



**St Helena  
Government**

**ST HELENA GOVERNMENT**

**GOVERNMENT OF ST HELENA  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
FRIDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021  
FIRST SITTING OF THE SECOND MEETING**

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

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**THE PRESIDENT**

The Honourable Cyril Robert Gunnell

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBER**

The Honourable Attorney General, Mr Allen Cansick

**ELECTED MEMBERS**

The Honourable Rosemary June Bargo  
The Honourable Gillian Ann Brooks  
The Honourable Mark Alan Brooks  
The Honourable Ronald Arthur Coleman  
The Honourable Jeffrey Robert Ellick  
The Honourable Corinda Sebastiana Stuart Essex  
The Honourable Martin Dave Henry  
The Honourable Robert Charles Midwinter  
The Honourable Christine Lilian Scipio  
The Honourable Julie Dorne Thomas  
The Honourable Karl Gavin Thrower  
The Honourable Andrew James Turner

**CLERK OF COUNCILS**

Mrs Connie Johnson

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

## First Sitting of the Second Meeting of Legislative Council

Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2021

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

(The Speaker in the Chair)

### ORDER OF THE DAY

**1. FORMAL ENTRY OF THE PRESIDENT**

**2. PRAYERS**  
(The Right Reverend Bishop Dale Bowers)

**3. ELECTION**

**Public Accounts Committee**

The Speaker –

The Public Accounts Committee as you know, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee is appointed by the Governor, so you need to elect three members of the Public Accounts Committee. I invite nominations for the Public Accounts Committee.

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

Mr Speaker, I'd like to propose the Hon Dr Corinda Essex.

The Speaker –

Thank you Hon Member. Is there a seconder?

The Hon. Martin Henry –

Mr Speaker I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you Hon Member. Hon Dr Corinda Essex, do you accept the nomination?

The Hon Dr Corinda Essex –

Mr Speaker I accept the nomination with pleasure.

The Speaker –

Thank you are there any other nominations?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Mr Speaker, I wish to nominate the Hon Karl Thrower.

The Speaker –

Thank you Hon Member. Hon Karl Thrower? Or is there a seconder, I do beg your pardon?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Mr Speaker I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Hon Karl Thrower you have been nominated, do you accept the nomination?

The Hon Karl Thrower –

Mr Speaker I accept the nomination.

The Speaker –

Thank you are there any other nominations?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Mr Speaker, I beg to nominate the Hon Gillian Brooks.

The Speaker –

Thank you is there a seconder?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker I beg to second.

The Hon. Attorney General –

Mr Speaker could I request that somebody else proposes the nomination of the Hon Gillian Brooks, as the Hon Robert Midwinter has already seconded a candidate so there needs to be somebody different.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much, is there another candidate that wishes to do that?

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

I nominate the Hon Gillian Brooks.

The Speaker –

Hon Gillian Brooks do you accept the nomination?

The Hon Gillian Brooks –

Mr Speaker I accept the nomination, thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you, are there any further nominations for Public Accounts members?

*Pause*

The Speaker –

Since there are no further nominations the results are Hon Members, Hon Dr Corinda Essex, Hon Karl Thrower and Hon Gillian Brooks. I declare that you have been duly elected to be members of the Public Accounts Committee.

Next item of business please.

**4. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT**

Good morning Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen and all those listening to this live broadcast from the Court House in Jamestown. Welcome to this first sitting of the second meeting of the St Helena Legislative Council under its recently constituted Ministerial Governance. The business for this Session comprises of the Election of a Public Accounts Committee, we've just done that, 11 Sessional Papers, 15 Questions and 3 Motions followed by the traditional Adjournment Debate.

I extend grateful thanks to the Lord Bishop, Dale Bowers for prayers, Mace Bearer, Merlin George for delivering the symbolic authority of this Honourable House, and SAMS for broadcasting these proceedings. Honourable Members, in 1988 Mr Harry Legg was appointed the first Speaker of the Legislative Council under the Committee System. The outgoing Speaker, in 2021 was Mr John Cranfield and the outgoing Deputy Speaker, Mrs Maureen Thompson. I extend grateful thanks to them for their leadership. And grateful thanks also are extended to all other members of the outgoing Council.

The first Speakers elected then for the new Ministerial governance are Cyril Gunnell as Speaker of the House and our Deputy Speaker is Mrs Catherine Cranfield. We all, all of us during our time in office have a lot of work ahead of us including the significant amount to get through during this Session. So, without further ado I will call on the Clerk to announce the next item of business, please.

**5. PAPERS**

*Sessional Paper 45 of 2021, Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development*

The Speaker –

Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I would like to present Sessional Paper 45/2021, Recommendations on Remuneration of Councillors, Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 46 of 2021, Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development*

The Speaker –

Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I wish to present Legislative Council (Remuneration and Allowances) (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 47 of 2021, the Hon Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning*

The Speaker –

The Hon Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 47/2021, Standing Orders of the Legislative Council.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 48 of 2021, Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development*

The Speaker –

Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I wish to present Sessional Paper 48/2021, Special Warrant No 1 of 2021/22.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 49 of 2021, Hon Chief Minister*

The Speaker –

Hon Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 49/2021, Government of St Helena - Proceedings of the Legislative Council – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021 - First Sitting of the Twenty-first Meeting.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 50 of 2021, Hon Chief Minister*

The Speaker –

Hon Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Thank you Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker I beg to present Sessional Paper 50/2021, Government of St Helena - Proceedings of the Legislative Council - Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - First Sitting of the Twenty-second Meeting.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 51 of 2021, Hon Chief Minister*

The Speaker –  
Hon Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Thank you again Mr Speaker, Mr Speaker I beg to present Sessional Paper 51/2021 entitled Government of St Helena - Proceedings of the Legislative Council - Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021 - First Sitting of the Twenty-third Meeting.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 52 of 2021, Hon Chief Minister*

The Speaker –  
Hon Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 52/2021, Government of St Helena - Proceedings of the Legislative Council - Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021 - First Sitting of the Twenty-fourth Meeting.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 53 of 2021, Hon Chief Minister*

The Speaker –  
Hon Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 53/2021, Government of St Helena - Proceedings of the Legislative Council - Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021 - First Sitting of the Twenty-fifth Meeting.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 54 of 2021, Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development*

The Speaker –  
Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 54/2021 entitled Saint Helena National Trust, Annual Report – April 2020 to March 2021.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

*Sessional Paper 55 of 2021, Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development*

The Speaker –

Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I beg to present Sessional Paper 55/2021, Saint Helena National Trust Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2021.

**Ordered to lie on the table.**

The Speaker –

Next item of business please.

## **6. QUESTIONS**

*Question 1. The Hon. Robert Midwinter to ask the Hon. Chief Secretary.*

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Chief Minister tell this Council, what progress has been made towards developing a collective vision for the Island, and what is her anticipated timeline for completion of this exercise?

The Speaker –

Hon. Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I would like to thank the Hon. Robert Midwinter for his question. This government's high level vision was shared with people during the recent round of constituency meetings that was completed last evening. During discussions we found that people were supportive of the basic mission that Councillors had put together, they were pleased to learn that work had started, to build on the Island's 10 year plan and Sustainable Economic Development Plan. To give an overview, our vision for St Helena is a sustainable and diverse economy which will be inclusive and promote opportunities for young people and introduces policies which will sustain and grow our working population to assist in retaining essential skills on island. Mr Speaker we wish to reverse our ageing population profile and seize up options for diversifying local revenue streams. We wish to honour our commitment to the Overseas Territories COP 26 climate pledge with a focus on our green and blue agenda. It's our desire to build more resilience on island in food production, medical capabilities and renewable energy. Mr Speaker we wish to maximise the economic and diversification opportunities afforded by the fibre optic cable and place emphasis on environment and timely communications with all our stakeholders, both here and in the UK. It is encouraging to note that a lot of planning to support our vision is already in existence, we are talking with officers to understand where the gaps are so that plans can be developed to address these and engage with key stakeholder groups as we've been doing and continue to do as part of this process. It



is anticipated that the vision together with the delivery strategy will be completed and published before the end of this financial year but the vision we would hope will come together in January 2022. So it should be a new year present. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Hon. Member. Hon. Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I wish to thank the Hon. Chief Minister for her response. Mr Speaker, will the Hon. Chief Minister confirm that the questions arising from the recent round of constituency meetings will be placed in the public domain along with any related answers provided.

The Speaker –

Hon. Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Yes we are planning to use the media, we're going to collate all the feedback from our constituency meetings and do a frequently asked question and hopefully provide answers so the community is well aware of our plans going forward and how we plan to address it.

The Speaker –

Thank you Hon. Member, any further questions?

***Question 2. The Hon. Gillian Brooks to ask the Hon. Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Gillian Brooks –

Mr Speaker, will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development give this House an update on the sewage facility for Half Tree Hollow and Jamestown? Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development, Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I would like to thank the Hon. Member for her question. So before I proceed Mr Speaker I would like to give a little background to this question to try and determine how we got to this stage. So in 2016 Mr Speaker, consultants WSP from South Africa was commissioned to design a waste water management system for HTH and Jamestown. They identified 3 possible solutions. Option 1 was to separate a package treatment plant for HTH and Jamestown. Estimated costs was £1.59m. Option 2 was for Jamestown pump station, a marine outfall up to 25m depth and the package treatment system for HTH estimated cost was £2.1m. Option 3 was the combined HTH and Jamestown sewerage treatment with Jamestown pump station and marine outfall up to 25m depth and estimated cost of £1.6m. In order for the treatment plants to work effectively for HTH, options 1 and 2, the consultants advised that the storm water would need to be separated from the waste water. Currently both storm water and waste water are channelled through a combined sewer that flows into a septic

tank at the guns in lower HTH. Coupled with that, storm water is the responsibility of SHG and sewerage the responsibility of Connect Saint Helena. WSP consultants estimated that separating storm and waste water at each of the 82 households would cost an estimate of £1.5m. Connect Saint Helena has since advised that there is significant more households with storm water connected to the combined sewer. So the estimate cost to separate would be significantly higher. With inception of the Economical Development Investment Programme or EDIP, we have agreed a capital programme vision. A strategic plan and an updated infrastructure plan. The strategic plan has identified that the infrastructure issues need to be addressed as priorities for facilitating and achieving this vision. One of the 2 highest infrastructure priorities was sustainable sewerage, simultaneously milestones have been included in the EDIP logic framework. The core considerations at the EDIP mid-term review would be an extent to which projects are being delivered, on time and within budget. It is therefore vital that the solution for this priority sector is capable of being satisfactory, delivered on schedule. A view from amongst the previous Elected Members in perceiving this combined sewer system, option 3, the Capital Programme section revisited the 2 other options. Regardless of altogether greener, an objective of SHG 10 year plan and the importance of a blue green economy and our blue belt programme, to the Island's tourism sector, preference has been given to a technical solution that will ensure sustainable environmental standards that are attained with respect to waste water discharging from both HTH and Jamestown. Option 1 separates treatment plant from HTH and Jamestown is now being proposed as the option, which should be delivered through the EDIP. The consultants WSP pointed out that the storm water from around homes in the HTH area is connected directly into the waste water sewer. They stated that under intense rainfall conditions this would reduce the efficiency of the treatment plant. The consultant had only considered the possible solution of separating the storm water at the source at a cost of approximately £1.5m. The Capital Programme section has identified an alternative, much cheaper solution that is based on a combined sewer management that will develop and neutralise in a developed urban area. The solution is a combined sewer overflow and comprised of a system to direct the majority of the storm water that is in excess of the waste water. So the principle is simply where the system separates the storm water from the waste water. So I think we should now lead on to where we got to today, that was just, sorry a lengthy background.

Currently under the Water Ordinance 1978, Connect Saint Helena has responsibility for waste water but does not include rain water or simply natural occurrence of water. So to establish a combined sewer overflow, it would require amendments to the Interpretation section of the Water Ordinance, which would create an exception which would see Connect Saint Helena becoming responsible for rain water or natural occurrence of water in combined sewerage, conducting waste water or storm water. Connect Saint Helena has been responsible for the managing of waste water in a combined sewer in HTH and Jamestown, since the utilities company was established in 2013 however the wording in the Water Ordinance 1978 defines waste water as not including rain water. Connect Saint Helena's position is that they state basically SHG is responsible for storm water. This creates difficulty in managing a combined sewer system since SHG is not responsible for the waste water in the combined pipes and Connect Saint Helena is not responsible for the rain water in the combined pipes. We are now working with the AG's Chambers to seek a minor amendment in the Ordinance to clarify that in the case of a combined sewer, responsibility of storm water would rest with Connect Saint Helena. Thank you Hon. Member, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –  
Hon Gillian Brooks?

The Hon. Gillian Brooks -

Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you, Hon Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter -

Mr Speaker, will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development say when this work will be completed?

The Speaker -

Thank you, Hon Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks -

Thank you Mr Speaker, may I ask the Hon. Rob Midwinter whether you're referring to the complete system or the part in the Ordinance?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter -

The part in the Ordinance.

The Hon. Mark Brooks -

I have confirmation from the Attorney General, Hon Member that it will be done as a priority and as soon as possible.

