



ST. HELENA

GOVERNMENT OF SAINT HELENA

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MONDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 2015
SECOND SITTING OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING**

Laid on the table - 18 March 2016.

ST. HELENA
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

THE SPEAKER

The Honourable Mr Eric William Benjamin

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mrs Margaret Anne Catherine Hopkins

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

The Honourable Chief Secretary	-	Mr Roy Burke
The Honourable Financial Secretary	-	Mr Colin Owen
The Honourable Attorney General	-	Ms Nicola Moore

ELECTED MEMBERS

The Honourable Nigel Dollery
The Honourable Wilson Charles Duncan
The Honourable Gavin George Ellick
The Honourable Cyril Robert George
The Honourable Lawson Arthur Henry
The Honourable Brian William Isaac
The Honourable Bernice Alicia Olsson
The Honourable Christine Lilian Scipio O'Dean
The Honourable Derek Franklin Thomas
The Honourable Pamela Ward Pearce

The Honourable Leslie Paul Baldwin - On leave of absence
The Honourable Dr Corinda Sebastiana Stuart Essex –
On overseas leave

CLERK OF COUNCILS

Ms Gina Benjamin

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Monday, 16th November, 2015

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

(The Speaker in the Chair)

ORDER OF THE DAY**1. FORMAL ENTRY OF THE PRESIDENT****2. PRAYERS**
(The Rt. Rev. Bishop Richard Fenwick)**3. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT**

Please be seated. Good morning, Honourable Members, ladies and gentlemen, I trust you all have had a good weekend. I would like to thank the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop for those special prayers and also the prayers for the people of France this morning.

I would like to thank you all for supporting the change I made at Committee stage at the first Sitting day when the two larger Bills were progressed in Committee of the whole Council. That change seems to have worked well and I thank the Deputy Speaker for her input. My aim is to continue that process whenever lengthy Bills are presented to this forum in future.

The business before the Council includes two Questions and the Adjournment Debate and I suspect that the business before Council will conclude during the early part of today.

Lest I do not have opportunity later to thank all who have contributed to making this session of Legislative Council a successful one, I do so now; in particular, I thank the staff of the Secretariat and the Councillor's Office and the team from South Atlantic Media Services for the services that they have rendered. I also thank all our officials, the Directorates and the Honourable Members for all the difficult tasks of preparing those important Bills for their smooth passage through this forum, thank you everyone.

Honourable Members, you will now be aware that while we have enjoyed the peace and safety of our island over the weekend, thousands of people around the world were not so fortunate. In particular, I recall the tragic events in Paris, France over the weekend where the 129, mainly young people, lost their lives at a musical concert through an act of terrorism and where many more were injured as a result. As an act of respect for those who lost their lives,

and in support of their bereaved families and the French nation, I ask that we observe a one minute silence at the same time that France and many countries across the world will be doing so. For us, this will mean that we shall do so at 11 o'clock this morning and I will apologise to any member if their speech is disrupted in so doing. If that should happen, the Honourable Member will be able to continue thereafter. The latest arrangement on this, Honourable Members, is that the Police will parade in front of the Court House at about 11 o'clock and we shall join them outside there for the one minute silence. Thank you, Honourable Members. Now I will call on the Clerk to call the next item of business.

4.

QUESTIONS

Question No. 1 – The Honourable Gavin Ellick to ask the Honourable Chief Secretary.

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

Will the Honourable Chief Secretary tell this Council what progress has been made with the transport strategy, which proposed to develop the public transport system?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Roy Burke –

Thank you, Mr Speaker, thank you to the Honourable Gentleman for his question. I am able to report that the consultant in this case visited the island, as Members will be aware, in April last year, following which a number of recommendations were made and were considered by members of the Legislative Council. Recommendations included the consideration of the instigation of a Public Transport Service as well as consideration for Home to Duty services. New timetables which were drawn up to incorporate schools, the public transport services and other work to duty services were published and a Workshop was held in March of this year. The Workshop invited any interested businesses to attend to discuss proposed new services. The Workshop attracted no interest from potential new service providers. There then followed a procurement process but, however, it has not been possible to implement all the recommendations of the report. The timetables, therefore, have been redrafted and a new contract offering with an expanded public service should be in effect from 1st January 2016.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Chief Secretary. Honourable Gavin Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

When the Honourable Chief Secretary said we were given an assurance that on April 2015 this transport system would be up and running and why is this?

