



**St Helena
Government**

ST HELENA GOVERNMENT

**Proceedings of Legislative Council – Wednesday, 10
September – Inaugural Meeting**

L.A.16 UPON THE TABLE 24 OCTOBER 2025

ST. HELENA
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

THE PRESIDENT

His Excellency the Governor, Nigel Phillips CBE

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER

The Honourable Acting Attorney General, Mr Andrew Dawson

ELECTED MEMBERS

**The Honourable Clint Richard Beard
The Honourable Gillian Ann Brooks
The Honourable Rebecca Elizabeth Cairns-Wicks
The Honourable Ronald Arthur Coleman
The Honourable Dr Corinda Sebastiana Stuart Essex
The Honourable Martin Dave Henry
The Honourable Denis Karl Leo
The Honourable Robert Charles Midwinter
The Honourable Derek Franklin Thomas
The Honourable Julie Dorne Thomas
The Honourable Karl Gavin Thrower
The Honourable Andrew James Turner**

CLERK OF COUNCILS

Miss Anita Legg

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

INAUGURAL MEETING

Wednesday, 10th September 2025

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

ORDER OF THE DAY

1. PRAYERS

(The Right Reverend Bishop Dale Bowers)

2. ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS

The President -

I invite each Councillor in turn to come to make the Oaths of Allegiance and Affirmation. I will call your names individually. In accordance with normal practice however, I will first call the Attorney General.

Oaths taken by:	Mr Andrew Dawson – Honourable Acting Attorney General
	The Honourable Clint Richard Beard
	The Honourable Gillian Ann Brooks
	The Honourable Rebecca Elizabeth Cairns-Wicks
	The Honourable Ronald Arthur Coleman
	The Honourable Corinda Sebastiana Stuart Essex
	The Honourable Martin Dave Henry
	The Honourable Denis Karl Leo
	The Honourable Robert Charles Midwinter
	The Honourable Derek Franklin Thomas
	The Honourable Julie Dorne Thomas
	The Honourable Karl Gavin Thrower
	The Honourable Andrew James Turner

3. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

(His Excellency the Governor)

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council it is a great pleasure to welcome you today as you take your seats in this Chamber. Having earned the trust of the people of St Helena through a democratic election, whether you are returning to Council or joining for the first time, your presence here reflects a commitment to public service that deserves recognition and respect. The work of this Council is central to the life of our democracy. As elected representatives, you are entrusted with three core responsibilities, to make legislation that serves the long-term interests of the island, to scrutinise the work of government with fairness and rigour and to represent the voices, concerns and aspirations of your constituents. These responsibilities are not abstract. They are the daily work of a democratic governance. The laws you pass will shape the island's future.

The questions you ask will help ensure that decisions are made transparently and with accountability, and the people you represent will look to you, not only for leadership, but also for listening. As Winston Churchill once observed, no one pretends that democracy is perfect or all wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time. It is a reminder that democracy is not easy, but it is essential and it depends on the integrity and the diligence of those elected to serve. One of your first and most important tasks will be to select the next Chief Minister. This is a decision that will shape the direction and tone of government over the coming years. It is a moment that calls for careful thought and a shared commitment to the good of the whole island. The Chief Minister will carry significant responsibility, but their success will depend on the strength of the team around them and the support and scrutiny of this Council. Equally important is the role of the Speaker, who will guide the proceedings of this Chamber with impartiality and authority. The Speaker ensures that debate is conducted with order and respect and that all Members, regardless of view or background, have the opportunity to be heard. It is a role that underpins the dignity and the effectiveness of Council's work. This will be the second iteration of a Ministerial system of Government. The model brings opportunity for leadership, clear lines of accountability and more strategic approach to decision making. The system is still evolving with the implications for Ministers, for Council and for the Public Service. The success of this system will depend on how well we work together to make it real and effective. It is therefore appropriate that this new Council begins its term at a time of reflection and opportunity. Much has been achieved by your predecessors and we can build upon it, yet we must always be committed to learning. The Governance Review now under way, offers a chance to consider how our institutions function and how they might evolve to better serve the people of St Helena. It is not a review imposed from the outside, but one shaped by local voices and experience. I encourage you to engage with its recommendations constructively and with a shared sense of purpose. I recognise that the months ahead will bring challenges. There will be difficult decisions, competing priorities and moments of disagreement, but I also know that this Council brings together a wealth of experience, insight and commitment. If you approach your work with humility, with a willingness to listen and with a focus on the common good, you will serve this island well. Let me close by thanking each of you for stepping forward to serve. The people of St Helena have placed their confidence in you. I wish you wisdom, strength and unity as you begin this important work. Thank you.

4. ELECTIONS

Election of Speaker

The President -

I now invite nominations for Speaker. Are there any nominations please?