The Speaker -

Hon Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter -

Mr Speaker, is the Hon. Minister able to say how many housing plots in HTH are currently being held up, awaiting this work?

The Speaker -

Is that question related Hon Member?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter -

Yes we are talking about the sewerage system in HTH, we have been talking about houses in HTH Mr Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you, then I will allow it. Hon Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks -

Thank you Mr Speaker. I thank the Hon Member for his question however at this time I do not have the actual figure of the number of houses awaiting completion or construction but I would take an undergoing to provide this information to the Hon Member.

The Speaker -

Is that suitable to you Hon. Member?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter -

Yes thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any other member wishes to speak on that question? Hon Dr Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Hon. Minister say if funding has been identified to undertake the necessary works?

The Speaker –

Hon Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I thank the Hon Member for her question. As I alluded to earlier, the funding will come from the EDIP programme, so to my understanding, funding has been identified for the works. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Hon Dr Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex –

Will the Hon. Minister state whether the funding that has been identified is only indicative or whether full costing has been prepared?

The Speaker –

Hon Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

I'd like to respond to the Hon. Member's question, it's only indicative.

The Speaker –

Hon Dr Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

I thank the Minister for that clarification. Will the Hon. Minister state when it is likely that full cost estimate will be prepared?

The Speaker –

Hon Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

There is work being undertaken right now to finalise the design, until that is complete we will then be able to give an estimate of that cost.

The Speaker –

Hon Dr Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Will the Hon Minister give an indicative timeline for that exercise to be completed please?

The Speaker –  
Hon Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –  
Thank you Mr Speaker. Hon. Member it is difficult to estimate that now but we would be able to give a better indication by the end of the financial year.

The Speaker –  
Hon Dr Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –  
I thank the Hon Minister for that response, with which I'm afraid I don't feel satisfied. Can you please indicate that you will give a full detailed response to this House, certainly not later than the end of this financial year?

The Speaker –  
Thank, you, Hon Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –  
Thank you Hon Member. Yes I can confirm that my anticipation is to give an answer before the end of this financial year.

The Speaker –  
Next question.

***Question 3. The Hon. Ronald Coleman to ask the Hon. Minister for Education, Skills and Employment.***

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –  
Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Education, Skills and Employment tell this Council, since being informed of the problems encountered at Prince Andrew School on the presence of alcohol and drugs, what redress if any had been taken?

The Speaker –  
Hon Julie Thomas?

The Hon. Chief Minister –  
Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Hon Member for his question. As a result of the issue the following actions have been taken. A multi-agency meeting has been convened with representatives from Police, Education, Health and Social Care and the issues were discussed and next steps agreed. It was recognised that whilst this has presented within Prince Andrew School with a small number of students, the issue is a wider community issue. Concern was raised by school staff in relation to the accessibility of these banned substances to students to bring them into school. This group is meeting on a regular basis to undertake actions to address the issues. Some of the actions are around continuing to raise awareness, roles and responsibilities of parents and guardians and improving policies and procedures to make them more robust in relation to the situations such as these. Mr Speaker a letter was sent to all parents to make them aware of the issue, encourage parents and guardians to have discussions with their child about the dangers of these substances and repercussions of being involved with this in the school and to offer help to the parents and the guardians and the students. A whole school

assembly was held where students were addressed by the Portfolio Director and the Acting Detective Inspector to again remind the students of the school rules, making them aware of the dangers of being involved with these substances and the legal consequences. All students were discouraged from using these banned substances. Students who were involved in these incidents were given the appropriate sanctions but they were also given support from the School Nurse to reinforce awareness of the dangers to themselves and others and help them to avoid participating in these activities in the future. As mentioned the issue is more than the responsibility of Education and it is a wider community concern therefore the matter is to be referred to the Safeguarding Board to develop a plan of action on how this issue can be addressed as a community, as it is more than just a school issue. I would like to emphasise that the problems referred to involve a very small number of students bringing alcohol and or drugs on to the school premises, 10 in total. Also all schools have a personal, social health and citizenship education programme that includes awareness and the dangers of drugs, alcohol and smoking. This education programme is ongoing for Primary through to Secondary. To advise, to date there have been no more reported incidents of students being in possession of alcohol or drugs in Prince Andrew School. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Hon Ronald Coleman, any more questions?

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I would just like to ask if the parents who were involved, were a receptive response from them.

The Speaker –

Can you put that into a question please?

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Was there a receptive response from the parents?

The Speaker –

Okay, Hon Julie Thomas?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, because the question is of a personal nature unfortunately I'm unable to answer that, thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Hon Ronald Coleman?

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Thank you Mr Speaker for that.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Next question please?

***Question 4. The Hon. Rosemary Bargo to ask the Hon. Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development tell this Council, what plans if any, are in place to address the issue of the road section from Hutt's Gate to Longwood Gate which is very narrow and is considered a danger to the public?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Hon Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Hon. Member for her question and do know that this stretch of road has been coming up in our constituency meetings, so I'll take this opportunity to try and address this. So rehabilitation works was carried out on this stretch of road in question under the previous Capital Programme Project, the R1 project, which involved some widening and some resurfacing of the road. Unfortunately there are no current plans to address further widening of this road and it was not identified as a priority in the 2018 Infrastructure Plan, developed by consultant John Cox. The roads maintenance budget this year is unfortunately only £416k and is mainly used to address plant and reactive repairs to existing road surfaces. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Hon Rosemary Bargo?

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Honourable Minister. The Honourable Minister, I'm sure you're aware that this particular road is regularly used by pedestrians.

The Speaker –

Is this going to be followed by a question?

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Yes if that's okay.

The Speaker –

Carry on then.

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

If there was an incident and pedestrians were using the road at the same time as traffic, including emergency vehicles coming from both directions then this will have serious and possible fatal consequences therefore can I ask if you would reconsider and readdress the seriousness of this issue?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Hon Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Honourable Member for her supplementary question. However in the 2018 Infrastructure Plan it was not highlighted that this stretch of road was to any significant concern therefore there was no consideration to widen the road. But I will ask my Portfolio to assist in enquiring for to widen the area and this could be taken into consideration when prioritising capital funding in the future requests. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Hon Rosemary Bargo, any further questions?

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Thank you no, thank you Minister.

The Speaker –

Are there any supplementary questions from anyone else? Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

May I rise on a point of information Mr Speaker?

The Speaker –

Please do Honourable Member.

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Mr Speaker, the issue on this stretch of road at Longwood is one that has been a concern of residents for many years and in fact some fairly minor works would do a great deal to improve the condition. There are one or two minor areas where minor widening would improve the visibility considerably and therefore would improve the safety of the road. I would not think that a full capital programme would be necessary to make adequate improvements to the road that would satisfy the majority of the residents in that area. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member for that information. Honourable Mark Brooks do you want to respond to that?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Yes Mr Speaker thank you. I would like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. I'm aware as well that this has been highlighted in our constituency meetings, so I would therefore undertake a commitment to relook at this road and to see if small amounts of improvements could be made without making a request for the capital programme funding. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Karl Thrower?

The Hon. Karl Thrower –

Thank you Mr Speaker. May I ask the Honourable Member, was any research carried out on the usage of this road for the 2013 Infrastructure plan because it seems as if part of this has already been fixed or will be fixed in the near future? Because once Field Road is upgraded, a lot of that traffic that is coming into Town, it may actually be much quicker for that traffic to come down the Haul Road and basically through Rupert's and up the newly revised Field Road and then back down. Because at the minute I know that the difference is about 4 minutes and a lot of its down to Field Road, actually its more of an issue of traffic management can answer some of these problems with this road.

The Speaker –



Thank you, your question actually turned into a statement afterwards but I will allow it.  
Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. As I said earlier there was an assessment done but this was back in 2019, sorry there was an assessment done for the R1 project prior to 2018 but I will take the concerns of the Honourable Member into consideration and we would try to look if that could be concluded within the scope of addressing this. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Next question please.

***Question 5. The Hon. Andrew Turner to ask the Hon. Minister for Safety, Security & Home Affairs.***

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Safety, Security and Home Affairs tell this Council, what plans are there to install fire hydrants and improve fire safety in the Blue Hill area following the recent fire in the area?

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Jeffrey Ellick?

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Firstly I would like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. Mr Speaker, Connect now has 2 fire hydrants and the Fire and Rescue Service are liaising with Connect over their installation in the Blue Hill area. The Fire and Rescue Service have been in discussion with Connect since June 2019, as a lack of fire hydrants in the Blue Hill area and have completed a risk assessment of that environment. At the time of the initial discussion, the main water lines in those areas were of 2 inch in diameter or less. For the installation of fire hydrants, the Fire Service would require 4 inch to give the quantity of water required. However since 2019 Connect have installed a 90mm water main which is 4 inch, near the Head O' Wain Clinic and they now have 2 hydrants in stock. The Fire and Rescue Service are working with Connect over the installation. At the current time we do not have a definitive date of when Connect will be able to install the hydrants. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Andrew Turner any further questions?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

No just to thank the Honourable Minister for his response.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Next question please.

***Question 6. The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex to ask the Hon. Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development tell this House what progress has been made to date regarding refurbishment of the fish processing facility at Rupert's and what work remains to be done before it can become fully operational?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I would like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. Mr Speaker before I proceed I seem to be doing a lot of standing and sitting so would you mind if I remove my jacket?

The Speaker –

I will allow that. Does anyone else wish to remove their jackets? If they wish to, then please go ahead. Please proceed then Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

To give an update on Fish Processing Factory, so to date Saint Tuna Corporation or STC have partner-shipped with SHG and has almost completed procurement of all the necessary equipment needed, to operate a modern, fish processing factory, capable of processing fish for both local markets and the export market. This include: a vacuum machine, new generator, a replacement forklift, mincing machines, satellite communications from ship to shore, replacement of ice machine, CCTV systems, IT equipment, fish processing equipment, work vehicles, fencing, reefers, reefer wheel sets so that reefers can be manhandled with ease, maintain cold rooms. STC have, sorry I'm just going go on to some of the works that STC have undertaken. So Saint Tuna Corporation, STC has re-floored the outside shed area and has already begun re-flooring of the inner, interior of the of the Fish Processing building, to bring it up to HACCP standard, as required by their lease agreement. So most of this new equipment is now on island and some is still on its way. The Saint Tuna Corporation has also undertaken a full evaluation of the utilities service to the factory and they have identified significant inefficiencies in the energy use. So we are help financing the installation of some new solar panels on the roof to help make the factory further efficient. The only significant delay to the project is the delivery of the containerised blast freezer from the USA. The freezer was chosen to enable minus 45 degrees freezing and this item was chosen because it was believed to be the most cost effective way. And due to logistic issues, no doubt Covid has played a part in this, it has taken an additional 3 months to deliver to the island and because of this SHG has agreed to an extension of 3 months, which will take us up to February 2022 to complete the refurbishment. STC are also implementing an internal measure to ensure that operations can continue of the factory in the meanwhile and once this piece of equipment arrives it should mean that the factory will be fully operational. So just to give you an indication of the works that is still to be complete, so what needs to happen is the installation of some equipment for management of accounts, so some software equipment, installing of fire alarm systems, installing some internal air conditioning units, and also providing electric service to the reefer park bays, as I mentioned earlier. Also it needs a small amount of work to install some plastic fly screens and some temperature control curtains. But it has been identified that there might be some additional floor works required. As the factory undergo the refurbishments, there was some works that wasn't previously deemed necessary but because the floor was uncovered, there was some works that was deemed necessary. Thank you, I hope that will go a little way in explaining the factory. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. As St Helena Government is contributing up to £500k to the refurbishment, what monitoring procedures are in place?

The Speaker –

Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. We do have a Project Board in place to monitor the spending of STC. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Will the Honourable Minister please elaborate a little about the composition of the Project Board and its Terms of Reference please?

The Speaker –

Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

I won't go through the Terms of Reference but I will be happy to share that with the Honourable Member. The composition of the Project Board is my Head of Directorate, Dax Richards, who is Chair I believe, yes? Also there is members of STC, as well as the government official members on that board. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

And thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Mr Speaker I thank the Honourable Minister for the response he gave regarding physical progress however he has not mentioned financial progress and my question concerned "progress". So I would be grateful if he could give some feedback regarding financial progress. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

I thank the Honourable Member for her question. As you alluded to earlier, the grant was agreed for up to £500k. So to date approximately £375k has been spent. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. The Honourable Minister indicated that the completion date is now indicatively February but he also indicated that there is now some further works that may be required. I visited the facility myself and I can see that there is substantial further work that needs to be done, so is February still considered to be a realistic date?

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. Yes February is still the estimated date of completion. I'm also aware that there's still some work to be done but as I said, the procurement of the material for this work has already been completed and is here on island, so I anticipate that this could move forward speedy the not too distant future. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any further questions Dr. Corinda Essex? Thank you. Any further questions on this? Honourable Rosemary Bargo.

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Can the Minister clarify his statement about full operation in February 2022? Does this mean that export services will commence from this date? Thank you.

The Speaker –

And thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. Yes it is envisioned that the factory will be fully operational, followed shortly by the factory being able to process, freeze and export fish, as well as process fish for the open market. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you. No further questions? Honourable Karl Thrower.

