

ST. HELENA
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PRESIDENT

His Excellency the Governor, Mr Mark Capes

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

The Honourable Acting Chief Secretary	-	Mrs Gillian Ann Francis
The Honourable Acting Financial Secretary	-	Mr Dax Richards
The Honourable Attorney General	-	Mr Kenneth Ian Baddon

ELECTED MEMBERS

Mr Leslie Paul Baldwin
Mr Nigel Dollery
Mr Wilson Charles Duncan
Mr Gavin George Ellick
Mr Cyril Robert George
Mr Anthony Arthur Green
Mr Lawson Arthur Henry
Mr Brian William Isaac
Mrs Bernice Alicia Olsson
Mr Ian Sebastian Rummery
Ms Christine Lilian Scipio-O'Dean
Mr Derek Franklin Thomas

CLERK OF COUNCILS

Miss Gina Benjamin

**INAUGURAL MEETING
OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

Wednesday, 24th July, 2013

The Council met at 10.00 am
in the Court House, Jamestown

(The President in the Chair)

ORDER OF THE DAY

1. PRAYERS

2. ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS

Ex Officio Members

Mrs Gillian Ann Francis	-	Acting Chief Secretary
Mr Dax Leroy Richards	-	Acting Financial Secretary
Mr Kenneth Ian Baddon	-	Attorney General

Elected Members

Mr Leslie Paul Baldwin
Mr Nigel Dollery
Mr Wilson Charles Duncan
Mr Gavin George Ellick
Mr Cyril Robert George
Mr Anthony Arthur Green
Mr Lawson Arthur Henry
Mr Brian William Isaac
Mrs Bernice Alicia Olsson
Mr Ian Sebastian Rummery
Ms Christine Lilian Scipio-O'Dean
Mr Derek Franklin Thomas

3.

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
(His Excellency the Governor, Mr Mark Capes)**

Honourable Members, colleagues, I welcome this opportunity to address you at the beginning of the term of this new Legislative Council. I should like first to congratulate each one of you for standing for election and on winning the confidence of those that you are here to represent. I offer special acknowledgement to Councillor Olsson, who, I believe, is here to serve on Council for a fifth term. I should also acknowledge those who stood unsuccessfully at the General Election, I thank them for their willingness to serve the people of St Helena.

It would be most remiss of me not to pause here to mention the excellent work of the Returning Officer, Mrs Gilly Francis. She and her team managed the preparations for the election and the count itself quite superbly. Mrs Francis, currently our Acting Chief Secretary, is an outstanding public servant and trusted colleague whose professionalism sets the high standard that others may strive to achieve. I am most grateful to her.

My thanks also to our hugely capable and experienced Attorney General, Ken Baddon, for his invaluable input to the election process and for the steady supply of sound advice that he so readily provides to guide our daily work; that I have enjoyed every single day of my work here in St Helena is due in large part to having such first class colleagues.

During the run-up to this General Election, one often heard the remark that this would be the most important General Election in the history of St Helena. I would not disagree with that. The status quo of seemingly endless dependency on DFID has gone forever; St Helena is on a new compass bearing now, one that steers away from reliance on the taxes of people five thousand miles away. We are approaching a new era, an era that will bring many challenges as well as new opportunities. At the dawn of air access in 2016, this Legislative Council will be in the driving seat. Whether St Helena is well positioned, ready to prosper and benefit from this new era will depend on you. Whether the people of St Helena will be properly prepared, ready to face that new era with confidence, without fear, will depend on you. The people of St Helena have put their trust in you to guide the island. I believe that they want you to deliver greater opportunity and prosperity, ensuring that all who live here can share in that prosperity, ensuring that those who need extra help and care will receive it and ensuring that the environment and cultural heritage is properly safeguarded. I believe that is the essence of the challenge that you face and the people of St Helena, to whom you are accountable, will rightly judge you on your performance. You will have your own ideas on how to meet the challenge ahead, but I should like to offer you a few thoughts on laying the foundations of progress, thoughts that are drawn from my observations over the past year or so. The people look to you for leadership, they want to see leadership, I urge you to provide that leadership and the accountability that must accompany it. That involves being prepared to explain and stand by your decisions. When the going gets tough, it's important to resist taking the ignoble route of looking to officials or others to provide cover for your decisions. You make the decisions, you own them, you explain and justify them. Encourage good communication and trust between each other and with public servants. Avoid being labelled as one of those that constantly criticise and find fault. How idle it is, how utterly unhelpful and negative it is to just criticise and blame others. How much more constructive, how much more intelligent to work together to find a remedy. Tell the people where you are taking St Helena. An absolutely vital and continuous part of your job must be to make the time to explain fully to the people where we are heading and why, and, crucially, what that will mean for them. I offer these thoughts for you to consider as you prepare to take on the heavy responsibility of government. You may choose to disregard them of course, but if you were to heed them I believe that you would soon improve the historically poor image that some people have of Councillors, and, by extension, of Government. My challenge to you, starting

from today, is to improve the reputation and worth of Councillors in the eyes of the people of this island. For my part as Governor and Head of the Government, I commit to working with you and with officials to help meet the challenges ahead to serve the best interests of all the people of St Helena. Let us work together in partnership to build a stronger St Helena, to deliver the full potential of this wonderfully special and much loved island. Thank you very much for your attention.

4. ELECTIONS

Election of Speaker.

The President –

I invite nominations for the Speaker.

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Mr President, I propose that Mr Eric William Benjamin be nominated as Speaker to serve on Legislative Council.

The President –

Thank you. Mr Eric Benjamin not being on the island at the present time, I'll ask the Clerk of Council if she has confirmation, written confirmation that Eric Benjamin accepts the nomination?

Clerk –

Yes, Mr President.

The President –

And I have that confirmation here. May I have a seconder?

The Hon. Brian Isaac –

Mr President, I beg to second.

