

**ST. HELENA**  
**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

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**THE PRESIDENT**

The Honourable John Gilbert Cranfield

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

The Honourable Chief Secretary	-	Mrs Susan O'Bey
The Honourable Financial Secretary	-	Mr Dax Richards
The Honourable Acting Attorney General	-	Ms Aine Hurley

**ELECTED MEMBERS**

The Honourable Clint Richard Beard  
The Honourable Cruyff Gerard Buckley  
The Honourable Gavin George Ellick  
The Honourable Jeffrey Robert Ellick  
The Honourable Anthony Arthur Green  
The Honourable Lawson Arthur Henry  
The Honourable Cyril Kenneth Leo  
The Honourable Christine Lilian Scipio  
The Honourable Derek Franklin Thomas  
The Honourable Russell Keith Yon

The Honourable Corinda Sebastiana Stuart Essex - Overseas

**CLERK OF COUNCILS**

Mrs Connie Johnson

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2021

The Council met at 10.00 am  
in the Council Chamber, Jamestown

(The Honourable Speaker in the Chair)

### ORDER OF THE DAY

**1. FORMAL ENTRY OF THE PRESIDENT**

**2. PRAYERS**  
(Fr. Alan Williams)

**3. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT**

Honourable Members, ladies and gentlemen and our radio listening audience, I bid you all a very good morning. There's not much of an address I want to do this morning, just to welcome you back to the second sitting of the twenty-seventh meeting of Legislative Council. Once again, I am grateful that Fr. Alan has agreed to open our meeting with prayer this morning and to thank Merlin George for his duties as Mace Bearer.

I also, once again, express my thanks to the staff members at SAMS Radio for providing support to our listening audience.

Honourable Members, I received an e-mail from the Honourable Dr Corinda Essex over the weekend and she asked me to convey her thanks and best wishes to you all and she looks forward to being back on the island again soon.

Honourable Members, we have just the one Bill for debate, followed by the Adjournment Debate this morning. I wish you all well in your deliberations and I now call on the Clerk to announce the next item of business, please.

**4. PAPERS**

*SP 44/2021 – The Honourable Lawson Henry.*

The Speaker –  
The Honourable Lawson Henry?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Before I proceed to present Sessional Paper 44/2021, I beg to move to suspend Standing Order 10 and 12 pursuant to Standing Order 20, Rule 1 for the duration of this sitting being held here today, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, to enable the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021 to be presented to this Honourable House for consideration, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Members, it has been proposed, oh sorry, we're looking for a seconder first, I do beg your pardon.

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I beg to second, Sir.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much indeed. Honourable Members, it has been proposed and seconded to suspend Standing Orders this morning to enable this Council to debate the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Question on suspension of Standing Orders, put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

The Honourable Mover?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 44/2021 – Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021. Mr Speaker, I have here a Certificate of Urgency signed by His Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker –

Thank you.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

The Speaker –

Next item of business, please?

**5.**

## **MOTIONS**

***Motion No. 1 – The Honourable Lawson Henry***

### **THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021**

The Speaker –

The Hon. Lawson Henry?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021 be approved in principle and referred to a Committee of the whole Council.

The Speaker –

Do we have a seconder, please?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I beg to second, Sir.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Councillor Ellick. Honourable Mover, you may now speak to the Motion.

The Hon. Lawson Henry -

Mr Speaker, first of all, I'd like to thank the Honourable Members for agreeing that this Bill can be heard by the House today. As Members will be aware, this is a significant amendment in terms of allowing the MCA audit to take place later this year, in fact, I think it's going to happen next month, so that's how important it is to St Helena.

So, Mr Speaker, the AG's Chambers was provided with a draft template/regulations to the Merchant Shipping Bill, the Shipping Ordinance, requiring the establishment of an authority which will have conduct of the administrative functions and duties prescribed to be performed in the regulations. Whilst preparing the draft regulations to effect the Ordinance, it was realised by the AG's Chambers that there was no enabling provision to establish the requisite authority. The attached Bill has been drafted to remedy this abovementioned situation and merely makes provision for the appointment of a person, mindful of the statutory definition of the word "person" to perform the functions and duties to be prescribed. This is an important amendment as it will allow the regulations to be enacted in readiness for an audit to be carried out on St Helena in the coming months. I therefore look for Members support and commend the Bill to the House, this short amendment of the Merchant Shipping Amendment Bill, 2021. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Members, I put the question that the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021 be approved in principle and referred to a Committee of the whole Council. The Motion is now open for debate. The Honourable Derek Thomas?

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Mr Speaker, I rise in support of this amendment to the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill. As the Mover alluded to, it allows for regulations to be enacted in order for the audit to take place, which is very essential to St Helena, so I give my support to this amendment. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you. The Honourable Clint Beard?

The Hon. Clint Beard –

Mr Speaker, I support this amendment, I think it's very important that the work continues and although I think that this has come about in the preparation for the audit work, so I think it has come about rather as an urgent document, I think it is very important that we support this, so I support it fully. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you. The Honourable Gavin Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I stand in support of this Bill, I think this last piece of work will get this Merchant Shipping Bill over the line and therefore I appreciate that. Thank you, Sir.

The Speaker –

Thank you. The Honourable Anthony Green?

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I simply rise to say I support the Bill. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any other Member, the Honourable Cruyff Buckley?

The Hon. Cruyff Buckley –

Me too, Mr Speaker, I, too, rise in full support of this Bill, it's another piece in the puzzle to support our long-standing history in terms of seafaring and also for other international benchmarks in relation to marine traffic and large vessels and we do hope to make revenue, generate revenue of some of these initiatives, it's so important that we protect our harbour and surrounding waters. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any other Member wishes to speak? The Honourable Mover, you may wish to respond to the debate?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I just wish to say thank you to those Members who did rise in support of the Bill and I look forward to the rest of the Members supporting it during the Committee stage. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you.

Question that the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021 be approved in principle and referred to a Committee of the whole Council, put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

The Honourable Mover?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Council do resolve itself into a Committee to consider the detailed provisions of the Bill.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Do we have a seconder, please?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

I beg to second, Sir.

The Speaker-

Thank you.

Question that the Council do resolve into a Committee, put and agreed to.

