



**St Helena
Government**

ST HELENA GOVERNMENT

**Proceedings of Legislative Council – Thursday, 11
September, 2025 – Second Sitting of Inaugural Meeting**

Laid 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, SECOND SITTING

Thursday, 11th September, 2025

The Council met at 10.00 am

in the Council Chamber, Jamestown

ORDER OF THE DAY

1. FORMAL ENTRY OF THE PRESIDENT, HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

2. PRAYERS (The Right Reverend Bishop Dale Bowers)

3. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

Honourable Councillors, we meet again in the effort to elect a Speaker and Deputy Speaker. I will, in a moment, pass the floor to the Honourable Attorney General to set out the position that we find ourselves in. Before I do so however, I have been asked to request if you have any objections to photographs being taken by SAMS of today's meeting. If anybody has an objection, please indicate now. Then it is agreed that photographs may be taken. Thank you for that. Honourable Attorney General, the floor is yours.

4. ELECTIONS

Election of Speaker

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you Your Excellency. Honourable Members, we find ourselves in an interesting situation. Strictly, I have taken the view that as a matter of law, we remain in our first meeting. That's an important position, because it is the Governor's responsibility to chair, to preside over this meeting, whilst it remains the first meeting up until the point that we elect either a Speaker or Deputy Speaker. The question is, where are we in relation to those two elections? The situation we reached with regard to the election of the Speaker is that after an attempt to have a tie break after two rounds of voting, the top two candidates remain tied at six all. The effect of our Standing Orders was to require that that item of business be deferred to the next day, and that is why we are here today. Our Standing Orders also require that a fresh election be held in those circumstances, and they actually uses the Latin words *ab initio*, 'from the beginning' in our Standing Orders. That means we start effectively from square one. It also means that the modifications we made to Standing Orders for that election do not apply now, unless it is we want to modify them again. Now it's important, I believe, that we do modify the Standing Orders again, because without the modifications with regarding proposing, seconding, nominations, etc., we would have to go back to the Standing Order rules, which would require each individual candidate to secure a proposer and seconder from amongst your

number. I think therefore, as a matter of practicality, it makes sense that we follow the same arrangements that we had, which is that the slate of candidates be adopted en bloc by vote of this House. I think it's also important, and it may be done, perhaps by His Excellency, is that we check, we verify with the candidates who sought election for the Speakership that they wish their nomination still to go forward at this stage. We may find that we don't have the six candidates that we had yesterday, but that clearly is a matter for those individuals, whether they wish their names to go forward or not. Now we need to contemplate again what happens in relation to speeches. You've heard the speeches from all of the candidates yesterday. Under our existing rules, and this was the rule that was not suspended yesterday, each candidate is entitled to an up to five minute speech. But you did hear all the candidates yesterday, and it may be that you would like to suspend that Standing Order and be able to proceed directly to the vote. Equally, you may say, no, we'd like to hear speeches, if the candidates want to make the speeches again, should they wish to do so. It may be they want to change what they've said, and that will be perfectly acceptable, because, as I say, this is a fresh election. We're starting from the beginning. So if you don't suspend the Standing Orders with regard to speeches, we must expect the candidates are free to make those up to five minute speeches. So far so good. We now have to contemplate, what are we going to do if after the rounds of voting, and I'm suggesting we modify the Standing Orders to allow for a second round of voting, if the top two candidates are again tied, as we did yesterday, what are we then going to do. Our Standing Orders contemplate that situation, and they contemplate it by simply saying that who's ever presiding simply announces that we have failed to elect. Now the effect of that is simple. It just means that the Governor is able to bring this first meeting to an end, and we will deal with the elections at our second meeting. At our next meeting, the arrangements for who presides at that second meeting are provided for in the Constitution, and I'm sure the Honourable Governor will be delighted to know that he doesn't have to fulfil that role. The next person who presides, if we haven't elected a Speaker or Deputy Speaker today, will be drawn from amongst the membership. And they use the word membership rather than Elected Member, because it allows for me, goodness only knows why you want to choose me, it allows for me to be chosen by you to preside, should you wish to do so. But equally, you could choose one of your number to do so, and if you did, the Elected Member who is presiding does not lose their vote. They can still vote, but as we know, the Speaker does not have a casting vote in any event. So those are the arrangements. Alternatively, though you could say you want to bring certainty today, and we could, should you wish to do so, adopt a tie breaking situation, such as I suggested yesterday, as you'd have in a General Election, if the top candidates, or for example, those to be elected are tied. And the traditional route is to draw lots; that can be drawing playing cards, drawing short straws, tossing a coin, something of that order. Now I'm putting this out to you so that you can think about it. I don't recommend it to you, because as your Attorney General, I'm trying to stick within Standing Orders. And the Standing Order position is quite clear. If you fail to elect we simply defer it until our second or subsequent meetings if we're in that situation. So, Mr. President, Your Excellency, it's clearly a matter how we now proceed. But I perhaps invite you to see if Members have anything that they wish to say, and if they do or they don't, what I will then proceed to do is propose modifications to the Standing Orders. What I will do today, different from yesterday, though, is to deal with them in chunks. I would propose to deal with the modifications to Standing Orders, first, to deal with the nomination process. I will then separately deal with the issue of speeches, to give you an opportunity to decide whether you want to hear speeches or not. And then separately, I will deal with the tie breaking situation, so you will need at least three votes to get through that situation to determine what fair procedure you need. It's perhaps worth me saying at this stage, I think it would be a fair procedure for the election of Speaker, either to dispense with speeches or to allow speeches to take place, or perhaps give people the opportunity to make speeches, but they don't have to. And it wouldn't be held against them, for example, if they chose not to, because after all, those speeches were all made yesterday, and it's perfectly acceptable to say, please take account of the remarks that I made yesterday. But Your Excellency, I think that's sufficient for me from for the moment.

The President -

Thank you, Honourable Attorney General. Honourable Members, does anybody wish to address the floor.
(Pause) The Honourable Karl Thrower.

The Hon. Karl Thrower -

Thank you, if I may Your Excellency. I think the best way forward is to allow the candidates to decide on whether they want to repeat their speech or have a new speech.