The President –

Thank you. Is there any other nomination? No?

Question that Mr Eric Benjamin should be elected as Speaker, put and agreed to.

The President –

Thank you.

The Hon. Ken Baddon (Attorney General) –

Mr President, as we discussed earlier, we now have a situation in which we have a new Speaker who is not actually able to take the Chair. Your ability to chair this meeting has expired under the provisions of the Constitution. May I suggest that you suspend the sitting while the elected members decide what to do next? What they need to do is to agree that a member of this Council, which can be an elected member or an ex officio, actually take the Chair for the election of the Deputy Speaker, but if you would simply suspend the sitting we can then reconvene in a few moments time and sort that out.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Attorney General. And so then we will adjourn this meeting for about ten minutes or so while we sort out the procedural matters for the election of the Deputy Speaker. Thank you very much.

Council suspended.

Council resumed.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –

Good morning, Honourable Members. We have agreed informally that I will take the chair at the moment, but as I mentioned before the sitting was suspended, we do actually need the twelve elected members formally to appoint someone to preside over this item of business given that we have a Speaker who is absent and we do not yet have a Deputy Speaker. Could I call for nominations, please, for someone to preside over the next item of business? Councillor Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I propose Catherine Margaret Ann Hopkins as Deputy Speaker.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –

No, I'm sorry, Councillor, we haven't quite got that far yet. We're just looking for someone to preside over that election.

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I propose the Attorney General.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –

Thank you very much, I declare my interest. Is there a seconder? Councillor Dollery?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –

I would second it.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –

Thank you very much. I put it to the vote, unless there are any further nominations, any further nominations for someone to chair this one item of business?

Question that the Attorney General be nominated to preside over next item of business, put and agreed to.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –

The Ayes have it and I take the chair for this item of business. I call upon the Clerk to call the next item of business, which is the election of a Deputy Speaker.

ELECTIONS

Election of Deputy Speaker

The Hon. Ken Baddon –

Thank you. Honourable Members, I call for nominations, is there a nomination, please, for the position of Deputy Speaker? Councillor Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –
I propose Catherine Margaret Anne Hopkins.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –
Thank you, Councillor, is there a seconder?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –
I would second.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –
Thank you, Councillor Dollery. Mrs Hopkins, you are present, do you consent to the nomination?

Mrs Hopkins –
I consent to the nomination.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –
Thank you, Madam. Are there any further nominations for the office of Deputy Speaker? No? As you know, Honourable Members, there has to be an assent by a majority of you to the position, therefore I put it to the vote that Margaret Anne Catherine Hopkins be elected as Deputy Speaker.

Question put and agreed to.

The Hon. Ken Baddon –
The Ayes have it, the Ayes have it and I call upon Mrs Hopkins to come forward and take the Oath. Can I record for the record that His Excellency the Governor has authorised the Clerk of Councils to administer these Oaths, so the Oaths will be administered by the Clerk of Councils.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS

Mrs Margaret Anne Catherine Hopkins – Honourable Deputy Speaker

The Hon. Ken Baddon –
Honourable Members, it is my pleasure now to surrender the chair to the Honourable Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –
Honourable Members, representatives of the Administration and members of the public who may be listening over the radio, I should first like to thank the Honourable Members for putting their confidence in me to become their Deputy Speaker and to congratulate all Honourable Members for their recent election to this Council. I beg your indulgence to say a few words before we continue with the Order Paper.
It should, of course, be the Honourable Speaker, Mr Eric Benjamin, who is talking to you now, but as we all know, he will shortly be on his way back from Cape Town from medical

treatment and I am sure that we all wish him well and look forward to seeing him back here next week. I have every confidence that he will serve you well and I happily offer him and the whole Council my full support. I am sure that, had he been able to get a message to me to read to you this morning he would have done so and he would wish me to extend his warm congratulations to all of you on your election to Council.

With immediate effect, I will be resigning from the Chairmanship of the Human Rights Capacity Building Committee as this is a role which falls to the Speaker of the House. The work of the Human Rights Capacity Building Committee to take forward the Human Rights National Action Plan, which is now in its second year and includes plans to introduce legislation to enable the establishment of a Human Rights Commission, will continue. I should like to publicly extend my thanks to Committee members, the Facilitator and to the public and to the Administration, Private Sector, for their positive response in taking the objectives of the National Action Plan forward.

Following this meeting, I will register my interests with the Clerk of Councils and I'm sure that all Honourable Members of this Council realise that they also need to lodge their interests. The Register is a public document and open to inspection at anyone's request.

Being an Honourable Member of Legislative Council brings with it huge responsibilities, His Excellency the Governor has spoken of them and there can be little doubt that the next few years are going to be tough for you as leaders of our community. How the island moves forward towards the opening of the airport is definitely in your hands. How the island progresses is yours to frame. I would draw your attention to some words of Franklin D. Roosevelt. "The test of progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have little". Honourable Members, there are four questions I would suggest you need to ask yourself at frequent intervals. Am I listening? Am I hearing? Am I responding to what I hear? Am I offering the island the leadership it needs to bring change for the good? I wish all of you well as you begin your lives as Legislative Councillors. You can rely on my full support whilst I will maintain the independence and impartiality required of me as your Deputy Speaker.

Honourable Members, as we move to the next item on the Order Paper I would just ask you two things. One is, if you wish to speak, please raise your name board if I haven't actually been caught by you looking at me to draw my attention and the second is, when you speak, please make sure you speak into your microphone. Thank you, Clerk. Next item of business.

ELECTIONS

Election of Committee Chairmen

The Hon. Gillian Francis (Acting Chief Secretary) –

Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper No. 16/2013 – Council Committees 2013 which contains the names of the five Council Committees for which all five Chairmanships are currently vacant.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Chief Secretary.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The Deputy Speaker –

I call for nominations to the Chair of the Economic and Development Committee. The Honourable Ian Rummery?