The Hon. Karl Thrower –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Member, given the fact that we've just a £495 increase in the cost of shipping a container, say whether there's any calculations been done on when it becomes a significant problem for the business case on exporting frozen fish?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

I'm not sure if the question relates but I will try and answer it for the Honourable Member. The £495 which you're referring to, the BAF, usually is specifically for containers coming in. The way this business will operate is they will be exporting fish, so I don't envisage that the £495 will play a part in the exporting of fish. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

And thank you Honourable Member. Any further questions, no? Can we move on to the next question please?

***Question 7. The Hon Ronald Coleman to ask the Hon Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning.***

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning tell this Council, what are the threats in and around St Helena considered to be contributing to climate change and what mitigations are in place to lower or eradicate such threats?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I would like to thank my Honourable friend for his question. The threats contributing to climate change in and around St Helena has been identified by the carbon footprint activity during the St Helena Net Zero Carbon Scoping exercise undertaken in March 2021. The estimated carbon foot print contributions by the broad threat areas such as the:

- Private road transport = 24%
- Agriculture = 21%
- Requirements for Commercial energy = 17%
- Requirements for Residential energy = 16%
- Shared road transport = 8%
- Requirements for government energy = 5%
- Waste management = 5% and
- Waterborne transport = 4%

So Mr Speaker, a National Climate Change Policy was endorsed, in which aims to reduce the quantity of greenhouse gas emissions created on island by making better use of the island's natural resources, in order to maintain a good quality of life for residents now and in the future. As a mechanism for achieving the objectives of the Climate Change Policy, an Action Plan was implemented to reduce emissions to help St Helena prepare and adapt to the predicted effects of climate change. So Mr Speaker I would like to go on by saying what St Helena is already doing to reduce its carbon footprint. So Mr Speaker, Environment, Natural Resources & Planning Directorate is participating in the Green Overseas Program with other Overseas Territories to co-construct and design actions and activities related to climate change resilience and renewable energy transition that the Green Overseas Programme will support and finance. So Mr Speaker, with the cancellation of the PASH Renewable Energy Contract, SHG is working with Connect Saint Helena on alternative options to achieve our national renewable energy objective. In respect of Agriculture and Food, it is hoped that reducing reliance on the imports for consumption through increased production of the local produce will assist this as well. Furthermore Mr Speaker, a 3 year Cloud Forest Project has commenced in order to implement the Peaks National Park Management Plan, so that we have a better land management. Off course as I mentioned Mr Speaker, this is a 3 year project that we have received funding for but it is likely it will take more than 3 years to achieve. Also Mr Speaker, in respect of the Waste Management, a CSSF funded project to develop a Materials Recycling Facility at Horse

Point Landfill Site to recycle aluminium and steel cans, plastic, cardboard and glass has commenced. Furthermore Mr Speaker, Waste Management Services, and I'm certain that some members of the community might see a strange piece of equipment around Town because I was raising my eyebrows when I saw that, that the service has already embraced electrification and converted their petrol small machinery to lithium powered and recently commenced using an electric street cleaning machine with zero emissions to enhance public areas cleaning. So that is the piece of machine that I said Mr Speaker, that I raised my eyebrows when I saw it in the Grand Parade. So Mr Speaker I also will take the opportunity in informing the Honourable Member of what St Helena could do more to reduce its carbon footprint. So for me Mr Speaker in respect of Energy, if we use the transition of 100% renewable energy to drive electrification and energy efficiency measures. In respect of Agriculture and Food, we should be looking at increasing the horticultural production and reduce the reliance on imports. We could invest in a forestry programme to reforest the island by delivering additional cloud forest cover up to more than 10 hectares. As a government Mr Speaker we should lead by example and work in partnership to mobilise the entire island to address climate change. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Ronald Coleman?

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Yes Mr Speaker, I'd just like to thank the Honourable Member for that reply and the work that's been done.

The Speaker –

Thank you, are any further questions on that? No, can we move on to the next question please?

***Question 8. The Hon Rosemary Bargo to ask the Hon Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning.***

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning tell this Council, what plans are in place, if any for the introduction of Labour Subsidy to Farmers to assist them with increasing output?

The Speaker –

Did you say introduction or re-introduction? Could you read the question again please?

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Will the Honourable Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning tell this Council, what plans are in place, if any for the re-introduction of Labour Subsidy to Farmers to assist them with increasing output?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I'd like to thank my Honourable friend for her question. Firstly Mr Speaker I'd like to take the opportunity to declare my interest because my Dad is a registered part-time farmer.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member.

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. So Mr Speaker due to financial constraints, Environment, Natural Resources & Planning Portfolio does not currently have any plans to re-introduce a labour or wage subsidy for farming. Any subsidy provided must be in line with St Helena Government Subsidies and Grants Policy. Prioritisation on who should be targeted and staff resources will be required to monitor all claims and also to monitor the productivity and quality. Following an External Audit Review in 2007 it was established that the subsidy did not effectively contribute to or achieve its primary objective, which was to support genuine agricultural production. So my understanding Mr Speaker that in 2005 to 2006 financial year, £27,602 was allocated for the farmers as a subsidy and in 2006/2007, £31,120 was allocated. So Mr Speaker I was trying to demonstrate to my Honourable friend as to the amount of money that was previously approved to give an idea as to how much funding we're talking about. And of course Mr Speaker Environment & Natural Resources Portfolio will be willing to consider the introduction of labour subsidy to farmers if funding is provided for such scheme. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Rosemary Bargo any follow-up to that?

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Thank you Mr Speaker, no thanks.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Any follow-up questions, Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker will the Honourable Minister give consideration to other options apart from direct subsidy, which could provide support to farmers who are finding it difficult to engage labour. For example, perhaps it could take some form of 3-day work scheme where individuals could be allocated to work on farms rather than actually farmers be given the subsidy in hand. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

And thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank the Honourable Dr. Essex for her question. As indicated that we as a Portfolio would be willing to give this consideration. I'm certain that we also, when doing this consideration would include what the Honourable friend has mentioned.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. I don't see any other lights up so can we move on to the next question please?

***Question 9. The Hon Robert Midwinter to ask the Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development tell this Council, what is the current position regarding the Rock Fall Memorial, and when is it anticipated that this will be sited in a suitable location?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. For the benefit of the listening public I would just like to give a little bit of background on this and before I get to the current positioning regarding the Rock Fall memorial. The Rock Fall memorial, a replica water fountain is intended to replace the rock fall water fountain that was erected in memory of those who lost their lives through the rock fall incident in 1890. An application was for development permission for siting the replica water fountain at the edge of the pavement area in front of the Canister, in Jamestown. This was submitted in March 2020 by Enterprise St Helena. Responsibility for the fountain was then passed from Enterprise St Helena to what was then the Environment & Natural Resources and Planning Directorate. The Environment & Natural Resources Committee was of the opinion that the fountain would enhance the area, being a replica of the original fixture in that same area. The then Environmental & Natural Resources Committee (ENRC), which I'll refer to from going forward, it's a mouthful, was of the opinion that a temporary siting would enable a better assessment of the location. Following concerns from the Land Development Control Authority, about safety and restricting pedestrians from walking along that area and also it would probably be obscured by the 2 car parks directly in front of that area, so what they did was they made the temporary application for the siting to be only for 3 months in the first instance. This was done in March 2021 however planning permission were refused. An appeal against this decision was placed with the Land Development Appeal Tribunal in July 2021. The appeal was held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and will resume on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021, so not too far in the distant future. I think that we can just say that the outcome from this appeal would determine the next steps going forward. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Mr Speaker I thank the Honourable Minister for his answer. Is the Honourable Minister able to say what other sites have been considered and why these have been deemed unsuitable?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his supplementary question. I wouldn't say other sites was unsuitable because there were some sites that was identified, one of them being the Castle Gardens but it was chosen that the Canister be the preferred site. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Robert Midwinter?



The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Mr Speaker again I thank the Honourable Minister for his response. If we find that the application does not succeed again, will other sites be considered, Mr Speaker?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question and take the undergoing that yes, if the appeal system was denied and not to proceed, I think the next steps is to then look at other areas for possible siting of this replica. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Any further questions?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

No thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Any further questions, Honourable Andrew Turner?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Will the Honourable Minister tell this Council how much money has been spent to date on acquiring and attempting to situate this fountain?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. However I don't have those figures to hand at this time but I will take an undertaking to provide those figures for the Honourable Member. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member and when those figures are provided will you make that public?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Mr Speaker yes I intend to make that public.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Any further questions on that? No, then can we move to the next question please.

***Question 10. The Hon Gillian Brooks to ask the Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Gillian Brooks –

Mr Speaker will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development give this House an update on what measures are being proposed to address

parking issues in Jamestown and alleviate congested areas, in particular the area by the Bridge and Lower Market Street?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. I think I'm well informed because I live in Jamestown but there has been increased traffic congestion in Jamestown in recent years therefore there is need for better traffic management. There is a limited number of parking spaces available at peak times. Police has seen an increase in the number of vehicles that are now licenced and using our roads but a paid parking scheme for Jamestown was developed by the previous ENRC and it has been discussed widely on several occasions, including consultations with the public. The aim of such paid parking scheme was to try and encourage people to use alternative methods of transport, such as the buses and also try to encourage more car sharing. Also this would help alleviate some of those parking spaces and make a few more available. The whole scheme would be underpinned by a fixed penalty legislation, which would serve to fine offenders but not criminalise them. The Legislation was brought into force in April 2020 but the Regulations still have to be fully developed and the fees agreed for the Fixed Penalty Notices. Currently a revised proposal for a parking scheme is being prepared and will be submitted to my Portfolio, for the listening public's benefit, the Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development Portfolio, to the board for their initial discussions. The aim of such scheme is to better manage the supply of parking spaces in Jamestown and alternatively the outcome would hopefully try and to address some of the traffic congestion, which we're now faced with, with working and living in Jamestown. So I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Gillian Brooks?

The Hon. Gillian Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Any other Member wishes to speak? Honourable Mark, no I think it was Honourable Andrew Turner who first had his light on.

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister tell this Council what plans are in place, if any to encourage the use of smaller vehicles, such as motor cycles and scooters type to alleviate parking issues?

The Speaker –

Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. Currently there are no plans in place but as you know this is a new government, this could be something that we consider when we start renewing this, like I said its coming to my Portfolio so this is

something that we could take into consideration in how we could incorporate that. Thank you Mr Speaker. Thank you Honourable Member.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Mark Brooks. Honourable Andrew Turner do you wish to continue?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister tell this Council what plans are in place, if any to look at loading times for goods vehicles, in order to alleviate congestion?

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. As I said earlier we will look at this again and I think that would be part of the whole new discussions around the whole issue, so I would incorporate that question into the discussions that will soon take place. So I'd like to thank the Honourable Member. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Is the Honourable Minister aware that the area in front of the Jamestown Market is supposed to have double yellow lines and will he give an undertaking to ensure that it is put back in place prior to the Fixed Penalty Notices?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Thank the Honourable Member for his question. I am not aware but I will take the opportunity to look at this the same time when it is up for renewal shortly.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

I thank the Honourable Minister for his response.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Member indicate who is going to be involved in undertaking the review?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

I do apologise Mr Speaker, could I ask the Honourable Member to repeat her question?

The Speaker –

Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Member please indicate who is going to be undertaking the review?

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. It would be I think in partnership with the Sustainable Development Committee and Jeffrey's Portfolio which is Safety and Security.

The Speaker –

Whose Portfolio?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Minister Jeffrey Ellick. Sorry can I say His Portfolio is Safety and Security, so we will try to undertake this jointly. Also under my Portfolio is the roads so no doubt they will play a part in trying to resolve this. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

I thank the Honourable Minister for his response. Will the Honourable Minister give an undertaking there will be widespread consultation on any proposals? The previous parking scheme was widely consulted on, island-wide, and was developed in great detail and I think it is necessary to continue the same procedures for a review. And indeed the majority of the recommendations that were in the previous document was fully supported. The main issue, on a point of information that resulted in it not being rolled out was lack of resources for enforcement and implementation. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex. Can you say which document you were referring to?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

The Jamestown Parking Scheme Proposal Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. There is, as I said we are looking at it but there is no significant changes within that proposal identified so far. So I don't see any need for additional rounds of public consultation however like I said, if we do have the discussion and a matter arises that does need a new round, I give an undertaking that that will be carried out at the time. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex, no?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you.

The Speaker –

Honourable Karl Thrower.

The Hon. Karl Thrower –

Thank you Mr Speaker, Might I rise on a point of information?

The Speaker –

You may.

The Hon. Karl Thrower –

Part of the planning conditions of the R2 project was that a full traffic management plan for Jamestown, must be completed within 12 months of the opening of the road and part of that was to include public consultation due to that the impact that the of moving all the freight around to Rupert's Valley will have on the occupants of Napoleon Street. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you for that point of information. Honourable Mark Brooks do you wish to respond to that point of information?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

No I do not wish to respond. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Mark Brooks, can I ask you why?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Because he raise a point of information Sir and I took that information on board Sir. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

I thought I'd give you the opportunity to reply, that's all. Thank you. Any further questions on that? No, can we move to the next question then please.

