

ST. HELENA
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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 Attorney General	-	Mr Allen Cansick

ELECTED MEMBERS

The Honourable Clint Richard Beard
 The Honourable Cruyff Gerard Buckley
 The Honourable Jeffrey Robert Ellick
 The Honourable Corinda Sebastiana Stuart Essex
 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 Gavin George Ellick		Excused
The Honourable Russell Keith Yon		Excused

CLERK OF COUNCILS

Mrs Connie Johnson

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Friday, 4th June, 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

Good morning, Honourable Members and ladies and gentlemen, I bid you all a very warm welcome to the first sitting of the twenty-fourth meeting of Legislative Council. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Fr. Alan for giving us the benefit of prayer and to thank Mr Merlin George for his continued support as our Mace Bearer.

Honourable Members, we have two apologies this morning, one from the Honourable Gavin Ellick who had to have an operation on Tuesday, but unfortunately it didn't happen because his blood pressure was sky high and now they're treating him to try and get his blood pressure down to an acceptable level before they can carry out the operation and the Honourable Russell Yon who is attending his Auntie's funeral this morning so he asked please to pass on his apologies to all Honourable Members this morning.

Honourable Members, I anticipate this special meeting to be a relatively short one as we only have three Sessional Papers, one very important Motion for proposed amendments to the Constitution of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha and also the traditional Adjournment Debate, and, Honourable Members, you may remove your jackets if you so wish. So now I will call upon the Clerk of Council to announce the next item of business, please?

4. **PAPERS**

SP 22/2021 – The Honourable Financial Secretary.

The Speaker –
The Honourable Financial Secretary?

The Hon. Dax Richards –
Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to present Sessional Paper 22/2021 entitled St Helena Government = Statement of Expenditure in Excess – Financial Year 2019/20.

Ordered to lie on the table.

SP 23/2021 – The Honourable Anthony Green.

The Speaker –
The Honourable Anthony Green?

The Hon. Anthony Green –
Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 23/2021 – St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha Constitution (Amendment) Order, 2021.

Ordered to lie on the table.

SP 24/2021 – The Honourable Chief Secretary.

The Speaker –
The Honourable Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Susan O’Bey –
Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 24/2021 – St Helena Government – Proceedings of the Legislative Council, Friday, 15th January 2021, First Sitting of the Twentieth Meeting.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The Speaker –
Honourable Members, in accordance with Standing Order 3(a) I put the question that the draft record of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council held on Friday, 15th January 2021, First Sitting of the Twentieth Meeting, be confirmed.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –
Thank you. Our next item of business, please?

5.

MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 – The Honourable Anthony Green.

The Speaker –

The Honourable Anthony Green?

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Mr Speaker, may I first deal with a Motion to dispense with notice. Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Legislative Council pursuant to Standing Order 10 dispense with the ten-day notice period for the Motion No. 1 detailed on the Order Paper for the first sitting of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Legislative Council.

The Speaker –

Do we have a seconder, please?

The Hon. Lawson Henry –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much, Honourable Member.

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Mr Speaker, Standing Order 10 of the Legislative Council requires that 10 days clear notice be given for Motions. Rule 2 of Standing Order 10, however, allows for this notice to be dispensed with following consent of the President and the assent on behalf of Her Majesty of Members of the Legislative Council. I submit that Motion for this assent today.

The Speaker –

Do we need a seconder, Attorney General? No? Okay. Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Members, Standing Order 10 of the Legislative Council requires that 10 days clear notice be given for Motions. Rule 2 of Standing Order 10, however, allows for this notice to be dispensed with following consent of the President and the assent of the majority of Member of Legislative Council.

Question that the 10 days' notice be dispensed with in accordance with Standing Order 10, Rule 2 in relation to Motion No. 1, put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

The Honourable Mover you may now go to your original Motion? Thank you.

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Legislative Council resolves to endorse the draft informing the proposed amendments to the Constitution of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha.

The Speaker –

Do we have a seconder, please?