The Hon. Ian Rummery –

Madam Speaker, I wish to nominate Mr Lawson Henry.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Is there a seconder for this nomination, please? The Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean.

The Hon. Christine Scipio O'Dean –

I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Are there any further nominations for the Chair of the Economic and Development Committee? In which case, I would like to ask the Honourable Lawson Henry if he is prepared to take the Chair?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

I am, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you.

Question that the Honourable Lawson Henry be elected as Chairman of the Economic and Development Committee, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

I call for nominations to the Chair of the Education Committee. The Honourable Leslie Baldwin?

The Hon. Leslie Baldwin –

Madam Speaker, I'd like to nominate Christine Scipio O'Dean.

The Deputy Speaker –

Is there a seconder to the nomination?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I beg to second, Madam.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Are there any further nominations to the Chair of the Education Committee? The Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean, are you willing to accept the nomination?

The Hon. Christine Scipio O'Dean –

Madam Speaker, I accept the nomination.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you.

Question that the Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean be elected as Chairman of the Education Committee, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

I call for nominations to the Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.
The Honourable Lawson Henry?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Madam Speaker, I propose the Honourable Cyril Robert George.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Is there a seconder to the nomination, please? The Honourable Ian Rummery?

The Hon. Ian Rummery –

Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Are there any further nominations to the Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee? In which case, I ask the Honourable Cyril George if he is willing to accept the nomination?

The Hon. Cyril George –

Madam Speaker, I am willing to accept the nomination.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member.

Question that the Honourable Cyril George be elected as Chairman of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

I call for nominations for the Chairman of the Health and Social Services Committee. The Honourable Lawson Henry?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

I propose the Honourable Ian Sebastian Rummery.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please? The Honourable Leslie Baldwin?

The Hon. Leslie Baldwin –

Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Are there any other nominations to the Chair of the Health and Social Services Committee? In which case, I would like to ask the Honourable Ian Rummery if he is willing to accept the nomination?

The Hon. Ian Rummery –

Madam Speaker, I am willing to accept the nomination.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member.

Question that the Honourable Ian Rummery be elected as Chairman of the Health and Social Services Committee, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

I call for nominations to the Chair of Social and Community Development Committee. Any nominations, please? The Honourable Cyril George?

The Hon. Cyril George –

Madam Speaker, I nominate Nigel Dollery, Councillor Nigel Dollery.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder to the nomination, please?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I beg to second, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Are there any further nominations to the Chair of the Social and Community Development Committee? In which case, I should like to ask the Honourable Nigel Dollery if he is willing to accept the nomination?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –

Madam Speaker, I am.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you.

Question that the Honourable Nigel Dollery be elected Chairman of the Social and Community Development Committee, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

Next item of business, please.

ELECTIONS

Election of Members of the Executive Council

The Deputy Speaker –

I call for nominations for candidates to stand and serve as Executive Councillors. The Honourable Ian Rummery?

The Hon. Ian Rummery –

Madam Speaker, I wish to propose the Honourable Lawson Henry for Executive Council.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –
I second the Honourable Lawson Henry.

The Deputy Speaker –
Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Lawson Henry, are you willing to stand?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –
I am, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –
Thank you, Honourable Member. Are there any further nominations, please? The Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean?

The Hon. Christine Scipio O'Dean –
Madam Speaker, I propose Ian Rummery.

The Deputy Speaker –
Thank you, Honourable Member, is there a seconder, please?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –
I would like to second that proposal, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –
Thank you, Honourable Member. Are there any further nominations to Executive Council, please?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –
I would like to nominate the Honourable Cyril George.

The Deputy Speaker –
Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please? The Honourable Ian Rummery.

The Hon. Ian Rummery –
Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –
Thank you. I do apologise, I didn't ask the Honourable Ian Rummery if he was prepared to accept the nomination.

The Hon. Ian Rummery –
Madam Speaker, I am prepared to accept the nomination. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker –
And is the Honourable Cyril George willing to accept the nomination?

The Hon. Cyril George –
Madam Speaker, yes, I am prepared to accept the nomination.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Any further nominations, please? The Honourable Leslie Baldwin?

The Hon. Leslie Baldwin –

Madam Speaker, I'd like to nominate the Honourable Christine Lilian Scipio O'Dean.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is the Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean willing to accept the nomination?

The Hon. Christine Scipio O'Dean –

Madam Speaker, I accept the nomination.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Any further nominations to Executive Council, please? Honourable Leslie Baldwin?

The Hon. Leslie Baldwin –

Madam Speaker, I'd like to nominate Nigel Dollery.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please? The Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean?

The Hon. Christine Scipio O'Dean –

Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Nigel Dollery, do you accept the nomination to Executive Council?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –

Madam Speaker, I accept the nomination.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Are there any further nominations to Executive Council?

Question that the Honourable Lawson Henry, the Honourable Ian Rummery, the Honourable Cyril George, the Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean and the Honourable Nigel Dollery be elected as members of the Executive Council, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

Next item of business, please?

ELECTIONS
ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

The Deputy Speaker –

I call for nominations for members to serve on the Public Accounts Committee. The Honourable Gavin Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I propose Councillor Brian Isaac.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please? The Honourable Leslie Baldwin?

The Hon. Leslie Baldwin –

Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Does the Honourable Brian Isaac accept the nomination?

The Hon. Brian Isaac –

Thank you, Madam Speaker, I accept the nomination.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Are there any further nominations to serve on the Public Accounts Committee? The Honourable Nigel Dollery?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –

Madam Speaker, I'd like to nominate Anthony Green.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please? The Honourable Cyril George?

The Hon. Cyril George –

Madam Speaker, I'd like to second the proposal.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Does the Honourable Anthony Green accept the nomination?