***Question 11. The Hon Dr Corinda Essex to ask the Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development please state precisely what is the current situation regarding the re-location of the bus shelter at Hutt's Gate and that near Scotland and the erection of the bus shelters planned for Levelwood, Sea View and Two Gun Saddle?

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. The site of the current bus shelter near Hutt's Gate on the road to Levelwood was deemed no longer suitable due primarily to a change in user demand. So several attempts has been made to secure a suitable land for a shelter in the area near the Vicarage, near Hutt's Gate Store building where the need for a shelter is greatest. Further discussions with the land owner near the Vicarage, has resulted in agreement in September 2021 to use the land for erection of the shelter in this area but pending availability of funds. Representation was made to the previous Environment & Natural Resources Committee from the public regarding a relocation of the shelter at Scotland, which was deemed unsuitable for residents residing in the Kunjie Field area. Plans to relocate the shelter across the road has been discussed but work on this shelter was to be a lower priority, given the limited resources. Planning permission for a bus shelter at Red Hill, Levelwood was refused by the Planning Development Control Authority in August 2021, on the grounds that the bus shelter in the proposed location would encourage public service vehicles, that is, buses to stop and manoeuvre on a steep junction and a blind corner. This posed a risk in terms of Highway safety, not only to pedestrians but also to vehicular traffic. Prior to this planning permission for a different site in Red Hill, near the Sheltered Accommodation had been given by the Land Development Control Authority in August 2019. The planning process included a public consultation but no representation was received and the work to progress to the stage of seeking expressions of interest for contractors for this work, so there was no progress after, sorry there was some progress to proceed to the expressions of interest. The decision to apply for an alternative site at Red Hill was taken by the then ENRC Committee following representation from the public. So we got to the stage where we will now have to consider whether to revert back to the original plan. So regarding the shelter in Sea View area a suitable safe site is still to be identified. There is no suitable Crown land in that area for a shelter that will provide a safe access and use. So discussions with the land owner have exhausted. All potential options for a suitable safe site and a detailed assessment of Crown land in that area has already been done. In Two Gun saddle a site has been identified, it is adjacent to the southern end of the paved area that overlooks Heart Shaped Waterfall. Discussions are still in progress and with stakeholders input, we will then see if this is a suitable site. So that's a little update to where we got to with that. I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I rise on a point of information first before I ask my question.

The Speaker –

Please do.

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

I was a member of the former Environment & Natural Resources Committee and as far as I was aware there was budget provision, both for the relocation of the Hutt's Gate bus shelter and potentially that of the one near Scotland. Indeed there, actually to my knowledge these 2 if not 3 prefabricated bus shelters on island would only require installation. So installation costs should not be excessive and I would ask the Honourable Chief Minister why it is that this is being reported in this House today that there are not the financial resources to continue with the installation of those 2 bus shelters which are already on island?

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I will try and address that question. There is no budget provision within the Infrastructure budget for new builds such as bus shelters. Funds has to be allocated to urgent priorities, building maintenances and so on but there is maybe a glimmer of hope that this could be catered for, an alternative bid to made to the Micro Projects budget from the EDIP programme. As you are aware and like you said there are currently 2 bus shelters in storage but the additional funding would still be needed for the civil works and that's the works for initially laying the foundations in which the bus shelter would be situated. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Mr Speaker does the Honourable Minister accept that the longer these 2 bus shelters remain in storage, the more chance there is of them deteriorating?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

I am aware of this Mr Speaker, so we will ty and do everything possible and we will try to look for alternative funding through the Micro Projects budget. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Does the Honourable Minister also accept that if we want to encourage best use of transport into Jamestown, the need for bus shelters in the rural areas is going to become greater than it is at this current point in time?

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd like to thank the Honourable Member and just to reiterate that yes, I am aware of this and as I said, I will try and find some alternative funding within the Micro

Projects, so this will also help with the previous question which will alleviate congestion in Town.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member, thank you very much. Any further questions, Honourable Karl Thrower.

The Hon. Karl Thrower –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Could the Honourable Minister say whether, when we're now planning future developments such as the CDA, whether bus shelters and the potential for widening roads in the future is being taken into account when the Crown are keeping part of the land? So basically there seems to be the problem with space with bus shelters when we have to place them after the fact but if we were just to keep a few meters at the side of the road, when we actually plan a new development or a new road then that would get rid of that problem.

The Speaker –

I was considering whether that was relevant but yes it is because the member did mention the other things as well. Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question and also for his advice, which I think some of that came through and yes I would take that advice on board in future plans to make sure we try and look for all alternatives and all solutions going forward and also prepare for our future plans in going forward. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much that was well considered. Next question please.

***Question 12. The Hon Andrew Turner to ask the Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development tell this Council, what social impact has been from the recent change from a Household based, to a Family based benefits structure?

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. Your question was what social impact has been from the recent changes from a Household based, to a Family based structure. Just to say that this was only introduced in October 2021, so it will be too soon, it will be too soon to give you an indication of the social impacts but what I can do is run through what this new definition has incorporated, to give you some idea of the benefits that has come about from introducing this new structure. Okay so to date there has been 51 new families that has registered as a result of the changes in the IRB, including 26 adults with disability, 1 carer for children, 3 adults aged 65 plus who are now eligible for Basic Island Pension, most of them who have worked on Ascension and in the UK and had qualified for IRB as each as a family in a household. It also has been 12 persons aged 65 plus, sorry Mr



Speaker I will read that out again as I left out a word. 3 adults aged 65 who are not eligible for Basic Island Pension, most of this is because they have worked on Ascension and the UK and qualified for IRB, as each is a family in a household. But 12 persons aged 65 plus are not eligible for pension in receipt of IRB top up. 27 have dropped off the list because they have either obtained work and I think out of those 27 that have obtained work, that is 16 and the rest have assets that is twice the annual minimum wage which is currently 12,675, so that leaves you with 12, if you take 16 and 11 that makes you 27, so that leaves you with 12 people. Some of the good news is that the total number of families on IRB is currently 217 plus 24 in receipt of rent only. But I think as a new Council we could do our bit in offering our support to those who might have difficulty understanding the changes that has come about only recently. And my Honourable friend Andrew Turner only last night in his constituency meeting suggested to constituents that this is something that we could assist with. So I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question. I also would like to say that I'm aware that some people are having difficulty understanding that, understanding the new changes, the new definition and like I said along with the rest of the Members we'll do our best to try and help and support those people. But overall Sir, Mr Speaker I do think there has been a positive impact from the new changes in household definition to family definition. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Honourable Andrew Turner?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Is the Honourable Minister aware that there are cases now where people's properties, where they are unable to live in them are being counted against them making them unable to claim benefits?

The Speaker –

Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Yes my Honourable Friend I am aware of this but as I said these policies are designed to try and incorporate everyone however this is not a perfect policy and I don't think you'll ever get a perfect policy because if it was a perfect policy it would incorporate everyone. But we as a new government could try and look at this to see how we could better improve this, so it incorporates as many people as possible. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

And thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Andrew Turner?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister state what provisions are there, if any in the current policy for exceptional circumstances cases, for those who may not necessarily fit in the black and white of the current policy?

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, thank you Honourable Member for your question. Currently that would go to Social Care and emergencies. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member, Honourable Mark Brooks. Any further questions, Honourable Andrew Turner, no, nobody? Then can we move on to the next question please.

***Question 13. The Hon Robert Midwinter to ask the Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development tell this Council, what strategic assets have been divested by the St Helena Government since the launch of the Investor Prospectus, and how much revenue has been generated as a result?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks and once again you're up but we will be having lunch after all of these questions but could you answer this question please?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and yes I would look forward to a break at lunch. So I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question but again Mr Speaker, for the benefit of the listening public, I'd like to give a little brief background to how we got here. So the Investor Prospectus was first published by SHG and Enterprise St Helena in October 2019. So since its launch, no strategic assets has been divested by St Helena Government however 3 properties are currently under offer for consideration and this is, will be coming to Executive Council shortly. But this has only come about after the 6<sup>th</sup> round of disposable undertakings and these 3 properties is currently under consideration and this was done by the Asset SHG Sustainable Development team. And so this is the 1<sup>st</sup> round for the Sustainable Development team and they have managed to secure 3 properties for consideration. So I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question, thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I thank the Honourable Minister for his response. Can the Honourable Minister say were any restrictions placed on the types of use for these properties?

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

No I'm not aware of any restrictions, they can be sold for business use or residential use. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister say where these are listed buildings, can you say if any checks will be undertaken to ensure that these properties are being properly maintained by the new owners?

The Speaker –

Thank you, Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question and I would like to assure the Honourable Member that yes, checks will be made. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

No thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much and Honourable Mark Brooks, the question also asked how much revenue has been generated as a result. I don't think you answered that part.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker for reminding me of that. So it is difficult to give an actual figure, as I said the 3 properties are still currently under consideration. But I would anticipate that the revenue received from these 3 properties will be in excess of £600k and that revenue will go into the Capital Receipts Fund. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much and I'm glad I asked the question. Honourable Robert Midwinter, anything further?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Nothing further at this stage.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. So can we move on to the next question please?

***Question 14. The Hon Dr Corinda Essex to ask the Hon Minister for Safety, Security & Home Affairs.***

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Safety, Security and Home Affairs tell this Council, what action remains to be taken before the revised legislation to underpin the new Immigration Policy, widely consulted upon approximately a year ago, can come before this Honourable House?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Jeffrey Ellick?

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I'd just like to thank the Honourable Member for her question. Mr Speaker following consultation on the approval of the Immigration Policy, a draft Immigration Amendment Bill 2021 was finalised by the Attorney General's Chambers and submitted for consideration to the Council Committee, then responsible. Thereafter a new request was made for further amendments in respect of powers of Immigration Officers. Instructions regarding these powers were never finalised to the Attorney General's office, Chambers sorry. The view taken by the previous government was that the legislation should not be progressed until it included the further amendments, for which instructions were needed. It then became apparent that instructions were such, it would not be finalised in time to have the Bill presented to the previous Legislative Council before dissolution. Last week final instructions were given to the Attorney General's Chambers on this matter and they have now sent a final draft of the Immigration Amendment Bill to my Portfolio Directorate for consideration. As soon as I've considered and agreed the Bill, I intend to submit it to Executive Council for consideration. If Executive Council approves the Bill, I expect it will be presented to Legislative Council early next year. It is important to note that as we have a new government and Legislative Council both will now need to approve all parts of the Bill. This is a matter I'm aware the Council is keen to consider. My intention is that before this Bill is considered by Executive Council there will be caucus on it with all Elected Members. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

I thank the Honourable Minister for his response. Can I have an indicative date, the beginning of the New Year or June, when it is likely to come before this Honourable House, please, given that you said there has to be prior consultation, both with the Executive Council and Legislative Council?

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Jeffrey Ellick?

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

I can't really give an indicative date but what we will be looking at is possibly within January at the earliest. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex?

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Is the Honourable Minister aware - and I'm sure he is but I would just like confirmation - that the Immigration is one of the urgent topics that was progressed as far as possible under the previous Council and is one which potentially has bearing upon future development of the island and key cross cutting issues, and therefore would he agree to give it a high level of priority? Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Jeffrey Ellick?

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Yes I'm well aware it is a top priority. Like I said before we will look for it to come to the House possibly in January and I think that will be the next sitting of Legislative Council. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much and we're going to be announcing the next and final question and once again it's going to be the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development, Mark Brooks. You'll be glad to know that it's the last one Honourable Mark Brooks but can we announce the question please?

***Question 15. The Hon Ronald Coleman to ask the Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development.***

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Will the Honourable Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development tell this Council, how much money was spent on the setting up and running of the Enterprise St Helena organisation at Ladder Hill and the rationale for shutting it down?

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for his question however within that question seems to be 3 questions. One was for how much was spent in setting up the Enterprise St Helena, what was the reason for the organisation and the rationale for shutting down the organisation. So again it's quite a lengthy question, almost 3 questions in one Mr Speaker as I alluded to. So I'll do my best in trying to answer this but I think for the listening public, again it might be an advantage if I give a little bit of background to this Sir and I'll also help address the Honourable Member's question in why this was set up. So Enterprise St Helena was a new non-governmental organisation established under local legislation. Primarily it was to promote the growth of the economy of St Helena, to the development of existing businesses and to promote the island to new investors. It developed, the vision was to develop and create a sustainable and vibrant economy for the benefit of the island, whilst creating opportunities for all. So the organisation was jointly funded by the then DFID, which was the Department for International Development and also St Helena Government. So just to get into some figures, the investment by St Helena Government over the time was £9.1m. This was between financial year 2012/13 through to financial year 2020/21. It also had a contribution from DFID of £8.6m, so in all a total contribution over these years of £17.7m. The ESH budget was approximately £2m per annum, sorry the final years the budget was approximately £2m per year and of that SHG was still contributing about 900k, to be precise 897k per year. So when Enterprise St Helena was in its final year of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of funding, DFID, the Department for International Development, they suspended in March 2021. A review was undertaken by SHG on how best to deliver the economical development of activities going forward for St Helena. At a formal Legislative Council meeting, LegCo that was held in July 2020, 2 potential options was presented, one of which proposed a scenario where ESH would no longer exist but instead the delivery of all economical development activities would be driven by the new Treasury and Sustainable Development, which is currently within my Portfolio. It was also that the approach to that particular activities would be divested out to the private sector, under a management contract agreement. This would include some subsidies

where it was needed appropriate. The other scenario related to a 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of ESH support from now, which would be the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, the FCDO, an SHG current co-funder whereby activities currently undertaken by ESH, would gradually be handed over to either the private sector or St Helena Government and this was designed to happen over a period of 3 years; so with those activities being outsourced to the private sector, falling under the contract management with ESH in the first instance.