### **Council in Committee.**

The Chairman -

Then I'll put the question that the Title, Enacting Clause and Clause 1 do stand part of the Bill. Attorney General?

The Hon. Aine Hurley –

Yes, Mr Speaker, the title is self-explanatory, the Merchant Shipping (Amendment), 2021.

The Chairman –

Thank you. Honourable Members, you may wish to speak to the Title, Enacting Clause and Clause 1?

### Title, Enacting Clause and Clause 1.

Question put and agreed to.

The Chairman –

Then I'll put the question that Clauses 2 and 3 do stand part of the Bill. Attorney General?

The Hon. Aine Hurley –

Yes, thank you, Mr Speaker. Clause 2 of the Bill provides the definitions of terms to be inserted into section 2 of the Ordinance.

Clause 3 of the Bill establishes a Maritime Authority which will be appointed by the Governor in Council. The Governor in Council will set the terms and conditions of appointment of the Maritime Authority after obtaining guidance provided by the MCA. The Maritime Authority will have administrative conduct of the functions and duties prescribed in regulations and may publish operational guidance in respect of the regulations. And just to clarify that, the regulations will not, the regulations are not required in order for the audit to be carried out as the audit is a matter

beyond St Helena, however, this amendment is required to ensure that the regulations can take full effect which would be relevant to any such orders.

The Chairman -

Okay, thank you. Honourable Members, you may now speak to Clauses 2 and 3.

Clauses 2 and 3.

Question put and agreed to.

### **Council Resumed.**

The Speaker -

The Honourable Mover?

The Hon. Lawson Henry -

Mr Speaker, I beg to report that the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021 passed the Committee with no amendments and to move that this Council approves the said Bill and recommends to the Governor that it should be enacted.

The Speaker -

Do we have a seconder, please?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick -

I beg to second, Sir.

The Speaker -

Thank you, Councillor Ellick. Honourable Mover, you may now speak to the Motion.

The Hon. Lawson Henry -

Just to say, to thank the Members again for their support during the Committee stage.

The Speaker -

Thank you. Then I'll put the question that this Council approves the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021 with no amendments and recommends to the Governor that it should be enacted. Honourable Members, you may now speak to the Motion.

Thank you. Then, Honourable Mover. Oh, sorry, the Honourable Cyril Leo, I beg your pardon.

The Hon. Cyril Leo -

Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the Bill. With reference to the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2021, this amendment Bill is in the very best interests of St Helena. I beg to move.

The Speaker -

Thank you. Anyone else wishes to respond? Honourable Mover?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –  
Nothing further, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –  
Thank you.

Question that Council approves the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and recommends to the Governor that it should be enacted, put and agreed to.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Speaker –  
The Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Susan O’Bey –  
Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn sine die.

The Speaker –  
Thank you very much. Do we have a seconder, please?

The Hon. Dax Richards –  
Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker -  
Thank you. The Motion is that this House do now adjourn sine die and the Motion is now open for debate. The Honourable Lawson Henry?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –  
Thank you, Mr Speaker, I rise in support of this Adjournment Debate and for my first item I’d like to entitle it “Is anyone Listening?”. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, last Friday was the very first time for me, as a member of the Government, to oppose legislation put forward by the Government and I did so with a very heavy heart, but nevertheless, I did so on a very, very strong principle. In 2017, when the Remunerations Bill for Elected Members was put before this House, elected members set out some very real concerns in the process of how this particular issue is dealt with and in making this representation today, I make no criticism of anybody in particular, in particular, not the independent body, because I do believe that they carried out a very good job. Nevertheless, some of the recommendations is so fundamentally wrong of how they have been arrived at that I don’t think any reasonable person could accept that and I’m saying it here today with the hope that the Mover will go back and there will be some internal discussions so as these matters, after four years, is considered before this matter happens again. I complain that the whole process is got no openness and transparency. When you’re dealing with people, they’ve got a right to know what’s being said by another party and the real issue for me in that report is the fact that a benefit has been taken away, it has been put into salary that’s become taxable and that the forefathers never intended that and I think that weighs heavily on my mind, so I thought I would raise it here again today, because I don’t think anybody was listening in 2017 and I think that is



very sad. Over the last eight years, I have worked very closely and supported the Government 99.9% and I've given it my all and at the end of my tenure, you know, I've enjoyed this work, I've supported the Government, but I do feel that this whole issue with this remuneration has been very much rushed, there is no detailed process and that's what needs to happen, that a detailed process needs to be undertaken so's that all parties who take part in it should know what the other party is saying. And what it does, the current process, it just raise the suspicion of some of the recommendations that has come about and I don't think it is done deliberately, but it is the lack of a process and this was what elected members asked for in 2017 and it is rather sad that at the ending of our tenure that such an important Bill was not approved by this House, because it is significant. We're embarking on a new form of governance and it was right that the people who wants to stand know what they are standing for, but the fact that it involved a principle that was not taken into account in 2017 caused me to vote against the Government, so I hope by coming back here this morning and explaining that that somebody will now listen.

My second point I would like to raise here, Mr Speaker, is the new railings in the central steps, because I don't think anybody has mentioned the fact that after quite a long time, in actual fact I remember in May 2019 I wrote after the current Governor's inauguration to have the central railing installed and I know there have been many mentions of it in the House before and I'd just like to say finally we've got the rails, I think it's an excellent job done by our workers in the public service and I would publicly like to thank them.

And finally, Mr Speaker, I would ask the Mover to look into the fact that in Jamestown, our capital, there is just only one facility that young mums can use to change the babies nappies, just one and it's rather unfortunate it's in the wharf area rather than in the central town and I think such an important facility should be available to all on island I would ask the Mover if she would seriously look at that and report back accordingly.

And finally, Mr Speaker, this will be my last address to this Assembly, it's with a heavy heart, but I would like to thank all my colleagues around this table for all their support. Thank you.

*(Applause)*

The Speaker –

Thank you very much indeed. The Honourable Russell Yon?

The Hon. Russell Yon –

Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate. Mr Speaker four years have come and gone and like all of my fellow colleagues we will be delivering our last adjournment debate for this term. Some of us have already declared that they will be retiring from politics whilst others are preparing themselves again to stand in the forthcoming General Election. At this time, Mr Speaker, I will just go away and reminisce on how the have and the have not's, the what if's and the what not's, but most of all I will go away quietly and not perform a Donald Trump act.