The President -

If there are no further comments, I shall hand back to the Honourable Attorney General to take us through the procedure as set out.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you Your Excellency. Honourable Members, you will be familiar with the motion I put forward to you yesterday to suspend Standing Orders. I wish Your Excellency, I propose the suspension of the following standards, or Standing Orders for the purposes of the election of the Speaker. Order five, Rule five for nominations; Order five, Rule six regarding proposals; Order five, Rule eight, stipulations in respect to proposing and seconding; Order five, Rule nine, proposing or seconding second candidates is forbidden; Order five, Rule 13, call for seconder; Order five Rule 15, no second; Order five, Rule 18, confirmation of notification. Excuse me a moment and Order five, Rule 21 concerning no further proposals. I suggest that in the place of those Standing Orders, we accept that the following candidates have been duly proposed and seconded, and have noted that each of the candidates has accepted their nomination for the role. The list I have is as follows, and I stand to be corrected if the list is incorrect. I'm grateful that the Clerk is avoiding an unforced error. Thank you. So the candidates we have for Speaker are: Mr. Cruyff Buckley, Mr. Anthony Green, Mr. Cyril Gunnell, Miss Christine Scipio and Miss Maureen Thompson. I suggest I leave the notifications here. I seek a seconder for those, and I suggest that we vote on these, and then I will return to the other issues momentarily.

The President -

Thank you, Attorney General. I don't propose to repeat the motion as set out. Is there a seconder for the motion as put forward? The Honourable Andrew Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner -

Your Excellency, I beg to second.

The President -

Thank you. Then the motion is passed.

Question put and agreed.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you, Your Excellency. So I now turn to the situation as to whether or not you wish to hear speeches. I'm going to put the proposal, but you do not have to hear speeches. So therefore, if you want to hear speeches, you need to vote my proposal down. So I propose that we suspend Rule five. So Order five, Rule 24 (a) the address before voting. If you agree, we will simply rely on the speeches made yesterday and proceed to the vote. If you disagree, nonetheless, the speeches are available, so I propose it. I therefore seek a seconder for that particular amendment.

The President -

Do we have a seconder for the second motion put forward? (*Pause*) No seconder so the motion does not go forward.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you Members. Thank you Your Excellency. So that then brings me to the question of the tie break arrangements. There are effectively two proposals that we can follow through. One is in relation to the Standing Orders, we can let them run, but I suggest we make the same amendment as we did yesterday. That is, in the event of a tie, we allow for a break for 20 minutes, so there is an opportunity for informal

discussions and then vote again. So I make that proposal, and I then also propose in relation to the Standing Order, Order five. Rule 25 is that, if after that tie breaking arrangement that we talked about, that second vote, that simply we follow our Standing Orders at that point and allow His Excellency to declare that we have failed to elect a Speaker. If you disagree with me, you will need to propose an amendment, which will provide for some other alternative arrangements, such as the drawing of lots. But as I am proposing the particular amendment, the change I am after in relation to Order five Rule 25 (b) is simply to allow a second run off vote between the tied candidates after a 20 minute break. I am then suggesting that we simply follow our Standing Orders. That's my proposal Your Excellency.

The President -

Thank you Honourable Attorney General. I once again ask if there is a seconder for the motion, as stated. The Honourable Andrew Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner -

Your Excellency, I beg to second again.

The President -

Thank you. I put the motion forward.

Question put and agreed.

The President -

So, I think we now proceed to the position where I invite each individual to, I shall call their name if they wish to give a speech. Could they please approach the table and give their speech of no more than five minutes as of yesterday. And can I please ask that we strictly enforce the five minute rule, I will interrupt if we go beyond on this occasion. So the first person I invite to come to the table is Mr. Cruyff Buckley.

Mr. Cruyff Buckley -

Morning again, Members. I have to say it is with disappointment I sit here today to give this speech. The demonstration of unity in this Council already is beginning to unravel. And this is my, of course, my personal opinion. Standing Orders exist for a reason. The previous Standing Orders were set by the previous Council, and is dated 2022 and in there, it outlined that proposals and seconders for Speakers was a requirement. And in my opinion, it is done for a reason, because ultimately the Elected Members select the Speaker. So whilst the reason given was to widen the pool and give everybody a chance, the ultimate goal is to find someone who the Elected Members are willing to work with. We had people interested in the position yesterday, came here, gave a speech, and were left embarrassed because they didn't have a single vote. One would ask, what's the point? What would have happened if 50 people applied for the position of Speaker? We would have taken two days, wasted everybody's time, without no support from Elected Members. Hence why the Standing Orders require that we have a proposer and a seconder to have a foundation on which a candidate can deliver their speech in the interest of the island. So I just had to get that off my chest to begin with. I don't want to rehash what I said yesterday. I think everybody in this house is aware of the role of the Speaker, impartiality within the House, maintaining order and integrity above all, upholding the Code of Conduct. If we are so simply going to dispense of Standing Orders at the first sitting for the next four years of this tenure of this Government, I think that, in itself, sends a message that we are willing to bend the rules. So I do question loyalty within this House, as some members had a single vote. That wouldn't have happened if we had a proposer and a seconder. I understand the pool would have been limited to six candidates, had everyone seconded and proposed somebody, but at least they would have had a foundation and a person guaranteed Elected Members, at least two of them would like to have worked with. I'm sorry, Governor, to put a damper on the start of what I would believe to be a future for St Helena, but I feel it's my duty, because I have this microphone in front of me to highlight this problem. Thank you.

The President -

Thank you Mr. Buckley. I now invite Mr. Anthony Green to approach the table and give a speech if he should so wish.

Mr. Anthony Green -

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. I haven't brought my speech with me this morning because the indications yesterday was that it wouldn't be needed. But just as a reminder, I think in summary, I said yesterday that I have spent about many years in the Public Sector, which is the St Helena Government, and about the same amount of time in the private sector. And so I just wanted to probably add to that, that there were one or two things that I didn't add yesterday because of the restriction of time, and that was that during the time I was with the St Helena Government, I was also a Justice of the Peace, also a Justice of the Peace on Ascension Island. As well as that, I've also worked at least four years as a Lay Advocate. One of the achievements, perhaps, that I have accomplished over the years, in order just to reinforce my position that I stated yesterday, was that I was selected, when I was originally with the St Helena Government by the Governor of that time, to serve as an Acting Administrator on Ascension Island. The other accomplishment, which I think would be useful for you to know is that while on Ascension, I personally initiated and carried through the formation of ISO 9000, which is an internationally recognised management system. And while my bosses in London thought it was a very brave thing, which they wouldn't have undertaken, we actually achieved that in 18 months, and also upgraded to 9001. And the purpose of ISO 9000, it's an internationally recognised management system, which actually I've told eventually changed the whole culture of the organisation. And as you know, one of the other things that perhaps I've been noted for, that I do try and make sure that I operate with impartiality, and that sometimes is a double edged sword. Thank you.

The President -

Thank you, Mr. Green. I now invite Mr. Cyril Gunnell to approach the table and give a speech, if you should so wish.

Mr. Cyril Gunnell -

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council, thank you for listening to me yesterday, as I tried to convince you that I am well suited to the task of Speaker of the House for the next term of Legislative Council. I would like to thank the five other candidates for putting themselves forward for the important role of Speaker. It was heartening hearing their expositions. After five rounds of voting, votes were tied and Standing Order five, Rule 25 (b) has been brought into play. If the vote be equally divided, the Speaker shall adjourn the item of business until the next day, and on that day conduct a fresh election *ab initio*. In essence, this means to start from the beginning, just to let you see that I am very conversant with the Standing Orders. Honourable Members, I am not certain what it is that I can say further to make my reason for wanting to be your Speaker any more compelling than I did yesterday. It took me several years to evolve into a competent Speaker during the last term, and that is with many years of wide ranging and relevant experiences behind me. The Speaker's role is established under the Constitution. The Speaker has responsibility for overseeing debates and ensuring order is maintained in the Legislative Council and overseeing parliamentary rules are followed. I believe I managed that very well, at least I have never been told that I didn't, and would like to continue doing so. The Speaker takes guidance from the provisions in the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct. These are made pursuant to the Constitution and interpreted and applied to assist with maintaining order. But as I said yesterday, there are flaws in these guidelines, which need to be addressed early in the new Council. Some Honourable Members will already be aware of weaknesses, and I would be glad to assist others who may not be. I do believe I have the broad range of skills and personal qualities required to successfully fulfil all the duties of the vacant Speaker position. Honourable Members, notwithstanding the votes were tied yesterday, I would still like to be considered for the vacant role of Speaker, to assist Honourable Members in the responsibilities, in any way that the Speaker can be involved, and also to help take forward any unfinished business. There is quite a bit of it, some will know, and others may not, but I would be prepared to point that out to them. I, like my friend Anthony Green, said just now, he made people aware of some skills that he may have from attending courses and things. I too, have a management course from the Open University. I didn't mention

that yesterday, but I would be able to call on all of that to be able to help me in my work, if I were to be chosen to be Speaker. I hope that I am. Thank you all for listening.

The President -

Thank you, Mr. Gunnell. I now invite Miss Christine Scipio to approach the table and give a speech, if she so wishes.

Miss Christine Scipio -

Thank you, Mr. President, Honourable Members, apologies to the listening public, the mic was not on. Thank you once again for the opportunity to address this House. I am deeply grateful for your thoughtful consideration you have given to my expression of interest and for the spirit of respect that continues to define our proceedings. This House is not just a place of procedure, it is a place of people. Each one of you brings the hopes of your constituents, the weight of their trusts and the responsibility to do right by them. This House is the beating heart of democracy, and the Speaker must be its steady rhythm, ensuring that every voice is heard, every rule upheld and every moment of disagreement met with dignity. I do not claim to have all the answers, but I do bring experience and a deep respect for traditions and responsibilities we share. I'm willing to listen, a readiness to act, and a belief that leadership is most powerful when it's consistent and fair. I do know that choosing a Speaker is not a simple decision. I have been in this situation on previous occasions. Choosing a Speaker carries weight, not just for this House, but for the tone we set as leaders. And in moments like these, I believe it is important to pause and remember what this role truly ask of you. It is not about personality, it is not about preference, it's about capability and who can guide this House with steadiness, impartiality and care. Therefore, I ask for each one of you to be objective in your thinking and ensure that the decision you are making is for the greater good of St Helena and its people. Thank you once again for your time.

The President -

Thank you, Miss Scipio. I now invite Mrs Maureen Thompson to approach the table and give a speech, if you should so wish.

Mrs Maureen Thompson -

Mr. President, Honourable Members, good morning. I didn't realise that I would have an option to speak again this morning, so I would like my speech that I gave you yesterday to stand. Thank you so much.

The President -

Thank you, Mrs Thompson.

The President -

Members, we have five candidates for election. We need to have a majority decision if the Elected Members are to declare a nominee elected as Speaker. Voting will be carried out in secret, and you may 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.

(Members Vote)

The President -

The results of the election are as follows:

Mr. Cruyff Buckley – No votes

Mr. Anthony Green – No votes

Mr. Cyril Gunnell – 2 votes

Miss. Christine Scipio – 6 votes

Mrs. Maureen Thompson – 5 votes

Given that neither Mr. Buckley nor Mr. Green received any votes, they shall be eliminated from the election, and we shall vote again.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Your Excellency can I just have a look at the tally sheet again? There was a mistake made in the announcement, in that Mr. Gunnell had one vote; one plus six plus five equals 12.

The President -

Then I will correct the announcement. We remain with the elimination of two candidates before mentioned.

Mr. Cyril Gunnell – 1 vote

Miss. Christine Scipio – 6 votes

Mrs. Maureen Thompson – 5 votes

We will repeat the election.

(Members Vote)

The President -

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

The results of the election are as follows:

Mr. Cyril Gunnell – No votes

Miss Christine Scipio – 5 votes

Mrs. Maureen Thompson – 7 votes

With a clear majority, I hereby declare that Mrs. Maureen Thompson has been duly elected as the Honourable Speaker of the Council, and I congratulate Mrs. Thompson on your election. *(Applause)* Ladies and gentlemen I now wish to briefly adjourn Council whilst the Speaker takes the prescribed oaths of affirmation and puts on the robe to assume the chair. So please don't leave the Chamber, because I believe that's quite a short activity. And may I thank you for your indulgence in my brief term as your President. Thank you.

Council adjourned.

Council resumed.

FORMAL ENTRY OF THE SPEAKER (Hon. Maureen Thompson)

Election of Deputy Speaker

The Speaker -

I call upon the AG to give us a further update regarding the Deputy Speaker.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you Madam Speaker. Congratulations.