During that discussion with Members at that time, it was suggested that a hybrid option would develop. This was followed up by ESH Executive Management team with the Board of Directors. So that option analysed consideration for staffing cost, independence and the ability to progress key work streams, including Companies Register, digital development, tourist branding and investor enabling. So the Sustainable Development was the option that was preferred, and that is why it came back to government, the Sustainable Development Portfolio. I think in some way why that decision was chosen was because it would see a saving of around £110k per year but if we were to proceed with phase 3 and the continuation of ESH, it would mean that an additional £295k would have to be spent to facilitate this decision. So as I said the decision was made to support the Sustainable Development option thereby reducing funding for economical development and redistributing it into other areas such as Health and Education. As a result Enterprise St Helena finished at the time with DFID at the end of phase 2; that was when the funding came to an end. Since then like I said St Helena Government has invested in a new Sustainable Development team. But just to give you a bit more information on how those cost savings was made, I'll just give you a bit a breakdown. So Enterprise St Helena run on 27 staff and that was into its final years of existence, whilst Sustainable Development team runs on 11 staff members. So under ESH there were 4 Tourism Officers, a Supervisor and a Tourism Manager and the Sustainable Development team there are now just Head of Visitors Information and an Assistant. In ESH there were also 4 in HR and Finance, now there are none because that has been incorporated within ESH, sorry within SHG. There were also, there were 3 Administration staff in ESH, now there is none because again that has been incorporated in SHG. And where there were 1 Chief Executive and 4 Directors in ESH, there are now just 1 Head of Sustainable Development. So the new Sustainable Development team has also taken on some additional responsibilities, so this new team now are responsible for the Tourist Office, strategic asset disposal, business property, it also offers an investor point of contact, marketing and also recently has the added responsibility of Civil Aviation and the list goes on; SHG digital strategy and also providing the provision for strategic economical advice. The new team now is closer in government, which makes it simpler for the team to work in partnership with SHG. I can give you first-hand knowledge of this because when I want to speak to my Head of Sustainable Development, I simply need to just run down a few flights of stairs. So just to talk about a bit of financial benefits, so like I said earlier we budget for the year 2021/22, when ESH was still in operation the budget was around £2m. Sorry in the last years of ESH of 2020, the budget was around £2m, of which £897k was funded by SHG. I think that brings us up to date but I will also add that Audit for St Helena is currently working on a Performance Audit, to determine whether ESH achieved its intended outcomes. So there has been like I said a significant investment in this company of £17.7m over the given years and the audit would help illustrate if that was a good investment for the money that was spent. So that audit is intended to be completed in the first quarter of next year, so 2022. So I hope that gives you some information in answering your questions, Honourable friend. I'd like to thank you Mr Speaker.

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Mr Speaker, I'd just like to thank the Honourable Member for that comprehensive reply and we will await the Audit report. Thank you.

The Speaker –  
Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –  
Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker as a former Executive Director of Enterprise St Helena I must declare an interest. However can the Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure and Sustainable Development tell this Council what was the overall rating awarded by the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office for Phase I and Phase II of the project and can the Minister say what this rating actually means?

The Speaker –  
Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –  
Thank you Mr Speaker and I'd like to thank the Honourable Member for that question. I think it was a "A" that was given on both of those occasions but that was reached by the intended outcomes set by DFID I think at the time. So yes it did meet an "A".

The Speaker –  
Thank you very much Honourable Member. Honourable Robert Midwinter?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –  
Thank you Mr Speaker. If I can rise on a point of information Mr Speaker for the benefit of the listening public, I wish to let them know ESH received an overall "A" rating for both Phase I and Phase II and that this is defined as outputs met expectation. This rating means that the FCDO were generally satisfied with the overall performance of ESH against the targets that were agreed. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –  
Thank you for that point of information. I take it Honourable Mark Brooks you wouldn't want to respond to that.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –  
No Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –  
Thank you very much. Any further questions on that? Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex.

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –  
Thank you Mr Speaker. May I rise on a point of information?

The Speaker –  
Please do.

The Hon. Dr. Corinda Essex –  
Thank you. When the Honourable Minister was comparing the funding required now with the funding used during the life of Enterprise St Helena, in fact it is not correct to compare it as

“like with like” because the DFID funding was for project activities, such as support to private sector businesses, grants and other forms of assistance, which in fact are no longer provided. So the element of approximately £900k, which was for the recurrent expenditure is comparable to the current outputs of the government. But the wider figure, a much larger figure, which was supplied by DFID in fact enabled quite substantial support to be given to the private sector and there is currently no funding available for that purpose. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you for that point of information Honourable Dr. Essex. Honourable Mark Brooks do you wish to respond to any of that at all?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker and I do take into consideration what my Honourable friend did say but just to reiterate, the budget was around £2m in the final year of which of that £897k was SHG’s contribution and I was trying to compare the savings and why the decision was made because under the current Sustainable Development team, it is estimated to be a contribution of around £750k. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much for clarifying that Honourable Mark Brooks. Any further questions, no? And I think all of the questions now have been dealt with.

## **Council Suspended**

## **Council Resumed**

The Speaker –

I hope you’ve all had a good lunch and was able to get over all of that this morning. I felt a little bit sorry for Honourable Mark Brooks answering all those questions but there were no others to put in between, so it was one after the other but I think we all did very well for this, quite a large meeting and the first one. But we are now back in the House and I call on the Clerk to announce the next item of business please.

## **7. MOTIONS**

### **1. The Hon Minister for Treasury, Infrastructure & Sustainable Development:**

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this Legislative Council Remuneration's and Allowance Amendment Bill 2021 be approved in principle and referred to a committee of the Whole Council. This Bill 2021 which falls within the sections 73 (2) (a).

The Speaker –

I'm sorry Honourable Member I was supposed to ask if there's a seconder to this.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Oh, I do beg your pardon.



The Hon. Allen Cansick –

Mr Speaker, I just remind the Honourable Member there is actually a certificate of Urgency to be presented first and then a motion to suspend the Standing Orders before you get to the substantive Bill.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

So first I need a seconder?

The Speaker –

Yes do you have a seconder?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much, Honourable Mover do you have a certificate of etc.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Yes I do have a Certificate of Urgency signed by his Excellency the Governor.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. You may proceed.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, the 2021 Bill that falls in with section 73 (2) (a) of the Constitution, do hereby recommend that Legislative Council to forthwith proceed on the Legislative Council's Remunerations and Allowances Amendments Bill 2021.

The Speaker –

Speak to the Motion.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Sorry Mr Speaker, just getting a bit confused here with the different papers. Mr Speaker, I wish to suspend the Standing Orders. I do beg your pardon Mr Speaker for taking the extra time to go through my papers.

The Speaker –

It's quite alright Honourable Member.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Mr Speaker I beg to move that the Standing Orders 12 section 5 (3) is suspended for the next item on the Order Paper, so that the Legislative Council's Remunerations and Allowance Amendment Bill can be proceeded today.

The Speaker –

Is there a seconder to that please?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you. So the question is that we suspend Standing Orders, so the next item can be dealt with.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

Honourable Mover?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I raise in support of this Motion and confirm that plans are well advanced for the interment. Oh sorry that's the wrong, I do beg your pardon Mr Speaker. I still getting a bit confused with the Papers.

The Speaker –

That's all right just take your time.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Mr Speaker I beg to move that the Legislative Council Remuneration's and Allowances Amendments Bill 2021 be approved in principle and referred to a Committee of a Whole Council.

The Speaker –

Is there a seconder?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

The Hon. Allen Cansick -

Mr Speaker, Honourable Mark Brooks needs to speak to the Motion now.

The Speaker –

Yes that's what I was about to ask him to. Go ahead Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker this Bill has a long title of a Bill for Ordinance to be amended for Legislative Council Remunerations and Allowances 2010, to adjust the Remunerations Allowance and benefits for Members of Legislative Council, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. Mr Speaker it is somewhat uncomfortable presenting a Bill that will effectively determine my own salary, along with the salary of my fellow Members here. However it is unfortunate that the task does falls under my Portfolio. Members will be aware of section 72 of the Constitution of St Helena, which contains the relevant provisions as to how the Remunerations and allowance of Members of Legislative Council are set. Section 72 of the Constitution requires firstly that the Remunerations Allowance and other Benefits for the Chief

Minister, Ministers and other Elected Members, also the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker are to be provided in the Ordinance, that is why we had to consider the Bill here today. Secondly the Legislative Council can only proceed on such a Bill if the report of an Independent Body reported by the Governor acting in the direction recommended the appropriate levels of Remunerations and Allowance and Benefits be laid before the Council and be published. Mr Speaker the report has been published and it's laid before the Council today. And thirdly that the levels of Remunerations Allowances and Benefits in the Bill must not exceed those of the Independent Report. An independent Body was appointed by the Governor to begin the review in May 2021. It was completed in July 2021. The report with two amendments clarify specific matters that has been laid before council today and is essentially paper 45/2021. The Legislative Council Remunerations and Allowance Bill has adopted the recommendations of the level of Remunerations Allowance and Benefits as proposed for a Ministerial System in the report of the Independent Body and I would just like to run through that for the benefit of the listening public Mr Speaker. So the structure sits as the Remunerations for the Elected Members of Legislative Council, which we are currently referring to as the Backbenchers is set at £20,000 per annum. The Remuneration for the Ministers is set at £35,000 per annum per year, Remuneration for the Chief Minister is set at £50,000 per year and the Remunerations for the Speaker is set at £15,000 a year and for the Deputy Speaker £11,000 per year. Members will also note that the Bill cannot set levels any higher than those that I have just mentioned in the Report therefore the amounts of the Bill can only be amended if there was to be a reduction from those set levels. Thank you Mr Speaker, I now open the questions for debate.

The Speaker –

So I put the question that the Legislative Council Remuneration Allowances Amendment Bill 2021 be approved in principle and referred to a Committee of a whole Council. The question is open for debate. Anyone wish to speak? Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker as provided in the Constitution and Law, Legislators receive salaries and reimbursement of expenses which can be referred to allowances. A few months ago St Helena was supported by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretariat in carrying out a self-assessment of St Helena's Legislatives against Commonwealth Association Parliamentary Benchmarks for democratic Legislatures. As a result of this self-assessment it has been recommended to St Helena Government to establish an independent body such as a Parliamentary Services Commission to oversee the independent process for determining the salary and allowances for Legislators. So Mr Speaker, I hope that St Helena Government in going forward, as mentioned by the Honourable Minister about the Independent body that this recommendation will be taken forward. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member, anyone else wishes to speak? No one? Mover may reply.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Nothing further to add I'd just like to thank the Honourable Member for her input, thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member, so I put the question that the Legislative Council Remuneration Allowances amendment Bill 2021 be approved in principle and referred to a Committee of a whole Council.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

Mover do you wish to say anything further?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

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

The Speaker –

Is there a seconder to this Motion?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member, so I put the question that the Council do resolve itself into a Committee to consider the detailed provisions of the Bill. I'm supposed to move to the Clerks table now but, sorry? Oh I do beg your pardon.

Question put and agreed to.

### **Council in Committee**

The Speaker –

Okay so we now move ourselves into Committee and so I put the question that the title enabling Clause and Clause 1 do stand part of the Bill and I invite Members to speak.

The Hon. Allen Cansick –

Mr Speaker, Clause 1 of the Bill covers the short titles and commencement provisions. The Ordinance is to have a retro effect from the date of the General Election so there is an amendment to sub clause 2 to correctly reflect this and I'll propose at the end of speaking on the rest of the Clause. The Clause specifies specific times which comes into effect with different positions. So in regard to all Elected Members that's from the date they were elected as Members of Legislative Council, for the Chief Minister, Speaker and Deputy Speaker that's from the date they were Elected by the Legislative Council and for the position of Minister that is the date they were recommended to those positions by Chief Minister. Mr Speaker I propose an amendment in regard to Clause 2 sub clause 1 and that is amended as follows: the words "come into force" are deleted and replaced with the words "is deemed to come into force". The reason for this has been greatly pointed out by the Members of Council is that the Bill itself can't come into force on an earlier date, it can only be deemed to have done so. So that's the reason I put forward that amendment Mr Speaker. Clause 1, sub clause 2, I apologise Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Yes of course, sub clause 1 and just remind me what the reading is again please?

The Hon. Allen Cansick –

Yes Mr Speaker, the proposed amendment is the words "come into force" are deleted and replaced with the words "is deemed to come into force".