The Hon Lawson Henry –
Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –
Thank you very much indeed. The Honourable Mover, you may speak to the Motion.

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members will recall that on 26th March 2021 this House endorsed the results of the consultative poll conducted on 17 March 2021 and recommended that the Constitution of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha be amended to change the governance system of St Helena to a ministerial system of government.

On 12 April 2021 I conveyed this information on your behalf to Lord Ahmad, the Minister of State for the Overseas Territories in the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office. Lord Ahmad responded on 5 May 2021 giving approval for UK officials to commence detailed discussions with SHG on finalising the constitutional amendments.

As Members are aware, proposed amendments to the Constitution had earlier been drafted by the Attorney General's Chambers following instructions from the local Progress Committee. The proposed amendments had been discussed between all Elected Members and further changes were made at their request. Details of the most substantial amendments were given to the public in the build up to the Consultative Poll. The information booklet circulated to the public in the build-up to that Poll detailed the following proposed changes:

- *Creation of the position of Chief Minister and four other Ministers.*
- *A Process for Election of Chief Minister by Legislative Council and appointment by the Governor.*
- *A Process for a Vote of No Confidence in Chief Minister by the Legislative Council.*
- *A Power for the Chief Minister to choose four Ministers for appointment by the Governor.*
- *Allocation of Portfolios for Ministers to Ministers.*
- *Meetings of the Ministers (Cabinet) to consider advice to be tendered to the Governor at Executive Council.*
- *Dismissal of Ministers at the recommendation of the Chief Minister.*
- *Removal of Shipping from the Governor's Special Responsibilities.*
- *Creation of two Select (Scrutiny) Committees.*
- *Removal of the Chief Secretary and the Financial Secretary as Members of Executive and Legislative Council.*
- *Removal of the Oath of Confidentiality.*
- *Removal of Council Committees.*
- *Transfer of certain current functions of the Financial Secretary to the Minister responsible.*

These still remain the areas of proposed substantial amendment to the Constitution.

Members will be aware that these are all changes that arise out of the decision to move to a Ministerial system. This is not an exercise in general Constitutional reform but instead in making amendments to the Constitutions that arises from the move to a Ministerial system.

In his response to my letter, Lord Ahmad promised that they would do their best to ensure the process is completed as swiftly as possible in advance of the general election later this year, provided agreement could be reached on the substance of the proposed amendments.

This is not a guarantee that it will be done in time for the dissolution of this current Council, but in providing our agreement it give us a good chance to progress the amendments in good time.

During recent weeks, the Attorney General's Chambers has been in discussions with the FCDO about the proposed amendments. The FCDO made some minor changes to the earlier draft but the areas of substantial change still remain as the public have been informed. Following those discussions, an updated draft St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha Constitution (Amendment) Order 2021 has been produced. This draft Order is the Sessional Paper to which this Motion relates.

Copies of the draft Order have been published on the St Helena Government website.

Members have previously met to discuss this draft. Out of those discussion have arisen the requests for some technical changes and clarifications from the FCDO and more substantive amendments are proposed in two areas.

The first of those is in regard to the Select Committees. It will be suggested that the provisions should allow for the creation of at least two committees rather than fixing the number at two. Further it will be suggested that the Order explicitly states the Committees will be made up from a number of Elected Members who are not Ministers, as this has always been the intention. The other change is to remove the power of the Chief Minister to force the dissolution of Legislative Council following the loss of a motion of confidence or a motion of no confidence being carried. Members were of the view that this power should be the same as at any other time following a request for dissolution to the Governor by the Chief Minister. In such cases the Governor shall dissolve unless in his or her judgement, considers the Government can carry on without a dissolution and that dissolution would not be in the interests of St Helena.

If the motion is passed today, these changes will be proposed to the FCDO along with the endorsement of the draft Order.

