today, and what can I do to make people's lives awkward, to do things wrong or to not do anything at all, which sometimes they're accused of. The whole team right across does the very, very best, probably woefully underappreciated. Thank you very much.

The Honourable John Birmingham

It was housing. I nearly forgot what it was going to say there. Just for a bit of information, for those who are not aware, I believe on housing, there is a squeeze. I believe there's a private company that wants to build 10 units within Stanley on a piece of ground that's just used as a parking area. There are certain things moving forward. I hope.

The Honourable Leona Roberts

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank my Honourable Colleague for his portfolio, and I would add my thanks there too, and in particular, actually, to Power and Electrical. We had an issue when a transformer up on the hill was hit by lightning, and to be honest, the service and the contact that we had from them was over and above. So, I would just like to put that on record.

What really brought me to my feet was comments by my Honourable colleague, Gavin Short, because I do take some issue with the line that there is an acceptance of overspending on projects. I think I'm sure I'm not the only one around the table that has had sleepless nights and endless frustration, and varying degrees of rage, disbelief and horror at overspends. I think the need is absolutely recognized to manage projects better, you see time and time again the optimism bias at the beginning of projects that puts us in a in a bad position later on, but I would firmly oppose, certainly from my perspective, there is no acceptance of overspending.

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Mr Speaker, I thank the Honourable Members for their comments, constructive comment as well. I do think that we have an exceptional team in the PWD and the using waste oil in place of diesel is one example of the ingenuity that some of them excel in from day to day. And the theme of overspends, I hear what Honourable Leona Roberts was saying, overspends are something we have a great deal of experience in the Falkland Islands Government. And so, by that very fact that should help us, now turn the corner and put a reality check on what we're planning and executing and do away with the financial surprises on projects.

With your permission, I will now continue my portfolio.

Mr Speaker

Can we take one more question?

The Honourable Jack Ford

Thank you, Mr Speaker, just on the on the point of the use of waste oil, which, of course, is very positive. But on the comments, made by my Honourable colleague, MLA Gavin Short, unfortunately, didn't pay enough dividends, as only this week, Executive Council and Standing Finance approved an additional £1M for the MPA road project, which, of course, I supported as we want to see this project completed, as it's a wonderful thing. However, did bring the total for this project to over 30 million pounds, which has been a significant cost to the taxpayer.

Thank you, Mr Speaker

The Honourable Peter Biggs

I thank the Honourable Member for additional comment.

Mr Speaker

Yes, please continue with your portfolio report.

The Honourable Peter Biggs

Report for the Environment Department. I'd like to thank Mike and his team for this report.

Since the last portfolio report in November the Environment Department has been working hard to deliver our environmental priorities, which remain very important to this Assembly. I'd like to share some recent highlights with you.

A new vision for how the Falkland Islands will achieve its energy ambitions was approved by Executive Council last month. The new Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan outlines the path for the Falkland Islands to reach 100% renewable energy provision by 2045. The documents set out a strategic direction that will enhance life in the Falklands by replacing aging and polluting energy infrastructure with modern facilities. As the use of renewable energy increases, the use of fossil fuel will decrease.

The Falkland Islands Government has formally endorsed the UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy. The Strategy aligns with commitments that have already been made by FIG in our Environment Strategy and the Islands Plan, while others reflect work that that has been led by other stakeholders within the Falkland Islands. Endorsing the Strategy will encourage external funders, including the UK Government, to invest funding and resources in important environmental projects here in the Islands that will help preserve our unique environment.

Our work adapting to the impacts of climate change continues:

1. We have started an assessment of finance options for blue-green carbon together with the international consulting firm Ricardo and funded by the Green Overseas Programme.
2. Our second project, an assessment of how climate change will affect water security for Stanley, is in final stages of procurement.

We have three environmental policy projects underway:

1. The Pollution and Waste Management Policy, which aims to manage our waste more effectively and reduce the amount of pollution in the Falklands is in its final stages of drafting.
2. The National Park Policy and Management Plan, which aims to create a national park in the Hill Cove Mountains on West Falkland, is also nearly complete.
3. And the Marine Managed Areas Policy, has been written and is currently being reviewed by our legal department before going to Executive Council. I must emphasise that this is a complicated piece of work and a timeline for the completion of this is difficult to predict; it will depend somewhat on the outcomes of public consultation, wider legislation drafting programme priorities, and the approvals process by Executive Council.