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. So “come into force” should be should be deleted and “deemed to come into force”. All those in favour say I, oh is there a seconder first please?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Mr Speaker I beg to second.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

A – G?

The Hon. Allen Cansick –

Yes Mr Speaker, if you now put the Clause itself for agreement to the House?

The Speaker –

Alright so I put the Clause for agreement, just one moment please. Sorry Honourable Members alright so I read the Clause on sub clause 2, the Ordinance is deemed to come into force on October 2021 and applies in the case of (a) the Speaker and Deputy Speaker with effect from the date election is provided in section 55, (b) any Elected Member of the Legislative Council with effect from the date as elected as a Member of the Council, (c) Chief Minister with effect of the date of elected to that office, in accordance with section 37, and (d) any Minister with effect from the date recommended as such by the Chief Minister in accordance with section 37 (a) (1) or 37 (d).

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

So Attorney General, can we go through the next Clause please?

The Hon. Allen Cansick –

Mr Speaker Clause 2 amends the interpretation section of the Principle Ordinance by deleting the definitions of Chairman and Executive Members as they are no longer needed in the Principle Ordinance.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

Can we continue Attorney General?

The Hon. Allen Cansick –

Mr Speaker Clause 3 removes the current schedule in the Principle Ordinance for remuneration of Members and inserts a new Schedule. This details the amounts of remuneration for Members and Pension arrangements.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –  
Continue AG.

The Hon. Allen Cansick –  
Mr Speaker Clause 4 removes the current schedule of allowances and benefits from the Principle Ordinance and inserts a new Schedule detailing such.

The Hon. Andrew Turner –  
Mr Speaker I'd like to propose an amendment to this Clause?

The Speaker –  
Amendment will be proposed. What is the amendment?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –  
Mr Speaker I'd like to propose Clause 4, item 3(a) is amended as follows: the word car is deleted and replaced with motor vehicle.

The Speaker –  
Car replaced by motor vehicle. So the proposal is that Elected Members will be paid an allowance for journeys made by motor vehicle, to and from home to attend meetings or to carry out other official duties at the rate per mile equal to that determined for public officers under St Helena Government's staff policy. All those in favour say I. Oh you need a seconder, do you have a seconder for that?

The Hon. Karl Thrower –  
Mr Speaker, I'll second it.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –  
So all that's happened is that the word car is deleted and that replaced by motor vehicle. Can we continue?

The Hon. Allen Cansick –  
Mr Speaker I think we agreed the amendment but we need to agree the Clause now, Clause 4.

The Speaker –  
So I put the question that Clause 4 is carried.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –  
We need to work our way through it, can we carry on then Attorney General?

The Hon. Allen Cansick –  
Mr Speaker Clause 5 is the final Clause of the Bill and it is a transitional provision which makes clear that previous Members of Executive Council, who remained in office until 25<sup>th</sup> October receive their remuneration and allowances from the date of the 13<sup>th</sup> October at the previous rate

and not these changed rates. And that's needed because of the provision that's deemed this to come into effect from 13<sup>th</sup> October.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

We carry on then Attorney General.

The Hon. Allen Cansick –

Thank you Mr Speaker that was the final Clause in the Bill, so that concludes the clause by clause of this Bill.

### **Council Resumed**

The Speaker –

Right so we're now back into – stage. The mover can respond to the Bill if he wishes.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I beg to report that the Amendment Bill 2021 passes the Committee with 2 amendments and moves that this Council approves the said Bill and the recommendations to the Governor that it should be enacted. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Is there a seconder for that, no?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

Next item please.

### **2. The Hon Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Planning:**

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I beg to move that this House resolves, pursuant to Section 68 of the Constitution of St Helena, that the Standing Orders contained in Sessional Paper 47/2021 are approved.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. Is there a seconder?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much Honourable Rob Midwinter. Thank you Honourable Members. Honourable mover you may speak to the motion.

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker Section 68 of the Constitution of St Helena allows Legislative Council to make, amend and revoke Standing Orders, consistent with the Constitution for the regulation and orderly conduct of its proceedings for the dispatch of business, for the passing of Bills and for the presentation of Bills to the Governor for assent. Mr Speaker the Standing Orders of the previous Legislative Council have been inherited by this new Council. Members will be aware that we have set up a working group to look at making Standing Orders that will reflect the manner in which this Council considers it should regulate its proceedings and dispatch its business. Just some of the important matters to be addressed by the working group are the procedures for questions for government and for committee stages of a Bill. I personally look forward to considering with all Members of Council, the recommendations of the working group. Mr Speaker the Standing Orders being considered today are a necessary stop gap until the Council has its fully updated Standing Orders. The Standing Orders makes 2 necessary changes Mr Speaker. Firstly they make technical changes that are needed to reflect the move from a Committee system to the Ministerial system of government. They delete the definition of Council Committee and add definitions for Chief Minister and Minister. They also delete the use of Committee Chair, Chief Secretary and Financial Secretary and where required, add Chief Minister, Minister or Minister responsible for Finance into the Orders. Secondly Mr Speaker they make changes needed so that the Standing Orders are gender silent. They had previously been written in a male biased way, only used masculine pronouns, this gender bias is something I'm aware this Council finds unacceptable. I'm aware this Council is of the view that going forward all new legislation will be gender silent. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Members this motion is that this House resolves, pursuant to Section 68 of the Constitution of St Helena, that the Standing Orders contained in Sessional Paper 47/2021 are approved. The motion is now open for debate. Anyone wish to speak? Honourable Andrew Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Mr Speaker I'd like to stand in support of the motion. While this particular motion is, as the Honourable Christine Scipio mentioned, a necessary stop gap, I must echo the Minister's mention of the work that has begun in review of the Standing Orders of this Honourable House. The Standing Orders, we were told at our CPA conference recently is described as the rules of engagement for how we can hold government to account. While this small change is just the beginning of a much wider piece of work to review the Standing Orders, we must ensure that going forward this House will operate in an accessible, transparent and effective way. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wish to speak? Honourable Dr Corinda Essex.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also support this motion because it is a first step towards actually getting the operational foundation for the new Ministerial system and the sooner that that gets put in place, the better for us all. Indeed I'm disappointed that we haven't made further progress with getting some of these necessary documents in place before we actually had this first formal sitting of the House. So I hope very much that this will steer further action in future and the



next time we meet in a formal sitting, we will have the recommendations of the working group to consider. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much Honourable Member. Does anyone else wish to speak? No-one else? Does the Honourable mover wish to respond to the debate?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Yes I will take the opportunity to thank the 2 members who rise in support of this motion today and it is recognised that with this new Ministerial Government that a lot of work does need to be undertaken and that we will strive to ensure that we do have things in place fairly soon. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much. So the motion is that this House resolves, pursuant to Section 68 of the Constitution of St Helena, that the Standing Orders contained in Sessional Paper 47/2021 are approved.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

Next item of business please.

### **3. The Hon Robert Midwinter:**

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Mr Speaker I beg to move that this House resolves that the re-interment of the Liberated African remains is a matter of grave societal concern and urge that the relevant Minister with responsibility for any matters resulting from the airport project to address this issue as a matter of urgency.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member, is there a seconder?

The Hon. Ronald Coleman –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable mover you may speak to the motion.

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, between 1840 and 1872 the Royal Navy liberated more than 25,000 Africans from slave ships, in an attempt to halt the slave trade and these liberated Africans were landed at Saint Helena, initially at Lemon Valley and subsequently at Rupert's Valley. Unfortunately in excess of 8,000 of those that were liberated did not survive their ordeal, the majority of which are buried in unmarked burial grounds in Rupert's Valley. Mr Speaker prior to the commencement of the airport project, in 2008, some 325 sets of intact human remains were exhumed from the area and these are currently stored within the Pipe Store in Jamestown where they remain, some thirteen years later awaiting re-interment. Mr Speaker if these were the ancestral remains of any one of us sitting here in this House today I

believe the Members concerned would be banging on the doors of Government, both here and in the UK to address this issue as a matter of urgency and yet, these 325 individuals whose remains await reburial could very well be related to any one of us living here on this Island. It is in this respect that I strongly support the notion that this Island ultimately has responsibility for the immediate reburial of these 325 individuals and crucially, for ensuring the respectful memorialisation of this currently uncelebrated and unprotected site.

Mr Speaker, the Liberated African Advisory Committee has produced a well-researched and fully comprehensive Master Plan for a project that aims to achieve a right and proper memorialisation of the cultural heritage sites associated with the ‘Liberated’ African Establishment on St Helena Island. This will be achieved through the following objectives: 1. Provide a peaceful and respectful final resting place for the disturbed Liberated African remains currently in storage in the Pipe Store. 2. Memorialise the ‘Liberated’ Africans through acknowledgement of the tragedy of slavery. 3. Educate future generations about the lingering consequences of the centuries-long enslavement of and trade in Africans supplied to the colonies of the Americas, the Caribbean, and Europe. 4. Memorialisation will enshrine the legacy of the liberated Africans whose untold stories, memories and contribution to humanity changed St Helena. Furthermore, the project will aim to enhance the physical and visual elements of said sites through landscaping and protection measures, as well as equipping national development agendas with necessary procedures and support to ensure that these sites of international significance are not indiscriminately disturbed again. Mr Speaker, I wish to be clear to my colleagues that in bringing this Motion to the House I am not seeking a re-prioritisation of current budget lines, or a specific allocation of funding for future years but moreover a commitment that this Government recognises the importance of this issue and agrees that the relevant Minister with responsibility for any matters resulting from the airport project should address this issue as a matter of urgency; in particular to ensure that the exhumed Liberated African remains are respectfully laid to rest. How this is achieved remains a matter for further debate by this House. Mr Speaker, in closing I should also note that since preparing this Motion for the House it has been brought to my attention that a way forward for the reburial of the remains themselves has been identified between the Liberated African Advisory Committee and the Anglican Church. I also understand that this proposed initiative will involve a community project undertaken by students at Prince Andrew School, with funding support from St Helena Government. Whilst this is certainly positive news, I feel that this does not detract from a commitment to supporting the overall aims and intentions of the wider project initiative. Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. This motion is that this House resolves that the re-interment of the Liberated African remains is a matter of grave societal concern and urge that the relevant Minister with responsibility for any matters resulting from the airport project to address this issue as a matter of urgency. The motion is now open for debate. Honourable Mark Brooks.

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you Mr Speaker. So in identifying the relevant Minister that will be me again Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I do rise in support of this motion and can confirm that plans are well advanced for the re-interment of the Liberated African remains. I won’t run through what my Honourable friend has said, it is along the same lines that he has already presented but I will say that I am pleased to report that Phase 1 is on track and the date for the initial implementation of Phase 1 is early 2022. Following discussions with the Anglican Church, Bishop Dale has confirmed that the re-interment can take place in the Church grounds, just behind St Michael’s Church, in the Rupert’s Valley. Also as my Honourable friend alluded to, the Prince Andrew

School students has kindly agreed to support the project, by allowing their technical students to make the coffins. I think that has summed it up but I would just like to add that this is a great example of a working partnership between the Liberated African Advisory Committee, also Bishop Dale and also the excellent support from Prince Andrew School students. So thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

And thank you Honourable Member. Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak? Honourable Andrew Turner?

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you Mr Speaker, I'm standing in support of the motion. I have to start by thanking my Honourable colleague for raising this important issue and I think it's particularly appropriate that we face up to this on Human Rights Day. To help understand the importance of this, I want everyone here to take a few moments to picture a graveyard and to think of the family and friends we have left. Now imagine that somebody decides to build a road through that area and so they dig up your loved ones and place them in boxes and leave them locked in a room for the better part of 13 years. I'm sure you would be outraged. Well that's exactly what happened to the people who've been kept in the Pipe Store. We've often in the past referred to them as remains, as bones, maybe that will help make it easier to keep them locked away. But Mr Speaker, Honourable Members these people are our brothers and sisters both in blood and in spirit. These people are a part of our history and our culture but most importantly these people are human beings and deserve the same respect that we would all want for our loved ones who passed on. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wish to speak? Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I rise in support of this motion and I'm pleased to hear from the relevant Minister that work has been undertaken and things are in place. It's pleasing to hear. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much and does any other Honourable Member wish to speak? No-one? Honourable Dr. Corinda Essex.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I commend the Honourable Member for bringing this motion to the House today. This is a matter that has been on the books for a number of years. I think the importance of what is being proposed has never been overlooked and there have been many factors which have caused it to be impossible to actually come to its conclusion, much before today. Indeed a working group was set up which I know did an enormous amount of work in actually exploring options. There were funding difficulties encountered and so on along the way and it is a great relief to know that it looks as though we are now getting close to a workable solution. So I fully support the motion.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Member wish to speak? Otherwise Honourable mover you may wind up?

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I would like to thank all of the Honourable Members, those in support of my motion and in particular the Honourable Ronald Coleman for seconding this motion. I'm very pleased with the response I've had from other members, so thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you. This motion is that this House resolves that the re-interment of the Liberated African remains is a matter of grave societal concern and urge that the relevant Minister with responsibility for any matters resulting from the airport project to address this issue as a matter of urgency.