If the motion is carried today, the next steps in the FCDO are for the final legal checks. This will include putting the Motion into the correct format and style for an Order to the Privy Council and making relevant technical changes. It is important to note that the Order is UK Legislation and it must follow the process for the enactment of Orders in Council in the UK. It is expected that this will be the final endorsement of the proposed changes by the Legislative Council. Further endorsement is only expected to be requested by the UK if there are substantial changes.

If the Motion is carried and the draft endorsed today, it puts St Helena in the best position it can be to have the amendments made before the dissolution of this Council.

I commend the Motion to the House.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much indeed. Honourable Members, I forgot to mention in my address that I've had feedback from the SAMS station and they're saying that the er, some are leaving or when switching on microphones and switching them off it is affecting the output when going over the air, so I would ask please if you'd try and be careful when switching your microphones on and switching them off because it's picking up sounds that don't necessarily need to go over the air, so I would ask you please to try and be careful.

Okay, Honourable Members, the Motion is that the Legislative Council resolves to endorse the draft informing the proposed amendments to the Constitution of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. 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 Motion, I think it is at a pivotal time in the history of St Helena in terms of how we are governed. It certainly has over the recent years and a real need from the electorate to hold the Council to account. In the recent reviews of constitutional reform by Professor Sarkin it was clear from the electorate that they wanted change and that that change should be one where direct responsibility for decision making in Government relates back to elected members. This now proposal will do just that. It is significant for the island because aid money is getting shorter, we face some significant challenges in going forward and it is right and proper that the electorate be given the opportunity to elect those people who they feel can take St Helena forward in these challenging times, but, importantly, is also able to take responsibility for the decisions that they make, so it will be nowhere to hide, is my phrase now, in going forward, so I think it is a very, very important and significant time for this island and I fully support this Motion and hope that the House will do as well, it is the best thing that can happen to our Government in going forward and the people of St Helena deserve it. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much, Honourable Member. The Honourable Jeffrey Ellick?

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. As this House is aware, I did not support the Motion to endorse the consultative poll and this was based on the fact that I did not believe it was the will of the people for change and that was based on the low turnout, so as a matter of principle I will not be endorsing this Motion, but will, however, ask the Honourable Mover to ensure that FCDO and the Privy Council are specifically made aware of the percentage turnout in respect of the vote for a ministerial system which was 8% of the eligible voting public.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Any other Honourable Member wish to speak? The Honourable Cruyff Buckley?

The Hon. Cruyff Buckley –

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I rise in full support of this Motion and look forward to a bright future for St Helena, I think, in speaking to some constituents today a good point was raised today about why don't we have constitutional reform at least every ten years, Mr Speaker, I think it's a sign of the times that politics is forever changing and a lot can happen within ten years and I think there's always a way back if it doesn't work for St Helena, legislators are here to act in the public interest and if a system is not working we reserve the right to change it, so I give my

full support and I thank my Honourable Friend here, Lord Green, for bringing this to the House, I think he's a huge advocate for a ministerial system and as a young lad working under the leadership of Dr Corinda Essex at No. 1 Main Street I remember back in 2005 when it was first talked about and back then being as green as I was, excuse the pun, I didn't realise the magnitude of what could happen if we take such a step and I believe it is the right thing to do if for the right reasons. I think there's a lot of work that needs to also go on behind the scenes, Mr Speaker, this is the Order which is the highest document and it's essential that we get this piece right, but other elements, such as the Code of Conduct, the Ministerial Code, allocation to island-wide constituencies for non-ministers, all of these things need to be discussed and put into paper and hopefully we can use these principles in our working relationship, so, again, Mr Speaker, I give my full support. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any other Honourable Member wishes to speak? The Honourable Derek Thomas?

