



PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

MORNING SESSION: 9.20 a.m. – 12.40 p.m.

Gibraltar, Thursday, 15th November 2012

The Gibraltar Parliament

The Parliament met at 9.20 a.m.

[MR SPEAKER: Hon. A J Canepa GMH, OBE *in the Chair*]

[CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENT: M L Farrell Esq RD *in attendance*]

PRAYER

Mr Speaker

Order of the Day

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Clerk: Meeting of Parliament, Thursday, 15th November 2012.

(i) Oath of Allegiance; (ii) Confirmation of Minutes – the Minutes of the last meeting of Parliament which was held on 18th and 19th October 2012.

5 **Mr Speaker:** May I sign the Minutes as a correct record of the proceedings of the last meeting?

Members voted Aye.

10 *Mr Speaker signed the Minutes.*

Clerk: (iii) Communications from the Chair; (iv) Petitions; (v) Announcements; (vi) Papers to be laid; (vii) Reports of Committees; (viii) Answers to Oral Questions.

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Questions for Oral Answer

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TOURISM, PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND THE PORT

GibiBikes Further roll out of scheme

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Clerk: Question 927/2012, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Public Transport advise the House whether the Government is now committed to the further roll out of the GibiBikes scheme?

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Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port.

Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Yes, Mr Speaker.

The Government is committed to making a success of the GibiBike scheme, as being both environmentally friendly and as part of the general plan for traffic management.

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This Government identified certain problems with the scheme as originally envisaged under the previous administration, but has now resolved these problems so that the scheme can go ahead to the advantage of everyone.

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It is expected that the remaining bike stations will be in place within the next few months and it is intended that the whole scheme will then be transferred so that it is under the full control of Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar.

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Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, if you would permit me to be slightly party political in what I am about to say, I obviously welcome the Government's commitment to the scheme. Given that it was started by us, we always thought it was a good scheme and even though I think on the first occasion that we raised questions in relation to the scheme, we got the sense that the Government was not really behind it, but I am very glad that matters are now afoot.

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If the Minister would recall, I think the last time that we, as an Opposition, posed questions in relation to this matter on 21st June, the Minister did say that one of the areas in respect of which he said was making progress was in relation to addressing the concern which the Minister had, Mr Speaker, as to any further problems that the scheme may encounter. Does he have these assurances at the moment?

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Hon. N F Costa: Well, Mr Speaker, in the first place, let me start by replying to the preface to the question, which is to say that, at the time that I answered the original question on GibiBikes, what I told the House was that the Government had some serious concerns on the scheme and, in fact, in answer to Question 352/2012, I set out, for instance, the number of stations that were out of action – there were five – and I also listed the many other myriad issues that arose from a product essentially, Mr Speaker, which had only been rolled out on 27th November, so one would have expected that, during the very first year of its first phase having been rolled out would have worked perfectly well.

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I therefore proceeded to list the fact that there were 45 locks which were broken; that out of a bike availability of 130, that had decreased significantly; that anti-tilt tags had been broken; and that the spares to make them roadworthy had not turned up in Gibraltar.

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I also made the point, at the time, Mr Speaker, that the original contract entered into by the previous Government was just for the provision of the scheme and it did not include a contract for maintenance – as a result of which, I am told by the UK company, some of these issues arose, with all due respect and without wishing to agree with the hon. Gentleman, one would have thought that a product in its first year would not have had any of the issues, without the need for maintenance or otherwise. So I am not in any way putting the blame there on the hon. Gentleman, but certainly given that the scheme had so many problems, one could not then throw even further taxpayers' money without properly considering whether or not this was a product which should be rolled out. That is in answer to the first part or rather to the preface of the question.