Question put and agreed to.

The Speaker –

Next item of business please.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT DEBATE**

The Speaker –

Adjournment Debate. The Hon Chief Minister?

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this House adjourn sine die.

The Speaker –

Thank you. Is there a seconder to the motion?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

I beg to second Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. The Motion is that the House do now adjourn sine die. The motion is now open for debate, does any Honourable Members wish to speak? Honourable Christine Scipio?

The Hon. Christine Scipio –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I feel honoured and privileged to stand here today having been nominated for the seat of Minister for Environment, Natural Resources and Planning in the first Ministerial Government for St Helena. I found the induction training for the Ministerial form of government at the beginning of our tenure was very educational and informative, despite having spent 9 years as an Elected Member in the Committee system. Needless to say one never stops learning. I would like to say a big thank you to the government officials who were involved in the arrangements to deliver this training. In my humble opinion Mr Speaker, there appears to be a misunderstanding of how Executive Council operates, particularly now that there is a Ministerial form of government. I recommend that more should be done to help

the public to understand how things are expected to work. Openness and transparency are achieved by Ministers being answerable to the elected Legislative Council which acts on behalf of the public. This should be achieved through such medians as the Select Committees established under section 69A of the Constitution and Questions and Motions asked at formal Legislative Council meetings. Incidentally, perhaps in the interest of openness and transparency, a start could be made by announcing well in advance when formal Legislative Council is to meet and what business will be transacted there. *(Pause for water)* There are of course other ways apart from Legislative Council scrutiny in which openness and transparency can be achieved. As a general rule, once decisions have been reached they should be disseminated with explanations given to the public in such things as press releases, social media and radio interviews, as well as constituency meetings. Mr Speaker I would like to express my appreciation to all staff in the Environment, Natural Resources and Planning Ministry for their support as I try to understand the functions of this Ministry and how they are delivered. We all have something to learn during this process of change. No doubt I will have a further 101 questions to ask. I would also like to say how pleased I am to see the improvements made to the road surface in the Longwood Enterprise Park, normally known as Longwood Dairy, to ensure the safety of our community. Thank you to the Roads Section for carrying out these works. Appreciation is expressed to all members of the public who attended our recent constituency meetings. It is my understanding that over 230 individuals attended, so well done to you all. Mr Speaker when I look out through the window I see the sun is shining and it make me to think that at last Christmas is almost here but Mr Speaker, I then remind myself that when I'm in Town the sun might be shining but when I drive to my home in Longwood, its foggy and raining. So Mr Speaker I'll take the opportunity to our listeners to wish them a merry Christmas, as it soon will be here and a prosperous safe 2022. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member and we look forward to your 101 questions. Anyone else wish to speak? Honourable Dr Corinda Essex.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I first wish to declare my interest as President of the St Helena Chamber of Commerce and as an importer and retailer.

Mr Speaker, the repeated and large increases in freight charges that are occurring in response to escalating global fuel prices are a major cause of concern island-wide, particularly as there is no clear indication as to when bunkering costs will stabilise. The situation is already having a serious impact on the price of goods in the shops and is likely to worsen in forthcoming voyages as further increases are programmed to occur. Salaries and wages meanwhile are remaining largely the same, so the purchasing power of our people is being greatly reduced. As a result, lower earners are already suffering hardship which is negatively affecting their quality of life. Many of the elderly are struggling to meet their basic needs and so are larger families with young children, as well as others within our community. It is said that St Helena needs to grow its population but at the moment there are no incentives to encourage young people to start families, indeed the reverse is true. The impact of the rising bunkering prices is exacerbated by the worldwide shortage of shipping containers and cost of moving these from hub to hub, therefore options must be explored to determine what is the most cost effective route for the transshipment of our cargo from Britain and also relating to other potential revenue streams for the MV Helena. I am aware that research was done in this regard previously but this was before the Covid pandemic. Such a lot has changed since then that it would be worth re-examining all possibilities. Mr Speaker, a responsible Government cannot ignore what is

happening. I recognise that with the budget pressures that we and indeed Britain itself are facing, payment of a subsidy to cushion the impact of the freight increases may not be acceptable to the British Government, or affordable, but some action has to be taken before a regressive downward spiral results in very serious social consequences which will come with their associated costs such as increased crime, further demands on health care, increased demand for social benefits and an even further depressed economy. Mr Speaker, another burning issue that requires urgent attention continues to be the poor performance of the company contracted to provide case management and related services to our patients sent to Pretoria for medical investigation and/or treatment. I declare my interest as I have recently had the unfortunate experience of having direct dealings with the company in question. I have evidence indicating incompetence, untruthfulness and unprofessional conduct, which I submitted to the Health Directorate on behalf of all patients and carers who were in Pretoria until our departure of August of this year. I received a response indicating that the matters had been brought to the attention of the company. However, feedback from patients sent to Pretoria since my return, indicate that there has been minimal improvement in some areas and none in others. It is evident that further action needs to be taken to ensure that St Helena Government gets improved value for money and the patients and carers receive the level of support that they should get and so desperately need.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I wish to express concern regarding the recent decision taken to defer approval of the planning application relating to the establishment of a satellite ground station at Horse Point. Such development is essential if St Helena is to bring new funding streams into our economy that will benefit the entire island and help enable internet connectivity to be more affordable. An Environmental Impact Assessment relating to the proposed site has been undertaken and mitigation measures recommended. What else is required? If the concern is that not enough is known about the potentially unique weevil claimed to be discovered in the area, and I don't wish to diminish the importance of the find, I have to ask, is the weevil likely to bring huge economic benefit to St Helena even if it is a new discovery? I doubt it. If it is shown that I am wrong, I am willing to take a different view as I do value our environment. I would not wish anything to be done that would have serious detrimental consequences but decisions must reflect the best interests of St Helena as a whole. We are already hampered by the fact that the runway alignment at the airport is sub optimal in part because it had to be located so as to have minimum negative impact upon mole spiders thought to exist on Prosperous Bay Plain. Please let us learn from our mistakes and ensure that we do not repeat them going forward. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Any other Honourable Members wishes to speak?  
Honourable Andrew Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker I must start off by thanking everyone who attended our first round of constituency meetings. The input from the public that we heard from these meetings has been invaluable and I hope that this level of engagement will only grow during our term. However Mr Speaker I must also raise a less positive note from my contribution to the adjournment debate. A nation's greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members and Ghandi spoke these unforgettable words in a speech he delivered in 1931. Yet currently for us in 2021 we're still struggling. Mr Speaker the recent amendments to the Benefits Ordinance has succeeded in correcting the issue around the household definitions and I was glad to hear earlier on in the session that more people have been captured than have been lost by the system. Nevertheless the new system has created some hardships in the community. I

myself have been contacted by many people who've been placed in dire straits because of the change in the system and many more who've seen significant reductions in the amount of benefits they are now entitled to. Although I think we all admit the current Benefits Ordinance isn't perfect and the amounts that we can offer are still too small to realistically live on, a much bigger problem arises from how we distribute those benefits. Currently benefits come under the financial side of government operations and this to me seems entirely the wrong approach when dealing with what is essentially a social care issue. If the aim was only to save money and look at numbers then this would make sense however benefits should never be simply a cost saving exercise. By leaving benefits under social care and having assessed by social care professionals, we could ensure the professionals understand people's needs and that they will be protecting our most vulnerable. So I urge our new government to look at moving benefits into the hands of Social Care to ensure that we are putting people first and not numbers. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak? Honourable Rob Midwinter.

The Hon. Robert Midwinter –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the Adjournment. Firstly Mr Speaker, I wish to thank those constituents who took the time to come out and meet us over the past three weeks. I was particularly pleased to note that between the sessions held at Kingshurst and Guinea Grass Community Centres, the turnout represented a good ten percent of those listed on the Electoral Roll for the St Pauls District. I look forward to meeting with Constituents on a one to one basis and for the benefit of the listening public I will be hosting a drop-in surgery at Kingshurst Community Centre on the third Wednesday of each month, starting from next week. Mr Speaker, our meetings with the community has led to a long list of public concerns that need to be addressed by this Council, with some key themes arising, including; Healthcare Services and Health Promotion, Parking and Road Safety, Education and Skills Development, Economic Growth Opportunities, and how we attract and retain younger, working age individuals in order to grow our population for the future, to name but a few. Mr Speaker, some of the public's concerns will be addressed when legislation that was being worked on by the previous Council is brought to this House, and Constituents have been asking me when this will happen. However, thus far, despite the question having arisen at informal meetings of this Council, we have not had sight of any list of legislation to be progressed, prioritised or otherwise. I therefore look forward to seeing this as a matter of priority, as well as agreeing which Elected Members will be sitting on what related working groups and any associated committees, most notable the two Scrutiny Committees. Mr Speaker, of key concern to the public is the health of the community; in particular the need to ensure that the community is protected from Covid-19. I therefore welcome the roll-out of the Pfizer booster and ask that the Minister for Health and Social Care continue to explore additional areas of support or treatment that may be available to the island through the UK Health Security Agency, such as the new antiviral treatments that according to Pfizer can reduce the risk of hospitalisation or death by 89%. Mr Speaker, alongside of this further exploration work, I believe that we need a revitalised publicity campaign; not only to remind the public that good hygiene practices help to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases, but also to provide the public with an update regarding what is now considered best practice, bearing in mind that far more is now known about the Coronavirus than when the pandemic first arose. Such a campaign needs to focus on known facts in order to help dispel some of the myths, rumours and speculation that we so often see posted on social media. Mr Speaker, my final point is a bit of a gripe regarding our

office facilities, which I feel are woefully unsuitable for the job that we have in hand. Having now been in office for two months, it has become evident that moving the Councillors out of the Castle and into the Courtyard is really not working very well, and that these office facilities certainly do not meet with the recommendations contained within the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (or CPA for short) St Helena Legislative Council Benchmark Report. Mr Speaker, in this respect I draw attention to Recommendation 5, which notes that there should be improved facilities to give LegCo increased stature and make it a distinct and separate institution from the government and that there should be a review of access to the chamber and any other meeting space to see if reasonable adjustments could be made to make them accessible for all. Mr Speaker, whilst the Benchmark Report is yet to be laid before this House, I would urge the Executive to ensure that an alternative facility is identified for the Legislature as a matter of priority, which is not only fit for purpose, but is also fit for the future. In closing Mr Speaker, I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member and does any other Honourable Member wish to speak?  
Honourable Gillian Brooks.

The Hon. Gillian Brooks –

Mr Speaker, I rise in support of the Adjournment. Firstly, I would like to say how I appreciated the Induction Programme that was put in place for us over the past few weeks. This afforded us an informative insight from Directorates here on island and was an eye opener as to what is being done, often in an unassuming way behind the scenes. Equally, through our virtual meetings and forums with the UK Government, we have gained and continue to gain invaluable understanding and information. Over the past three weeks, we have collectively attended Constituency Meetings in all districts and I am sure I echo my honourable colleagues in saying how pleasing it was to see the turnout of constituents. The issues raised were near consistent over all meetings, which emphasis their importance to the community and the necessity for us to work, as best we can, towards better outcomes. In my last Adjournment Debate I spoke of the Health Transformation Programme and it would be good to know what progress is been made on this. The staffing shortage in the nursing and care professions on island is to say the least, concerning, not just for the public who will inevitably be affected, but for the wellbeing of the staff. Another area of concern is our roads. I appreciate we do not have resources to overhaul our road network but verge cleaning needs to be addressed. Overgrown verges are not only unsightly but a hazard to pedestrians and drivers. This could be an avenue of employment, providing an income and tidying the island. I would, at this point, like to say how well Connect St Helena worked with laying the pipeline along the main road in a section of Half Tree Hollow. Traffic management was accommodated as best as possible, to minimise disruption. It is pleasing to see the tidying and maintenance been done on the Castle Gardens, it is after all the public green-space in Jamestown. I would hope the walkways around the gardens can at some point, be maintained. Whilst appreciating the greenery, I would like to see the trees at the front of the garden be appropriately trimmed back to help to alleviate the problem of bird droppings all along the main street in that area. Mr Speaker, Christmas is fast approaching and here on St Helena we must be thankful that to this present day, we can look forward to celebrating in our normal festive spirit. I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and we look forward to a happy and prosperous new year. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –



Thank you Honourable Member and does anyone else wish to speak? Honourable Ronald Coleman.

The Honourable Ronald Coleman –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Since we last met we have covered all districts with constituency meetings and what a great turnout there was and I would like to thank the people for coming out and meeting us for the first time. Mr Speaker, roads has been one of my issues but I can say Mr Speaker that progress has been made, also filling in potholes. And this work has been continuing, I've had correspondence with Mr Henry from the Infrastructure and he is committed to continuing this work. So I want to thank the Roads section for the work they've been doing and continue to do. Access to doctors and getting doctor's appointments is still an issue but we also know from the department that everything will be back to normal soon. I'm still worried about the work for our young people and the unemployed and also the retention of our young people who return from overseas, after we have invested so much money in them and we still don't have attractive terms and conditions so that they can stay on the island. Mr Speaker what about our land disposal, we need quicker release of land for house building, especially for first time house builders. We have local people wanting to invest, what a boost to our economy but it is taking years to have these lands released. What is the hold-up? Mr Speaker is the island becoming a walk away? First PASH Global has walked away, then there is the concern about our public procurement exercise that was to go wrong with the public electronic communications network services provider. Time is running out and everybody is waiting for the affordable service. Then we have the One Web application deferred yesterday. Finally Mr Speaker we campaigned for better communications, openness and transparency but to me very little is happening on this front. Let's hope this will improve as we move along. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member and does any other Honourable Member wish to speak? I think it was the Honourable Rosie Bargo that caught my eye first.