The Hon. Derek Thomas –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I rise in support of this Motion. In recent consultation meetings with the public leading up to this Motion, the public indicated quite clearly that the current governance system was weak and needed to be improved upon. The public wanted to see clear leadership and quick decision making, they wanted to see elected members taking full responsibility of decision making, a ministerial system will provide for just that. As my Honourable Colleague alluded to, Councillor Henry, under the ministerial system there will be nowhere to hide, ministers will have to take responsibility. The timing I also feel is right as well, we, as an overseas territory, rely heavily on grant-in-aid and that is becoming very challenging. There are er, to get the best deal possible from Her Majesty's Government there needs to be a high level of negotiations and taking advantage of funding streams that St Helena could benefit from, a ministerial system will give ministers more clout to be able to engage with Her Majesty's Government in trying to provide a better future for St Helena, so I fully support this Motion.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Dr Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex –

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I rise in support of this Motion, I still have concerns that the whole process of moving towards a ministerial government is not rushed, I expressed those from the outset and I do still have concerns in that regard, because I do not think that that would necessarily be to the future benefit of St Helena. I fully support the comment made by one of my colleagues opposite regarding the need to change the Constitution on a regular basis and I have raised Motions on that very issue in this House on more than one occasion and I am disappointed that the current review only relates to issues directly relating to the formation of a ministerial system of governance as there are wider implications of the current Constitution that basically need to be reassessed in the light of how St Helena has changed and developed since 2008. Having said that, I feel that if the proposed changes that are before us today are endorsed by Her Majesty's Government and we move towards a ministerial system that will ultimately be a step forward for St Helena which should provide us with a greater degree of autonomy and support self-determination which I think everyone in this room and most of the listening public are aware is one of my key priorities, so I don't hesitate in supporting the Motion. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much indeed. The Honourable Clint Beard?

The Hon. Clint Beard –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. In previous formal sittings I did not support the ministerial system, but I think as I go through the documentation and listening to all elected members around the table you will have support and some that will not, so at the moment I just hope that, looking at the new and improved system, how it will be beneficial to this island, that will take all the concerns into consideration as well as all the adjustments that will be needed to run a government that can be properly scrutinised, because one of the comments was the reason is also for a high level of scrutiny, so I will support this Motion, but I do have a few concerns that going forward we need to make sure that this system is going to work, I just want that to be noted, we need to make sure it works.

The Speaker –

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

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Thank you, Mr Speaker and I do thank Members who have spoken, it is always appreciated whatever your views. Just on the point about making sure that the Minister of State for Overseas Territories is conveyed the detail, I can, in fact, confirm that the full details, or the figures and all the percentages, were conveyed to Lord Ahmad in my letter of 12th April, so, in thanking Members for their support, I now look forward to that being reflected on behalf of constituents through the vote that I assume will follow. Thank you, Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Mover. Honourable Members, the Motion is that the Legislative Council resolves to endorse the draft informing the proposed amendments to the Constitution of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha.

Question put and agreed to.

The Motion is carried.

The Speaker –

Next item of business, please?

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 until 18th June 2021.

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, Honourable Members that this House do now adjourn until Friday, 18th June 2021. The Motion is now open for debate. The Honourable Dr Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex –
Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, it would be remiss of me not to bring to the attention of this Honourable House the extensive stakeholder and public concern relating to the current situation regarding our Fisheries. I fully accept that there will always be some teething problems associated with any change in management that is absolutely inevitable. The recent lack of clarity, confusion and seeming inadequacy of forward planning regarding the operation of the fish processing facility has resulted in negative impacts upon not only our local fishers but also the entire supply chain and local market. This situation cannot continue without serious repercussions for the economy of St Helena. St Helena Government's policy priorities recognise the importance of our Fishery, not only in terms of potential economic growth, but also in the context of food security.
Mr Speaker, I do not rise to try to apportion blame, but to request that the St Helena Government, as the owner of the processing facility, albeit under a lease agreement now to a third party, and as a responsible Government wishing to act in the best interests of this island, will do all in its power to ensure that the current issues are addressed as speedily as possible and that the remainder of the transition period is as seamless as can be achieved.
Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –
Thank you very much indeed. Any other Member wishes to speak to the Adjournment Debate?
The Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –
Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I also would like to turn to a rather hot topic in the community and ask the Honourable Chief Secretary if she could update this House and the listening public on the smooth transition of the operations of the fish processing factory located at Ruperts from St Helena Government to the Saints Tuna Corporation Ltd. According to St Helena Government's Press Release of 30th April 2021, Saints Tuna Corporation Ltd will commence the refurbishment of the factory from June 2021 and during this refurbishment period an interim arrangement will be put in place by Saints Tuna Corporation Ltd to ensure that fish is available to meet the demands of the local market. Mr Speaker, as the factory is owned by St Helena Government, has St Helena Government provided a deadline as to when the refurbishment of our fish processing factory will be completed? Today, 4th June, I have observed that there is no fish for sale to the public at the Jamestown Market and even yesterday for this matter. Last month in this House, it was stated by the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee that customers do have options when purchasing fish, they might purchase fish from the small processing unit which will be setting up at the Wharf. It is my understanding that a Fishmonger has been trying for at least the last three years to operate a fish business at the Wharf, will they still need to wait a further three years before it becomes operational? When comparing the size of our fish processing factory and the building identified at the Wharf for the Fishmonger, it is my opinion that the Fishmonger will be operating from a rather small facility. Will this Fishmonger be able to provide the variety of