The Hon. Attorney General -

Your Excellency, I rise first on what is strictly a point of order, because I'm going to propose a motion to suspend certain of our Standing Orders. As this is a new Council and there are a lot of people present, I think it helpful if I actually go through the mechanism, so people are clear what is to happen. So I am physically standing pursuant to Order 21, which deals with the suspension of Standing Orders. The Rule says the Council may at any time, suspend any of these Standing Orders by motion made and carried under this order. So once I have put the proposal, it will need to be seconded and then voted upon. I am required, pursuant to Order 21 Rule two, to specify exactly which Standing Orders I seek to suspend, and I am able to make a brief statement explaining why. So my motion Your Excellency, formally, is to propose the suspension of the following Standing Orders for the purpose of the election of the Speaker. I am required to specify for how long the suspension should last, and it is by definition, for the election of the Speaker only. So the rules I seek to suspend are: Order five, Rule five, concerning nominations; Order five, Rule six, concerning the proposal; Order five, Rule eight, stipulations with regarding proposing and seconding; Order five, Rule nine, proposing or seconding second candidates is forbidden; Order five, Rule 13, a call for a seconder; Order five, Rule 15, no second; Order five, Rule 18, confirmation of notification; Order five, Rule 21, no further proposals; and finally Order five, Rule 25(b), which concerns the elections more generally. In the place of those Orders that

I seek to suspend, I wish this Council formally to acknowledge and accept that the following individuals stand duly nominated and proposed and seconded for the office of Speaker. They are: Mr. Keith Brinsden, Mr. Cruyff Buckley, Mr. Anthony Green, Mr. Cyril Gunnell, Miss Christine Scipio and Mrs. Maureen Thompson. All of the rules I referred to deal with nominating and seconding and proposing such individuals. By making these changes, we are able to ensure that all those people who have sought to come forward for the office of Speaker, are able to do so without having to secure the formalities of seeking nominations, proposals and being seconded. It was the desire to ensure that as many people as possible could put their names forward that has justified suspending the Standing Orders. The final order I seek to suspend is with regard to Order five, Rule 25(b), which applies in the event that the top two candidates tie. Rule 25(b) provides that if that happens, that the order of business should be postponed until tomorrow. I suggest that in its place, we accept that we should stand adjourned for up to 20 minutes and then vote again. If the vote is tied after that second occasion, then the item of business should stand adjourned until tomorrow. Your Excellency, that is the proposal I seek a seconder for, in terms of suspending Standing Orders. Thank you.

The President -

Thank you Attorney General. Is there a seconder for the motion? Councillor Thrower, sorry, Councillor Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner -

Your Excellency I beg to second the motion.

The President -

Thank you. I put the question that Standing Order, five, Rules, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, 18 and 21 and the further explanation, as set out by the Attorney General, are suspended.

Question put and agreed.

The President -

Thank you very much. We now have more than one person standing for election, therefore I now have to give an opportunity for each to address the Council. Each person nominated will have no more than five minutes to speak and will be called in alphabetical order, starting with Mr. Brinsden. Mr. Brinsden, would you please care to approach the table. You have five minutes and no more than five minutes to explain your interest in becoming the Speaker.

Mr Keith Brinsden -

Mr. President, Members of Legislative Council. I'm declaring an interest, an expression of interest for the vacant position of Speaker / Deputy Speaker of the new Legislative Council here on St Helena, with the view that I will uphold the Laws, Standing Orders, Codes of Conduct associated with the position. I am a person who shows an independent and impartial view, with no bias one way or another. The role of Speaker is one where control of the event is paramount, and should there be a deviation from the proceedings or principles of the topic under discussion, the Speaker must redirect the Members back to the main point. The Speaker must maintain control and ensure that direction is on the correct road. They must also be impartial to the Legislative Council and operate in an independent way. My motivation for seeking the position stems from my attendance as Mace Bearer, where I am able to silently observe in a proper manner, the proceedings going on and develop any constructive thoughts to myself. Motivation comes from using my career in management and applying the experience from that to the post. As the Speaker is a chair or manager of the team, and guidance is necessary to maintain the correct and proper direction for meetings of Legislative Council, without this control, then meetings could not deviate along a different path. I propose to fulfil the responsibilities by observing and adhering to the Laws, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct set, in order that meetings follow a professional and meaningful path and direction. Without the control from the chair, then meetings will not progress in the correct and proper manner. Often, there may be a deviation of views, and it is important that any debate is held in a correct way. In my life, I have shown the capacity and worth to be able to take control of many situations and tasks set, with the result that due care, diligence, openness and transparency are shown

to be observed. I have received the necessary training through my life to allow for this control to be effectively, carried out and administered. I feel that through my professional working and experience throughout my career, I have the attributes and capabilities to hold the office of Speaker of the House and be able to work in a logical and progressive style, producing the required standards whilst observing the codes and standards of the Constitution and legal aspects to ensure a controlled operation is followed. It is further important that as meetings are broadcast to the public, that these necessary controls of management are seen to be observed and shown. I thank you for hearing my expression of interest for the position of Speaker, Deputy Speaker of Legislative Council.

The President -

The second candidate is Mr. Cruyff Buckley. Mr. Buckley, would you care to approach the table. You have five minutes, or no more than five minutes to explain your interest in becoming the Speaker.