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The reason why, Mr Speaker, it has taken all of this time to be able to come to a position where the Government is happy to roll out the second phase is precisely because we have been – well, me and my officials – locked down in very detailed negotiations, until we have been satisfied that the issues that have arisen on the roll out of the first phase will not happen again. We now have those written assurances. Whether or not they do arise in practice will remain to be seen, but as I have also told the hon. Gentleman in the last part, when answering his question, what we intend to do is to source locally the maintenance of

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the bikes and the repairs of the bikes, so that we will not have to endure the delay of time, for instance, that it has taken for spares to arrive in Gibraltar or indeed to have a situation where, because there is a commercial dispute with the UK company, we cannot progress on other fronts.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, in his first answer the Minister made reference to the... I cannot remember exactly the word he used, but I think basically the running of or the ownership of the scheme was going to be transferred into Government's hands. Can he expand on that?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, as the hon. Gentleman knows, the scheme is operated by the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited. It is hoped that... (*Interjection*) Well, what is intended is that as part of the transfer of the operation of GibiBikes to Gibraltar, the Gibraltar Bus Company would be able to train employees within the Gibraltar Bus Company to be able to carry out the repairs and the maintenance, rather than have to rely on an overseas operator, which of course has within it (*Interjections*) its inherent problems.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, in terms of a further roll out, can I ask him a specific question. Can he tell this House how many bike stations remain to be installed? Does he have that information or am I being unfair in posing this question now without any notice?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, I do not have the information before me. I will get it for the hon. Gentleman, but we will roll out the exact number of stations that was foreseen in the original contract.

I hope that answers the question, but if he wants the specific number or the location, I will be happy to provide it to the hon. Gentleman.

Hon. D J Bossino: Yes, Mr Speaker, and I am very grateful for that. I take this opportunity now, Mr Speaker, given that we are posing questions in relation to GibiBikes, I have been approached only recently by a part owner of a gaming company, who tells me that his employees are very fond of this scheme and the one issue that they are finding, the one problem that they are finding is the unavailability of bikes. Is that also an issue which is being addressed, given the popularity of the scheme?

Hon. N F Costa: Well, yes, Mr Speaker, in my first answer, I reminded the hon. Gentleman of the series of problems that the scheme was experiencing when we inherited the same, when we came into office. Because we have been in commercial discussions – to describe it in one particular way – because we have been in such discussions, we have not been able to progress on a critical matter, such as the repairs because of this commercial negotiation that has been ongoing.

We have now come to a satisfactory resolution of all of these issues and we are now waiting for the spare parts to arrive in Gibraltar, to be able to fix the bikes so that there are more bikes available.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, would the Minister be able to confirm whether there is going to be an increase in the number of bikes available as you roll out to the remainder of the stations as planned?

Hon. N F Costa: Yes, Mr Speaker, that is the intention.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

Gibraltar Bus Company Limited
Employees' promotions, demotions and earnings

Clerk: Question 928, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Public Transport provide details of the individuals employed by the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited, as at 9th December 2011, and what the position is now, with details of the promotions or demotions since 9th December 2011, and the earnings of the individuals, both before and after the promotions?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port.

Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, I now hand over to the hon. Gentleman a schedule with the information requested as at 8th November of this year.

The hon. Member should note that the schedule does not include the salaries of the employees, but that I am happy to provide these details in confidence to him.