We are currently obtaining quotes and putting together a business case to export hazardous wastes overseas for recycling and safe disposal, particularly lead acid batteries and WEEE waste.

Together with the Maritime Authority, we are incorporating oil spills on land into the national oil spill contingency plan; this is important because there is currently no plan for dealing with terrestrial oil spills.

Our habitat restoration work continues:

1. A survey was recently completed of all the FIG-owned islands by Sally Poncet and Ken Passfield which has helped us to prioritise sites for restoration.
2. We will carry out a third and final season of tussac planting on Middle Island National Nature Reserve this winter (King George Bay).
3. We will start restoration of Green Island and Bob's Island (Salvador Water) and Top Island (River Harbour) this winter.
4. And we will carry out a second season of planting native grasses and shrubs on Stanley Common this winter, improving habitat for birds and insects.

We have had a busy tourist season at Yorke Bay and Gypsy Cove penguin colonies. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our tourism industry and the public for complying with the new guidelines of 1 guide per 16 guests. This was the first season with the guidelines, and we will be reviewing their effectiveness shortly. I would also like to thank our dedicated wardens who were out there in rain or shine for the welfare of our wildlife and for the visitors to those sites.

Mr Speaker

Does any Honourable Member wish to comment on that section of the report? I thank both of the Honourable Members for their portfolio reports.

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Order of the Day: Bills

Coins Validation Bill 2025, this Bill has been Gazetted and we go to the second reading.

The Honourable Financial Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the Coins Validation Bill 2025. This Bill is to validate coins they were issued by Tower Mint, with whom the Commissioners of Currency have contracted to mint and distribute coins before the required regulations for those coins had been made. Under the Currency Ordinance 1987, Currency Commissioners have the sole right to issue coins on behalf of the Falkland Islands Government under section 6(1), it also provides for the Commissioners to arrange for the minting of coins which are of the denominations, weight, form, design and metal prescribed by the Regulations under Section 6(5)(a).

Commissioners can only issue coins lawfully if they are of the description prescribed by the Regulations. Within the Currency Ordinance 1987 there is no provision for the retrospective validation of coins issued before the necessary Regulations had been made and come into force. In order to make the issue of those coins lawful, the Currency Commemorative Coins Regulations 2025 were made, and this Bill would validate the coins that were issued before the Regulations came into force.

This Bill is corrective and administrative in nature, rather than addressing any policy issue. To ensure that no other corrective Bills would be required for coins minted and issued before the required Regulations have been made, agreed processes and procedures have been put in place with Tower Mint. These include reiterating the approvals process and regulations required before coins can be minted and distributed, highlighting that the Falkland Islands process differs from other Overseas Territories. Provision of a forward plan of commemorative coins to be released to allow for planning and scheduling of required work, which is updated as the coins move through the approval and validation process, timely communication of issues that may affect the forward plan timetable. And finally, written confirmation from the Falkland Islands Government to Tower Mint that all necessary Regulations have been made, and the coins can be minted and distributed.

The Honourable Roger Spink

Mr Speaker, I second the Motion.

Mr Speaker

Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to the Bill? There is no debate. Is there any objection to dealing with this Bill by the short procedure, there is no objection. Does any Member wish to propose any amendments to the wording of the Bill? There are no amendments. I declare the Bill will be read for a third time and do pass.

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Coins Validation Bill 2025.

The Loans (Amendment) Bill 2025, this Bill has been gazetted, and we go to the second reading.

The Honourable Financial Secretary

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill. The Loans (Amendment) Bill 2025.

This Bill will amend clauses within section 14 of the Loans Ordinance 1979 to clarify and remove ambiguity that currently exists on how money in a Sinking Fund can be invested. The Falkland Islands Government has recently entered into borrowing agreements to support its capital infrastructure investment programs. Under Section 14 of the Loans Ordinance 1979 entering into such borrowing requires the Financial Secretary to create a Sinking Fund to set aside and invest funds to meet the repayment of that debt when it becomes due.

Due to the Government having not taken on borrowing for significant period of time, or to the value that it has committed itself to, a review of the Ordinance was undertaken to ensure compliance to it regarding the creation of a Sinking Fund, and that the clauses remained valid. That review identified the ambiguity and potential conflict that existed within section 14 of the Ordinance, where subsection 2, could be interpreted as being that all money within the Sinking Fund must be invested within the Falkland Islands. However, subsection 3, could be interpreted to limit the amount that could be invested within the Falkland Islands.