Mr Cruyff Buckley -

Good morning to all Members, and congratulations on being selected to lead St Helena for the next four years. My name is Cruyff Gerard Buckley, and I hereby express my interest in serving this Honourable House as your Speaker. My interest in politics stems from a passion to move St Helena forward in terms of its development and improving the quality of life for everyone who resides on this island that we call home. My background involves five years' experience, starting in 2016 serving on both Legislative and Executive Councils, having performed roles such as the Chairman of the Employment Rights Committee and also as the Chairman of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, under the old committee system of governance. I have also chaired regular Elected Members meetings. All of these duties have allowed me to gain valuable experience in formal and informal sittings within this Honourable House. The role of the Speaker is more than just a ceremonial one. It requires a strong character, but with a firm but fair approach to proceedings in the House in accordance with Standing Orders. I realise that this role require clarity with regards to obligations within these orders, but also flexibility to allow a steady flow of debate in the House amongst passionate politicians. Having had first-hand experience in the House with previous long serving Speakers, I've gained an important insight into how this balance can be achieved. A more profound role of the duty of the Speaker is the investigation of complaints against Members and to uphold the Code of Conduct. If selected, I shall endeavour to hold timely investigations to ensure that the Code is more than just words, and to install confidence into the public as to the integrity of this Honourable House. It is, in my opinion that more can be done to promote the prestige of the Speaker and the role of the Members in this House. Selective community engagement should be more prominent, especially within Schools and other institutions. The Speaker should be able to represent Parliament in a politically neutral way, but also have the ability to raise St Helena's profile internationally. Previous years have indicated low participation during elections, with the recent low turnout of approximately 50% with only half the population eligible to vote. One can see the interest in political leadership needs to be reinvigorated. If selected, I will give a commitment to ensure that this work is undertaken throughout the island as a whole, especially with the Youth Parliament, with the aim of encouraging more islanders to engage in political decision making and to enable a wider representation of democracy. This promotional work would also seek to highlight the roles of Elected Members and their functions within this Honourable House. So why choose me to perform the role of Speaker? I believe that drawing from my previous tenures within the political sphere, including conferences abroad, I have gained a well-rounded knowledge about parliamentary procedure, which will enable me to serve Members interests within this House as well as outside within the community. In addition my dedication and commitment to elevate St Helena's profile, and my intention to raise more awareness around the important work performed by our leaders, can only be beneficial in many ways towards our islands progress. I thank you for your time and consideration.

The President -

The third candidate is Mr. Anthony Green. Mr. Anthony Green, would you care to approach the table. You have five minutes, or no more than five minutes to explain your interest in becoming Speaker.

Mr Anthony Green -

Mr. President and Members, thank you, and good morning and to Honourable Members, many congratulations on your election results. How Council conducts its affairs is so important for gaining public support and respect. The Speaker, of course and the Deputy have pivotal roles to play in achieving this. My motivation for seeking either position is rooted in my background accumulated throughout my working career and latterly, over the past 17 years being a politician, the majority of the time when I served as Chairman under the committee system. I offer a summary of my background for you to consider what I could bring to this job and what continues to motivate me today. The first 25 years of my working career was with the St Helena Government. I progressed through the Civil Service, from a learner Clerk in the Secretariat, then to assistant Postmaster, then Chief Clerk Public Health, and then back to the Secretariat, now referred to as Central Support, holding positions of Principal Clerk, Assistant Secretary and then Assistant Government Secretary, of which during the six of those years, I performed responsibility as Acting Government Secretary, now called Chief Secretary for about an aggregate of three years in portions of about three months at a time. Those periods when I acted as Government Secretary, I was then the leader of government business at Legislative Council meetings. I have also been the Clerk of Councils for three years. My time on Ascension, first as Administration Officer, initially seconded from the St Helena Government, and later becoming the Senior Manager, de facto CEO, and then CEO of the Ascension Island Works and Services Agency. Back here, some 15 years later, I was the Constitutional Coordinator, when the island first considered whether it wanted to move to a Ministerial system of government. I followed that with being Managing Director of the St Helena Development Agency and then CEO of Solomon and Company until 2008, which was then immediately followed a few months later with being first elected to Legislative Council. Council and politics have attached themselves to me or vice versa for a very long time. I have 5 GCE O' levels and a professional certificate in management from the Open University. I would propose to fulfil my responsibilities in any of the Speaker roles with the same vigour and energy I've applied throughout my life. On deciding to leave employment on Ascension, my boss, who was working with the BBC World Service Director, which is one of the five organisations in charge of funding and delivering funds for the infrastructure on Ascension, wrote to me, and I quote a small portion from my reference, he wrote, and I quote, "with a strong sense of right or wrong, Tony will stand up for what is right, even if it means being unpopular or tackling higher authority. Not surprisingly, with his public service background, probity, accountability and being fair, are attitudes that he brings to everything he does". Unquote. Full text, of course, is available if you wish. As to the role of the Speaker, I feel that it has at least two key features, one of impartiality, and secondly, one of authority, applying the rules consistently and fairly. I trust this will assist Honourable Members.

The President -

The fourth candidate is Mr. Cyril Gunnell. Mr. Gunnell, would you care to approach the table. You have five minutes, or no more than five minutes to explain your interest in becoming Speaker.