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Madam Speaker, I accept.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Just a very gentle word, Honourable Members, it is customary in the House to address each other as the Honourable Leslie Baldwin, the Honourable whoever, so when you make your nominations, perhaps you could try and remember that, please. Early days, but let's try and get it right. Are there any further nominations, please? The Honourable Ian Rummery.

The Hon. Ian Rummery –

Madam Speaker, I wish to nominate the Honourable Leslie Baldwin.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder, please. The Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean?

The Hon. Christine Scipio O'Dean –

Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Does the Honourable Leslie Baldwin accept the nomination?

The Hon. Leslie Baldwin –

Madam Speaker, I accept, thank you.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Are there any further nominations for members to serve on the Public Accounts Committee?

Question that the Honourable Brian Isaac, the Honourable Anthony Green and the Honourable Leslie Baldwin be elected as members of the Public Accounts Committee, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

Honourable Members, I think this would be an opportune moment to allow you just to have a coffee break, so I will suspend the sitting for fifteen minutes. Thank you.

Council suspended.

Council resumed.

The Deputy Speaker –

The next item of business, please.

5.

THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Deputy Speaker –

Honourable Members, I'll just remind you that in the case of the Adjournment Debate the maximum time allowed for each member to speak is ten minutes and I will apply that rigorously to you. The Honourable the Acting Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Gillian Francis –

Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this Council do now adjourn sine die.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you. Is there a seconder, please?

The Hon. Ken Baddon –
Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –
Thank you. I put the question that this Honourable Council is adjourned sine die. Does any Honourable Member wish to speak? The Honourable Brian Isaac?

The Hon. Brian Isaac –
Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, I should like to begin by thanking the electorate of the island for their support and confidence in supporting me as their representative in the Legislative Council for the next four years, God willing. I will honour my commitments as I know the next four years will not be easy for Councillors as there will be hard decisions that have to be made, but if the people of this island are involved in the democratic process then I'm sure that the progress will be achieved.

Secondly, I congratulate Honourable Members on their election to the Legislative Council and as a representative of the people of this island and hope that the public spirit that has been conveyed during the campaign period will remain positive and committed and the proposals to change Government policies, which were said by so many during their campaigning, will shortly be demonstrated and I will await with anticipation for the proposed changes to be tabled shortly in this Honourable House. I made no promises to change, but have committed myself as a servant of the people of this island to promote and develop existing policies which I know I can advocate on behalf of the vulnerable, the disabled and the elderly and be a voice for those who struggle on low financial income. I will continue to support growth within the economy and will strive for a level playing field when it comes to sharing the wealth that we hope will come from air access which we hope to promote our health service, education and social security system. I am proud of the world class standards of our students that have recently achieved high standards in the United Kingdom in their academic studies, which has demonstrated that if given the opportunity with a strong educational background much can be achieved. I hope that these students' achievements will inspire other students to follow in their footsteps.

Our sports team who has competed in Bermuda at a world class level has also made us proud with gold and two silver medals. Again, I congratulate the families of our students in the United Kingdom and the families of our keen sports men and women who I know have given so much to meet their goals and the publicity of their achievement has promoted the island to the outside world.

I would also wish to thank members of the outgoing Council for their strong commitment and dedication over the past four years and wish them well in whatever paths they take. I am aware of their commitment and dedication to the people of this island, which has paved the way for the new Council to progress. Many will be remembered for their support given from day one for air access for the island, the SHELCO proposal, tax break for farmers and fishermen, income tax allowance of £7,000, the EDF funding for a breakwater and infrastructure related projects, the passenger and Customs terminal, wharf improvements and the implementation of the Basic Island Pension scheme, which are just some of the achievements, but the list goes on.

In concluding, Madam Speaker, I wish to congratulate you as the Deputy Speaker and Mr Eric Benjamin as Speaker and wish you both well in your roles in the Legislative Council. I would also like to make a mention of two people who have stepped up and taken two senior positions in Government at this time that the island is experienced many changes and they are the Acting Chief Secretary, Mrs Gillian Francis and the Acting Financial Secretary, Mr Dax

Richards. Both officials carry large responsibility, and I am confident and having previously worked with both of them and knowing their experience and knowledge, they will support the new Council in all their endeavours. Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Nigel Dollery?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –

Madam Speaker, this is a short speech, having listened to the radio this morning, I have changed the sequence of it. Having been successful in this election, I hope to be held to account by those who live here, particularly those who voted. If the public ask for assistance from me as a Councillor, I hope I never fail to get back to them with an answer. I may not have the answer they want, but I expect to be able to explain why a particular decision was taken. I consider my first obligation is always to them, the public. I will work hard with all other Councillors to hopefully provide a service the public deserves. There will be changes; some I will like, some perhaps not. The confident, capable Saints I know can handle anything; I therefore hope that when faced with changes my first thoughts will always be how will this impact on the elderly and those who are disadvantaged in any way. As individuals, we can all help through supporting those in need with our cash and our efforts. The Government, however, does not duck its admittedly expensive responsibilities in looking after those who need its care and support. I will take full advantage of any training offered to me by SHG, I will learn, I hope, quickly, what powers we do or do not have as Councillors and where I can check it up on the legislation. I want a dynamic, flourishing St Helena, but if we've not cared for our elderly and disadvantaged during the process of getting there then I believe we will have failed.

And my last area is the freedom of information. You all know I feel strongly about what I consider the secretive and sometimes obstructive way SHG in all its forms has hidden information from the public; like a lot of you, I've had experience of it. One hears about things like, delay answering for three weeks and the member of the public will give up. If Her Majesty's Government, the Commonwealth and the United Nations believe openness and transparency are part of good government I'm obviously in good company. This needs sorting promptly, not at some vague time in the future when the system thinks it can get round to it. Secret government is an embarrassment in the modern world. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Lawson Henry?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Madam Deputy Speaker, may I begin by welcoming you back to this House as our Deputy Speaker.