cuts and size of fish to the public as a fish processing factory or will they only be able to provide ground species to our community? Mr Speaker, I am very sceptical as to what options are available to our community at this exact moment.

On a number of occasions in this House, I have raised issues concerning incoming letter mail. In my opinion the current system is worse than the days of sail and steam. I will be grateful if the Honourable Chief Secretary could tell this House today if the incoming letter mail system has improved.

According to St Helena's Ten-Year Plan, the national goal 'Altogether Greener' indicates that we will become one hundred percent self-sufficient in renewable energy. It is extremely disappointing to have now learnt that it appears that PASH Global is not able to meet the expectations of the Renewable Energy Strategy or St Helena's Ten-Year Plan. We have been encouraged to support this inward investor, but our aspirations are sunken.

It is, however, pleasing to note that despite Covid-19 complications the Submarine Cable Project is still on target.

Mr Speaker, there are very few businesses in the world today, including those on St Helena, able to operate without some form of international network or business accounts. This could range from a simple social media account right through to a finance and banking. Over recent years, the identify checks for anyone accessing these different accounts have been changing with increased levels of scrutiny to ensure tighter security. One safeguard, which is now quite common, is a unique verification code set by mobile text message by many online accounts, which users must enter in order to log in. A new code is required each time which generally expires after a few moments. Mr Speaker, this is an increasing problem for private individuals and businesses on St Helena as our local mobile system does not seem to allow incoming international text messages to be received. For businesses the challenges of our geographic isolation are well established, however, this mobile phone communication obstacle adds an extra layer of complication that negatively impacts economic growth and quality of life on St Helena. It is hoped that the public won't have to wait until the Submarine Cable Project is completed to be able to benefit from this means of communication.

The British Napoleonic Bicentenary Trust Press Release three months ago stated that Lord Ashcroft has made a generous donation of £300,000 to St Helena to support the repairs to our Jacob's Ladder. Can the Honourable Chief Secretary provide an update to the public if St Helena Government has received such funding and when is it likely that the repairs will commence? My dear friend, the old lady down the hill, informs me that it is perceived that discussions are being held behind closed doors in divesting our Ladder. Surely the public should be consulted on this matter before a decision is made.

A W Ship Management has advised that the MV Helena is delayed for the upcoming voyage to allow for the loading of eight tanktainers of diesel. Obviously, Mr Speaker, tanktainers is being considered as an alternative option for fuel delivery due to the uncertainties with the gold-plated Bulk Fuel Installation Project at Ruperts. In my opinion, I believe this will be a step backwards for the economy of St Helena as a bonded area will need to be constructed to receive these tanktainers which no doubt will cost more than possibly £200,000 to facilitate. The procurement cost of fuel in tanktainers is likely to be more expensive than purchasing in bulk supplied by a tanker. The cost of transferring the fuel up Ruperts Valley and then to be emptied via a fuel bowser also need to be factored in the cost. The mind boggles.