Mr Cyril Gunnell -

Good morning, Mr. President and Honourable Members of Legislative Council. Honourable Members, if I haven't already done so, I offer you my sincere congratulations on being elected to serve the people of St Helena for the next term. I had the honour of being the seventh Speaker, following constitutional change in 1988, which allowed for the Speaker to be elected to the exclusion of the Governor. I learned early, while transiting from a committee system to ministerial form that the role of Speaker involves much more than the chairing of formal meetings, of which a great many were held in the four years while the ministerial system developed. These included Ministers Question Time. The Speaker is responsible for enforcing the rules of the Legislative Council, presiding over the conduct of House business and maintaining order and decorum. It is the Speaker's duty to ensure that the rules of the House for conducting the business are followed and that all Members have an opportunity to take part in debates. I am fully conversant with the provisions in the Constitution and Standing Orders and also the Code of Conduct for Members of Legislative Council, all of which require amendments, some extensively for improving outcomes. I am willing to recommend to Honourable Members how I believe amendments to these documents can be, to a certain extent, improved outcomes. Amendments to the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct should be done early in the tenure of the Council. It is essential that the Speaker is seen to be above party politics and does not take part in debates or votes unless there is a tie. The Speaker requires a broad range of skills and personal qualities to successfully

fulfil all the duties of the position. A Speaker needs to be sympathetic, firm, fair and impartial in their judgement, with the ability to remain above the fray in the House. A Speaker exercises a fair amount of discretion, but is mindful when making decisions they must be made in the public interest. The Speaker, like any other Elected Member, can be held accountable for their actions. Many years of wide-ranging experience has helped me become a competent Speaker and to build relevant expertise and strong leadership. This includes serving two terms on Executive Council, as Chair of Employment and Social Services and Health and Social Welfare committees respectively. I served also on various other Council Committees and Boards, and I led a delegation to the EU conference in Bonaire, Netherlands, Antilles, on an EU funding tranche for the island. During the last term, I accepted invitations from the Speaker of the House of Commons to have face to face interaction with him and Speakers of other Overseas Territories. I found this very beneficial, and it helped me tremendously with my work on behalf of the Legislative Council. I have always been passionate about our island politics and how they affect the lives of our people, so perhaps the more satisfying involvements in my Council career have been causing change in SHG policy, so that the unestablished workforce became established, with pension rights; a complete review of the Constitution; and review of the benefit system, which, among other improvements, established a Basic Island Pension. The latter meant that for the first time, citizens who previously were not entitled to a pension for their labours, started receiving a basic pension based on number of years worked on St Helena. I also chaired the Prison Visiting Committee for a number of years, and the Public Accounts Committee. We saw the profile of the PAC enhanced over the years and become highly regarded. And I am still a member of the Chamber of Commerce. An improvement or an involvement I am still proud of is the restoration of British Citizenship in 2002. You may remember that Saint Helena lost its British citizenship. It was Saint Helena who took up the challenge and we had it restored in 2002. On the back of that other Overseas Territories had their British Citizenship restored as well. Honourable Members, I would like to be considered for the vacant role of Speaker to assist Honourable Members in their responsibilities, in as much as the Speaker can be involved, and importantly, to help take forward any unfinished business, including from the last term, provided this is the wish of Honourable Members. Thank you all very much.

The President -

Thank you. May I please remind candidates the time limit is five minutes. I now invite the fifth candidate, Miss Christine Scipio. Miss Scipio, would you care to approach the table. You have five minutes, or no more than five minutes to explain your interest in becoming Speaker.

Miss Christine Scipio -

I prefer to stand. Mr. President, thank you for granting me the opportunity to speak today, regarding my expression of interest for the role of Speaker of this Honourable House. This is not a decision I take lightly, and I have given it considerable thought. My decision reflects the number of years spent listening, learning and striving to serve St Helena with compassion and fairness. To each newly Elected Member of this Legislative Council, I offer my warmest congratulations. May your tenure be guarded by wisdom, empathy and shared commitment to the betterment of St Helena and its people. The role of Speaker carries great responsibility. It demands strong leadership, unwavering integrity and a deep understanding of parliamentary procedure. But more than that, it requires ability to foster respectful, productive dialogue among Members, to be a calm presence in moments of tension, a steady hand in times of uncertainty and above all, a servant of this House, not above it, but within it. I do not approach this role as a newcomer to its weight. Since first being elected in 2012, I have served across multiple terms in the Legislative Council, including under both the Committee System and the current Ministerial form of Government. I have chaired Education Committee, served on Economic Development Committee, Executive Council, and contributed to the Safeguarding of Children's Board, the Scholarship Awards Committee and the Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy. Mr. President, 2021 I was honoured to be appointed Minister for the Environment, Natural Resources and Planning. I've also represented St Helena at international conferences, including the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference and the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarian Forums, Cop-28, Cop-29, where I have advocated for the unique challenges faced by small island territories. These experiences have deepened my understanding of international policy, strengthen my ability to collaborate across cultures, and reaffirm my commitment to ensuring that St Helena is not only heard but respected in global conversations. I have also

deputised for the Chief Minister on a few occasions over the years. The experience has taught me that leadership is not about commanding attention but earning trust, and trust is built through listening, fairness and consistency. It has shaped how I listen, how I lead and how I serve, values that lie at the heart of the Speaker's role. I have witnessed evolution of a political systems, from the Committee structure to the Ministerial form of Government, and I have stood at the centre of both. I understand the intricacies of Parliament procedures, and I know what it means to lead with both firmness and empathy. It has been an honour to preside over this House in absence of the Speaker, during both the Committee structure and the Ministerial form of Government. Each chapter brought its own challenges and opportunities, deepening my understanding of parliamentary procedure and strengthening my appreciation for the weight of responsibility of all in this House, as representatives of our people. I remain humbled by the trust placed in me during those times, and I carry that same sense of duty and care into this moment as I stand before you today. So today, I ask for your trust, not just in me, but in the kind of leadership that listens first, acts fairly and always put the good of St Helena above all else. If entrusted with this role, I'll ensure that our proceedings are conducted with discipline, transparency and integrity. I will uphold the rule of law without fear or favour and will foster a culture of accountability that reflects the values our constituents expect from us. Thank you for considering me, it'd be the greatest honour to serve you and our Island in this way. Thank you.

The President -

The final candidate is Mrs. Maureen Thompson. Mrs. Thompson, may I invite you to approach the table. You have five minutes, or no more than five minutes, to explain your interest in becoming Speaker.

Mrs Maureen Thompson -

Thank you, Mr. President. Honourable Members, many thanks indeed for giving me the opportunity to address you on the matter for the election to fill the vacant position of Speaker. Firstly, I would like to congratulate you on your successful election to this Honourable House of Legislative Council, and wish you all every success during the tenure of your office, serving the people of St Helena. I present myself before you today because of the tremendous support I received from members of the public persuading me to stand for election as Speaker. So without further ado, I'll give you a summary of my background. I sincerely apologise to those of you who have heard it all before. At the age of 15, I left school, worked in retail for four years, until June 1972 I got the opportunity to join the St Helena Police and made history by being the first policewoman on the island, along with one other. During my time in the Police, I wore several caps as besides the normal policing duty, I also dealt with the issuing of driving and motor vehicle licences, Immigration Office, Public Prosecutor, and collecting off and paying recipients, child maintenance. I remained in the Police for nearly 10 years and during the time, I had the opportunity to attend three courses in the United Kingdom, which abled me to reach the rank of Police Inspector and acted as Assistant Superintendent on one occasion. I then left the island in March 82 where I married and lived in the United Kingdom for 32 years. Of course, I wanted to join the Police in the United Kingdom, but unfortunately, the only position that could be offered to me was in Notting Hill Gate. At the time, the reputation in that area was far from ideal, so I decided against it. I then went to work in security as a Loss Prevention Officer, firstly in Little Woods for two and a half years, and then for Marks and Spencer's for 19 years. This provided an opportunity to work with the police, the extent of our work at the police control room at Piccadilly Circus during the May Day riots. During my time working for Marks and Spencer's, I worked in three of their stores, arresting people from all walks of life for shoplifting, handbag theft and staff members from stealing cash from tills. The role brought about some difficult situations, which were the most unpleasant experience of my career, which included arresting an off-duty Police Officer who was on sick leave at the time, and I was instrumental in having my Supervisor and Manager arrested for theft. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my role as the Loss Prevention Officer until all secure store security was dealt the biggest blow, as the job I love came to an abrupt end. This was due to problems arising from the outcry against Bouncer's behaviours in nightclubs. So the government passed the law making changes regarding security in both stores and nightclubs. This meant that my contract had to be outsourced. I decided against it and applied for a role in Marks and Spencer's and was successful in securing the job in the store's Finance Office in Oxford Street, where I completed 10 years. In January 2014 because of my mother's failing help, my husband and I decided to return to St Helena to care for her. In 2019 I decided I wanted to do something meaningful in life, so in March of that year, I successfully been appointed to Deputy

Speaker, post I held for nearly two and a half years until Legislative was dissolved in August 21. During this time, I had many opportunities to be Speaker of the House due to the illness of the Speaker at the time, the late John Cranfield. So I understand the Speaker is independent and unbiased, who acts as a referee, administration and leader within the House, ensuring that the Legislative process functions effectively. As Deputy Speaker, I've represented the Speaker's office in three different working groups, working tirelessly, looking at new ways to modernise the structures of the new governance. This involved discussions on the processes leading to the Consultative Poll, Constitutional amendments, Ministerial Code, Post-election representation areas, Question Time, Select Committees, Election monitoring, and Induction training, and liaise with CPA for redrafting of the Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct. During this time, I had the opportunity to Chair a few internal disciplinary inquiries. I am an Associate Member of the CPA and attends their Annual General Meetings to keep updated with the activities. Unfortunately, to serve as the Deputy Speaker in October 21 was unsuccessful, so I once again found myself looking for something meaningful to do and served on the Prison Visiting Committee. If I am fortunate enough to be elected to Speaker role, I can assure you I'm fully committed to the role and do all in my power to serve you well. I'm dedicated upholding the rules and traditions of the House, ensuring fairness for all Members. I'm motivated....

The President -

Forgive me Mrs. Thompson, your times up please. Draw it to a close.

Mrs Maureen Thompson -

I'm positive, I'm motivated by positive attitude, honest, conscientious, enthusiastic, and I've always worked in the team. I am passionate about what happens to our island and its people, and together we can work to achieve what is best for the future. Thank you.

The President -

Thank you very much. We now have more than one person for election. Members, there are six candidates, and we need to have a majority decision for the Elected Members to declare a nominee elected as Speaker. Voting will be carried out in secret, and you may vote for only one person. Once you have made your mark in the box, on the paper, the Clerk will give you, the paper should be folded and the Clerk will collect it from you.

(Members vote)

Thank you. Whilst the Clerk is collecting the votes, I will just remind you that if one of the candidates gets seven votes, they are elected Speaker. For the Speaker to be duly elected, it must be a majority of all Councillors. If candidate gets less than seven votes, then the candidates with the lowest number of votes will drop out and there will be a second ballot.

The results of the voting is as follows:

Mr. Keith Brinsden – No votes
 Mr. Cruyff Buckley – 1 vote
 Mr. Anthony Green – No votes
 Mr. Cyril Gunnell – 4 votes
 Miss Christine Scipio – 5 votes
 Mrs. Maureen Thompson – 2 votes

I propose that Mr. Brinsden and Mr. Green withdraw from the vote and we will vote again. A reminder members, Mr. Brinsden and Mr. Green have been removed from the vote.

(Members vote)

Have all Members had the opportunity to vote? Clerk, please.

The results of the second ballot are as follows:

Mr. Buckley – No votes
 Mr. Gunnell – 5 votes
 Miss Scipio – 6 votes
 Mrs. Thompson – 1 vote

I propose that Mr. Buckley is withdrawn from the election and we will vote for a third time.

(Members vote)

Have all Members had the opportunity to vote? Clerk, please.

The result of the third vote is as follows:

Mr. Gunnell – 5 votes
 Miss Scipio – 6 votes
 Mrs. Thompson – 1 vote

Mrs. Thompson is therefore withdrawn from the election, and we will vote for a fourth time. We will have a two minute pause whilst we print some more ballot papers. We will now conduct the fourth vote. I remind members that the decision is between Mr. Gunnell and Miss Scipio.

(Members vote)

Have all Members had the opportunity to vote? Clerk, please.

Members, we have a dead heat. Both candidates six votes. May I suggest that we have a pause for a few moments and then we will vote for a fifth time.

The Hon. Attorney General -

May I interject on a Point of Order. Your Excellency, as you recall, we did suspend Standing Order 25(b) in the Order. I described earlier, and that is that we should now stand adjourned for 20 minutes to allow for Members to have informal discussions before themselves and then re vote. If we are then tied, we adjourn the item of business until tomorrow.

The President -

Attorney General, thank you for your comments. Council, we are adjourned.

Council adjourned.

Council resumed.

The President -

Members, we now return to the fifth vote for the Speaker. I'm informed by the Attorney General, if we are unable to reach a conclusion today, then the item will be removed to tomorrow, and we will proceed with the election of the Deputy Speaker. And it would be the Deputy Speaker would then oversee the election of the Chief Minister. So if I may ask the Clerk, if you're ready, then we'll distribute the votes for the fifth count.

(Members vote)

Have all Members had the opportunity to vote? Clerk, please.

Members, we have a dead heat once again.

Therefore at this point, we will pause the election of the Speaker for removal to a Legislative Council to be held tomorrow, and we will proceed with the election of the Deputy Speaker.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Your Excellency, I beg to move the same amendments to Standing Orders for the election of Deputy Speaker, as I did for Speaker. If you and Members are happy, I will dispense with reading out the details, but what I will read out are the eight candidates. In fact, perhaps before we do that, we should inquire of those who are standing for Speaker whether they wish to be considered for Deputy Speaker, because at the moment, all their names are on the list.

So I appreciate your Excellency that you perhaps didn't hear what I said. We do have Mr. Gunnell and Miss Scipio on the ballot for Deputy Speaker. The question is whether either would choose to withdraw, and I suggest that we ask whether they wish to be considered for Deputy Speaker or not. It wouldn't necessarily preclude them from being considered as Speaker, but necessarily that would give us further complications tomorrow.

The President -

I'll do this in alphabetical order. Mr. Gunnell, would you care to approach the table and indicate if you would wish to be considered for the election of Deputy Speaker.

Mr Cyril Gunnell -

Provided I don't become Speaker, I certainly would wish to be considered as Deputy Speaker.

The President -

Thank you Mr. Gunnell. Miss Scipio, may I ask you to approach the table to indicate whether or not you would wish to be considered for the election of Deputy Speaker.

Miss Christine Scipio -

Yes, Mr. President, for both.

The President -

Thank you to both.

Election of Deputy Speaker

The Hon. Attorney General -

So in which case, then your Excellency, as I say, I beg to move the same amendments to Standing Orders that I did for the election of Speaker. This time, the candidates are as follows: Mr. Keith Brinsden, Mr. Cruyff Buckley, Mr. Anthony Green, Mr. Cyril Gunnell, Mrs. Connie Johnson, Miss Christine Scipio and Mrs. Maureen Thompson. I leave it to you Your Excellency, whether you invite them all to speak for the five minutes again, but I do note there is one additional candidate in this round who wasn't heard last time.

The President -

Thank you. I do not believe it's necessary for those candidates who have already spoken to speak again, and therefore I will leave it to the one additional candidate to speak. That additional candidate is Mrs. Connie Johnson. I invite Mrs. Johnson to approach the table in which you have five minutes and no more than five minutes to explain your interest in becoming Speaker. Apologies, Deputy Speaker.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Your Excellency, within our haste, what we haven't done is formally put the motion to the Members about suspending Standing Orders and adopting the procedures.