I would like to thank all those people who turned out to vote on Polling Day and to my sponsors and supporters. I would also like to pay tribute to the Returning Officer and her team for the efficient way in which the election process was managed, right up to the counting of the votes and the announcement of the winning candidates. I would also wish to thank my colleagues who voted me for Chairman of the Economic Development Committee and subsequently to Executive Council. I am honoured to be chosen for this high office and wish to reassure you all I will work with you as we have started, that is, working as a team and consulting with you. I am very pleased to say that in the short time since the election the Council has met informally on two occasions and it is clear to me that there is a great hunger from all Honourable Members to work as a team, show leadership, openness and

transparency. I am therefore confident that we can carry this through to the end of our tenure. I intend to go on as I started, that is working for St Helena and working for the people. It was very clear from the campaign that the Honourable Ian Rummery and I ran that the electorate wants to see our Councillors working as a team, taking responsibility and working as leaders in our community. Top of that agenda too was more openness and transparency in the way our Government works, I therefore look forward to working with colleagues in the Administration to bring about subtle changes that is needed to make our Government more open and bring it closer to the people. This Government has a huge challenge ahead and to make this island ready for air access this will be our only chance to bring the island off grant in aid. To achieve this huge challenge, there is going to be many changes. In some cases, we, as islanders, need to change too in the way we think and how we do things. As a people, we have a right to challenge any changes that are being proposed, but at the same time, to make air access a success, then we must embrace change and work with our Government to make this island ready so that all Saints can benefit from the many opportunities air access will bring. I look forward to working with you all and keeping you updated and consulting with you along the way.

Among the many issues raised during the election campaign was the high cost of living on our island and the impact this is having on the elderly and those on Basic Island Pension and benefits, concerns were raised on the poor condition of our roads, the need for more investment in our infrastructure, such as water, electricity, sewage, to name but a few. These and other issues that we face and which will require investment come at a time when the world is in recession and as a grant in aid territory we are expected to play our part in reducing our expenditure and reliance on the UK taxpayer. It is therefore incumbent on us all to ensure that the money we do get is spent in those areas and on those services we need the most. We must also ensure that in doing so we do not widen the gap between the rich and the poor. It is interesting to note from the record of the inaugural meeting of the previous Council many of the issues we face today was evident in 2009 and was raised by members back then, in particular, the benefits system. A lot has happened with our benefits system since and, in particular, the introduction of the Basic Island Pension, but those who are on benefits continue to struggle to make ends meet. We very much look forward to Professor Roy Sainsbury's report and on the review of our benefits system and we must ensure that it takes account of all the issues that are apparent. The real test will come when we have to address the cost implications of his recommendations. We must, however, ensure that in taking forward the recommendations in this report that we start to close the gap between the rich and the poor on this island, even if it means funding some of the recommendations by not doing some of the things that has a lower priority in Government. I am sure, however, that there is savings to be had if we all work together to ensure that we spend our pounds in the right areas and we continually look for efficiency savings. Keeping with our benefits system, there is one other issue that I would like to bring to Members' attention that is to do with the Basic Island Pension. As I understand it, one of the criteria is that a person must work on St Helena for a minimum of twenty years. This effectively cuts out all those St Helenians who work on Ascension for most of their working lives. I strongly believe this is wrong and in some respects unintentionally discriminates against those Saints affected by it. I would argue, that given the close links between the two islands over many years and the significant contribution that Saints working on Ascension, and elsewhere for that matter, has made, and still do to this island's economy, I can say with some confidence that up to 2002, as a member of the Ascension Island Council, it was known that remittances from Ascension to St Helena was over one million pounds per annum. This did not take into account monies sent to families through the mail system and hand carried. I would further argue that Saints living on Ascension continue to make a significant contribution to this island, many own their

own homes here and up until the late nineties St Helena benefit from the income derived from fishing licences sold on Ascension. Like St Helena, there is no national pension scheme on Ascension that Saints can contribute to. They rely on small gratuities at the end of their working lives. I believe, given that the close links between the islands and the significant contribution that these Saints have made to our economy over many years and continue to do so that they should benefit from the Basic Island Pension scheme and that particular criteria must be reviewed to include them. Keeping with the benefits system, there needs to be a link between the benefits system and the fees, charges, arising from our services provided by the Health Service so that those people on Basic Island Pension who depend solely on that income and those on income related benefits are exempt from paying these fees when attending hospital. I understand they are already exempt from paying for prescriptions. Finally, Madam Deputy Speaker, I wish to place on record that I strongly oppose the Oath of Confidentiality that I was required to sign as an elected member today. No member in our mother country's parliament is required to sign such an oath. Whilst recognising that the Oath of Confidentiality is in the current law, I will work with Honourable Members to remove this archaic oath from our Constitution. Such an oath contravenes the rights to freedom and expression and is inconsistent with the partnership values that is enshrined in our Constitution and it is in opposition to the No...?...principles of openness which requires an elected member to be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that he takes. There is simply no place in a modern democracy for such an Oath; I do not understand why it is required. We are living in a democracy where there needs to be more openness and transparency in the way we govern our island. This, I believe, can only come about if we, as a people, make it happen. I intend to, with the help and support of my Honourable Colleagues, to do just that. In the coming months, the Honourable Ian Rummery and I will be working on and consulting with the electorate and NGOs in tabling a suitable draft policy and legislation to bring about freedom of information to our island and I very much look forward to the support from all officials in doing this. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wishes to speak? The Honourable Tony Green?