Mr Speaker, four years ago I walked through this door as an Elected Member not knowing what to expect, but I quickly learned what a day let alone four years can be in the world of politics. I stepped up to the plate as I believed that I could deliver in making a difference for this Island and her people. Have I delivered, I believe that I have. Have I achieved what I wanted to achieve, I will be the first to say no, Mr Speaker. What I will say is that under the constraints that we as Elected members have to perform our duties, I believe that collectively we have all achieved in

some way or the other to make changes for the betterment of the island and it's people, even though there will be members of the community who will beg to differ.

Mr Speaker, one of my objectives was to see and understand most of all the working mechanisms behind SHG and more recently being the Elected Members representative on the Fit for the Future Board I have seen first-hand most of the chunk and clunk that makes SHG tick and let's hope that the decision by SHG to review its operations to make it a more refined and well-oiled organization will become fruitful. The first few years of this change will be difficult for some, especially if they are not accustomed to change and multi-tasking, but given time all will see that this will be a worthwhile exercise and change. I have always advocated in this House for staff to become more multi tasked as I have witnessed first-hand what can be achieved with employees multi-tasking and most off all it allows employees to adapt to change and not to become complacent in performing just one trade or profession. Mr Speaker, I sincerely hope that senior officials of SHG will take it upon themselves to assist other employees to come to terms with this transition and most of all be mindful that addressing the current inefficiencies within SHG will also mean including the management system, as I see this might become an issue if we have managers in post overseeing one or two employees. I know that there will be continuous changes in Phases two and three of this program and let's hope that in the years to come we all will see the benefits of these changes and not revert to an SHG as it is currently.

Mr Speaker, during my time I must also say that being appointed the Chair of ENRC by my colleagues will remain as one of the highest accolades and to become a member of Executive Council was for me an opportunity to test my inner strength. It was rather unfortunate that due to health conditions I was not able to see the full term through and in 2021, in 2020, I reluctantly relinquished my positions as an ExCo member and thus my chairmanship of ENRC on advice from my physician. To date, Mr Speaker, I can say that with treatment I can control my symptoms; however, more still needs to be done to find the root of my health issue. I owe a lot to the support given by the staff at the General Hospital and also to the Specialist in Jo'Burg who assisted with my diagnosis and medication through telemedicine. This I see as a sign for the future and although I might not have been the first I cannot see it being the last either as with the incoming fibre optic cable a lot more of our island patients will experience the positives of telemedicine.

Mr Speaker, as a former member of ExCo I can say that there have been some hard yet meaningful decisions that were made and I commend all involved for doing so, so diligently even though there were times when debates became intense. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the members of LegCo who during that time kept us on our toes and ensured that through our Caucus sessions their concerns and issues with the decision making was taken on-board.

Mr Speaker, I will not delve back into what accomplishments I acclaimed as that will appear as self-praise, and to be quite honest I was not here to claim self-accomplishments but to seek the best outcomes for the Island and its people.

Mr Speaker, there are still some concerns that I will address today, firstly because of Covid-19 our economy and that of economies worldwide were struck in a downturn of Tourist numbers right at a time when tourism was beginning to show the positive impacts on our economy. Everyone, not just on this Island, but across the world has been impacted drastically, the world is no longer allowing people to criss-cross its axis freely and that has hit home severely. Thanks to SHG Officials, the medical teams and the elected members, the virus has almost been kept at bay and we are able to stay covid-19 free. Thanks to the UK Government we were able to secure the Astra Zeneca vaccine and to date most all of our eligible population has been vaccinated. Mr Speaker, things are changing and with every baited breath the virus either takes off in another direction, it's

a vehicle with no desired direction or destination and even with the vaccines available there must still be caution as to how we meander our way around it. It would be great if we could continue to live, work, play and enjoy life without having to fear this life sucking pandemic but that is not how it is going to be. This pandemic is here to stay and we all across the world must come to terms with this fact and learn to live with it. This might sound harsh, Mr Speaker, but it is the reality. Our only hope is to pray that we can do all in our powers to keep it away and if and when it comes here we manage it in a professional way and keep fingers crossed that it does not get a hold of our elderly population.

Mr Speaker, moving on, another issue that is causing concern amongst all of us is the ever increasing cost of additional charges added to our freight cost, in particular the bunkering adjustment fee known as BAF and the currency adjustment fee known as CAF. These charges have become added cost to our importers who in turn recover their expenditure from the end consumer, so across the board we as the customer eventually have to pay for these additional costs. Although there has been minimal increases to the standard shipping of a 20 foot Container of general cargo from the UK and South Africa, figures show that the latest BAF has increased significantly to the fact that we are no longer looking at cost increases below a hundred pounds per voyage but they are now climbing to way above 200 pounds and in the case of voyage 44 to 300 pounds per container.

Figures show that on:-

Voyage 42

BAF Bunker adjustment fee – Additional £210 to be applied per container and an additional £8.40 per w/m on break-bulk items.

CAF Currency Adjustment Fee – Reduction of 1.75% applied to container and break-bulk freight  
Voyage 43

BAF – Additional £255 to be applied per container and an additional £10.20 per w/m on break-bulk items.

CAF – Reduction of 3.55% applied to container and break-bulk freight

Voyage 44

BAF – Additional £300 to be applied per container and an additional £12.00 per w/m on break-bulk items.

CAF – Reduction of 1.75% applied to container and break-bulk freight

Mr Speaker within a space of three voyages we are seeing increases on average of £255 or a total of £765 per 20' container, an average increase of £10.20 per cubic metre of break-bulk and an average CAF reduction of 2.52%.

Understandably these additional charges/reductions cannot be avoided by Andrew Weir Shipping, our shipping operator, but it highlights how the cost of the world's fuel and how the world currencies are fluctuating in these uncertain times. The impact this has to large consumers across the world is very minimal however for a small island like St Helena who rely heavily on imports the impacts are felt in everyone's pockets. I would like to ask the Financial Secretary to monitor these charges very closely and to keep tabs on the important cost which drives these charges up and down and that is the world price of market Brent crude oil. As of yesterday, one barrel of Brent crude oil which is equivalent to 42 gallons was \$74.76c or 1.78 dollars per gallon, which in fact makes yesterday's diesel prices in the UK set at £1.36 per litre or £5.15 per gallon. The reason I ask this is simple, we must ensure that we are always getting what we are paying for and not take for granted that it is business as usual as the impacts are felt by all throughout the island.