The Speaker –

Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Roy Burke –

Mr Speaker, as I've already indicated, in any procurement exercise, the procuring body is dependent on service providers to come forward to meet the requirements that were set out in the specification. In this case, nobody came forward to offer to provide those services.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Chief Secretary. Honourable Derek Thomas?

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Chief Secretary say if any work has been done with a view of SHG providing a level of subsidy to run the service?

The Speaker –

Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Roy Burke –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. The intention in this case was to have a fully outsourced service requiring no subsidy. In all cases of subsidy for any public services that's a decision that ultimately rests with those funding providers, decisions would have to be made in those circumstances by members of the relevant Committee. As I indicated earlier, it's hoped that a new service could be in place by 1st January, that will be one of the considerations taken during that process.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Chief Secretary. Honourable Derek Thomas?

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Will the Chief Secretary say that one of the considerations in providing the service will be to provide a level of subsidy?

The Speaker –

Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Roy Burke –

Sorry, if I didn't make that clear, I thought that's what I'd just indicated.

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Thank you.

The Speaker –

Any other questions. No? Then will the Clerk call the next item, please?

Question No. 2 – The Honourable Gavin Ellick to ask the Honourable Chief Secretary.

The Speaker –

Honourable Gavin Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

Will the Honourable Chief Secretary tell this Council what systems are in place for on call firemen?

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Roy Burke –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thank the Honourable Member for his question. A number of business areas within the Police Directorate provide an on call function, that also applies to other areas of SHG. These include Police Service, Immigration, Sea Rescue and Fire and Rescue. It is acknowledged that at any time on call has an impact on the family and other people associated with those officers serving. The Fire Service has eleven staff and in the normal course of business the team is split into two, one half covering requirements at any time. It's worthy to note that in 2014, additional funding was secured to increase the team by five. A key reason for this increase was to mitigate the impact of staff who are on call. The team is also supported, as Honourable Members will be aware, by auxiliary firefighters. Earlier this year a number of staff were lost to the airport firefighting team, which has had a great impact on staff for a short period of time while recruitment and training takes place. In the near future the on call demand will reduce with all firefighters available to cover the function. Once the training of new recruits is completed firefighters will cover approximately every other week. Options for the issue of mobile telephones for firefighting teams are also being explored to improve the flexibility of the on call system.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Any further questions, Honourable Member, any further questions from the House? No? Okay, so that brings us almost to the end of our discussions today. I call on the Clerk to call the next item of business.

5.

THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Speaker –

Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Roy Burke –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn sine die.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there a seconder?

The Hon. Nicola Moore –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much indeed, Honourable Attorney General. The question is that this House do now adjourn sine die. The Motion is now open for discussion, debate. Any Member wish to speak? Honourable Brian Isaac?

The Hon. Brian Isaac –

Mr Speaker, I support the Adjournment Debate and with your permission I would wish to follow up on a topic that was raised at the last sitting of the formal LegCo where I gave a commitment to speak on the matter at this sitting, which is how do Government deal with homelessness on the island. The Housing Office has a duty to assist those applicants who are deemed homeless as set out in the Strategic Manual 2015. There is no legal duty to help homeless households, not duty to regulate private landlords or minimum habitat standards in

the private sector, no protection from eviction and no rent controls on St Helena. All of these would help to prevent homelessness on St Helena, but equally if the duties are too burdensome there is a risk that Government will not be able to meet its duties and landlords will be deterred from letting their homes. Since 2014, the Housing Office has received and dealt with eleven homelessness applications. Four of the eleven are applicants returning home to the island and have not made prior arrangements for accommodation upon their arrival. All of the nine cases were awarded housing, including three ex offenders. All of the cases were investigated thoroughly, however, there have been a few occasions where some Council members felt that the system was tedious and expected these individuals to be assisted without following current policy and procedure. There is currently only one urgent case being dealt with at the moment.

