

# STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE

OPEN MINUTES OF THE  
STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025  
In the Liberation Room, Secretariat, 13.30

*These minutes are draft minutes until confirmed by resolution at the next meeting of the Committee.*

|                            |   |                                 |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Present:</b>            | The Honourable Roger Spink, MLA (Chair)<br>The Honourable Mark Pollard, MLA (Vice Chair)<br>The Honourable Teslyn Barkman, MLA<br>The Honourable Peter Biggs, MLA<br>The Honourable John Birmingham, MLA<br>The Honourable Jack Ford, MLA<br>The Honourable Leona Roberts, MLA<br>The Honourable Gavin Short, MLA |                                 |
|                            | The Honourable Financial Secretary, Pat Clunie  | FS                              |
| <b>In Attendance:</b>      | Acting Chief Executive, Andrea Clausen<br>Head of Finance, Steve Cannon<br>Senior Accountant, David Livermore<br>Management Accountant, September Maldonado<br>PMCL – Ed Jewson   | A/CE<br>HoF<br>SA<br>MA<br>PMCL |
| <b>Secretary:</b>          | Executive Assistant, Imogen Didlick   | EA                              |
| <b>Public &amp; Press:</b> | Press x 4<br>Public x 0   |                                 |

## PART I – OPEN

**1. Apologies for absence:**

1.1 The Honourable Chief Executive, Andy Keeling.

**2. Declarations of interest:**

2.1 Item 7 - MLA Short.

**3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025:**

3.1 The minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

**4. Matters Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025:**

4.1 None

**5. Summary Financial Management Report – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (Report 12/25):**

*The purpose of this report is to provide Honourable Members with a summary financial report as at 28 February 2025 for the 2024/25 financial year. This is an information paper only.*

5.1 MA presented the report.

13.31 MLA Barkman arrived.

5.2 MLA Spink thanked MA for the report and said that he felt that the numbers seemed to be moving in the right direction.

5.3 Honourable Members noted and accepted the report.

## **6. Retention of S&P Rating of A+:**

6.1 *The purpose of this item is for Honourable Members to note that S&P Global Ratings have confirmed that the sovereign rating for the Falkland Islands is to remain at A+ with a stable outlook.*

6.2 FS confirmed that the A+ was a long-term rating – their short term 3-year horizon was A-1 which was the highest rating to be awarded. FS advised that stability of the economy and good fiscal prudence was what ensured this rating for the Falkland Islands. Overall, the F.I is seen as having a strong economy and acknowledges that oil as potential revenue has not yet been factored into the rating. FS advised that once oil does happen it would take a few years to feed into their analysis so there would be no sudden increase once oil happened. FS said the Falkland Islands should be very proud of this achievement as they have a better rating than some countries with a bigger economy. HoF added that as a comparison the F.I have the same rating as Japan and China.

6.3 FS informed Members that S&P Global Ratings do speak to other stakeholders so this was not just purely an FIG accomplishment but the whole of the FI so all efforts across both the private sector and civil service should be commended for this credit rating.

6.4 MLA Short commended the rating.

## **7. Subvention Request for Technical Survey (Falklands Radio):**

7.1 HoF said this report was to approve a subvention of £30k for a survey on Falklands Radio broadcast and IT equipment. It had been submitted to Executive Council in January but was deferred and asked for further work to specify the technical requirements for the radio station to mitigate equipment failure.

7.2 MLA Spink suggested that any funds remaining after the survey be used to fund urgent equipment replacement, to prevent Falklands Radio having to return with a further request. MLA Roberts said she had discussed with the Station Manager (Liz Roberts) who explained that there was a huge amount of failure occurring, but rather than just replacing bits *ad hoc* they needed to understand the broader issue. MLA Roberts confirmed her support for the funding and said that this was a vital service for the community, and they were clearly struggling. MLA Roberts said that Falklands Radio are to come back with a list of what needed fixing and it had been clearly explained to the Station Manager that an entirely new building was not possible.

7.3 MLA Pollard agreed that the radio station was an essential service for the Islands and felt that the money should be spent on new equipment rather than a survey, but the reality was that they did not know what needed replacing first so the survey would help with that. MLA Pollard added that with this much failure occurring it was apparent that maintenance and repair needs hadn't been addressed and acknowledged the efforts of the new Station Manager to try and rectify that.

7.4 A/CE commented that if the equipment was failing to broadcast government public meetings then perhaps FIG's IT department should assist by helping to facilitate and improve connectivity and broadcasting. Honourable Members agreed.

7.5 MLA Pollard noted that the technical survey costs were £25k with £5k contingency so he was happy with any remaining amount to purchase equipment for urgent replacements. Honourable Members agreed.