The President -

Are Members content to agree that we suspend Standing Orders? I think I then go through the same process as I did last time, which is, is there somebody who would wish to second that motion?

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex -

Mr Speaker I beg to second. Mr President, I beg your pardon.

The President -

Thank you Councillor Essex. Then I take it that we have a seconded proposal. I believe I now need to ask without repeating the entire Order, because I believe you know what it is.

Question put and agreed.

The President -

And on that basis, Mrs. Johnson, I invite you to give your five minute address please.

Mrs. Connie Johnson -

Mr. President and Honourable Members, I am so grateful for this opportunity to address you on my nomination for Deputy Speaker, a non-voting, but important member of Legislative Council. I am the Pensions and Payroll Manager in Treasury and my team, Kelsey Henry and Taelah Crowie, both work very hard to ensure all of the SHG weekly and monthly payroll payments are made on time. It is so unreal to me that I'm almost within reach of my 40th year working for SHG. I started in April 1986 with my first line manager the late Enid Joshua and I can recall clearly, Cilla Isaac and myself writing out bills for services provided by SHG in our neatest handwriting, with fingers and nails covered in blue ink from the carbon paper. Back in those days when a prescription fee was just 30p. I later moved to the Accounts section, working with the late Brian Clarke, who was well known for adding up accurately long list of figures without a calculator. I remained in the accounting field for 26 years. I am grateful to SHG for the opportunities and funding, which allowed me to obtain a GCSE in Accounting in 1993, through day release classes and my Accounting level two in 1995. I started the ACCA qualification in 2002 and completed the 10 exams in June 2008. In 2012 I transferred to Corporate Support, where my duties also included assisting with the organisation of the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Service and the Governor's Inauguration. I continued to study and achieved a level five certificate in Leadership and Management in 2015. In June 2018 I gained my degree of Bachelor of Arts with distinction in Business and Enterprise. I have been the Secretary to Executive Council for a few years, and in September 2001, following the restructure, moved to the new role of Legislative Office Team Leader/ Clerk of Councils. So I've had the opportunity to work with many Members here today. I was also fortunate to have received work experience in Jersey and attend a forum in Westminster. So I am grateful to the CPA UK and the local CPA branch for their support. I left the Legislative Council office to fill in as a temporary PA to His Excellency the Governor, and in December 2023 was promoted to my current role. I've also been the local CPA Branch Secretary, so I have a clear understanding of what the role entails. Plus, I have prepared the CPA accounts for a number of years. I have expressed my interest in the Deputy Speaker's role because I feel I have the relevant experience and skills and having also worked at the Legislative Council office and also alongside past Speakers, Deputy Speakers, and with Carol Henry, a former Clerk of Council, I feel this has provided me with some really good, transferable knowledge. I have sat on various investigative panels, listening to the debates and facts and produced the minutes, so I am familiar with these requirements and procedures. I feel that I will be an asset to the Speaker when they are elected and this Council, because of my knowledge of Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct for Members of Legislative Council. Plus, I have my previous background as Clerk of Councils to draw upon. I would also enjoy the challenge of assuming, in the absence of the Speaker, the responsibilities, because this would be a new experience for me. I firmly believe that I will be able to actively support the work of this Council. Mr. President and Honourable Members, thank you for listening. I hope that

I have provided a sound foundation as to why I am suited to perform the role of the Deputy Speaker. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President -

Thank you. Members we have seven candidates for election, and we need to have a majority decision for the Elected Members to declare the nominee elected as Deputy Speaker. Voting will be carried out in secret, and you may make a vote for only one person. Once you've made your mark in the box, on the paper, the Clerk will give you, the paper should be folded and the Clerk will collect it from you.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex -

Mr. President, may I rise on a point of information?

The President -

Councillor Essex.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex -

Mr. President, I am confused as to how we are going to proceed from this point, because the matter of election as Speaker has not yet been resolved. So if, for example, when we vote for Deputy Speaker, the person who gets the most votes is still in the ring for Speaker, how will we then proceed? Similarly, if we do not vote for the two candidates that we know are still in the ring for the Speaker, because we feel that one or other of them is likely to be the Speaker, and therefore it will not be necessary to consider them for the Deputy Speaker, that is also unfair to them. So I would like guidance as to how we should best proceed in fairness to all the candidates involved. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President -