Mr Speaker, two weeks ago I attended a site visit to the CDA at Bottom Woods to look at the two newly constructed GL Homes. This has been a pet peeve project for me as we all will recall how in 2017 it was highlighted in this Council that the list of names for persons seeking Government Landlord Homes was about eighty and there were no homes available. The Infrastructure and Technical section of the then ENRD set about working on this already allocated land at Bottom Woods. Through all the ups and downs we now have two newly built homes and although they cost an average of 70 thousand pounds each once the final snag list is completed and additional services incorporated in the site itself these homes will be allocated to their eventual occupants. Many of you may frown at the cost, but these two homes have been built with disabled users in mind. There are enlarged wet rooms fitted out with all special needs requirements, turning radius within all rooms for wheelchair users, strengthened rafters to accommodate lifting harnesses etc and even some furniture fixtures within the kitchen section to allow disabled persons to become more comfortable in their home. To provide for these additional services the entire footprint of the houses was enlarged, they were constructed using 6 inch blocks and they also include double glazing so that too escalated the end cost. We must remember that today's housing requirements are forever changing.

Mr Speaker, this is an accomplishment for all involved and there are three or four other plots allocated for additional Government Landlord Housing in Phase One, including one design to include four flats. It is rather unfortunate that due to legal issues surrounding the cost of the services provided and how this can be incorporated into the sale of the other 14 plots in this Phase One development that the plots have not been advertised to the public at this moment as I had advised in this house back in December of 2019 that this would have taken place in January 2020. Let's hope that this work can be progressed soon and members of the public can benefit from acquiring a house plot and the Technical teams can move on to Phase Two of this development. It is endeavoured that there will also be other lands across the Island that will become available to the public for development, so progress is being made here and this in turn will decrease the waiting list for Government Landlord Housing drastically.

Finally, Mr Speaker, it now appears that St Helena will be venturing into a new form of politics in the future. It will be great to see how a ministerial government can perform here and hopefully it will inspire a greater magnitude of individuals to stand in the next election and also encourage more constituents who are eligible to turn out at the Polling Stations. This is a start of a new beginning and hopefully it will also encourage our younger generation to become interested in Politics as this is fast becoming a full time job and not a part time position that some members of the public have been alluding to. The Education, Skills and Employment portfolio should even consider including "Politics, the road on becoming a good politician" to become part of the education curriculum at Prince Andrew School.

Mr Speaker, it leaves me just to say thank you to not only to you, but to the Deputy Speaker, all my colleagues here and abroad and most of all to the constituents of St Helena who gave me this opportunity. It has been four years that I will remember fondly and have thoroughly enjoyed. I have not made a decision if I will stand in the next election as there are other people in my life who I have to discuss with first but rest assured whatever my next line of duty will be, I will hold you all in the highest esteem. Mr Speaker I support the adjournment debate and beg to move.

The Speaker -

Thank you. The Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker and Madam Deputy Speaker, it appears that this will be my final adjournment debate before Council is dissolved as I haven't been advised formally. I would like to thank you for your guidance and support to elected members, staff within St Helena Government, my family, friends and the constituents for their support during my tenure as a Councillor. This term hasn't been an easy ride, it has, indeed, been challenging. I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any other Member wishes to speak, the Honourable Gavin Ellick?

The Hon. Gavin Ellick –

Mr Speaker, I stand in support of the Adjournment Debate. First I'd like to thank all of my colleagues here, we've had a really, really tough time, we've had some really good debates, but nevertheless we've remained civil to each other. I would like to thank the Administration because everybody keep saying the Administration run the show, I think it's a fifty-fifty partnership, we're all to blame for everything and we all take praise when we do good. Most of all, I'd like to thank Honourable Lawson Henry and Cyril, because they say they're gonna quit, they're not coming back, I gonna miss you'll, especially Lawson as the Deputy to the EDC, we've had some really good debates. We won a few battles, we never win the war, we still got a lot more to do, so with that, and I would like to thank the people who voted for me and so I have to say, I'll be back and Mr Speaker, I have to thank you too. Good luck.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any other Honourable Member wishes to speak? The Honourable Cyril Leo?

The Hon. Cyril Leo –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, we have reached the finish line of the tenure of this Council. Over the last two months, we have managed to squeeze in a number of formal Legislative Council meetings in relatively quick succession. Now there are various reasons for this, but for me there is one reason that must be addressed with some urgency. As the island moves to a new system of governance, the reasons for the bottlenecks within SHG and that includes the Attorney General's Chambers, which have been holding up the progress of work that elected members considered priority, must be addressed. It is unacceptable that progressing legislation and other important business through local government can take up to five years or more. Work on the Immigration legislation, the Road Traffic legislation and the Land Development Control Plan, for a start, should have been implemented during the tenure of this Council. Over the last four years progressing draft legislation and other pressing work has been hopelessly challenging and painfully frustrating for the elected members and for members of the public. The Roy Sainsbury report on the Social Welfare Review was presented to SHG in April 2013; eight years on and the primary recommendation that required urgent attention was finally addressed on Friday. We may want to ask ourselves how many of our vulnerable and elderly have been negatively impacted over the last eight years. Both Governor Rushbrook and the substantive Attorney General have been made aware of the current bottlenecks within SHG that are responsible for holding up the progress of local government business according to the objectives and priorities of elected representatives. Mr Speaker, if this serious weakness within certain local government sectors is not addressed with transparency and urgency, such that these sectors are made more efficient and accountable, then

even the new system of governance, the new council and the efforts of the next assembly of elected representatives will be seriously handicapped.

Mr Speaker, members of the Electorate, on request, in January 2017, the then Governor Lisa Phillips informed me that the local general election was likely to be held around July 2017; I was determined not to miss the window of opportunity and therefore wanted to be in St Helena for the 2017 election. However, pursuing my long-held ambition to serve on Legislative Council required me to give up my fulfilling comfort zone on Ascension Island and risk stepping into significant unknowns in St Helena. As a Saint Helenian “outsider”, I was very dubious over successfully gaining sufficient support and votes in the 2017 St Helena general election. Nevertheless, I decided to make the sacrifices, put the fears of the unknown to one side and allowed the Electorate of St Helena to decide my fate.