The Hon. Rosemary Bargo –

Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker since my appointment as Elected Member, it has been a whirlwind of a journey on a fast track induction programme locally and from our overseas government. I found this extremely interesting and useful. The overview of the directorates was especially interesting and well informed, so thank you all. All the Elected Members have just completed the constituent meetings around the island, which was extremely well attended but the main areas of concern highlighted in all the meetings were: the quarantine and Covid, the current health system, benefits, utilities, housing and all of these areas... and areas of the state of the economy. As a representative for Longwood I have taken the opportunity to get to know my constituents and arranged a meet and greet evening, attending a coffee morning and doing a surprise drop-in at Harford Primary School. I want to thank my constituents of Longwood for welcoming me thus far and I'm looking forward to working further with you all. I'm focused on driving our economy forward and currently building relationships with the farmers to achieve their and island's goals to increase food production goal. I also recognise the hard work the Longwood team is doing on the Christmas festivities on Longwood Green. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them and to wish them every success in this event and I'd like to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas season and a happy and prosperous New Year. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you very much Honourable Member. Honourable Martin Henry.

The Hon. Martin Henry –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. One of the topics we have been discussing and asking over the consultation period over the last 3 weeks, is what is your vision for St Helena? The need to include the views, interests and desires of our community, in this Council's 4 year term is paramount and while we as a collective must refine and deliver its components within the scope of our means, we must always be conscious of why our community has chosen us to lead them in these uncertain and difficult times. To write a vision is a paper exercise however in order to deliver it, we must first have a tangible golden thread that links my ideas to my fellow Councillor and the core desires of our community. For me I aspire to have a healthy, vibrant population of people who understands that holistic health, mentally, physically and spiritually is just as much a personal responsibility as it is a public one. However in order for me to achieve my vision and for our community to enjoy the benefits of my vision, we must recognise how ideas are linked and developed and the understanding of these fundamental connections. So as I said on many occasions, in order for this community to work towards better health we must consume far more raw colourful foods and far less processed ones. However in order for us to do this, we must first grow, harvest and store the right foods. These foods must then be at an affordable price to our community and in order to do this we need to bring down the cost of utilities, using green technologies and using new ideas in the industry. In order for our community to thrive and retain our youth and protect our old and vulnerable, we need to establish a vibrant economics and look beyond our egg in one basket tourism sector, um tourism based economy and understand that we need to sometimes have the appetite to move with new technologies and platforms, as waiting until they are established elsewhere and know the outcomes is often too late, the opportunity is missed. These connections are just a few examples of the fundamental actions which is necessary. So as you can see in order for my primary vision to work, I must be in full support of others to achieve this. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Does any other Honourable Member wish to speak? Honourable Mark Brooks?

The Hon. Mark Brooks –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker you're probably fed up hearing my voice now and that's because out of the 15 questions, 9 of them today was directed at my portfolio. So I would like to take this opportunity Mr Speaker to thank those who worked on my portfolio, my portfolio team, notably Dax Richards who is my director of the portfolio and everyone that has been a part in helping me to educate myself and has given me the understanding that is needed to be able to answer my fellow member's questions. I would also like to thank the listening public and for anyone, for everyone that voted for me, as I won't be here standing in this position if it wasn't for them. I would also like to echo my fellow Minister's words in thanking everyone and wishing everyone a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Mark Brooks. Does anyone else wish to speak? Honourable Karl Thrower?

The Hon. Karl Thrower –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I rise in support of the Adjournment. Mr Speaker I would like to back up some of the points my Honourable colleagues have already made, concerning the state of the infrastructure projects on this island. We are now at a stage where the telecommunications project seems to have failed, the energy project seems to have failed, the Rupert's Port development is at a complete standstill and an investor who wanted to invest roughly, probably about £7m in the Space Park is now going to be delayed and it's questionable whether that will now continue. So I'd like to raise the point that obviously the methods that we are using to procure systems for this island are not working. We need to go back to the drawing board and look at them again. You cannot have, if it was one project that was failing it would be understandable but all projects are failing. And the cost to the island is absolutely enormous. If you divide the £500k that we're told we pay for freight to be moved from Rupert's Port around to Jamestown Port divided by 12, means that the cost of that port development every month that it does go forward is about £41k. We are in the second month; we will probably be in the fourth month by the time it works if it comes back on line by January. That takes us up to £160k, that's for one project. I think that when we start, obviously this is the last LegCo for this year, when we start back again in 2022, the first thing we need to address is the economy of this island because it's failing. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member. Honourable Jeffrey Ellick?

The Hon. Jeffrey Ellick –

Thank you Mr Speaker. I rise in support of the Adjournment Mr Speaker, just to say thank you the Public Service for their support since we've elected and my election as a Minister for Safety Security and Home Affairs. Thank you to the Public Service, thank you to my colleagues for their support and I'd like to say thank you to the public for their support during this time and we look forward to their support in the future. There's been a lot of comments from the public since this council's been elected, I hope it continues and I hope we continue working together. But most of all I'd like to say Mr Speaker, merry Christmas to you all, merry Christmas to the public and let's hope we have a good New Year coming up and face the challenges head on. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Member and I think I noted everyone apart from the Chief Minister but I'm going to ask the Chief Minister to respond if she wishes to.

The Hon. Chief Minister –

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Well this is going to be a test for me today to try and remember everything and try and touch on most of what people have contributed, so I thank you all for participating in the Adjournment Debate. Interestingly enough I think that most of the things that has been raised today has been placed on record as the foundation or the building blocks for our Vision and when going out in our Constituency meetings, it's come across in those forums as well that we are on the right road and it will obviously complement the 10 Year Plan and the Sustainable Economic Development Plan, already in place by St Helena Government. So as I'm speaking of Constituency meetings I too would like to raise and say, thank you to all of those who participated in the meetings. I think it is quite a record number of people we attracted and for that I'm truly grateful and I would encourage you all to keep attending our meetings, especially with your district representatives as we go forward because that is the only way we can have a two-way communication, if you communicate back with us. So that is the Constituency meetings. I'm just going to go quickly through my notes and make sure that I'm

covering everybody here. Communications, Minister Scipio mentioned about communications and quite a few others did the same. I think we all concur that more needs to be done to ensure that as we learn about our Ministerial Government that the public are brought on board, so that they understand why there are changes in the way in which we do business. And obviously there is a lot of coverage that we plan to do about that, especially as we come to grips with the role of the Scrutiny committees. And then I move on to the Hon. Dr Corinda Essex. She mentioned about the increased freight charges and the global fuel prices, again I think this is something we are all very concerned about but I can assure you that ExCo is looking at how these costs can be mitigated. Options that can be explored to find better outcomes for the Island's freight, that is something that I can tell you we'll be working on very closely in the not too distant future, as we move up to the New Year. I think it is also very relevant to highlight the need to look at the retention of our people; that was something that was also talked about and the hardships that is felt here on St Helena and dare I say probably even wider than St Helena, especially since the start of Covid-19. We are trying to visit most policies but as I hope the listening public will appreciate and my colleagues, we are still very new in this role and all of these things will need to be done in time and make sure that the detail is given, so we address it without having to return to it in the very near future. Hon. Dr Corinda Essex also talked about Pretoria and the service provider. I can tell you that the Health is being reviewed, is reviewing options sorry, for providing the service going forward and if I recall the contract is due up in April 2022, so that is very soon. The One-web, sorry the application for the satellite station was mentioned, not just by Hon. Dr Corinda Essex but a few of you in here today. All I'd like to add this time is that it's not the intention of the Executive Council to delay development, it is more about ensuring that we have the right information to make informed decisions. So that is the only reason that a deferral was made and then when we get that information and can hand on heart say we made an informed decision, then that will be done. I can assure you that was made very clear in our meeting that we are hoping that the deferral will be for a month only, it's not something that is long lasting, it's just that we need this additional information so that we can be confident in the decisions that we take. So it's not never ending delay.

I move on to Councillor Andrew Turner talking about the benefits system and the distribution of benefits. I don't think we can deny that this was raised in the Constituency meetings and it is something that has been raised by constituents outside of those meetings also. But this system will be reviewed after 6 months but I know that you, Councillor Hon. Turner, is working very closely with Minister Mark Brooks in trying to see how we can fill those gaps, so that when we look at it we understand the bigger picture and if there are people falling through the gaps. So that is something that we are very keen to address very soon. Hon. Robert Midwinter, if I can turn to you next, the Legislation programme is something that's on my to-do list, to find out exactly at what stages we are and I am hoping that I can get that completed after this very tiring but also very eventful week that we are coming out of now. And then you also spoke about the treatment and the options available to us for treating Covid-19 and I can assure you that antiviral treatment and immuno supplies are being looked into by St Helena Government and being explored and we are very keen to revitalise the campaign in how we progress on this. This again was something raised by members of the public and I think we are very keen to kick-start health promotion so that people understand where we're at, with regards to the information available on the new variants and indeed how we can continue to do best practices in ensuring that we keep ourselves and the island safe. Office facilities, I think we can all understand, we can see exactly what the constraints are there and I can only assure you that options are being considered with regards to this. Then I can turn to the Hon. Gillian Brooks and she also talked about and thanked everybody for the training and the induction programme and I would like to echo those thanks to everybody involved, within the St Helena Government

Portfolios. Obviously the induction programme was very intense but well needed and I think we all took it on board and understood the necessity of it for us to have a good overview of what happens within government and to give us a better understanding in thinking of our strategic vision for St Helena. The health transformation programme was also mentioned and I know Minister Martin Henry is talking of the state of the nation, so this will be provided as a plan. A plan is being implemented as we speak on all the different things but we really and I know Minister Martin Henry will confirm with me that trying to determine the state of the nation is a good benchmark on how we take our health system forward. So this is something that I think we all see as a necessity. Understanding the difficulties of the complaints coming in about the verges and how we address that is an ongoing issue I guess for St Helena, during this Council but also prior and the 3-day working scheme is something that I know everybody is very keen to look into. Obviously employment comes under my portfolio which is the Education, Skills and Employment, so this is something that I will be raising with people who've worked on this previously to determine exactly, what are the barriers, so that we can try and overcome this. But I'm not going to promise that it can be done because until I better understand the restrictions there, then I wouldn't want to be standing here and confirming that that's going to be back on the table soon. And then we move to the Honourable Ronald Coleman and I'm pleased to hear that you're happy in your Levelwood district or thereabouts because work is happening there from the roads section, so it's nice to know that praise is also going in that direction. You also mention about retaining our people, our young people. I think that's the voice of the whole Council to be perfectly honest with you and something that I think we know and understand we need to give a whole lot of focus to if we are to develop St Helena and ensure that we have an economy that is sustainable. Then I'm going on to, oh you talked about the quicker release of land as well and I can tell you that the Land Development Control, LDCA sorry has been reviewed and will be ready for consultation in the New Year, so hopefully you will be able to have some feed into that.

Honourable Rosemary Bargo, it's lovely to hear the relationship you're building with your constituents and I hope that we can all sing the same stories as we move forward. But I really hope that the time and effort that all the Constituency Reps will put into different districts will be utilised by the constituents and that we can obviously build our relationships on a one-to-one basis but that those in those districts that are up and coming businesses or indeed existing businesses that you will help us to try and build a better economy for St Helena. Then I go on to Honourable Karl Thrower and again you mentioned the Infrastructure failings and I think it's something that we need to take on board but I can tell it's not something that we're not aware of and I would agree with you that this is something we need to look at in some detail, after we come back from the holidays. And then if I recognise my Minister's contributions as well I suppose. Thank you, I think Minister Martin Henry kind of summed up what the vision is all about as well and again all the Ministers, thank you for today. I think Minister Mark Brooks need a certificate already, of urgency because of all the questions he had to answer today but well done to you Minister Brooks, I think you showed us that even in times of, a lot of commitment and dedication came through. But before I end I must also recognise my own Portfolio and that's the Education, Skills and Employment Directorate for all the support they've given me and now that all of the Constituency meetings are out of the way, I'd like to look forward to spending more time in my Portfolio to be able to learn more about what's happening there. And obviously I'd like to echo the support we've been given by the Public sector, the Government Administration in helping us to get here today because it's not been an easy week. But thank you all for your contributions and I really, really hope that this is a start of good things to come. Thank you.

The Speaker –

Thank you Honourable Chief Minister. Well that does conclude the business for this session Honourable Members and I now put the question that this House do adjourn sine die.

Question put and agreed to.

**Council is adjourned sine die.**

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**Honourable Speaker**

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**Date**