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Thank you, Madam Speaker, I support the adjournment. I just have a few brief comments and first and foremost I would like to pay tribute to the electorate who turned out 55% of vote last Wednesday and it now confirms that democracy is live and well in St Helena. I would secondly like to thank my supporters publicly, without their support I wouldn't be standing here today and perhaps it is one of the final opportunities I will have to actually express my thanks to my backroom staff, my wife, Simon and Sinead and Rico and Bruce who were my campaign managers who worked tirelessly to make sure that I was able to take my seat this morning. And last Wednesday we did have a new Council elected, the Governor wanted change, the island wanted change and the electorate has delivered. We've had the pack reshuffled and now we have to deliver. Madam Speaker, we have thirty-two months and it's going to be a very important thirty-two months. I would also like to pay tribute to my former colleagues, they have built the foundation and now the erection of the walls over the coming period will be that much more easier to continue. Finally, I'd like to really express publicly my thanks and gratitude and praise for the Island Games team, I think they've done us proud and particularly Simon Henry who has won a Gold Medal, I really think he needs an award and for me, an MBE wouldn't be out of the question. Thank you, Madam Speaker, I support the adjournment.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Christine Scipio O'Dean?

The Hon. Christine Scipio O'Dean –

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Madam Speaker

I rise in support of the adjournment debate

Madam Speaker, once again I would like to thank the electorate for participating in the General Election and for the support that was shown to me leading up to the General Election.

Madam Speaker. I fully realise that the next four years are not going to be easy as tough decisions need to be made. I endeavour to work hard to get the services that the people of the island deserve and I look forward to working with the new Council and wish them well with their new challenging roles. Our main task for the next four years is to inspire a greater belief in our collective capacity for greater accomplishments, working towards a more vibrant and resilient economy for our people.

Madam Speaker, I regard education as the means by which individuals can gain access to all things we value such as cultural, social and economic. I believe education allows individuals to become authors of their own life story. I have accepted the nomination as Chairperson for the Education Committee as I know from my own experience that the opportunities I have enjoyed are entirely the consequence of the education that I have been given. Perhaps I value education so much because it has given me so much – but what it has given me most is the chance to shape my own destiny. For generations of my family before me, life was a matter of dealing with the choices others made, living by a pattern others set. I, and those members of my generation who were given the gift of knowledge by wonderful teachers, have been given the precious freedom to follow our own paths.

Madam Speaker, every child should have the chance to be introduced to the best that has been thought, and written. To deny children the opportunity to extend their knowledge so they can appreciate, enjoy, and become familiar with the best of our civilization is to perpetuate a particular and tragic sort of deprivation. I worry that our schools are being asked to do more with less so we, the new Council need to ensure that Education is allocated adequate funding so that the importance of education is not being overlooked and undermined.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Derek Thomas?

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I first of all take the opportunity to welcome you as Deputy Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate. First I would like to say how pleased I am to be re-elected to Legislative Council. I would like to thank the people who have placed their trust and confidence in me and I will assure them that I will continue to work hard in the best interests of the island and for the benefit of its people. I look forward to working with the new Council. There is a lot of work to be done in preparation for air access, but it's important that our people are not left behind. During my recent campaign for election, some of the key issues in my manifesto to the public were to fight hard to see improvements to the income related benefits system. In my view, the current system is totally unfair and I have been claiming this for the past two years. Households where there is one person on the Basic Island Pension and the other on income related benefit, when the Basic Island Pension has increased that amount has been deducted from the person on the income related benefit, therefore, there are certain households who have not seen an increase for more than two years yet they have had to face inflationary increases. This is totally unfair. These people have been made to struggle and suffer. I sincerely trust that this Council will see this issue as a priority and have it corrected as a matter of urgency, together with other needed changes in the system, including the Basic Island Pension Scheme.

The £79,000 which has been approved in this year's budget for the establishment of an Apprenticeship Scheme, in conjunction with the Private Sector, should be utilised by the Education Department for the benefit of the island without delay. When it comes to employment, Madam Speaker, there should be a level playing field for the private sector and Government.

The Government should be applying the same criteria that they have set for the Immigration Control Board when recruiting employees in that where there is a Saint with the skills and abilities to do the job they should take precedence over non Saints. I have told the Private Sector that I will be seeking an amendment to the Immigration law at the earliest opportunity for this change.

We now need, Madam Speaker, to consider readjusting the system for incentives for businesses so that local businesses will not be jeopardised.

They should be treated comparably with outside investors. I have recently learned from the Financial Secretary that it was necessary to increase funding for the cleaning contract. I have no problems with this, but if the Government is serious about our elderly citizens in the community and the handicapped, then we need to improve the level of funding. £23,000 is far from being adequate. Elderly citizens who need support are finding it difficult to secure home carers since they are being paid peanuts. Carers who are providing full time care for the handicapped are not being paid the full time Carer's allowance, but partial allowance. This is clearly not fair and I trust that the Health Committee will push to have this corrected.

Madam Speaker, in the last formal sitting of Legislative Council, I put forward a Motion which was approved, for those Government pensioners who are in receipt of a Government pension not exceeding £350 a month should be provided with free medication. It would appear that the Committee did not implement this approval. I will ask that the new Public Health Committee implement this approval as a matter of urgency.

I will also ask the Environmental and Natural Resources Committee to see what monies are left from the £384,000 of the Roads budget and give urgent consideration for some of this money to be used to carry out immediate repairs to the road near Prince's Lodge which serves over twelve occupied homes and has been accepted as a district road. Also the road at Unity Cottage in Sandy Bay, which is in an extremely dangerous condition and not fit for vehicles to use. Elderly and disabled people need to use this road and if nothing is done we could very well soon have a serious situation on our hands. Also, in support of the Roads Policies, some monies need to be allocated for community roads. I will also ask the Committee to look at our land situation, which I have been pushing and pushing for some time. I don't understand

why it is taking so long to release land onto the market for first time builders at a reasonable price.

Madam Speaker, there is concern in the community over our elderly citizens in the Community Care Complex, Cape Villa and Deason Centre. It was described to me during my round of campaigning, although cared for well they are being held in these institutions, like they described to me, as prisoners since their bus was taken away. I am all for efficiency and it would appear that the bus is being used to transport staff in the same department, Health Department. Surely, through proper management, there is no reason why the bus cannot be used once a quarter to transport the inmates from Deason Centre and Cape Villa to the Community Care Complex for a day's outing and entertainment and once a month get the inmates out from the Community Care Complex, allow them to go shopping and a day's outing. Let these elderly folk feel that they are valued and not left there to be forgotten about. I see this as being no extra burden to the budget. I will ask again that the Health Committee follow this up.