It will have been noted that I do not support the ministerial system. While it has been stated that the change will be cost neutral to the budget it will cost more to administer than the existing committee system and therefore it appears that less funds will be available for other purposes which could have serious impact on our community in these harsh economic times.

The Speaker –

Can I just remind the Honourable Member that you have one minute left for your exposition?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you, I'll bear that in mind.

The Speaker –

Thank you.

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

While the ministerial system is being praised for accountability, it is my belief that accountability will only be achieved if it is the collective will of all elected members and the administration. Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Ah, thank you very much indeed, Honourable Member. Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak? The Honourable Anthony Green?

The Hon. Anthony Green –

Thank you, Mr Speaker, I support the Adjournment and I also wish to say that I also support the concerns expressed by my Honourable Colleagues regarding the Fisheries at the moment. Turning now to a different subject, it has often been said that a week is a long time in politics. It was only a week ago that I moved a Motion about audio material from the St Helena Government Broadcasting Station which closed down some eight years ago. That Station played a very important role for approximately forty-five years informing, entertaining and educating. Thank you all again for supporting that Motion, which was about ensuring that the precious tape recordings were safeguarded so that future generations could learn something about that period of our history. As you all know, shortly after the last LegCo meeting, we received a message from John Turner giving the excellent news that he has been working with the Museum for some time doing just that. We learnt John had been doing this work on a voluntary capacity and is commended for doing so and long may that continue. This work, obviously, is a slow process. Each tape has to be played at the normal speed, using an old reel to reel tape machine currently supplied by Ed Baldwin, the audio then recorded digitally on to a PC, the audio is then enhanced to improve audibility and saved to a file, labelled with the information on the tape box. So far, some one thousand, one hundred and fifty-two tapes have been digitised. Apparently, a further two hundred and fifty tapes were digitised earlier by a visiting film crew. I later got in touch with the Museum and Adam, who is in charge there, told me that the aim is to eventually have all digitised, then the interface created where the public can search and access the audio files from the Museum and maybe even given one day, with the better internet, it can be hosted online, so a brief update and our thanks to John and the Museum. I'm also pleased to say that the Museum has very kindly let me have a sample of mixed material that has been saved and digitised. It is very interesting, lasts approximately fifteen minutes and can be heard on Saint FM this evening around 6 o'clock and on SAMS radio also tonight at 7 o'clock after the news and announcements. I'm grateful to both radio stations, so don't please miss it. Thank you, Mr Speaker, I support the Adjournment.

The Speaker –

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

The Hon. Cyril Leo –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. The preamble to the Constitution acknowledges the people of St Helena as resourceful. The word resourceful also defines the people of St Helena as being creative. There are a multitude of examples portraying the wealth of creative minds that we are fortunate to have within our small community. One recent example is the creative thinking behind the design of the Badge of St Helena. Congratulations to the creator of the chosen design. The winner of the competition simply captures and conveys the importance of working together to shape the future of the St Helena. The design concept of assembling a puzzle depicts what is of paramount importance for the successful ongoing development of St Helena. And each one of us, Saints and non-Saints, here and overseas who are a part of the journey, are important to the challenge.

In my humble opinion, the Badge of St Helena design is exceptionally attractive and relevant. Creating the Badge of St Helena to acknowledge such individuals or businesses who make exceptional contributions to St Helena is a worthy endeavour. Awarding a Badge of St Helena on behalf of the people of St Helena for the local community to celebrate something exceptionally positive and honourable in the ongoing development of St Helena. The presentation of an award such as the Badge of St Helena is intended to be one of appreciation for the recipient and celebration for the whole local community. Yet, when the legislation for the new Badge of St Helena award was recently debated in formal Legislative Council, clear divisions of opinions were expressed by elected members. The concerns and opinions voiced by one elected member against the Bill included violation of the Constitution exclusion of Saints; offending Saint Helenians; and there were claims that elements of the Bill blatantly discriminate against the people of St Helena.