This Bill will remove the specific investment references to the Falkland Islands by amending subsection 2, removing the requirement for money held in the Sinking Fund to be invested in the Falkland Islands and subsection 3 by removing the requirement for limited amounts to be invested in the Falkland Islands.

In addition, within subsection 3, the amended Bill would provide the Financial Secretary with greater discretion how the monies within the Sinking Fund can be invested to maximize the opportunity for investment growth. This includes discretion over the types of investment that may be undertaken, where those investments are made, and the timing of the investments. The investment strategy of the money in the Sinking Fund will alter as repayment date of the debt draws closer. The amended Bill will provide the necessary

discretion for the Financial Secretary to alter the investments within the Sinking Fund to match the strategy and maximize returns to meet the debt repayments when due.

The Honourable Roger Spink

Mr Speaker, I second the Motion.

Mr Speaker

Does any Honourable Member wish to speak to this Bill? There's no debate. Is there any objection to taking this Bill by the short procedure? There's no objection. Does any Member wish to propose any amendments to the wording of the Bill? There are no amendments. I declare the Bill will be read for a third time, and do pass

Deputy Clerk of the Assembly

Loans Amendment Bill 2025,

The Motion for Adjournment.

The Acting Chief Executive

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

Mr Speaker

Honourable Members, over to you.

The Honourable John Birmingham

Honourable Members, I jumped up first because there may well be some replies. In rising to speak to the motion, I do have few items today. First of all, welcome to Group Captain Stratton, to this House.

Last week, I was invited to do a presentation to year 11 in the senior school, partly on how the Assembly works, but also a general question and answer session. I started by doing a Chinese whisper, which they were up for. The code in the beginning was “the Boston two step”. 32 students. By the time it got to the 32nd student, it had become “polystyrene”. I used this to illustrate the unreliability of what is very often seen and heard in the media, and increasingly, more and more online in social media.

The Tussac House, I went down to Tussac House this morning, just have a look around. It's settling in, but it's become apparent that there is a bit of a parking problem. I'm saying this this morning, Mr Speaker, because people are interested. There are 21 spaces down there, and they're the ones that are marked out currently. I'm hoping, and I'm sure, that when the

RSK camp moves and it's totally cleared and made good, then further parking will be made available.

I heard on a radio, BBC Radio Four last week, at the head of an exam board being interviewed and said that in parts of the United Kingdom, it's been agreed that apprentices will no longer need GCSE maths anymore at level two. Other positions, we could bring that down here to the Falklands to look at. There are positions in the Falkland Island departments which seem to require a level of maths that's out of keeping with the needs of the role. I'm sure the Education Department and Human Resources would be interested in looking further into this.

There was a letter in the Penguin News a few weeks ago about making changes to the makeup of the Assembly, it prompted me to have a think about the future. In the years since I first came into this House, things have changed substantially, the Governor used to chair the meetings. We at that time, were all part time, the rules, regulations and red tape throughout the Falklands were less, but that wasn't always a good thing, and many areas needed updating and modernizing. And although on occasion it can be irritating, we have to adjust and progress and accept that change is inevitable. Here in the Falkland Islands, in my experience, people have always been willing to adapt to change where it's needed.

But back to that letter, currently, there are eight full time Members on a four year term, even with the tweak that this Assembly agreed with that allows a level of flexibility, I believe it's going to be increasingly difficult for many people to put themselves forward as candidates, especially those who have mortgages and families with children and steady employment with career advancement opportunities, and also for those living or working in areas of Camp. After all, there aren't that many employers who are willing to give a four year sabbatical to an employee, so I believe there needs to be the start of a discussion of the makeup of Assemblies in the future. And I put this down as a starter for 10 - I propose that there'd be six full time Members of the Legislature who will take on full ministerial responsibilities. There are other Territories where this is an established system in place, and there would be four Members of the Legislature whose working arrangements would be part time and flexible, but with certain obligations to be finalized, who would sit in the Standing Finance Committee, which, after all, I consider to be the second most important committee within FIG as well as, being full Members of this Legislative Chamber. It's been put to me that the part timers would be second class Members. I disagree. They would be full legislators and they would sit on Standing Finance Committee, and we now know from the Attorney General's confirmation in this House that the three Executive Members (the three Members who sit on the Executive Council) are actually the Government). Clearly, any proposed changes would take a long time to get to the point where it could be put to the Privy Council. I accept that. But as the saying goes, the most important step on any journey is the first one, and with everything going on currently, some may say, why have I raised it at this time? Well, this is an election year, and I suggest anyone seriously considering standing for election to this House or even just interested in the running of the Islands, should think about the wider issues and the challenges, not only of the here and now, but also the future in an increasingly complex world.