Another concern raised, was for the Government to consider that since we are solely reliant on grant in aid and most wages and benefits are low by standards, when pay increases are awarded to take account of inflation. Instead of awarding a percentage across the board that everybody should receive equal amounts. In that way, we won't have a situation where the higher paid receives twenty to thirty pounds extra and the lower paid person or the Basic Island Pension receives ninety-eight pence a week. In that way, Madam Speaker, it would work out to perhaps a few pounds across the board.

Madam Speaker, a decision is soon to be taken for Sundale House to be converted into the Prison. I will ask, before such a decision is taken by Executive Council to please ensure that the views and concerns raised by the people of Half Tree Hollow are properly addressed and actioned upon.

Madam Speaker, recently in Half Tree Hollow, the majority of street lights were replaced by solar type lights to save on energy. These lights have not been working properly since and are now completely out altogether. Half Tree Hollow is a built up area and has been described by the residents as a Ghost Town at night. I will ask that the Committee of Infrastructure address this issue as a matter of urgency as it is extremely dangerous to the users in Half Tree Hollow.

Madam Speaker, there needs to be greater efficiency within the Government Service and I believe that can be achieved in many ways. The Government transport, in many cases, is being abused and there are many other cases where savings can be made and I trust that this Council will work hard to achieve that.

Madam Speaker, I will also work to promote and encourage openness and transparency and I do believe some suitable legislation needs to be in place for St Helena.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the outgoing Council for their support and the many achievements they have made and I wish them well for the future. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wish to speak? The Honourable Wilson Duncan.

The Hon. Wilson Duncan –

Madam Speaker, I support the adjournment debate. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my sponsors and supporters for their support during my General Election campaign and my sincere thanks to the electorate who entrusted me with their vote to represent them on the Legislative Council for the next four years. There will be changes during this time and I hope

I will be blessed with the wisdom and strength to make sensible decisions that will be in the best interests of the people and our island. I will tirelessly strive, with the help of my fellow Honourable Members, to guide our island forward in the right direction in collaboration with the electorate. I am humbled and honoured to be their representative, which I will endeavour to carry out to the very best of my ability at all times. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Gavin Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the electorate for voting for me and will do my best in their best interests and hope to work with other Honourable elected members for a better and united St Helena. Thank you, Madam.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Cyril George.

The Hon. Cyril George –

Madam Speaker, I would first of all wish to support the adjournment debate. Madam Speaker, I wish to congratulate you and Mr Eric Benjamin on your appointment as Speaker of this House and I look forward to working with you, our fellow colleagues and officials. I feel honoured to be nominated as a Councillor. Publicly I would like to thank everyone who turned out to vote at the General Election last week, in particular, I would like to thank my sponsors, supporters and special thanks to all the electorate for their support and confidence in me when you voted last week. I have no commitments and will endeavour to work hard and commit my time to my Council work for the future of St Helena. During my campaign, I have had concerns raised by the community regarding the RMS St Helena. We seem not to receive information from SHG or the Shipping Agents on updates of the RMS except for the information on the street and other sources. There are merchants who have concerns about their goods that has been ordered and they are not fully aware of the progress of the RMS. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak to the Adjournment Debate, please? The Honourable Bernice Olsson?

The Hon. Bernice Olsson –

Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the people of St Helena who have put me here today and who have continued confidence in me to serve another term on this Council. I will continue to try and help individual people and groups of people, at the same time dealing with major issues to bring this island forward. I'm also looking forward to working with the group of Councillors. Over the years, I have often been the odd one out, at least, on the minority side in many issues. It appears that those days are now over. I feel that this new Council has got a lot going for it and many issues close to my heart are shared with the majority, maybe even all, in this Council. I fully support the statement from Councillor Rummery and Councillor Henry regarding the Oath of Confidentiality. The Oath itself is in strong and contradiction to our constitutional aims. We must have an open and transparent Government to get public support for our work. A well functioning Government must support its people and at the same time the people support the Government. One of the main tasks of this new Council is to bring St Helena into being a well functioning democracy, fit

for the twenty-first century. Doing this will cause a lot of kicking and screaming from certain quarters, but we will overcome.

Madam Speaker, I am also very pleased about the CPA visit next week and I am sure that this Council will take full benefit from it and take advice on how best to tackle outdated policies and rules. Furthermore, I am most hopeful that the newly-reformed St Helena All Party Parliamentary Group in London will be supportive and helpful to us in creating a better St Helena. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wish to speak? The Honourable Leslie Baldwin.

The Hon. Leslie Baldwin –

Madam Speaker, I support this adjournment debate. I would like to share the congratulations and thanks mentioned by previous speakers, but I don't think there is anything to be gained by repetition of these statements other than the statement that I support most of you. I just wanted to add that I believe the electorate voted for change and I look forward to the team making necessary changes as soon as possible. I hope that instead of working in a team of twelve, that we make every effort to engage the population and make a team of thousands. I thank you.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Ian Rummery.