Here we are, four years on, and I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank all who made a special effort to vote at the last general election, and, in particular, those members of the electorate who personally gave me the opportunity to serve on Legislative Council.

I am satisfied that I worked to the best of my ability with loyalty, according to what I believed was in the best interests of the island. It has been a worthy experience that has enhanced my knowledge in many ways.

It really has been a special honour and privilege for me to have now satisfied my long-held ambition and served my beautiful island and the local community at Council level.

To anyone who contemplates taking on a responsible leading role in the ongoing development of St Helena and serving the local community at Council level, I sincerely encourage you to put your name forward as a candidate, without hesitation, and enter the political arena for the next general election.

My closing message to the Electorate is: if you are interested and care about the ongoing development of St Helena and the future of your community, then make a special effort to “have your say” and vote in the next general election.

I will take this opportunity to thank you Mr Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and my Honourable colleagues for your valuable assistance over the last four years.

There is no substitute for experience – thank you.

And finally I will give a big shout-out to “my encyclopaedia”; she is currently in South Africa, Cllr Dr Corinda Essex.

Mr Speaker, for the very last time - I beg to move.

*(Applause)*

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any other Member wishes to join in the Adjournment Debate? The Honourable Cruyff Buckley?

The Hon. Cruyff Buckley –

Thank you, Mr Speaker; I would like to join in with the Adjournment Debate. My fellow Honourable Members and listeners, I would like to take this final opportunity to thank all of you for your support and encouragement over the past five years actually, I came in on the bye election back in 2016/17 and we all have helped in pushing forward the island’s needs in what can only be summed up as an extremely challenging time for all on island and also internationally. People ask me, Buckley, do you enjoy your job? And I say, I don’t see it as enjoyment, nor do I see it as a

job, I see it as my duty to protect our interests as St Helenians and to uphold our Constitution, in particular, the right to self-determination.

Mr Speaker, I am a proud St Helenian, I'm proud of my island and its rich heritage and cultural diversity. We have seen the unprecedented impacts of Covid 19 in the world and yet, as a community, we have continued to strive. We have, with the support of the community, been able to keep St Helena Covid free, we have enjoyed relative calm in the wake of this pandemic and we should be thankful in many ways for our isolation.

My Members have highlighted many past and ongoing hurdles that we are experiencing, however, I will not be dwelling too much on the negative today, but I'm opting to acknowledge a few of our successes, not just as a Legislative Council, but as a community.

Mr Speaker, on the topic of employment, I am pleased to acknowledge the outstanding work being done by all involved in formulating the new Career Access St Helena which will enable those to have access to the employment market through placement training and skills development, this is such an important function for this Government to perform in order to ensure that individuals have meaningful work and are aware of employment opportunities across St Helena, thus enabling Human Resources to be directed to areas where they are most needed.

Education. On 15<sup>th</sup> July, the United Nations World Youth Skills Day was celebrated here on St Helena and SHG celebrated the eight scholarship students who will be undertaking three-year-long overseas studies. I would like to take this opportunity to wish them all well and to highlight that hard work and dedication does, indeed, reap great rewards. St Helena awaits your return and hopes to benefit from the knowledge and skills that you will gain from your different areas of study.

Mr Speaker, the Fibre Optic Cable. St Helena is on the cusp of achieving great success with the Fibre Optic Cable Project, however, we as leaders need to ensure that the community will gain from this advancement. This is history in the making and this asset is going to dictate the pace of St Helena's development. Mr Speaker, I cannot emphasise how important this technology is to the growth and development of St Helena. We simply cannot allow multi-national corporations to stifle St Helena's growth and development in the pursuit of profit. I urge all candidates who wish to stand for the next upcoming election to make this a top priority and to succeed in enabling the whole of the business environment and the general population to enter the digital age and fulfil their ambitions through the greatest technological tool man has ever created, the internet.

Mr Speaker, I'm looking forward to this ministerial type of government, I do feel that this island needs a change, whether it be for better or for worse and myself and my colleagues we joke down here and we say that the Police are going to come down and they're gonna check the whole of the Castle to ensure that there is no place to hide. We're gonna put down floor tiles so that nothing can be swept under the carpet. We are going to issue, Mr Speaker, a new level of accountability. The public will ask, who actually has the responsibility and accountability and the answer, Mr Speaker, will be the Ministers.

Mr Speaker, I do intend to run for election again and would like to highlight a few areas of importance that if I were to be elected I feel is essential for St Helena's future development.

Water Security, Mr Speaker. There is no development without water, Mr Speaker, it should be at the forefront of everything we do on the island, so I hope that whoever gets re-elected will take this with the seriousness it deserves and we can finally put this island on a sure footing when it comes to our most precious resource.

Food security, Mr Speaker, we look towards South Africa, we see bird flu, we see swine flu, we see Coronavirus, we see riots. Mr Speaker, this is where our food is coming from. We cannot

continue to be so reliant on the outside world, we need to put more effort into farming with the support of this Government, we need to build resilience.

Sports and recreational facilities. Mr Speaker, this is so integral to a healthy lifestyle. We have international competitions that boost morale for all on St Helena and I feel our facilities on the island are not up to spec nor conducive to any international participation let alone local participation in sports. We as a Government need to recognise the youth of this island needs an outlet and we as a Government need to wake up and give it to them.

Equality, Mr Speaker, how is it that I'm standing here in 2021 asking for equality? Not only with pay and remuneration, workload, recognition, rewards, Mr Speaker, is it too much to ask for equal treatment? We need to do better.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I'd like to thank all of my supporters, your words of encouragement have really galvanised my approach in this Council and has given me belief that we are making a difference as we sit around this table. I thank my colleagues again; there have been arguments, collaborations, forceful interjections, all in the pursuit of justice for St Helena and its people. I wish you all the very best for the future whichever direction you may choose to go.

In closing, Mr Speaker, I would like to finish with this quote – “Do not downgrade your dream just to fit your reality, upgrade your conviction to match your destiny”. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

*(Applause)*

The Speaker –

Thank you. The Honourable Derek Thomas?