Thank you Councillor Essex. Attorney General, may I ask you to comment.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you, your Excellency. The difficulty we have is, that with the exception of the suspension of Standing Orders, with regard to nominations, proposals and so on and so forth, we are following the established Standing Orders procedure. And the Standing Order procedure does contemplate this type of situation occurring, because it's not the adjournment of Legislative Council, it's the adjournment of the item of business. So the expectation of our Standing Orders is because we had a tie for the Speaker election that we will be going forward to tomorrow, to re-elect, or to try to re-elect for that particular post. Now, I see no difficulty in proceeding with the Deputy Speaker election now. Now let's assume, for the sake of argument, that one of the candidates for the speakership becomes elected to the Deputy Speaker role, it would clearly be inappropriate for that particular person to actually chair the proceedings, to act as Speaker for that election. And our Standing Orders also deal with that situation where, we would be able to have one of our number, including, should you wish to have it be me, one of our number act as the Presiding Officer for those particular elements of the proceedings. So assuming, for the sake of argument, that one of our candidates for the Speaker becomes Deputy Speaker, and let's assume that that candidate then becomes elected as Speaker, presuming we break the deadlock, then I would foresee that we would need then to have another item of business to proceed for the election of Deputy Speaker, again because the assumption will be and we would no doubt ask the individual, do you resign from the role of Deputy Speaker or not? The more difficult situation will arise and I will look at this situation overnight, as if we end up with a tie again tomorrow, because our Standing Orders provide for that situation. However, they leave the situation quite unsatisfactory, in my view, because it just ends up with a declaration that we have not been able to elect. I would imagine under those circumstances, you would like to proceed, to continue to try to elect, and it may be that you might want to adopt the procedures that you would have at a General Election, or a By-election, where there is a tie between the candidates, that it's decided by drawing lots, tossing of a coin, drawing straws, whichever particular method you may wish to choose. But that, I think, would come for a question of whether or not we wish to suspend Standing Orders and vary them in that particular direction. And I would suggest if we are in that situation, we are going to have to have more discussions between ourselves to identify what we think is the most appropriate and democratic

way to proceed. But as I say, I see no difficulty in seeking to appoint the Deputy Speaker now. I can see a way forward, that if the Deputy Speaker becomes the Speaker that becomes quite straightforward. Likewise, of course, you may find that one of the successful candidates for Deputy Speaker isn't the successful candidate for Speaker, and therefore we wouldn't necessarily have a problem in any event. But I trust that answers the Honourable Councillor Essex's point.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex -

Mr. President, I thank the Attorney General for his explanation, however, for the sake of clarity and hopefully moving forward in the most straightforward way possible, what are the objections to actually deferring election of the Deputy Speaker until after the election of the Speaker has been resolved?

The Hon. Attorney General -

It would be open to Councillor Essex to propose exactly that as a motion, be seconded and be voted through by Members in the ordinary way. So if, for example, that was something you wish to do, I suggest you make a proposal, have it seconded, that we defer the election of Deputy Speaker until tomorrow, should you wish to do so.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex -

Thank you, Attorney General. I definitely wish to do so, and I would now propose that the election of the Deputy Speaker is deferred until after the election to Speaker is concluded. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President -

Is there another Councillor would wish to second that motion? Councillor Thomas.

The Hon. Julie Thomas -

Thank you, Mr. President. I beg to second.

The President -

Thank you. Then the motion has been put. I will now put the question to those in favour of the motion to suspend the election of the Deputy Speaker until we have resolved the election of the Speaker.

Question put and agreed.

The President -

And we will suspend the election of the Deputy Speaker, which means, I think we have suspended business, but I look to the Attorney General on this?

The Hon. Attorney General

We still have the election of the Chief Minister.

The President -

Are members content that I, as the Governor, as Acting President, oversee the election of the Chief Minister? Do the same way? Forgive me, this is my first time in this, but I'm assuming I'll put it the same way. I put to the Council that I as the Acting President will take responsibility for overseeing the vote of the Chief Minister.

Question put and agreed.

Election of Chief Minister

The President -

I will oversee the election of the Chief Minister. I now reach the position where I invite nominations of the position of Chief Minister. Councillor Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner -

Your Excellency, I wish to propose the Honourable Dr. Rebecca Cairns-Wicks.

The President -

Is there a seconder for the motion that Dr. Rebecca Cairns-Wicks become the Chief Minister? Councillor Brooks.

The Hon. Gillian Brooks -

Mr. President, I beg to second.

The President -

Thank you. Then we have the motion put forward. Secondly are there any other nominations for position of Chief Minister? I see no one proposing that there be a second nomination. I take it therefore that Dr. Rebecca Cairns-Wicks stands unopposed in the position of Chief Minister. So therefore I put to this body, do you wish to accept the position of Chief Minister being afforded to Dr. Rebecca Cairns-Wicks?

Question put and agreed.

The President -

Then it is my privilege and pleasure to announce that the new Chief Minister for St Helena is Dr. Rebecca Cairns-Wicks and let me be the first to congratulate you on your appointment.

(Applause)

The President -

I believe, ladies and gentlemen, at this point, we have concluded business for today, subject to

The Hon. Attorney General -

I do beg your pardon. We misinterpreted our own hand signals between us there. So we need to proceed to the next item of business, which would have been the address by the Speaker. I propose that we move to the Adjournment Debate and we defer the address by the Speaker until after the Speaker's election, but that proposal will need to be seconded.

The President -

Councillor Essex.

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex -

Mr. President, the Adjournment Debate is normally the last item of business, so I consider would be more appropriate for that to take place at the conclusion of our meeting tomorrow. Thank you.

The President -

I don't know if I need to ask you to agree that. I think that makes sense personally. Are we content with that without me putting it through the whole vote process?

Council –

Yes.

The President -

Okay, good, right. So there will be a task actually for the Clerk's team to arrange the sitting of Legislative Council tomorrow. We'll need to establish who will be the President. I look forward to whatever guidance might be available on that, and we'll proceed if all are content. Therefore that is our business for today is concluded. Thank you. And once again, congratulations to you Dr. Cairns-Wicks.

Council Adjourned.


Honourable Speaker

24th October 2025
Date