The Speaker -

Thank you.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, we now resume the election for Deputy Speakership that was suspended yesterday. We do not need to consider the issue regarding proposals nor nominations because those rules were modified yesterday. But I do suggest we need to consider two aspects; one is in relation to speeches and the other is what we do in the event of a tie. So in relation to speeches, I will again propose that we do not hear speeches but equally though, we need to be careful. If you decide to allow speeches, we have to bear in mind that one of the candidates for Deputy Speaker, she was the candidate solely for Deputy Speaker, she did speak yesterday. So if you decide to allow speeches, bearing in mind that all the candidates for the Deputy Speaker role have already spoken in their role for seeking candidacy for the Speakership, you need to be careful to decide what to do. One of the suggestions I would have for you is that you allow Connie Johnson to speak again, so if she wanted to, she could come forward and make sure that she had the same opportunity to speak. The other alternative for you is that you don't allow speeches because you've already had them. But the point has already been made quietly to me in the background that representations for the Deputy Speaker may be different. And in which case then, the way to proceed is to allow Connie Johnson to speak again, should she wish to do so, to make sure that everyone is given a fair opportunity to speak. So I will propose that shortly but the other thing I would ask you to consider is what are we going to do in the event of a tie? So your Standing Orders in relation to a tie are as they were for the Speaker election yesterday. In other words if you fail to elect today, unless we change the Standing Orders, you will need to come back tomorrow to resolve the business. Now when I make the proposed modifications to you, I suggest that's not what you want to do. Then you will have one of two choices: either you declare that you have not been able to elect a Deputy Speaker, which is the broad thrust of your Standing Orders and the election of your Deputy Speaker would then move to your second meeting later in September; or as I mentioned previously, that you provide for the matter to be determined by the drawing of lots, as required. Madam Speaker that's my explanation and with your permission, I would now like to make my first proposal with regarding modification to the Standing Orders.

So I propose that we modify Standing Orders, such that Order five, Rule 24, not allow any further speeches to be made in relation to the candidacy. If you want to hear speeches or offer the opportunity of speeches, either you don't second or you vote my proposal down. Thank you Madam Speaker.

The Speaker -

Could we have a seconder to the motion then please? No, we don't have a seconder.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Fortunately Madam Speaker that makes it much clearer to everybody, so the option to speak is here. But I now make a second proposal to amend Order five, Rule 24 (a), specifically to allow Connie Johnson to speak for the second time, should she wish to do so. I seek a seconder for that.

The Speaker -

Could we have a seconder then please? Honourable Andrew Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner -

Madam Speaker I beg to second.

The Speaker -

Thank you.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Madam Speaker, you could invite the Members to debate it, but I suggest you proceed directly to a vote on relation to that proposal.

The Speaker -
Yes.

Question put and agreed.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you Madam Speaker. I now turn to the final proposal to modify Standing Orders, and this is in relation to Order five, Rule 25 (b) that will apply in the event of a tie.

(Noes confirmed for previous question)

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you Madam Speaker. I turn now to what I hope is my final proposal to amend Standing Orders. And this concerns Order five, Rule 25 (b) and that is, instead of directly proceeding to declare that the election has failed, that we do as we did yesterday for the Speakership election, and that is that we postpone proceedings for 20 minutes to allow for internal discussions and then vote again. But after that, we return to the arrangements in Standing Orders here in Order 25 (c) that rather than come back tomorrow for an election, we simply declare that the election has been unsuccessful and it becomes an early item of business at your second meeting. I seek a seconder for the proposal.

The Speaker -

Could we have a seconder for that proposal then please?

The Hon. Chief Minister -

I'm happy to second that, beg to second. Oh, sorry, Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker -

Thank you. Can I have a vote for that proposal then please?

Question put and agreed.

The Speaker -

I now call on Mr. Cruyff Buckley to make a speech for Deputy Speaker.

Mr Cruyff Buckley -

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and congratulations on your victory, shall we say.

The Speaker -

Thank you.

Mr Cruyff Buckley -

Members, what else there is to say this morning, really. It would be an honour to be an understudy to Mrs Maureen Thompson in the role of Speaker. And it would be a nice transition to be able to represent this House at the top level. A lot of the things I mentioned in my speech yesterday still hold true today, obviously, but one of the most important ones, I think, is around promotion and community engagement. I think this island as a whole desperately needs more engagement with our political leadership. The recent turnout speaks for itself. We have around 4000 people here on the island, and obviously children can't vote. So the voting register lists around 2000 people, which is around half the population, and of those 2000 only 50% choose to vote. So in actual fact, this island is being represented by a quarter of its population. And in my opinion, this really needs to change if we are to have a true representation of how people are feeling on the island, and some of them are despondent. The general feeling on the island is that St Helena is in decline, and I don't think anybody here will deny that, and I had high hopes for this Council to turn that around, and I still believe that you can. It's not going to be easy. It's going to be a real

rough road, but I believe that we need to have more partnership with His Majesty's Government, which is why the role of the Speaker and the Deputy is so important to raising St Helena's profile internationally, from a political neutral point of view. And I hope that Mrs Thompson, and whoever succeeds, are successful in being her Deputy, will take this on board and reach out to the community of St Helena with road shows, presence within schools and other institutions, that promote the good work that goes on here on Council, and also point out the difficulties we have with limited budget, but more importantly, to help the public understand that the money we do direct, goes to the right causes. And I think that's important. It is not what you have. It is what you do with what you have. So again, that is my main reason for running for Speaker and Deputy Speaker is to provide more community outreach. The business of the House is directed by Standing Orders. One cannot deviate from them. Flexibility is allowed, as I mentioned yesterday about passionate debate amongst politicians, but the Standing Orders stand true, and is the reason why, they are set by members and they're built on integrity. So apart from those two major roles which I see the Speaker undertaking, I think there's nothing much more left to say, other than if you do choose me, I will do my best to represent St Helena and also the Honourable work in this House. Thank you.

The Speaker -

Mr. Anthony Green.

Mr. Anthony Green -

Madam Speaker, I can be brief. First to warmly congratulate you on your appointment. Secondly, that I remain a candidate for the Deputy Speaker, and thank you very much.

The Speaker -

Thank you. Mr. Cyril Gunnell.