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the Adjournment Debate and as we know this will be our last time in formal Legislative Council since we will be dissolved midnight tonight. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you, the Deputy Speaker, my fellow colleagues, officials from the Administration and the general public for their support during the past four years which has been rewarding but also somewhat rather challenging, especially during the past eighteen months in our preparedness and management of Covid 19 where we have done really well in protecting our citizens through management and preparedness of this dangerous and deadly virus. I sincerely trust we keep it this way since this virus will be with us for the foreseeable future. All involved should be commended for their dedication and hard work, including the British Government for the level of financial support.

Mr Speaker, I will reflect on some highlights which have been achieved through this Government and the biggest ticket item being the fibre optic cable. Progress is being made and plans are well on the way. The cable will have the potential to bring about major development for St Helena, cheaper, quicker and faster broadband, telemedicine, online training, ground station job opportunities and extra revenue for the Government to provide more essential services. The new Government should ensure that this remains on track in delivering and progressing this forward.

Today, Mr Speaker, we have seen changes in our Social Security Ordinance which makes provisions for the change of “household” to “family”, this will ensure that those persons who previously were unable to claim income related benefit due to other members earnings in the household will now be able to make claims for the income related benefit. This is a high level of funding, over £200k, which the Council has been committed to fund from within our current allocation and this will have to be sustainable for future years.



Mr Speaker, a tremendous amount of our local legislation, which are outdated and not suitable for current times, dating back to the 60s, 70s and 80s, some of this legislation has been progressed during this term, but there's still a lot more to be done.

Mr Speaker, talking of legislation and it is very unfortunate that the Immigration (Amendment) Ordinance could not get over the finish line by this Council. A lot of work was done by the Working Group and through our public consultation, the general public would have expected the legislation approved and passed by this Council and I will explain to the general public. What has happened is a tremendous amount of work has been achieved; more than eighty percent of the work for the Immigration Ordinance has been completed. We now have a more professional Immigration Service where a tremendous amount of training has been delivered to our Immigration Officers. What has changed, Mr Speaker, is that St Helena Government has restructured in order to bring things together in a more modern structured part and that is to bring border security altogether, which includes Customs and Immigration Officers. Therefore, in moving Immigration Officers away from the Police the powers of arrest that they currently have will no longer be appropriate. St Helena will now have a more modern structure and I have been informed by His Excellency the Governor and Head of the Governor's Office that the current project, which has been providing funding support to the Immigration, the FCDO, the Home Office, has given approval for the project to be extended and I'm extremely grateful to Her Majesty's Government and it's been extended to finalise the arrangements on border security which will include powers of arrest for Immigration Officers, training of Immigration Officers on asylum seeking, the draft legislation has been completed, so, therefore, Mr Speaker, the pathway for Immigration has been set in getting this work completed and it should be a priority for the new Council in the coming months.

Mr Speaker, another piece of work which has been ongoing is the review on the Land Development Control Plan and what I can say is that work has now been completed and is ready for public consultation and engagement. That's a work we will see that recommendations are made to bring about a tremendous amount of improvement for persons to obtain land and build, there will be massive changes and it will be the subject of public consultation and, like I say, it will be hugely improved for general benefits.

Mr Speaker, I will also, what has been an issue for the past few weeks is the issue on fish not being available, but what I can say is the Public Health Protection Board has been quite active in trying to get this up and running and I can say that today letters will be issued to the fishermen to enable them to be able to sell fish, whole fish at the landing site and that will include ground fish, but it also will allow fishermen to be able to distribute fish around the island from their vehicle, the vehicle however will need to be licensed and they will need to maintain the cold chain and I know that the Environmental Health Officers have been working and I have been told the letters will be issued today so during the period while the factory is being refurbished fish will be able to continue to be supplied on the local market.

Mr Speaker, I will perhaps leave it as that and just finally end by saying once again I extend my great thanks to you and the Deputy Speaker, the elected members and the general public. I will be standing for re-election and I will be engaging with the general public nearer the time. Thank you all for your support.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Member. The Honourable Anthony Green?

The Hon. Anthony Green -

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I support the adjournment. On 26<sup>th</sup> July, we had the General Election 2017 and on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2017, exactly four years ago, I was appointed as Chairman of the Social and Community Development Committee, which has been a major part of my responsibilities and I really would like to thank the Members, but before I do so, I do want to say that during those forty-seven months, we actually had ninety-five meetings, which means that we averaged two a month and we passed more than forty-five pieces of substantive legislation, including the Marriage Bill and recently the Social Security Bill, which, to me, is very important, plus there was also subsidiary legislation, plus also policies, so I do think that we have tried hard, but I do wish to particularly thank my Committee, for some reason they're all sitting together today, Councillor Cyril Leo who has been my Deputy, Councillor Jeffrey Ellick, Councillor Gavin Ellick and Councillor Thomas and also the official members, Gillian Francis and also Tracy Poole-Nandy and more recently Ann Muir who has been assisting us during the particular discussions on Social Security. But I also want to pay tribute, just very briefly, in just saying that I recognise the work that our Councillor Brian Isaac did, (*hear hear*) because it was very important and he actually did a sterling job over many years and his passing was sadness to us all. The other person I would like to pay tribute too who perhaps most of you have forgotten and that is during our first year as a Committee, we were really supported by the, sort of, Crown Counsel, Social Care, Christine Cooper and the excellent work that she supported helped us to really build and strive for future things. So the other person I particularly want to mention is our effervescent Secretary of the Social and Community Development Committee and also the Clerk of Councils who all have given really staunch support. I think, for me, I'd like to say thank you to all the Members and wish you well in whatever you do, I think, for me, this is a defining moment, I shall leave it at that, except to say I also really need to thank my wife who without that support I wouldn't be able to do what I do, so thank you very much, Mr Speaker, I beg to move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The Speaker -

Thank you. The Honourable Clint Beard?