Thank you. Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Peter Biggs.

Mr. Speaker, in rising to support the motion, I would like to also welcome Group Captain Stratton on to our Assembly. And I would like to mention Brigadier Dan Duff, as well, who somehow seemed to slip out of the Falklands without getting his complete farewell.

I thought Brigadier Duff made a great impression on the people of the Falklands, and they found his presence reassuring and very pleasant. I wish him and his family all the best for the future, and also find it quite reassuring that he's been promoted into a very relevant position in MoD.

I would like to also note that Chief Executive Andy Keeling will end his employment with the Falkland Islands Government at the end of this month. And I would like to take this opportunity, hopefully we'll see him back here at some point in the near future, but I'd like to take this opportunity of saying how I rate him as one of our best CEs, that one of the best ones I've seen, but I have been viewing him from a different perspective, this time as a Member of Legislative Assembly, but I was very impressed with his wide experience and knowledge and also his exceptional leadership skills. And he will be missed. However, I'd also like to congratulate our incoming Chief Executive, Andrea and I have great confidence that you'll carry on with the high standards that Andy gave to us. Thank you

The Honourable Leona Roberts

Thank you, Mr Speaker in rising to support the motion, there is much I could say definitely have some opinions on MLA Birmingham's comments, but appreciating that we can't enter in debate during Motion for Assembly. I will save that for another time, but there certainly could be some interesting discussions about that.

I, too, would welcome Group Captain Adele to the House today. It's wonderful to have you here, and I'm glad that your first Assembly isn't an epic which might have chased you away for forever. And also, to put on record my thanks to Brigadier Duff to wish him well in the future. Thank him for his commitment, and I hope that he and Lady Billa enjoy the next part of their adventure.

I too, would very much like to recognize the work of our outgoing Chief Executive, Andy Keeling, whose contract would come into an end this month. I have only worked with a couple of Chief Executives, but Andy is, I think anyone who's met him would agree is an exceptional person, incredibly committed not just to the Falkland Islands Government, but to the Falklands as a whole, pretty much from the moment he set foot on the Island. I think he fell in love with the place and dedicated absolutely everything to the progress of our community.

I think Chief Executives, Falkland Islands Government is an unenviable role. There is so much to juggle, there is so much to do, and the list is never-ending, and I know our

incoming Chief Executive has already experienced the joys of this and will have much more of that in the future. But simply to say to Andy and Anya that I wish them all good things in the future. We look forward to seeing them back soon, but the Falklands will miss them, their wonderful personalities and character and everything that they've given to the islands over these last few years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I support the Motion.

The Honourable Mark Pollard

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, in rising to support the motion, I urge my Honourable colleague to perhaps put forward a motion, and we can debate the proposals put forward earlier on. Today, I'd like to welcome the deputy commander, welcome to the House, and add my thanks to the to the Brigadier as well and his family.

Mr Speaker. I'll keep it brief, but I want to just a plea for people to participate in the consultations ongoing at the moment. It can feel, I imagine, that there is a bit of consultation fatigue at times, but there are some incredibly important ones on the table at the moment and upcoming in terms of whether it's about telecoms, land recovery programs or the upcoming salmon farming consultation. Please, people, if you're listening, please participate in these consultations. We're running them for a reason that none of these things are already set in stone. We need your opinion; We don't just want them. We need them.

And finally, just, I would really like to put on record my thanks to Andy Keeling. Andrea has been acting in Andy's absence, and she's done a fantastic job, my thanks to Andrea first. I wish all the best for Andy and Anya a speedy recovery and I hope we can see them back in the Falklands sometime soon. I'm sure they have it, to return as soon as they can and come back. I think Andy has been fantastic professionally for the Falkland Islands, I think as a couple have become a real part of the Falkland Islands society. I think that participated in our culture and our community, and they've really thrown themselves into everything. My thanks to both of them, and I can't wait to see them back even if it's for a short while. Thank you. Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Gavin Short

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in rising to speak to the Motion for Adjournment. I wish to touch on a few subjects most of which obviously aren't all that merry. And just for the benefit of listeners at home, the joviality was caused by losing my balance as I got up and almost going over backwards to me and chair, which would liven things up very much.