The Hon. Ian Rummery –

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate. I feel a sense of coming full circle in standing here today as it was in this very building toward the end of last year that the seed was first planted that led me to stand for election. I was invited to join in the Youth Parliament debate and I remember giving a rather theatrical speech in favour of young people having free spectacles and hearing aids. We won the debate and don't worry, the irony is not lost on me that now as the new Chair of the Health and Social Welfare Committee I'm gonna have to address this issue. That first speech led to some reading of political biographies, a subscription to the magazine "Total Politics", a few faltering conversations with my wife, Belinda, who at the time I suspect was just humoring me and eventually to my declaring an intention to stand for election. I am humbled by the number of people who showed faith in me at the polls and I feel the weight of responsibility to not let them and the whole of the electorate, indeed, the whole island, down. Watching an election from the other side, one is struck by two things. Firstly, the logistics of the operation and the efficient way in which the teams work, both at the Polling Station and during the count. The other is the solemnity of the event, those little things such as being shown an empty ballot box before it is sealed or having to vacate a Polling Station so that a voter can be assisted to vote. In some ways, it reminded me of religious rituals and if you think I'm being melodramatic is there not something almost sacred in the population placing an X in a box to choose those who will work on their behalf. Democracy is a fragile activity and one we too often take for granted. There was no vote rigging or violence during our election. Contrast this with Egypt, Iraq or Kenya where standing for office can be a death sentence. But just because our lives are not at risk does not mean that we can be complacent. We have a Constitution and one that upholds our fundamental human rights; this is important, because it is within living memory that one of these rights, a right to nationality, was denied to many Saints. We owe a great deal to those who fought so hard to restore citizenship and we must remain vigilant to ensure that

other rights are not denied. This is why freedom of information is so important. It serves to protect the people from exploitation and holds the Government and Administration accountable. It fundamentally alters the relationship between Government and the public so that power is not handed over with an individual's vote. The person elected to office is subject to scrutiny as are all of those in the Administration. In Colonial times, the rulers did not have to listen to those that they ruled. Today, there should not be any rulers, there are leaders who make decisions on behalf of the community but they must make these decisions for the common good of the community. The Oaths of Confidentiality does nothing for the common good, it promotes the culture of secrecy, it reinforces the divide between those who are elected and those who elected them, it has no place in a Constitution that otherwise protects the fundamental rights of Saints. As we move into an exciting period of the island's history, we must not forget those who may not feel part of this new chapter in the St Helena narrative. We must never forget those who struggle with illness, disability or who do not feel that they fit in. It is not enough to say that economic development will benefit all. We, as members of the Council, have a moral obligation to ensure that the vulnerable are supported and not just paid lip service. That means we must never let the trappings of office or the busyness of our work schedules become a barrier to engaging with the community, we must aim high, perhaps we should even dare to rise to the challenge set by Martin Luther King Jnr who said "Our goal is to create a beloved community and this will require equality to change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives". You may have also heard me quote the late US Senator Paul Wellstone before, but as we as a Council embark on this very exciting journey we will all do well to remember his words over the next four years. "Politics is not about big money or power games, it is about the improvement of people's lives." That one you may have heard, but I will leave you with another powerful statement from the late Senator Wellstone – "Never separate the life you lead from the words you speak". Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. I think it would be opportune to, as all elected members have spoken and it is not customary for the ex officios to speak in the adjournment debate, it would be sensible just to have a five minute comfort break in order to allow the Honourable Chief Secretary time to gather her thoughts before she responds to the debate. So I suspend the sitting for five minutes.

Council suspended.

Council resumed.

The Deputy Speaker –

The Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Gillian Francis –

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. With the fear of repeating all that has been said this morning I too would like to publicly congratulate Honourable Members on the election and in some cases re-election to this Legislative Council and to place on record our thanks and appreciation to the outgoing Council for their hard work and commitment during their term of office. Congratulations are also extended to yourself, Madam Deputy Speaker and to Mr Eric Benjamin on his election to Speaker. I would also like to thank Directors and employees in the Public Service, as well as those in Enterprise St Helena for their ongoing hard work,

commitment and support as we continue to work together with elected members to achieve our strategic goals and objectives. Much progress has been made but there is still much more work to be done as we prepare for the opening of the airport and seek to ensure that we realise maximum benefit from the opportunities emanating from this major project. I would like to thank the Governor and Honourable Members for their kind words. The success of the General Election was all down to teamwork and I thank all those who were involved in the process.

Much has been said this morning about the high cost of living and the need to ensure adequate provision for the elderly and the vulnerable, the need to review current arrangements for the Basic Island Pension Scheme and the Income Related Benefits System. I agree that we should always look out for the less fortunate. Similarly views have been expressed about the need for investment in infrastructure, in education and other areas of activity, but, again, as has been mentioned here this morning, there is a limited amount of funds available to us and as Members themselves have said, as leaders of this society they have some very tough decisions to make. We all know that we have a Sustainable Development Plan and this actually guides our way in terms of leading the island forward. The Plan has been subject to a recent review and the draft report with recommendations for various changes to performance indicators and the recommendation to add a key result area will be shared with Council shortly.

We have also received the draft report from the University of York, the Roy Sainsbury report, and a summary of the options has been costed by officials and both documents will be released soon.

In addition, a Social Policy Plan has been drafted and this too will be released by Council shortly and a second round of consultation will take place and it's planned for August, following which the draft will be finalised and submitted to Council for approval.

The Honourable Cyril George mentioned that public duty has to take priority over personal commitments. I would like to take the opportunity to remind Members that this is a requirement in the Code of Conduct for Members.

There was much mention this morning also about the freedom of information and the Oath of Confidentiality, all of which have been noted and we look forward to further discussion on this, noting that any changes to the Constitution will need to have the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

It was also mentioned this morning about leadership, accountability, efficiency in the Government Service, all of which I agree, and there was mention of the CPA visit which is due next week and I'm sure Members, together with officials, will take advantage of the opportunity for discussion with the members of the delegation when they arrive.

There is, as mentioned by the Governor this morning, there is a need for Councillors, as leaders of the community, to engage with the community and this has been talked about also by Members themselves.

In concluding, Madam Speaker, I would like to wish the newly-elected Legislative Council all the very best and I look forward, on behalf of the Administration; we look forward to the term ahead. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker –

Thank you.

Question that the Council do stand adjourned sine die, put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker –

Council is adjourned.

Council adjourned sine die.