The Hon. Clint Beard -

Thank you, Mr Speaker. As you can see, there's common threads all around the table, so we all are there to do the best that we can. One of the things that I see that we need to focus on, and I think hopefully the Fit for the Future will do that, is to look at the value of local employees, their skills and their knowledge and what they bring to this island. It's important that we recognise that going forward no matter what place we are. We need to also provide opportunities and that is something that hopefully will be taken on board. I know we've had the World Youth Skills Day where eight scholarship students that have done hard work that shows us that the Education system is working, because they're doing equivalent exams as those in the UK and they're getting the grades, so what does that show us, that their hard work has paid off. But they will still need opportunities when they return and that's when I look to Administration that is working hard on a graduate scheme and that will facilitate some of that. We also have cash in place now, Careers Access St Helena and that is also another conduit. As my Honourable Member across the table revealed about containers and reliance on shipping, the ever increasing container rates is becoming very worrying, we need to keep a key eye on that and that I'll leave over to the Financial Secretary, the key shipping man. Flight access, when I got here in 2017, UK was not on the table and now, what's happening now? We finally have UK flights coming in. When it comes down to the cable,

I believe it will be a game changer for St Helena, not only socially, but it will allow everyone to have access to this, I would say, fundamental element or availability or access to the internet and with this internet we would want everybody to have access, but only those that can afford it, so those that are on higher brackets be prepared to subsidise those that do not have. I was glad to hear Russell mention politics in the curriculum and now I will pay tribute to the Director of Education who has been at almost, well, every formal LegCo, I thank her also for her support, as you know, as Chairman, taking over two years ago, we have weekly meetings and I think the local expertise within the Directorate is showing and it's showing what can be done with local expertise. Tough times never last, but tough people do and around the table I think we have quite a tough bunch, we've debated heavily, we've even gone as far to criticise each other, but at the end of the day we walked out and hopefully nothing was taken personally, I hope so.

So, in ending I just to say my appreciation goes out to the community for trusting me for this four years and also to my fellow members and officials, I've learned so much and I think I'll be standing in the election, but I can tell you now that one thing that when I stepped up I thought things would be a far faster process to change, but I was rudely awakened as things do take time, but nevertheless, one thing that was evident when coming on to Council was that those with experience you could lean on them, you could hear what they were saying and you can take onboard how decisions came about, so in an ever changing, dynamic, political climate we need to be **?ofay** with those elements and we need to commend everybody to say thank you, I say thank you very much, I think it's been a good, we don't have an amusement park, but it's been a rollercoaster ride and for that at no cost, so thank you very much, Mr Speaker, Deputy Speaker and to all the staff within the organisation of SHG and in the private sector, thank you very much. Hopefully we can still move ahead and can press ahead to make St Helena sustainable, great and a place where we really can smile. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

*(Applause)*

The Speaker –

Thank you. The Honourable Jeffrey Ellick?

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment. I've been on Council for twenty months and how fast that time has gone, it has been a challenging and demanding time.

I am pleased that amendments to the Social Service Ordinance were passed on Friday as this will be a significant step forward in protecting our vulnerable people in society. I commend all involved for their efforts in bringing to and supporting this Bill in the House.

Covid was, in my view, one of the biggest challenges. As most people might be aware, I am still not happy with how decisions are being made, especially the last decision based on the latest Press Release from SHG on Covid. It clearly tells me that this Government does not value or care about the majority in our society. Our youth, there is no mention as to what plans are in place to vaccinate or protect our youth in the future. It appears that our Government is only interested in the selected few and don't want to hear the views of others within the community and how this Government moves towards opening St Helena. This is outrageous, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Let's hope moving forward we have a new Government that values its people and who will want to hear and engage with the people, especially when it comes to Covid. This Government aims to reduce quarantine to five days for the red-listed countries and the rest of the world to one day quarantine

by December this year. As far as I can tell, the plane will be coming from the UK which is recognised by most countries in the world as red-listed, but I suppose it depends on who is deciding on what countries should be red-listed. Looking at the Press Release, there is mention of a trigger point being sixty percent double vaccination rates for UK's adult population. UK already has 72.5% of adults vaccinated. I somewhat suspect the UK will not be classed as a red-listed country. It would have been useful if this Government would have published the definition of red-listed country at the time of the Press Release. It says in the Press Release the process for a red list will be developed. If I'm interpreting this correct, it somewhat brings to mind the phrase 'make it up as you go'.

In respect of Ministerial Government, Mr Speaker, we will have a ministerial government that is anticipated to give clearer individual responsibility for making political decisions, greater political accountability for delivering services and reforms and a governance system that progresses its business more swiftly and apparently the change to a ministerial system provides the opportunity for the next elected government to achieve all three. Mr Speaker, all I want is simplicity, a government that is fair, delivers on its promises, values its people, does not elevate particular groups above others and does not allow our people to be at the bottom end of a prioritisation list, one that builds a strong relationship with its people so they can be heard and taken seriously. When large groups press persistently about island matters, they are heard and their concerns addressed and they are not fobbed off. When it comes to systems, it's no different to systems in other spheres. Like football, you can have any system you want, but you will need a team that works together and you will need players who will have the skills and ability to do the job if you want results. So let's hope we will have a new government that has the skills and ability and most importantly are unified and deliver for the people.

Mr Speaker, there is another thing that is bothering me and I believe bothering most people, the fishing industry. We were told that by making a huge investment in the Fish Factory and by having an investor to take over the factory we would have a place where fish can be processed, be affordable and would be for the benefit of all. All this should have taken place on 1<sup>st</sup> June and it would ensure that no subsidy would be paid going forward. Well, Mr Speaker, it looks as if the Government has failed or is about to fail on all promises. I did raise with my ExCo colleagues whether they intended to provide subsidy to the fishing sector, but was told no decision had been made. Recent documents I have seen suggest otherwise. May I suggest that urgent action is taken to address the problems being experienced in the fishing sector and the promises made are fulfilled so all can benefit.

And lastly, I would like to thank all who supported me during my brief period on Council. To my Legislative colleagues we have had good banter and many heated meetings, for me, it has never been personal, but I am passionate. My colleagues, I wish you well in your future endeavours. Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

*(Applause)*

The Speaker –

Thank you. I think all Honourable Members have now spoken to the Adjournment Debate, so it's the Honourable Chief Secretary, do you wish to respond

The Hon. Susan O'Bey –

Yes, Mr Speaker, I do, thank you very much.

First of all, I'd like to thank all Members for their contribution to the Adjournment Debate, this last Adjournment Debate for this particular Government. A number of things were said and I unfortunately won't have time to respond to all of them, but I just want to reassure Members that I will take forward those things that you've asked me to take forward, notably that a detailed process be worked up in relation to Councillors remuneration, going forward I'll make sure that the new Government is aware of that. I'll also make sure that the new Government is aware of the desire and I think this is obviously a very important point that we look into facilities for mothers and babies, not just in Jamestown, but I think across the island, but, of course, that is going to take time, it's going to take funding and Members will need to prioritise that.