Mr. Cyril Gunnell -

Thank you, Madam Speaker and may I congratulate you once again.

The Speaker -

Thank you.

Mr. Cyril Gunnell -

I was Speaker of the House for the last term, and therefore have a complete understanding of the Deputy Speaker role. Their main role is to assist the Speaker with discharging the parliamentary functions as smoothly as possible. I am aware how the Deputy Speaker can be an asset in this regard. The Speaker is responsible for enforcing the rules of Legislative Council, presiding over the conduct of House business and maintaining order and decorum, ensures that the rules of the House for conducting its business are followed and that all Members of the House have an opportunity to take part in debates. In the absence of Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, must be ready and able to take on that responsibility. I know I would have confidence to take on that responsibility at a moment's notice. The Speaker position can be lonely, often needing someone to confide in and to share problems with. The Speaker is also the President of the local branch of CPA, and often would help to carry out research in parliamentary matters. The Deputy Speaker was a great asset to the Speaker's office, in this regard, that was the previous Deputy Speaker, and also when chairing meetings the Speaker couldn't attend. I can see no reason why this valuable assistance couldn't continue. If I was well, I'm not made Speaker now, but Deputy Speaker could be able to do that. But a specific and very important function of the Deputy Speaker is to deal with any complaints the Speaker may have received against Elected Members. In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the Speaker has to refer these to the Deputy Speaker and two other members of the Panel of Investigators to investigate and report back. As Deputy I would have no difficulty carrying this out. The position of Deputy Speaker can be challenging, therefore it is fortunate I am fully conversant with the procedures of formal Legislative Council meetings and provisions in the Constitution, Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct. I believe that politics is everybody's business. I try and keep abreast of what's happening globally by listening to the BBC Radio and watching political programmes on television. In St Helena, I try to keep

abreast by reading the local newspapers, press releases and attending as many public meetings as I can. I was first elected to Legislative Council in 1991 and came off Council in 2013. My Council experience and expertise was accumulated, quite a lot of it. I served on Executive Council for two terms, as I said yesterday, as Chairman of Employment and Social Services and Chairman of Health and Social Welfare. And I led a delegation to the EU conference in Bonaire for discussions on the EU funding tranche for this island. Council experience also included representing St Helena at various CPA conferences and Millennium Development Goals conference, where St Helena reported progress made towards MDGs targets in 2015. In Civil Society, as I said yesterday, I was part of the Citizenship Commission that campaigned for and achieved restoration of British citizenship, and I was Chairman of the St Helena Public Accounts Committee and also involved in other important activities benefiting the public. My previous work record includes Fire Inspector and Medical Assistant for Pan American Airways on Ascension Island. In the UK, I worked in accounts for B H Blackwell in Oxford, and also in Oxford. I worked in Flight Operations and Progress Control Manager for CSE Aviation at Oxford Airport. In St Helena I have held various positions including Income Tax Officer, Social Worker, Home Health Supervisor, Investigations Officer and News Editor.

The Speaker -

Mr. Gunnell can you try wrap up now please? You had five minutes.

Mr. Cyril Gunnell -

I'll be just a moment please Madam Speaker. Some of these were leadership positions. Honourable Members I am very passionate about our island and want the very best for our people. I know that you want the same thing. There are barriers, but I know you will work collectively to overcome them. Thank you very much. I would have handled a little bit differently, but you are in charge. Thank you very much.

The Speaker -

Mrs Connie Johnson.

Mrs Connie Johnson -

Madam Speaker, congratulations. Honourable Members, I have nothing further to add to my speech yesterday, and I hope that you gave it a lot of thought last night. Thank you.

The Speaker -

And finally, Miss. Christine Scipio.

Miss Christine Scipio -

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and once again, congratulations on your appointment. Honourable Members, I rise today with deep respect and a sense of duty to offer myself an expression of interest for a Deputy Speaker of this Honourable House. It's a role that calls not only for procedural knowledge and impartiality, but for empathy, steadiness and a genuine commitment to the values that underpin our democracy. The Deputy Speaker plays a vital role in supporting the Speaker and ensuring the smooth functioning of this House. It is a position that requires readiness to step in when needed, to uphold the rules with fairness and to maintain the dignity of the proceedings. Throughout my political career, I have remained committed to fairness and transparency. I believe that leadership is not about listening. It is about listening, showing up and doing the work with integrity. If entrusted with the role of Deputy Speaker, I'll bring to this House not only experience, but a calm and principled approach. I will support the Speaker in maintaining order, encourage respectful debate and ensure that the voices of all Members are heard and valued. I'm ready to support this House and contribute to its work with fairness, dignity and unwavering commitment. Thank you for your time.

The Speaker -

Now I call on the Clerk to hand out the voting papers.

(Members Vote)

The Speaker -

Okay, Honourable Members, we have a result.

Buckley – 3 votes

Green – No votes

Gunnell – 1 vote

Johnson – 6 votes

Scipio – 2 votes

So no candidate have seven votes, so we need to vote again. Anthony Green, you are eliminated, unfortunately. Thank you.

(Members Vote)

The Speaker -

Have everybody voted. The Clerk will now collect your papers. Honourable Members the results are as follows:

Buckley – 1 vote

Gunnell – No votes

Johnson – 8 votes

Scipio – 3 votes

Therefore, I declare that Mrs. Connie Johnson has been elected as your Deputy Speaker for this Council. Congratulations, Connie. *(Applause)*

5. ADDRESS BY THE SPEAKER

The Speaker -

First of all, Deputy Speaker, we'll get you to do your Oaths later. Thank you.

I would like to say I am deeply touched by the trust you have now placed in me by electing me Speaker of this House. It shows how much confidence you have in me to manage the affairs of the Honourable Council. I sincerely value the respect that you have given me, and that I promise I will endeavour to execute my duties to the best of my ability, to the task that you have entrusted in me. Going forward, I am sure you all know that you have a huge challenge in restoring public confidence, not only in the government, but also in you as Honourable Members of Legislative Council, therefore I wish you well and emphasise the importance of working together and in moving forward, you will all value and adhere to the guidance of our Constitution, Ministerial Code, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct, as these are the tools that will help you to build a peaceful, safe and prosperous St Helena. No Speaker can accept this important position without acknowledging the contributions made by my predecessors. And in this respect, I want to express my gratitude to the former Speaker, Mr. Cyril Gunnell and his Deputy, Mrs. Cathy Cranfield, for their support over the past four years. I will now call on the Clerk of Councils to the next item of business, please. Clerk of Councils.

6. ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

The Speaker -

The Honourable Attorney General.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you Madam Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to propose that I wish to have this House adjourn sine die.

The Speaker -

Is there a member to second it please?

The Hon. Chief Minister -

Madam Speaker, I beg to second.

The Speaker -

Thank you, Honourable Members, the motion is that this Council do now adjourn until sine die. The motion is now open for debate.

Honourable Rebecca Cairns-Wicks.

The Hon. Chief Minister -

Madam Speaker, thank you. May I extend my congratulations to you.

The Speaker -

Thank you.

The Hon. Chief Minister -

And to your Deputy Speaker on your election to this House, I look forward to working with you both over the course of our term. I also wish to congratulate our Honourable colleagues on your election to Legislative Council. I'm grateful for the advice and support that you have already shown me, and I know that your guidance is going to be invaluable as we work together in the service of our island. Finally, well, I extend my sincere thanks to the electorate for giving me the opportunity to stand here today, and I dedicate myself to the service of the people of this island, promising to work to the very best of my ability, collaboratively and collegiately for the good of our community. I'd also like to say thank you to all the applicants today for Speaker and Deputy Speaker, for your time today and for yesterday, as you have made very clear in your speeches of yesterday and today, we are, the vital role the Speaker and Deputy Speaker make. So I would like to say thank you. And I think the discussions and the debates and the voting reflects just how important we place those roles in working. Thank you.

The Speaker -

Honourable Andrew Turner.

The Hon. Andrew Turner -

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Before anything else, I wish to begin by extending heartfelt congratulations to the newly appointed Chief Minister. This is a moment of great responsibility and opportunity, and I'm certain that the Chief Minister will approach the role with the clarity, courage and commitment that our island deserves. I look forward to working constructively with you and with all Honourable Members as we face the challenges ahead. I also wish to warmly congratulate you as our new Speaker and also to our new Deputy Speaker. Your appointments are vital to the integrity and the function of this House, and I have every confidence in your abilities to uphold the dignity of our proceedings and ensure that the debate remains fair, focused and inclusive. Your stewardship will be essential as we strive to restore trust and deepen public engagement in our democratic processes; to be honest, that's a very long way of saying, good luck refereeing us lot. I think the last two days have shown that we have an assertive and passionate team who is prepared to fight for what they believe in. However, today's result also shows that we are willing and capable of compromise in the spirit of moving the island forward, and that's something I'm very proud of. To the people of St Helena, I offer my sincere thanks for returning me to Council. Your trust is deeply felt. I'm not here to make promises I can't keep, I'm here to work, to listen and to push for

the hard stuff with honesty and resolve. We face real challenges, but I remain committed to tackling them head on with the same determination and transparency I've always tried to bring. I'd also like to take a moment to acknowledge those who made the election possible, the dedicated staff who ensured the process ran smoothly, and the team at SAMS whose efforts helped ensure that everyone could be a part of that long night. Finally, to my supporters, to campaign volunteers and every person who took the time to offer encouragement, display a poster, or simply say, good luck. Thank you. Your belief means more than I can say. And a final thanks, especially to my wife, whose support has been unwavering throughout everything during the election and over the last four years. We now have a new team in place, the work begins again, and I'm looking forward to it. Thank you.

The Speaker -

Anyone else wish to speak?

The Hon. Dr Corinda Essex -

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment, and wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported me in my standing for re-election, particularly my sponsors, supporters and all those who voted for me. I really appreciate your confidence in me, and will do all that I can to ensure that I do not let you down and that I achieve as much as possible on your behalf. I also wish to thank all those responsible for organising and carrying out the election, which was conducted in a very professional manner, and all those involved are deserving of hearty congratulations. Madam Speaker, I will reserve most of my expositions for the standard formal sitting to be held in a few weeks' time, but I would just like to raise three points at the outset of this new government. The first is the crucial importance of moving on to complete unfinished potentially beneficial work streams as speedily as possible. The second is not to take refuge in blame games and finding excuses not to do things. We must focus on positive actions that will take St Helena forward, and how best to achieve these. Lessons from the past certainly need to be learned, but dwelling on what's gone wrong is counterproductive if it impedes progress. Madam Speaker, St Helena is in need of a lot of progress in many areas, and we must strive to bring this about. Last but not least, all 12 Elected Members must work as a team, undertaking open discussion and sharing information. Those of us who will not be Ministers are not the opposition, as there are no political parties on St Helena, therefore our core activities and functions may differ from those of Ministers, but we have all been elected by constituents to represent them, and we should all have shared common aims and goals. We must listen to their views, their concerns, their distress at times, and maintain meaningful communication with them. If we fail to do so, we are failing those who elected us, and we are failing St Helena. Madam Speaker, the entire world is in a challenging and demanding time, so being realistic, it is unlikely that we will be able to always achieve what we wish to and what our constituents would like, but we can and must work together to ensure that we do all that is possible to move St Helena forward and improve the lives of its people. Finally, Madam Speaker, I wish to congratulate yourself, your Deputy, and last but not least, the Chief Minister for your recent elections and I would also like to pay tribute to those who held those roles previously. When they were elected, the Ministerial system was in its infancy, there were no foundations to work from in many areas, and quite frankly, we were all faced with a nightmare scenario of trying to get a totally new model, fully operational and up and running. I'm glad to say, over the four years, we have made progress, and a lot of that is due to the effort of those who held the key roles during that period of time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you, Honourable Member. Honourable Martin Henry.

The Hon. Martin Henry -

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise in support of the adjournment debate. I have not prepared anything for today, because, as my Honourable friend Dr Essex has said, you will hear a lot from us for the next four years. So it is just and not to repeat all that has been said, but congratulations to you, Honourable Speaker, congratulations to the Deputy and congratulations to you, Chief Minister. And it is just now to say thank you. Thank you to the community, thank you for putting your faith and trust in me again to join this

government and also just to say thank you to all of those who were in support. But finally, to say thank you to the previous members of the Ministerial team I served under, again, not to repeat Dr Essex, we started with a government with no foundation in the middle of Covid and I just would like to say thank you to those members, because reflecting on their particular time, this government at least starts off in a totally different scenario, and I dare say, the expectations to move forward now is a lot higher. Thank you.