Overcrowding is an increased incidence of homelessness. There may be positive links between the increased challenge of homelessness and the increased reporting of domestic violence, whatever the cause, this is a challenge that is increasingly difficult to address, due to the lack of readily available affordable housing. There is also a challenge for the re-housing of ex offenders and victims of abuse due to the lack of available housing. There have been examples in which ex offenders have moved back into the same neighbourhood as the victims as no other accommodation is available. Current work is underway to create a Women's Refuge but this is only a small part of the wider solution. The building stock of Government Landlord Houses is generally in a poor state of repair due to historical lack of investment in maintenance and some poor design and construction. Investment is being made to address some of these issues and there is a significant outstanding need for major renewal works. In addition, there are general problems in a large proportion of Government Landlord Housing stock, there is no hot water, there are problems with damp and there are problems with drainage and kitchens and bathrooms are in a poor state of repair. In addition, twenty homes are estimated to be needed in the Government Landlord Housing stock to provide for an increased demand for affordable rented housing and the needs for temporary accommodation of re-housing ex offenders. The referrals from Safeguard needs of the wider public and homelessness. Mr Speaker, this matter will be dealt with during the next visit of the BAM team and stating the emphasis of the state of affairs in this complex issue.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Lawson Henry?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I, too, rise in support of the adjournment debate and would first like to pay tribute to our teachers, both past and present, for their hard work and dedication to their role in teaching and the part they play in developing our young people who are our future leaders. I wish to pay tribute to the Education Directorate for their recent initiative in the introduction of a teacher appreciation day.

I would also like to pay tribute to our emergency services for their hard work and the success they achieved in the airport major incident exercises, which is all part of our airport accreditation.

I would like now to give some recognition to our non government organisations, NGOs, as they are referred to on the island and all those people who work in these NGOs, most on a voluntary basis and with limited resources, saving both this Government and Her Majesty's Government millions of pounds. If these organisations did not exist then it would cost the British taxpayer many more of their hard-earned pounds. A few weeks ago, the Chairs of the five Council Committees met with those who are responsible for running these NGOs and

heard how they are struggling to exist as the cost of running the services they provide continue to rise. These meetings are held annually in the run-up to the annual budget process. SHG make an annual contribution to their running costs but this contribution is not rising sufficiently to provide the services that these NGOs carry out on our behalf. If this continues, then some are in danger of closing. If this were to happen then the service they provide will likely fall to SHG which would cost the taxpayer even more. All of these NGOs provide important services to the island, which if not done, is, as I mentioned, would fall to SHG. One such NGO I would highlight, that was created last year, is Creative St Helena, which came about as a result of the work carried out by VSO Pamela Murray. Creative St Helena provides a programme of Arts and Performance Activities in St Helena. They have increased availability in art, drama, dance, music, photograph and writing activities which will have widely resonating positive impacts on the economic and social development of St Helena and play an important role in protecting and celebrating Saint identity and improving quality of life on the island. Creative St Helena is well positioned to support the aims of the St Helena Government through the objectives set out in the Social Policy Plan. The plan to increase their service provision over the next year resulting in a number of measurable outcomes publish books, documentary, films, artwork and performances and to strengthen their collaborative partnerships with other NGOs, Government Directorates and local artists on the island. It is important that Creative St Helena moves beyond a person led service to a more sustainable and locally managed organisation. Creative St Helena was established in 2014 as a multi disciplinary arts organisation working across the island to promote and create opportunities for people in St Helena to access, engage and participate in artistic activities which strives to raise the profile of St Helena in art and culture, both on island and overseas which advocates for a creative artistic life on island, the social and personal value of involvement in the arts and for the expression and promotion of Saint identity. As I mentioned, Creative St Helena is currently managed by a VSO placement volunteer with a two-year contract due to expire in January 2016. In order to develop a strong and cohesive arts sector in St Helena which serves the local community, encourage and support artists on island, provide youth development opportunities and support the tourism activities regular funding is necessary to further development an arts programme and employ a local person to be trained in creative facilitation and project management to ensure the continuation of activities after the VSO placement has ended. Sadly, Pamela Murray, who has been the driving force behind Creative St Helena will be leaving our shores shortly. I would like to pay tribute to her for her hard work she has done on island with our young people. No-one has been identified to replace Pamela and unless we can find a budget and recruit someone locally this NGO is likely to discontinue. This would be detrimental to the island, especially to our young people who are our future leaders. It is imperative, therefore, that we find the funds needed to continue the services provided by Creative St Helena. We need to keep our young people on island, but to do so we need to create the climate that they will wish to remain here. Unless we can do this the huge investment made in building an airport will not be fully realised if we cannot retain young people on island. I urge the BAM when they visit the island shortly to recognise our NGOs for the value they give to this island and in doing so that they provide additional funding so that they can continue.