Following the strong criticisms delivered against the Bill, the Attorney General assured the House that no part of the National Honours and Awards Bill, 2021, breached the Constitution. However, the conflicting and opposing statements remained a serious concern. Mr Speaker, a Bill that was designed to establish a special award for exceptional service to St Helena risked being denigrated in the eyes of St Helenians if the law was to be implemented. Consequently, elected members voted six to five in favour of stopping the Bill's progress. Accordingly, the real possibility of the recipient of the Badge of St Helena being tarnished with community controversy and mockery has been avoided. An opportunity has now been created for elected representatives to amend and produce a National Honours and Awards Bill that all the people of St Helena can support and celebrate with honour and with pride. I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

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

The Hon. Susan O'Bey –

Thank you, Mr Speaker and thank you to Members for supporting the Adjournment Debate. Obviously, the hot topic expressed this morning is Fisheries and I can assure Members that concerns have been raised to the Saints Tuna Corporation and they are addressing these. One of the big issues was confusion, I have to say, about the licence, the processing licence and this is now being addressed and it is hoped that this should be in place early next week.

In relation to the updates requested by Councillor Christine Scipio, I would ask, Councillor, if you could at least forward me a list of the updates that you would like, not being clairvoyant I don't have all of that information to hand, I don't carry that level of detail around with me as you will appreciate, however, if you can pass me the list of updates that you require I will do so and apportion them to the appropriate officers to provide me with the relevant information. I am aware, I can, my Honourable Colleague on my right was able to say to me that in relation

to the funding for Jacob's Ladder that funding is sitting within the St Helena Napoleonic, sorry, the Napoleonic Heritage Account and that will be obviously dispersed once the relevant systems and processes are in place in order to be able to take that forward. One of the conditions attached to that, of course, is, by the donor, is that the Ladder should be managed by a non-government organisation and that is what is being worked on at the moment and will obviously need to be taken forward in order to be able to have access to that funding. Members will be aware, of course, that it is common practice to divest heritage sites to non-government organisations where it is felt that they can be better managed and taken forward for the good of the island.

In relation to all of the others, I'm afraid, as I said, I don't have that level of detail with me and I wasn't able to see through your paper, Councillor, as you were reading it, so if you can forward those to me I will address them and I think that remains as good news, Councillor Green, in terms of what's happening already with the radio recordings and it's good to hear that, also good to know that it's being done outside of SHG and by volunteers because, of course, everybody, the more we work together across the island, not just relying on SHG, I think that obviously makes for a far more sustainable approach. So I think, Mr Speaker, all that remains for me to say is thank you very much again for the contributions, I will endeavour to provide written responses to the questions posed in terms of the request for updates and I beg to move, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much indeed, Honourable Chief Secretary.

Honourable Members, that concludes our business for this session and I thank you all for your con- oh, I beg your pardon, the Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Mr Speaker, may I ask a question for clarity for the response to the Chief Secretary, please?

The Speaker –

No? Yeah?

The Hon. Allen Cansick –

I agree with you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Okay. Do you have any problem, Chief Secretary?

The Hon. Susan O'Bey –

I need clarity to answer it.

The Speaker –

Okay, I will allow it, go ahead Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just for clarity, to the response from the Honourable Chief Secretary, because in my adjournment I had asked if you could update the listening public, the Chief Secretary asked if I would forward my list to her, but I'm just concerned how the listening public is going to be provided with that information, so if you could just provide that clarity, please?

The Speaker –
Thank you.

The Hon. Susan O’Bey–
I would assume if I’m able to provide those answers to you then you would be able to update the listening public once you have that information, Councillor. Thank you.

The Speaker –
Thank you very much indeed, Chief Secretary. Honourable Members that concludes our business for this session and I thank you all for your contributions and your participation and I now put the question that this Council do adjourn until Friday, 18th June 2021.

Question put and agreed to.

Council is adjourned until Friday, 18th June, 2021.

Honourable Speaker

Date