The Speaker -

Honourable Midwinter.

The Hon. Robert Midwinter -

Madam Deputy Speaker, sorry, Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment, and I will also be brief. Firstly, Madam Speaker, may I take the opportunity to congratulate you and your Deputy on your elections to this House. I look forward to working with both of you over my new term of office. I would certainly like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Honourable Rebecca Cairns-Wicks on her election as Chief Minister. I look forward to providing her with my own support and assistance as she embarks on her new role within the St Helena Government. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the electorate for putting their faith in me once again, and in doing so, I would like to reaffirm to the public that I will continue to strive forward with those commitments that I made during my own campaign, in a manner that recognises the collective workings of this Council and to whole heartedly dedicate myself to the service of this beautiful island and its people. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you. Honourable Gillian Brooks.

The Hon. Gillian Brooks -

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I too would like to start by taking this opportunity to extend congratulations to you and to the Deputy Speaker and the Chief Minister. And I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to all who exercised their democratic rights and participated in the recent election. I am especially grateful to those who placed their confidence in me. I acknowledge with gratitude the support of my sponsors, supporters, my partner, my son, my friends and all who conveyed messages of encouragement and good will. Your faith and kindness are both humbling and inspiring. My campaign was founded on the principle that people are the heart of the community. As I commence this new term, I reaffirm that commitment to uphold this principle in all that I do. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you, Honourable Brooks. Honourable Derek Thomas.

The Hon. Derek Thomas -

Thank you Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate. First of all, I congratulate you on your appointment and that of the Deputy Speaker, including our Chief Minister. I would like to take the opportunity to say how pleased I am to be elected to serve our people and our island. It is a great honour. I would like to thank my sponsors and supporters and the many people who placed their trust in me, in voting. I look forward to the next four years in working with other Elected Members, and I do hope we can work together in bringing about some much needed improvements to improve the quality of life for our people and develop our island. Mr Speaker, Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker -

The Honourable Clint Beard.

The Hon. Clint Beard -

Madam Speakers, Members of Legislative Council and the community of St Helena, near and far. Congratulations to you, Madam Speaker, on your role, as well as the Deputy Speaker. Very important roles, and I think the time it took really showed what was happening, think that's important. I think a lot

of education need to be put in place before the next election, and what and how important the roles are. I also stand here before you today with a heartfelt gratitude and a deep sense of responsibility and immense pride. Thank you for all for voting, and especially those who had confidence and trust in putting the x by my name. I will endeavour to hold my word and be your voice. To those who did not vote, or did not vote for me, I will also endeavour to gain your confidence in me and rally hard so I can gain your support and trust in the future. I would also like to congratulate the Chief Minister and we very much have to work together as a collective team. I understand there's concerns, questions and perhaps even frustrations, people might have and from here on, we will work together to deal with those. We are all here to deal with these issues as it affects us all in some way or form. Reality is a better flow of communication to start with, and build your trust and confidence in the leadership of the 12 representatives. Our strength is resilience, being resourceful and independent. Together, we can make this difference to this wonderful island. Our focus should firmly be on the future and how we make improvements that will empower and sustain the island and its people and culture. Some points I already thought about and considered, is economic sustainability and the growth in this community; more opportunities for young people so leaving becomes a choice and not a necessity; investing in our community, be it education, health and affordable access through travel or communication; to keep the focus on the green and blue agendas, with continuation of protection of our unique environments. This work is clearly not achievable alone, so your input is critical in dealing with the work laying ahead, of all Elected Members and together as a team, we will be able to achieve outcomes that benefit us all. Your ideas, your criticisms and your informal chats will be welcomed as we partner in this journey. I will be ready to hear from you. I will be accountable to you, transparent in my actions and clear in my communication. So let us begin this new chapter, not with government on one side and the people on the other, but as one community with the end goal to improve St Helena as best we can. Let us achieve together. Thank you.

The Speaker -

Thank you Honourable Member. Anybody else wishes to speak? Honourable Denis Leo.

The Hon. Denis Leo -

Well, firstly, Madam Speaker, I'd like to congratulate you and your Deputy on your election. I also want to formally congratulate the Honourable Chief Minister on her election and my colleagues who have been elected to serve on this Council. Finally, I thank the people of St Helena for placing their trust in me. This is my first time in politics, and I know it's going to be a learning curve, but I am committed to giving it the best and to serving our people and our island. If we can work together and bring people's knowledge to the table, I believe we can build a stronger and more self-reliant island. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you so much. Sorry, Councillor Coleman, I didn't see your light on.

The Hon. Ronald Coleman -

Thank you, Madam Speaker, I raise in support of the adjournment debate. Madam Speaker, first, I would like to congratulate everyone here today, the Chief Minister, Elected Members, the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and I also like to express my thanks in all those who voice or express an interest in the Speaker and Deputy Speaker. I would also like to thank everyone who came out and vote in the election last Wednesday, especially those who trusted in me. Thank you. Special thanks also to my sponsors and supporters. Special thanks also goes to our local media for helping us with our campaign. Going forward, I will endeavour to do my best for the island and for you, the people of St Helena, whether you live on the island or overseas. Concerns, issues or problems, no matter how big or small, I am here to help. As a Councillor, Madam Speaker, we have been trusted by the people of St Helena for the next four years in taking our island forward. So I hope that we continue to work together as a Council, as a team, for the good of St Helena and its people. There are going to be many challenges, and I hope that together we can find solutions as far as possible, through openness and transparency, using all of the Council and where possible consulting and debating with our people. Let's hope St Helena will have, apart from our funding, the capacity and the capability to deliver on behalf of our island. Thank you.

The Speaker -

Thank you. Is there ... Honourable Karl Thrower.