I think, I've sort of said this in the House before, but I'm going to repeat it. We're, we're fast approaching the 1st April and yet another anniversary of our invasion, an event that still very much alive and in the minds of those who went through it as if it was only happened but a few weeks ago. For some this marks a troubling time, as a lot of us have a loop of tape in

our heads that starts to play and will continue playing until just after Liberation Day. What we don't know, though, is the volume. Some years, it is at a low level right through and can almost be forgotten about. Other years, the volume goes up and down. And some years, it rains pretty high for the duration, to the point where it gets in the way of normal life. So, to people new to the Falklands, all I say is this: just be minded that we may through this time, be a little different in the way that some of us react to some things.

Something though, that will be more pleasurable for me than it was 43 years ago will be the evening of the 1st April, this 1st April, which I will be spending with the other members of the Falkland Islands Defence Force, Class of 82, and their families. This is something that is organized by the members of that little club, which gets smaller as the years roll by. And I very, very much look forward to that.

It is perhaps something though, which sometimes thought about the feeling that both the FIDF and the Royal Marines, who were here on invasion night, are actually treated as something of a kind of a bad memory, something that should be kept in the background to not acknowledge something like an embarrassing family secret. Certainly, the Royal Marines were actually treated extremely shabbily by their own newspapers. Luckily for the FIDF members from that night, the invaders didn't seem to believe in the free press, or we may have got the same treatment as well.

It is bad enough that a lot of FIDF and the Royals have carried a burden of guilt all these years, wondering if we could have done more, should have done more, and the feeling that we let everyone down. But have a lack of acknowledgement, even from the FIDF itself here, makes that burden perhaps that little bit heavier. I am hopeful, though, that the Falklands version of the Veterans' Charter for those who have served their country in the FIDF, and it doesn't matter at what period may well change that.

I have very recently been made aware of the seeming intention to try and fetch another religious effigy from the coast to the Falklands. This is a weird story, and one that I've dug into as much as I can and will be snuffling around trying to pick up more information. From what I've seen so far though, I can't firmly say whether this is a fully planned and financed scheme or something a bit more haphazard in its nature. Whatever it is, this will be nothing more than a political stunt to parade this thing around the Argentine cemetery near Darwin and claim that it is on their own territory. The timing of this also shows their true intent, and they are paying not one jot of respect to those who they invaded and held at gunpoint. I have, last night, mailed both my colleagues and others with what I've managed to find out and stating that, in my view, that this should not be allowed to happen. And I'm hoping that they will give their full support to declaring this, what looks like the lump of cement known to me as 'Pedro, the Fisherman's Friend', a *statuea non grata* in the Falklands. Come look, enjoy your holiday in the free Falklands. Respect our Laws and feelings and take away photographs and memories but leave your political figurines and the like at home.

I was going to speak of the budget and also the waste treatment plant. But I shall leave that for another day.

I would like to say hello to our new Chief Executive to be, Andrea across the table. Welcome to the madhouse. And you're no stranger to this, of course, having been on this side of the bench, and of course, facing off against the Chief Executive. I would like to say though, that in Andy, I thought he was a brilliant bloke. I really do. He was down to earth, just an ordinary sort of geezer, if I can. And that's I say that not in a disrespectful way. He could communicate with people he was at your level. I do wish him all well. And I would also like to welcome Group Captain Adele to the House and to say a big goodbye to Brigadier Dan, who I wish nothing but the very best for in his future career.

Mr Speaker, I can't end on the gloomy note, and I wish to speak of something that happened yesterday. On my way to work yesterday afternoon, I chanced upon a number plate resting in the middle of the road, and rescued it, as you do, not knowing who the owner might be, I popped up a post on social media. Social media, at times can be a vicious, horrible thing, but on this occasion, I witnessed the positive community side of that media and thanks to all who helped me reunite the number plate and the owner in very quick order. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Jack Ford

Mr Speaker, I will be brief in echoing the comments of my colleagues in welcoming the Group Captain in what has hopefully been a more enjoyable process than the five hours we spent at in EXCO on Tuesday. My thanks and best wishes to CBF Dan Duff.

My thanks and best wishes to Andy Keeling, I've worked with him for a short time over the last year and a half, but it has been absolute pleasure, and I wish him the very best. Also, my wishes of good luck to the incoming Chief Executive, Andrea Clausen, who's taking over what will probably be the most difficult time in the history of the Falklands.

Given my Honourable Colleague Gavin Short, chose not to speak on the waste facility or the budget process, I might touch on it briefly. This week, in Executive Council and Standing Finance, a majority of us approved additional funding for the waste facility to the tune of a large amount of money. This will have an impact on the budget process. It is something I did support, as I believe it was better to go ahead than to not go ahead, as there was a cost related to both. It will have an impact on the budget process, and we will have to make, I believe, sacrifices elsewhere to accommodate it, but it's something that is worth doing. It is one of the foundations of what is required to operate a society, along with power, water and shelter. I think it's something that we need to get right, although, of course, I won't repeat comments made by my colleagues earlier today about the need to enhance control and oversight right across the capital program, but also across the day to day operations of government. I think we often look to the capital program as somewhere where we can make cuts and push things back. But I think the more important change would be to look at the operating budget, that is where we end up sinking most of our money on an annual basis, and unless we make changes to that, we won't see lasting benefits. I won't go on much longer, but I think there's one very significant thing happened this week, which probably warrants further debate in this House, as we, as we continue to

progress with budget process, But I'm sure we'll see more in the future. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Honourable Teslyn Barkman

Thank you, Mr Speaker and my Honourable colleague for his comments on spending on capital projects. And I hadn't intended to say anything about it, but I would certainly say that I let my vote in support for the waste management strategy and the waste management treatment facility to go forward, because we don't have an alternative plan, and this is a country that isn't going to stop producing waste. And so, while it is always disappointing when projects escalate in cost, this is something that we promised the public to deliver, and have promised them for a number of years, because Eliza Cove is at capacity, and trying to manage that facility or pretending that we can stretch out for another few years is something we simply cannot do. So that's why I lent my support to that particular project.

Also listening to some of the discussion that's happened around the table. And while I won't draw it into the area of debate, I'd say it's certainly clear that people who have expertise in the area of governance and representation should be informing suggestions to our democracy. We shouldn't certainly be rolling out haphazardly, any kind of changes as a trial. I'm reminded of the old adage that simple solutions are quite often held for fascists and teenagers. You know, they don't often tend to deliver what you hope to do. And certainly, all aspects of our democracy should be treated with respect, and any changes to them should be well thought through. And having worked in this position for nearly eight years in its full time capacity and note that I'm only one of five MLAs who have worked within it for that long. The understanding of the working dynamic of the House is an important consideration in particular, and the most important aspect of that, which is how and what informed people being chosen to be on Executive Council, which is the highest form of government in our democracy. And I certainly imagine that people who have and hold more responsibility and duties will inevitably change the dynamic, and as a result, you wouldn't want to see the smaller constituency's voice diminished as a result of that. So, anything that could change that dynamic is not sensible, and certainly we should be thinking it through properly first, and in the meantime, we certainly should be encouraging participation in our democracy. And I would also like to highlight that everyone should be filling out their canvas forms and returning them to the Registrar to be to be on the electoral roll in order to take part in our functioning democracy and to vote in this year's general election, and also to stand, and I hope many people will stand, and we should also be actively identifying and encouraging good candidates that can represent the whole country in Camp and in Stanley, and this is where we should be focusing our energy.

As far as I'm aware, there wasn't need for a tweak to the roles and responsibilities in the duties of an MLA. And I thank the Attorney General for his work in pointing this out, because actually, you don't need to be based in Stanley in order to carry out the duties of an MLA and that was already captured within the Standing Orders and within the roles and responsibilities of that and I'd like to thank the Attorney General for his work in identifying that is a possibility.

Moving on to what is a very bittersweet moment in the House, because we have to say goodbye to a brilliant Chief Executive in Andy Keeling, and I'd like to say that Andy and Anya have been vibrant additions to our country, and we're very, very sorry to see him go. The changes Andy introduced, from the start, was sympathetic to the development of our country, and from the first interviews that Mark and I undertook in the UK, he stood out as an exceptional leader and someone who could, from his own experience, understand institutions from the bottom to top, having worked through a council in his own right, and this was proven right, and we thank him for his work. He did some exceptional leading during his time here. And now, we pass that role on to a Falkland Islander for the first time, and we're very honoured that Andrea has taken up the challenge, and wish her (and I've already acknowledges today in the House in terms of my portfolio report), but I do wish it well and understand that there are going to be extensive challenges along the way, but certainly this Assembly support you and the ambitions for the civil service and as you go into the general election and a big period of change, and I'm sure it's reassuring to everybody that we've got at least one person going through to carry the ship through the year with guaranteed corporate knowledge. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker

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