I was also pleased to hear Councillor Henry's acknowledgement of the rails, the rail on the Castle steps, it's been an ongoing saga, but I think it is well worthwhile and at least it's happened during the life of this Council and I too would like to add my thanks to those people who made that a possibility.

Councillor Yon used a very good phrase which I'm going to actually borrow going forward, he referred to chunk and clunk and I actually agree with him on that, that's the prime reason for why the Fit for the Future Programme was launched. It is to try to smooth out the chunky, clunky systems and processes and ways of working that exist within SHG. It's not going to happen overnight, but I do give you my reassurance, or my assurance, I should say, that we will continue to work towards making sure that we do have a Public Service that is fit for the future and is able to respond everything that is thrown at us as we go forward.

I hear what is being said about Covid 19, on the one hand I hear Covid 19 and the way that this Government has responded has been a success story and, of course, on the other hand there are certain Members who feel that it hasn't been as successful as it should be. I think the proof is in what we see and that for an island that is able to continue about its business unfettered, unmasked and able to socialise on a level that most other countries can only dream of, I think is actually testament to the hard work on the part of all elected members, but also on the part of all officials who have worked tirelessly to ensure that we are able to enjoy this situation and I can assure Members that from the Officers perspective we will continue to proceed with all caution, we will make sure that we present the best possible evidence to elected members to help you to base your decisions about how and when the island opens up.

Going back to Councillor Yon, he referred to the concerns around the rising costs associated with shipping and my Honourable Friend on my right here was able to provide me with a very quick update to say that, first of all the Bunker Adjustment Factor, or the BAF, is actually paid against the base rate which is set at the start of each contract year, therefore it is not a voyage on voyage increase, it is against the base rate. However, Members will also be aware that the service is not subsidised. The Financial Secretary asked me to reassure everybody though that we continue to monitor the fuel prices and also how that impacts on the cost of freight going forward.

Mr Speaker, much has been said during this session about the roles of senior officers and elected members, particularly during the Remuneration of Councillors debate with some elected members making direct comparison in respect of the responsibilities of both parties. Mr Speaker, this is a little bit like comparing apples with oranges, the two roles are entirely different, one is political and the other is professional, one group is responsible for policy and the other is responsible for providing the advice on which political decisions are based. To be eligible for a career in politics requires a candidate to have qualities which appeal to the electorate, to be eligible for a career in the Public Service requires officers to be in receipt of prerequisite qualifications and experience relevant to the role that they are aspiring to. Mr Speaker, officers are paid to provide professional

advice and make decisions, operational decisions that is, on so many vital aspects of life on St Helena, from Health to Education to Security, Law, the Environment and protecting the community, and, yes, this is very often on a 24/7 basis. I can assure Members that senior officers regularly take out of office calls, or out of hours calls I should say from members of the public and, in addition, as I've said in a previous forum, they also take out of hours calls from elected members who call to seek advice and guidance on particular issues. There are, however, some elements that are common to both. Mr Speaker, both parties are and have been committed to striving towards ensuring that whatever is done is in the best interest of the island and its wonderful people and both groups also have experienced the phenomenon that no matter what is done both Councillors and Officers will never be able to please all of the people all of the time.

Mr Speaker, the last four years have been an interesting journey under the leadership of this particular Government. As Members have said, on occasions the pathway hasn't always been a smooth one, but this is normal in all governments and we mustn't lose sight of the fact that the journey has been made even more challenging by the global pandemic which has been crippling in its nature. Despite the challenges, there have been a number of significant achievements over the past four years. After much lobbying on the part of this Government, St Helena was able to secure an Economic Development Investment Programme totalling some £30m over six years and which replaces the earlier Capital Programme which came to an end in 2015. We signed a contract with Google in 2019 to bring high speed internet to the island, SHG rolled out a new Labour Market Strategy which focuses on developing our working age population both now and in the future, the St Helena Research Institute was established and launched, St Helena was awarded an Investment grade credit rating of triple B- in 2020 and, of course, this was maintained in this year, the Gibraltar International Bank is offering international bank accounts to local residents and businesses, this Government saw the implementation of the new Marriage Ordinance and the first same sex marriage on St Helena and in this particular session we've seen the ratification of the very important Social Security Bill and the Fisheries Ordinance, so these are just a few of the achievements which have been made, they are significant achievements and I take this opportunity to thank Members and Officers for their hard work and commitment.

Mr Speaker, today is actually we've come to a point in a relay race where we've set out, we've run the race and we're about to pass on the baton to another government. I'm sure that we will see some familiar faces in the new government, but we are at a crossroads. The new government will be different and we recognise that there will be a period of transition and of adjustment. This is the last formal Legislative Council where the Financial Secretary and I will sit as non-voting members and this is as it should be, we are civil servants, we are members of the Administration, we are not politicians, we are here to serve and not to make decisions regarding policy. I would like to take this opportunity, Mr Speaker, to thank you and Madam Deputy Speaker and all of the elected members for your support and your hard work over the last four years. As you say, it hasn't always been plain sailing, we've not always seen eye to eye, but at the end of the day we leave the room, I like to think, as friends, and that is how it should be. So, I take this opportunity to wish all of you well in whatever you do in the future. And I'd like to end with a quote as well, I'd like to end with a quote from the Two Ronnies to say – "It's Goodnight from me and it's goodnight from him". Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

*(Applause)*

The Speaker –

Okay, thank you very much indeed, the Honourable Chief Secretary. Honourable Members, that concludes our business for this session and I thank you all for your contributions and participation. As this will be our last session with this current Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support during my tenure of office and that includes Connie, our Clerk of Council and Merlin our Mace Bearer. It has been a steep learning curve for me, Honourable Members, but I would like to think that we did achieve quite a lot as a team. For those of you who will be running in the next General Election, the Deputy Speaker and I wish you well and good luck and I now put the question that this Council do adjourn sine die.

Question that the Council adjourn sine, put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much indeed, Honourable Members.

**Council is adjourned sine die.**

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**Honourable Speaker**

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**Date**