The Hon. Karl Thrower -

Thank you. I rise in support of the adjournment. I wish to congratulate you, Madam Speaker, on your election and the Deputy Speaker on hers. These are important officers that provide guidance and stability to our proceedings, and I look forward to working constructively with both of you during this term. I also wish to congratulate the Honourable Rebecca Cairns-Wicks on her appointment as Chief Minister, by far the quickest election that we have had over the last two days. I am confident that under her leadership, we will work together as a Council to address the challenges ahead and to build the opportunities that we need desperately to move forward for our island. I also wish to thank my two sponsors and the five supporters who signed my nomination form and gave me the confidence to stand as a candidate once again. Without their initial step of support, I would not be here today. I also extend my gratitude to the many members of the public who encouraged me during the campaign, and most importantly, to those who cast their votes for me. I wish also to recognise the hard work of all those involved in delivering the election process itself, from the Returning Officer and her team to those who managed polling stations and those who worked late into the night counting votes. Their dedication was ensured that their election was conducted smoothly, fairly and transparently. This year, we were also pleased to welcome the Electoral Monitoring Mission from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, British Island Mediterranean Region. Their presence reinforced both the integrity and the importance of our democratic process here on St Helena. I know that their observations will be provided valuable insights to strengthen our electoral system in the future. During the election, many members of the public raised concerns as to how polls work, how the electoral world works. I can only say that hopefully this House will take forward the suggestions that they make. We are getting to a stage now where we have a number of points, reports and benchmarking reports that we need to start considering and putting into place. My understanding is there are about four. And I would like to end with a word to all of the people who ran for the election for Speaker and Deputy Speaker. I can safely say that last night was my first sleepless night of this term. I found this process very hard. It was difficult, and as the Honourable Members have already said, we created things like the Standing Orders off the fly almost, when we were, the first term of the Ministerial system last time. Clearly, there is still some work to do on this, and hopefully we'll take that forward. But I wish to thank all the candidates. Sometimes the turnout of the balance does not reflect the hard work that the candidates put in. Unfortunately, that also needs looking at. I will take on board the comments made by Cryuff Buckley, because I think some of them were actually quite clear, and also I have the same concerns. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you Honourable Member. And finally, the Honourable Julie Thomas.

The Hon. Julie Thomas -

Thank you, Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the adjournment debate. I wish to begin by warmly congratulating you on your selection as Speaker of this Council. I look forward to working with you in building upon the foundations already in place, strengthening our democratic process and ensuring that we as Elected Members of this Legislative Council remain accountable to the people who have entrusted us with this responsibility. I also extend my congratulations to our newly appointed Chief Minister and Deputy Speaker. Chief Minister I wish you every success as you take on this important responsibility in leading the government of our island. I know the role will not be without challenges, but I sincerely wish you good luck as you begin this new chapter of leadership. Madam Deputy, Madam Speaker sorry, I warmly wel, it should be Madam Deputy Speaker, sorry. Connie. I can't see you right behind me there. I welcome you warmly to your role. I look forward to strengthening our working relationship and to the contribution we will collectively make in the service of our community. Madam Speaker, allow me now to reflect briefly on the recent election. Standing for office once again, was not a decision I made lightly. The past four years have been filled with challenges and opportunities, with moments of both great reward

and at times, personal difficulty. Yet these experiences have only deepened my commitment to serve. I owe immense gratitude to all those who encouraged, guided and supported me throughout this journey. First and foremost, I thank my sponsors, Bronia Stevens and Hannah Braff and my dedicated supporters, Cara Joshua, Julian Benjamin, Michael Sim, Patsy Peters and Laura Oliver. Your advice, encouragement and commitment were invaluable. A special word of appreciation goes to Julian and Laura, your time, energy and company during that long count helped make a demanding day far more bearable, and for that, I am sincerely grateful. I would also like to acknowledge and thank those involved in the entire election process and the media for their ability to continue throughout the entire process, to ensure it was undertaken to the best of St Helena's ability. To my brother Steve and Rhys and my sister Nicola, you have always been my steadfast support system, a constant source of love and encouragement, especially on poignant days such as this. To my greatest critics, but also my greatest inspirations, my husband, Waylon and our daughter, Erin, thank you. Your creativity, strength and unwavering belief in me are blessings beyond measure. And finally, to my wider family, friends and the community who stood by me, motivated me and reminded me of our shared purpose, I offer my deepest thanks. This election marks not only the conclusion of one chapter, but also the beginning of another, a new term of hard work, commitment and service in the best interests of our island and our people. I look forward to continuing to engage with you, to listen and to work alongside you as we build progress together. The only firm commitment I make today is this, over the next four years, I will place greater priority on communication with you, the people of St Helena. The past term has shown us, particularly during purdah, that misinformation and misunderstanding around the workings of Ministerial government remain significant challenges. We must address this, not only to strengthen our democracy, but also to nurture and inspire the leaders of tomorrow. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your trust, your support and your belief in the future we can build together. Thank you Madam Speaker.

The Speaker -

Thank you. The Honourable Rebecca Cairns-Wicks.

The Hon. Chief Minister -

Madam Speaker, if I may?

The Speaker -

Sorry. I think it's the Attorney General first.

The Hon. Attorney General -

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Can I just simply say to all of you, thank you. It is a tremendous honour to continue to serve with you albeit it's only been for a short time now, but it has been truly wonderful, and I'm grateful that so many of you commented on how well the election went. I was watching closely from behind the scenes, and I can endorse all your comments, and the fact that I was able to sit through the entire count and not have to lift my pen in anger is of great benefit, and does show how wonderfully well it was all conducted. I gather also that the report that we have had suggests that the election monitors also believe that the election was conducted well, too. I will continue to serve with as much diligence as I can muster. It is a tremendous honour as I say. The hard work really does start here for you, it's already, hasn't stopped for those of us in Public Service, but we all look forward to working with you. Thank you so much.

The Speaker -

Thank you very much. Can I just ask the Attorney General, is the Member allowed to speak again? Because I thought that was the wrap up.

The Hon. Attorney General -

It's a question of how strict you wish to be with the rules Madam Speaker. I'm conscious that our new Chief Minister is perhaps new to this. And from my standpoint, I would have no objection if you exercised your discretion to allow her to make a few brief remarks at this stage. But it's a matter for discretion.

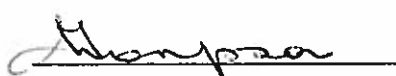
Strictly, we are used to one speech per motion, per item and what have you. But I'm conscious it is a new game, a new endeavour, and therefore an element of discretion could be reasonable.

The Speaker -

The Member has declined now anyway. Thank you Honourable Members that concludes our business for today. I now put the question that this Council do adjourn until sine die.

Question put and agreed.

Council is adjourned sine die.


Honourable Speaker

24th October 2025
Date