I would like to urge the Government that in relation to Creative St Helena that until such time they are able to recruit someone to continue the work we should seek a replacement VSO or retain the services of Miss Murray.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I wish to mention the infrastructure that will be necessary for medical referrals when our airport become operational. I wish to pay tribute to the work carried out by our Health Directorate in relation to this matter. Not surprisingly, this is becoming a real challenge not least what it's going to cost. I hope, therefore, that when the BAM team visit

that they will recognise that these costs could have been avoided had due consideration been given to the issues like this when the decision was made to have the hub for our airport in Johannesburg as opposed to Cape Town where all the necessary infrastructure for our medical referrals already exist and, indeed, you can access to any country from Cape Town. St Helena will have one scheduled flight per week and none of us here can understand why we need to have complicated this by having the hub in perhaps one of the worst and most complicated international airports in the world despite what SHG and DfID might otherwise have us believe. As always on this island, when we are on to something good Big Brother always knows best and we as islanders have to untangle the damage that is caused by poor decisions. This is one of them and we are now left to pick up the pieces, but who is going to pay the extra costs for medical referrals? Our people should not have to bear this cost of having to re-invent such infrastructure elsewhere when we had no say in the first place in making such a poor decision. Mr Speaker, I beg to move and support this adjournment debate.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Derek Thomas?

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a result of recently attending the Executive Committee meeting of the 61st General Assembly of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Westminster, London, last month, in addition to having meaningful successful meetings of the Executive Committee, funding of £20,000 for a project to outfit and furnish the Council Chamber has been approved. This project will add great value to parliamentary development of elected members.

Mr Speaker, during my term in office as a member of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, I do hope that other projects can be achieved for the benefit of St Helena.

Mr Speaker, I would now like to turn to our Technical Cooperation budget and Technical Cooperation positions where I have some concerns and feel needs to be improved upon. As the Chairman of the Public Health Committee, last week it was brought to my attention that our Technical Cooperation budget was well over prescribed for this financial year and no further spending for planned Technical Cooperation posts could be progressed until the new financial year 2016/17, the result of which would have an impact upon the delivery of certain key specialist areas within our Health Service, some of which, I understand, could be critical when it comes to patient care. At the front end of this process, the amount of Technical Cooperation posts for the financial year in line with our strategic priorities are agreed by DfID and endorsed by Council. Throughout the year there might be the need for certain priorities to have a greater need due to unforeseen circumstances. Surely when this need arises there should be greater level of communication with relevant Directors to understand the technical impact it will have upon the service delivery and in such incidents surely Council should be made aware of the need for such change, bearing in mind it is Council who endorse the Technical Cooperation budget in the first place. It is not easy to engage the services of specialist people, especially when it comes to health. Furthermore, when you have been successful with the engagement of certain specialists delaying such appointments until the new financial year 2016/17 will most likely prove to be a complete waste of time. Technical specialist people are not going to simply sit around, they will seek alternative engagements. I am pleased to say that having spoken to the Chief Secretary that some of the

major requirements within the Health will now go ahead within this financial year, but we should learn lessons from this and the process needs to be improved upon.

Mr Speaker, we have just received a successful visit from our Health Advisor, **Dr Dirk Miller**, who has identified gaps in our health service provision which needs to be filled and I do hope that there will be a positive outcome from our BAM visit in a few weeks time.

Mr Speaker, another issue of concern is our Apprenticeship Scheme which was put into place a few years ago. Although I have been made to understand that the Scheme is reviewed every year, I do feel that the Scheme needs to be improved upon in support of our strategic objectives. We need to do everything we can to ensure that the Scheme is designed to take account of essential key positions; construction, building, plumbers, electricians etc and technical key positions and supporting Apprentices in non government organisations. Just recently we have heard from Creative St Helena that they were not allowed to engage an apprentice under the scheme. This is not achieving best value of the scheme. I will be writing to the Director to see if these issues can be addressed in the review of the policy, even if it means employing less apprentices but in certain cases might have to be paid more in order to achieve the end goal.

Mr Speaker, it was very encouraging to see the position Solomons is taking with apprenticeships in last week's Independent.

Mr Speaker, recently students on the St Helena Government Overseas Scholarships Scheme has had their bond reduced and my understanding is to a cap of £5,000. What parents of students are now asking that the students who have already been bonded before this arrangement came into place if their bond could be adjusted to the same level as well? It seems it will only be fair and make sense if we want to attract young, experienced Saints back to St Helena to take on key positions. Again, Mr Speaker, I will follow this through with the Chief Secretary.

Finally, Mr Speaker, there is some concern about the lack of live programming on SAMS Radio. Although it is appreciated some of the good services SAMS do provide, the disappointment is the lack of live programmes during the evenings and weekends. This is not what was intended. People like to see their Country and Western type programmes, music for your young people, volunteers delivering Saint type programmes. I have spoken to the Chief Executive Officer of SAMS who said he will look into this. I do hope that something can be done. This should not be seen as a criticism, but a way on how the service can be best improved for the benefit of the people of St Helena.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Pamela Ward Pearce?

The Hon. Pamela Ward Pearce –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate. This is a very personal comment on what I firmly believe is the thin edge of the wedge - closed circuit television cameras, or more commonly called CCTV. The use of CCTV internationally is widespread. Britain is recognised as having the highest number of CCTV cameras per head of population but significantly it also has the most effective legislation to protect the civil liberties of its citizens. This has evolved over a number of years and with consultation with the people of Britain. St Helena will be having CCTV at the wharf in the very near future. The proposal has been to Legislative Council, the Planning Board and Executive Council. Most people are unaware of the heated debates surrounding this and despite my personal reservations, democracy prevailed. The reason cited for the employment of CCTVs is to stop vandalism and criminal behaviour. A list was presented purporting to show the cost of such

criminal behaviour which had apparently happened at weekends. Surely the first response to this would be, as suggested by the Home Office, to improve the lighting and policing, not the knee jerk reaction to pepper the wharf with CCTV cameras. I recognise the need for security, but I also defend the right of islanders to use the wharf as a traditional recreation area whether you want to watch the setting sun, promenade, swim, fish or snog, you should be able to do so without the intrusive CCTV enabling some voyeuristic official to have a cheap thrill or the ability to share on You Tube or the like. I further recognise the argument that CCTV will help in solving crimes and maybe even preventing them happening in the first place, but surely a Police presence would have the same effect. It is also true that most people using the wharf area are law abiding and there is no substance in the suggestion that as law abiding citizens they should not mind their image being captured on CCTV. There needs to be iron clad safeguards built in to protect us which should be enshrined in law, such as Codes as Practice and Data Protection, which, incidentally, was recognised by the Planning Board who recommended permission should not be granted until such time as there was legislation for data protection. We need to know who has access to the footage, where it is stored and for how long. We need to know if the cameras are fixed or if they sweep or zoom, for example, are the cameras pointed at boats, cranes or containers? Or are they generally scanning from the Honeymoon Chair to the Landing Steps? Do they point at or scan the entrance to the public toilets? Supposing they are unable to identify persons committing acts of crime then get carried away installing more CCTV cameras further along the seafront? What about our civil liberties? What about our right to use a public convenience or to meet friends at a bar or to share a romantic moment without being filmed? The few mindless people causing the criminal acts should be caught and suitably punished. This could be done with effective policing and use of police intelligence thereby sparing the majority of law abiding decent folk who do not want their right to use the wharf for traditional pursuits filmed. Today the wharf, tomorrow the rest of the island?

And finally, the crew of the RMS. The RMS is winding down, coming to the end of service to the island after twenty-five years, the crew, many of whom have served as long as the ship and some even longer having served on the old RMS too. These people have served us well, they have received accolades for their exemplary manner and abilities and deservedly so. The crew of the RMS are often the first point of contact with the island for many people travelling and as such are well placed as ambassadors, a role they have fulfilled unquestionably and with great aplomb. Now, just like the old ship, they too are being made redundant, but while the ship will have lots of people ensuring at the end of her useful life to St Helena her value is realised in a sale, the crew will be paid redundancy, but will suffer the ignominy of possibly having to pay tax on it. These people have served tirelessly and faithfully over the years. Can we not allow them their redundancy payment free from tax, as it is in Britain? Mr Speaker, I beg to move. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Nigel Dollery?

The Hon. Nigel Dollery –

Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate and can assure you that this will be quite short. This is my shortest adjournment speech ever, but probably the most important. It's in the form of a very short statement and question. After Friday's session, I was left with the feeling of unresolved business. Mention was made of our responsibility to the public as Councillors and the strong suggestion that a member should resign. Perhaps now is the time to call a General Election and put those who wish to be Councillors in front of the public again. We're going to see a lot of changes over the next few years, we should make sure now

that our Councillors have current public endorsement. I can think of reasons that some could raise against this option, perhaps BAM for instance. If our system cannot cope with the need to sort out an untidy situation now then it does not say much for our system or us as a Government. Thank you, Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wishes to speak? The adjournment debate, Honourable Gavin Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I say I will support the adjournment debate. I would just like to take this time to thank everybody who helped with Charlie Benjamin, one of our local heroes to ensure that the Ebony survives, and for all who contributed on that windy day. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wishes to speak on the adjournment debate. Then I call on the Mover, Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Roy Burke –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will seek to wrap up my words before 11 o'clock.

The Speaker –

Thank you.

The Hon. Roy Burke –

To give the House the opportunity to go and pay their tribute. I'd like to thank the Honourable Members for their comments this morning and if I can deal with some of the issues today I will, otherwise we will need to have some further conversations.

First of all, to deal with the Honourable Brian Isaac's issues about homelessness, we all recognise that that's a particular issue for St Helena at the moment. We have spent many hours discussing the appropriate course of action in terms of homelessness and some of the circumstances which the Honourable Member mentions, we recognise that we're a little way off the pace here, but work is going on to deal with Government Landlord housing issues and perhaps introduction of regulation to help that issue, but as with all things, and I'll come on to the point a little later, all these proposals require money and the oft used or held out hope in this respect is that our friends from DfID when they come the week after next will be coming with a huge bag full of money I think we might need to adjust our expectations there. I'd like to associate myself with the comments made by the Honourable Lawson Henry in support of all those delivering public services in St Helena, I see examples of outstanding practice on a daily basis in St Helena by those who work as public servants and those who work in NGOs across the island and as with many small communities we would not be able to deliver our service without those people who volunteer on a regular basis or who do so in their own time, so I certainly support commendations made by the Honourable Member.

We're aware, of course, that the capital programme is behind schedule, we have some significant issues there in respect of Government Landlord Housing, Safeguarding, Education, Health and NGOs and the trick, I suppose, for all of us around this table, is to find a way in which we can do our best to deliver the strategic objectives that we've set within the budget that were allocated. Referral costs, in that respect, in terms of health, could have been avoided, the Honourable Member said, I would beg to differ, health referral costs cannot be avoided, the issue is how we find a way in which we can minimise the significant impact that

that would have. The inevitability with an airport is that those referrals will now be by air rather than by sea and we know that a medical evacuation flight which is not on a scheduled service would cost a significant amount of money. The Health Directorate are doing a huge amount of work in that respect and I pay due respect to that work that's going on, both with the Committee and also with the officials.

The Honourable Derek Thomas alluded to the TC budget being over subscribed, the TC budget is over subscribed every year, it's programmed to be over subscribed with the expectation in years gone by that we would not actually spend that money. What happened this year is that we got a lot better at spending TC budget to the point where it's oversubscribed and a number of the posts which are agreed at the beginning of the year, as the Honourable Member says, change during the year and therefore there is some flexibility. **Dirk Muller**, the DfID Adviser didn't necessarily identify problems with current service, but supported the view of the Health Directorate that there are gaps in our service provision, so we were grateful to him for what he said and we are making those cases to our friends from DfID in the next couple of weeks.

As far as bonding is concerned, I'll be very happy to discuss the matter with the Honourable Derek Thomas, but in my view nothing has changed in terms of bonding, perhaps it's time for us to make that very clear to the people of St Helena.

The Honourable Pamela Ward Pearce's views of CCTV, I appreciate that it's a very emotive issue, but due process has been followed in this particular case, I don't think it's particularly helpful to suggest that officials are voyeuristic or getting cheap thrills, that, I think, is not appropriate and all questions about the operation of the CCTV cameras should be addressed, of course, to the appropriate Directorate. I can't explain today whether or not they're going to sweep or zoom in, I have no idea, but the appropriate Directorate will be able to deal with that issue. And as for redundancy issues for RMS employees, my recollection of redundancy payments in the UK is that they're not free from tax, there may be an element of redundancy which is free, but not all of it is free from tax, but that's set out in our legislation, there would need to be a change in our legislation if that was to be taken up.

The Honourable Nigel Dollery questioned some of the processes at last week's LegCo sitting. There is a proposal on the table for a change in the Code of Conduct and that may well deal with the issues that the Honourable Member raises.

And finally, the Honourable Gavin Ellick mentioned the ceremony on Saturday, which I was very pleased to attend and I would like to add my thanks to him for making the arrangements themselves. It was a beautiful morning, we experienced virtually every weather condition known to man, perhaps with the exception of frost and snow, but it was a most enjoyable afternoon. Thank you, Sir.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Chief Secretary.

Question that the House do adjourn sine die, put and agreed to

The Speaker –

That concludes very well, thank you very much for your cooperation this morning. Honourable Members, do not go away, we will go outside for a few minutes and await on the time for the Police to arrive and then we will observe the one minute silence at the Court House steps. Thank you very much indeed.

Council adjourned sine die