7.6 Honourable Members approved the budgetary recommendations of the report.

**8. Investment Portfolio Update Q4 2024:**

8.1 *This report aimed to inform the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) on the state of the investment portfolio and performance. The investment portfolio included seven funds, namely the Growth Fund, Insurance Fund, Capital Equalisation Fund, Pension Equalisation Fund, Pension Fund Old Scheme, Currency Fund and Income Fund. Each fund had its own investment objectives and strategy.*

8.2 FS presented the report and confirmed that as at 31 Dec 2024 the fund value was £421.8M; the funds had depreciated by £9.2M. £14.8M had been removed to help fund capital projects, including the new wind turbines, and to help with operating costs whilst waiting for fishing income. The investment gain was £5.6M. However, at the end of March they will see £15M go back into funds which will nett it off.

8.3 Honourable Members noted and accepted the report.

**9. Consideration of public Executive Council reports with financial implications submitted to Executive Council on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025:**

**9.1 Report 64/25, Additional funding to complete the MPA Road -**

9.1.1 FS advised that this report requested an additional £972k funding to complete this project.

9.1.2 MLA Barkman noted that it was a significant investment for connectivity for the Islands but it came at a large cost. MLA Ford advised Members that Executive Council had asked whether this money could be found from existing funds, but DPW did not know the answer. MLA Ford said that these overspends were frustrating and he would prefer to reallocate or find money rather than give new money. FS informed Members that DPW was anticipating some underspends so it could be found there.

9.1.3 MLA Roberts said it would be ‘fantastic’ to see this road finished as it was a long-awaited and long-overdue.

9.1.4 MLA Barkman asked whether it could be reported back to next month’s SFC as to how much ‘new money’ would be needed. A/CE advised that a discussion can happen during the Q3 director meetings and brought back to SFC. Action 1  
- FS

9.1.5 Honourable Members approved the budgetary recommendations of the report but stipulated that first efforts should be made to find this money from underspends.

**10. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting: Weds 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025.**

**11. Exclusion of Press and Public:**

13.52hrs

*"I move that the press and public be now excluded on the grounds that the next items of business to be considered are likely to disclose exempt information under Part 2 of Schedule 3 of the Committees (Public Access) Ordinance 2012".*

## PART II - CLOSED

### **12. Confirmation of the closed minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025:**

12.1 The minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

### **13. Matters Arising from the closed minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025:**

13.1 One matter arising was discussed.

### **14. Investment Portfolio Update Q4 2024:**

14.1 *This report was to complement the Consolidated Review of the Investment Performance and provide a more detailed analysis of the portfolio performance, as well as PMCL's conclusions and recommendations.*

14.2 Honourable Members noted and accepted the report.

14.3 *A full record of this discussion is contained in the exempt section of the minutes.*

### **15. Defence Related Taxation Exemption (Report 10/25):**

15.1 *The purpose of this report is to re-present to Standing Finance Committee the above titled paper [with edits and additional information].*

15.2 HoCT in attendance. HoF presented the paper.

15.3 *A full record of this discussion is contained in the exempt section of the minutes.*

*HOCT left at 14.49*

### **16. Charitable Donation – 1982 Memorial Wood**

16.1 *The purpose of this report was to recommend approval for a donation of £10,000 to the 1982 Memorial Wood Fund in order to allow the community to complete the installation of Memorial Benches in designated locations.*

16.2 HOF confirmed this was an exempt report due to personalities mentioned within the report.

16.3 MLA Barkman asked if there was any money left in the Community Fund. HoF confirmed there was £48K.

16.4 Honourable Members approved this request.

### **17. Consideration of closed/redacted Executive Council reports with financial implications submitted to Executive Council on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025:**

***NOT FOR PUBLICATION*** by virtue of Schedule 3 of the Committees Public Access) Ordinance 2012: Paragraph 10 (information about relevant contracts and negotiations).

#### **17.1 Report 63/25, Waste Management Facility; Additional Capital Funding -**

17.1.1 FS presented the recommendations and advised that Executive Council had discussed at length and had approved the report.

17.1.2 Honourable Members approved the budgetary recommendations of the report.

17.1.3 *A full record of this discussion is contained in the exempt section of the minutes.*

17.2 **Report 65/25, Quarry equipment to support capital works -**

17.2.1 FS said this request was for the purchase of a trommel to enable the quarry to produce material necessary for the upcoming capital programme. MLA Barkman noted that the quarry can still reach delivery regardless but just at a slower pace; so this was an example of a 'nice to have' rather than 'need to have' unlike the previous paper.

17.2.2 Honourable Members approved the budgetary recommendations of the paper.

*There being no other business the meeting closed at 15.09hrs*

Minutes confirmed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson