



News from Gilbert House

17/05/2019
Volume 1 Issue 8

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Message from the Chair— MLA Mark Pollard	1
MLA Ian Hansen	2
MLA Roger Spink	2
MLA Leona Roberts	3
MLA Teslyn Barkman	4
MLA Roger Edwards	4
MLA Stacy Bragger	5
Key Dates & Contacts	5

Message from the Chair

MLA Mark Pollard – Trade and Industry

We have taken the time to try and hold some public meetings to let the public know our progress on the Island Plan. I was unable to make the meeting at Fox Bay and the Hill Cove one was cancelled due to weather and flights. I would therefore like to give a brief update on progress to date on the Population and Workforce section.

We are taking a multi-departmental approach as well as working with the business community and the Chamber of Commerce to creating a long term labour force development strategy. A workforce development specialist has been appointed to work alongside our economist. A jobs portal has been created and we have lifted the cap on apprenticeships.

When we look at population growth I am keen to ensure that we try to encapsulate as best we can “What makes a Falkland Islander?” so that we can look to protect our culture into the future.

With the immigration policy, we have introduced the 4 year work permits and also recruited an officer to progress the implementation of the policy.

The training centre and FIGO are working together to communicate with Falklands students abroad and provide careers advice. We are also looking to start management trainee positions which will hopefully work encourage students to return after their studies.

We continue to work on encouraging the contractors and their families in the Islands to stay. Materials are being created to better inform them of the lifestyle and job opportunities within the Islands.

Work has begun on the new Falklands College and the CDS is still under review. The Skills Assessment Council are also addressing workforce gaps and looking into succession planning.

The minimum wage has been reviewed again as part of the annual budget process and the living wage policy and calculation will be published also with this budget. Workforce legislation is also being considered under the policy forward plan. Health and safety is due to be addressed first.

An agricultural traineeship is in place. There is also work ongoing with the RDS action plan as well as the TDS and work by FIDC to promote individuals and families to live in camp. Money also continues to be spent on camp education and infrastructure.



If you would like a copy of **The Progress Made to Date on the Islands Plan** please email assemblyadmin@sec.gov.fk, visit Gilbert House or call 27451. A limited number have also been placed in the post office.



Having just returned from South Africa this last few days (incidentally, a place I would recommend to anyone to visit), I thought it might be useful to share some of the issues they are currently facing. In particular the conversations I had with South Africans concerning their health and medical services.

It seems crazy that a country with so much economic potential has problems in this area but apparently the service can run from quite shoddy to absolutely appalling. For instance, in many areas, an expectant mother has to bring everything with her to hospital for the baby after birth. Milk, food, nappies, towels etc. They get absolutely nothing supplied by the state. There were a couple of horrific stories about new born babies dying through lack of nourishment.

There are stories about beds sitting outside hospitals waiting to be installed, but even with the huge unemployment issues they face, things like this are not being done. I asked about employment of nurses and I was told that it isn't a problem to recruit as nurses pay is good compared to other jobs. The problem is that people are applying for nurses jobs because of the pay alone, and training is scarce, so many hospitals have untrained nurses trying to do a skilled job.

While we must always strive to keep our Medical services at the highest possible level, we should always remember that we actually have it pretty good compared to other places in the world, as pinpointed by the few examples above.

While we were there, the election took place and from what I have heard on my travels home there isn't going to be a new Government, so whether the same problems continue or not remains to be seen.

I did have a moment of wondering if we were going to be subject to martial law, as MLA Pollard and I were in Jamaica last year. The day we landed in Durban to collect a hire car the front pages of the papers were all about troops being brought into Durban to quell the riots that were happening on the streets with the election lead in. Thankfully, I don't believe that happened, or at least we were driving North if it did.

Finally this month I would like to say goodbye to Mandy Whittingham and wish her well in her new ventures. Also welcome to David and I look forward to working alongside him and the rest of the KEMH team over the next few years.

MLA Roger Spink

Government Services

We have spent the last couple of weeks updating people on the progress of the Islands plan. The meetings are an opportunity for us to show what progress we have made and probably more important for us to listen to people to hear what we have not done and also to connect with people that may not cross our paths in Gilbert House. We have all been voted in to serve the people of the Falklands and it is only by hearing what you all have to say that we can act on those wishes.

That does mean that at times if it is in the interest of the Islands we may take decisions that certain groups do not like, but I believe we have been voted in to do our best for the whole community not just certain sectors. My philosophy is to try and take decisions that will make everyone in our community better off by the end of our Assembly.

The progress to date I think has been good but certain areas like capital projects have taken longer to get going that I would have wished. However when spending public funds the necessary checks and balances have to be followed and the difficulty of getting work done due to our geographical position and population size becomes clear.

In the coming weeks I am off to the UK with an FIG group to meet with various Government and Opposition Ministers to put forward the Falklands case, subjects to discuss will include Oil Development, the economy and trade, then we travel to Aberdeen to highlight to opportunity that Oil Development offers to UK business hopefully getting cross party support will enable our economic growth to continue and the visit will include discussions with the MOD highlighting the damage that rotor winds and the lack of a solution to the issue has done to our economy so far.

We return to pass the budget which builds on the progress made last year. We work for you so please keep passing on the comments on what we are doing we will listen.



MLA Leona Roberts

Environment & Public Protection



Picture above: MLA Leona Roberts meeting with Councillor Jonathan Joughin the Mayor of Douglas, Isle of Man.

One element of the MLA role that I sometimes have mixed feelings about is the overseas work. Politically, it is incredibly important that we maintain the Falkland Islands presence and play our part in international fora - reminding politicians and decision-makers in other countries of who we are and the realities of our situation. On a personal level it's not necessarily easy though and after a recent lengthy trip I admit I came home feeling a tad frazzled...

The trip included a lively CPA Executive meeting in Canada and a fascinating few days in the Isle of Man. This Crown Dependency has much in common with the Falklands, and faces many similar issues, so it was really useful to discuss their approach as well as having the opportunity to see how their government and Parliament work - rather more complicated than ours!

Another highlight was my attendance at a two-day conference about the Falklands war, hosted by Manchester University. The conference included a broad range of topics and speakers, discussing many aspects of 1982 from the perspective of "both sides". I always find it frustrating that Falkland Islanders are left out of these conversations - more by accident and habit than design, perhaps, but maddening nonetheless.

With that in mind, it was agreed that I would speak in the 'Legacy' section - explaining how far we've progressed in 37 years and describing the modern Falklands - self-financing, internally self-governing and, in general, a responsible and active member of the international community.



Importantly, I was also able to challenge or correct some of the comments and occasionally surprising assertions made by other speakers.

My presentation appeared to be well-received and I'm happy to say that I've since received messages of support from a number of delegates, including international academics and scholars.

Were a vast number of minds changed by my presentation? Probably not, but if even a few of those individuals go on to lecture or write about the Falklands, it can do no harm for them to have heard our point of view.

The alternative is that we do not make our voices heard and allow other countries to go unchallenged in creating their narrative about the Islands, our history and our future.

Picture left: MLA Leona Roberts meeting with The Hon Darryl Plecas (Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia) and Stuart McMillan (Member of the Scottish Parliament and representative of the BIMR Region, CPA) in the Canadian House of Commons



It's been a fairly busy few weeks trying to cram in all the budget and briefing meetings before five of us travel to the UK. In that time we have also finished an informal review of the Islands Plan, gathering what we have achieved towards it in the 18 months we have been in office.

It was clear when the stopwatch had to be produced at the Stanley Public Meeting that a lot has been achieved by FIG. I hope the brief highlights listed under each manifesto objective of the collective Islands plan demonstrates some insight into where we have got to.

What was even more useful from the public meetings we held was to identify where we have missed something. It isn't a 'pat-on-the-back' exercise, it's to be sure we have a clear focus ahead.

At the Department of Natural Resources links with Uruguay are bearing real results. We have import links established for pigs and horses. There is a farming sector and trade exchange facilitated by the Expo Prado and through familiarisation trips. Uruguayan farmers and journalists have visited the islands and plans are in motion for a reciprocal trip supporting Falkland farmers to go to Uruguay.

Other new opportunities include work on biosecurity and calafate control, and the possibilities for more convenient storage, and laser testing of wool. The South Atlantic Fisheries Commission has been re-established to better monitor fish stocks that straddle across the region, and joint research cruises have been approved with the first already conducted.

It is important that we are on sound economic, legislative and scientific footing for the future of our fisheries. One of the most important discussions to our economy, tying up progress and security for the future, is the current review of the ITQ fisheries. There is a peer review into our fisheries scientific programme to be commissioned, and implementation and legislative work continues on the Maritime Bill and audit to progress our maritime footing.

This supports work in hydrocarbons too. Further elements of ongoing legislative work in this area includes health and safety, environmental protection, national oil spill contingency and dangerous goods which have been approved by ExCo. Policy work has completed on the national demand that hydrocarbons would bring and FIG and Premier Oil have agreed a strategy on local content, which will involve enhanced regulation from FIG.

MLA Roger Edwards

Public Works



I last wrote an article concerning the C24 to which the Falkland Islands Government send a delegation every year. Each C24 is preceded by a "Pre C24" which is held up to about two months prior to the meeting in New York.

This year the Pre C24 was held in Saint George's, Grenada between the 2nd and 4th May 2019.

I attended the meetings on behalf of the Falkland Islands Government.

This particular meeting was one of the very best that I have attended and it was also one of the largest. 21 of the 29 Member States of the C24 attended. Also in attendance were 5 United Kingdom Overseas Territories along with French Polynesia, Guam, United States Virgin Islands and the Western Sahara. Administering Powers attending included France, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

United Nations Member States who spoke at the meetings included Algeria, Argentina, Honduras, Morocco, Spain and Uganda.

As was the case last year the discussions on the Western Sahara took up much of the time but we were all given our full fifteen minutes to put forward our petitions and the C24 Members had their full allotted time to respond - some appeared to use very slow watches as they did seem to have spoken for a very long 3 minutes.

About half of the C24 respondents did not make any reference to either Gibraltar or the Falkland Islands whereas the other half tended to speak in favour of either the Spanish claim to Gibraltar or the Argentine claim to the Falkland Islands.

Very controversially, both Syria and Chile said a visit by the UN C24 to the Falkland Islands should not take place as it was a sovereignty dispute and not a matter of De-Colonisation - so why at C24?



It was recently announced that a new leadership and management structure for our schools will be in place from the start of the new academic year in September. The new structure will see an Executive Head providing leadership across the Infant & Junior School and Camp Education and the Community School. Both schools will have a Principal and Deputy Principal. There will also be a new post of Camp Education Manager created. I see the new structure as a further investment in our schools and a positive step. I believe these changes will allow us to address the issues of staff retention and stability across the schools that I know are of concern to students and parents. We need to support staff better and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for all of their hard work, particularly with covering recent staff shortages in Camp Education and the Community School.

MLAs have been holding meetings this month to provide an update on progress on delivering the aims in our Islands Plan. I think it is a useful exercise to go through what has happened so far and what is left to do. I believe it enables the public to hold us to account better and guide us on which areas they think need more attention. The first of the meetings was held in Stanley followed by another in Fox Bay. Roger S, Teslyn and I travelled to the West for the meeting and I think we all thought it was a very useful session with a number of points made that we hadn't considered previously.

I noticed this weekend that the 'Welcome to Stanley' sign on the Bypass Road had been wiped out by, presumably, some careless driving. I've never been a fan of the sign as I think we could have something far more visually appealing and imaginative. For instance, the 'Montevideo' letters on the top of the Pocitos Beach are a must-visit for tourists with visitors taking photos of themselves next to the landmark and then posting it online. Perhaps now is the opportunity to invite ideas on what we could have instead of putting the same sign back up.

Next Public Meeting	To be confirmed and advertised at a later date.
Next sitting of ExCo	Monday 3rd June 2019
Next sitting of Legislative Assembly	Tuesday 4th June 2019, this will be the budget session.

Gilbert House Staff

<i>Office Hours</i> 08:00-1200 / 13:00-16:30	Phone
Cherie Clifford	(00500) 27451
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly clerkofassembly@sec.gov.fk	
Imogen Didlick	
PA to the Legislative Assembly paassembly@sec.gov.fk	
Meghan Law	Address
Administration Assistant assemblyadmin@sec.gov.fk	
	Gilbert House Stanley Falkland Islands FIQQ 1ZZ

Key Dates & Contacts

MLA Contact Details

MLA Barkman	tbarkman@sec.gov.fk (00500) 54754 / (00500) 53583
MLA Bragger	sbragger@sec.gov.fk (00500) 55144 / (00500) 54391
MLA Edwards	redwards@sec.gov.fk (00500) 55140 / (00500) 52044
MLA Elsby	belsby@sec.gov.fk (00500) 53240
MLA Hansen	ihansen@sec.gov.fk (00500) 55142 / (00500) 52929
MLA Pollard	mpollard@sec.gov.fk (00500) 55888
MLA Roberts	lroberts@sec.gov.fk (00500) 54753
MLA Spink	rspink@sec.gov.fk (00500) 51680 / (00500) 51128

Add yourself to our Facebook group [Falkland Islands MLA Discussion Group](#).

This is a group for residents of the Falkland Islands to contact MLAs with matters of concern or queries. Your question will either be answered by MLAs or, if more appropriate, passed on to the relevant FIG department (you will be notified of this).