ANSWER TO QUESTION NO 928/2012

Gibraltar Bus Company Employees

Surname	Name	Position	Week/Mon	Promotion
Ahakam	Mohamed	Driver	Weekly	
Alvarez Garcia	Marco	Driver	Weekly	
Andrades Tellez	Alberto	Driver	Weekly	
Barea	Yvette	Driver	Weekly	
Bates	Mark	Driver	Weekly	
Beilo	Judah	Inspector	Monthly	
Ben Messaoud	Mohamed	Driver	Weekly	
Ben Youssef	Abdel	Driver	Weekly	
Benhakim	Abdel	Driver	Weekly	
Benyunes	Richard	Driver (FJS)	Weekly	
Bonavia	Michael	Driver	Weekly	
Boulaich	Abdel	Driver	Weekly	
Caravaca	Catalina	Driver	Weekly	
Casciaro	John	Driver	Weekly	
Chacon	John	Driver	Weekly	
Codali	Joseph	G/Operative	Weekly	Admin
Costa	Paul	G/Superintendent	Monthly	
Cosquieri	Peter	Driver	Weekly	
Dalmedo	Julie	Admin	Monthly	Senior Admin
Debono	Michael	Driver	Weekly	Chargehand
El Yettefti	Mohamed	Driver	Weekly	
Fares	Karim	Painter	Weekly	
Flores	Juan	Driver	Weekly	
Garcia	George	Driver	Weekly	
Gonzalez	Miguel Angel	Driver	Weekly	
Holland	Douglas	Driver	Weekly	
Jalarbi	Mohamed	Driver	Weekly	
Lahouiri	Mohamed	Driver	Weekly	
Leto	Edward	Painter(FJS)	Weekly	
Lyons	Thomas	Driver	Weekly	
Lane	Cairon	Driver	Weekly	
Lozano	Juan	Driver	Weekly	
Macian	Jose	Driver	Weekly	
Maldonado	Juan	Driver	Weekly	
Marakchi El	Said	Driver	Weekly	
Martinez	Clive	Chargehand	Monthly	Manager
Mauro	Pepe	Driver	Weekly	
Mesa Ruiz	Rafael	Driver	Weekly	
Munoz	Manuel	Chargehand	Weekly	
Parker	Janet	Admin	Monthly	
Peach	Kevin	Driver	Weekly	
Porro	Alfred	Driver(FJS)	Weekly	
Perez	Derek	Driver	Weekly	
Olivera	Manuel	Inspector	Monthly	
Rocca	Antonio	G/Operative	Weekly	
Rodriguez	Clive	Driver	Weekly	

CONT. ANSWER TO QUESTION NO 928/2012

Surname	Name	Position	Week/Mon	Promotion
Rodriguez	Eddie	Driver	Weekly	
Ruiz Naraez	Juan Antonio	Driver	Weekly	
Salgado	Jose	Driver	Weekly	
Snape	Martin	P/T Driver	Weekly	
Tarraf	Mohammed	Painter	Weekly	
Traverso	Alfred	Admin	Monthly	Manager
Tiron	Gigi	Driver	Weekly	
Trujillo	Alfred	Driver	Weekly	
Usquieri	Derek	Labourer	Weekly	
Villanueva	Felix	P/T Driver	Weekly	
Vinales	Ivan	P/T Driver	Weekly	
Yome	Pepe	Chargehand	Weekly	
Zarb	Joseph	Driver	Weekly	
Gibibikes				
Cosquieri	Paul	Bike Mec	Weekly	
Kirk	Suat	Bike Mec	Weekly	
Victory	Emerson	Bike Mec	Weekly	
Pizzarello	Mark	Bike Mec	Weekly	
Casey	Aiden	Bike Mec(FJS)	Weekly	

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, I also take the opportunity to advise the hon. Gentleman that, on the last occasion, he specifically asked me about the –

Mr Speaker: Will the hon. Member please pay attention, because this is referring to a matter that was left outstanding at the last meeting.

Hon. D J Bossino: I am paying attention, Mr Speaker, whilst I read a rather lengthy schedule.

Hon. N F Costa: Well, Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman on the last occasion asked me specifically for qualifications of the new managers, and I promised the hon. Gentleman that I would provide that to him.

I have now a sheet to hand over to him which sets out exactly that and I would be grateful if the kind lady would –

Mr Speaker: It has to be photocopied, does it or – ?

Hon. N F Costa: I can provide that copy to the hon. Gentleman. I have got a copy in the office.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 833/2012

Qualifications of New Managers

Alfred Traverso

Spanish O Level Grade B

French CSE Grade 1

City & Guilds Shipbuilding/Fabrication & Welding Shipwright Apprenticeship Indentures

Steelworker/Welding Retraining Course

ISO 9002 Quality Manager Accreditation (awarded by EMAS Consultants)

Excel

Excel Advanced course

Word processing Stage 2

Word processing medical Stage 2

Word processing legal Stage 2

9 years experience as Operations Manager of a Security Company

8 years experience as Office Admin of the bus company working closely to the then Director of Operations

Clive Martinez

Vast experience in dealing with the public in the Tourism Trade having undertaken

British Airways Load Control B737/B737-236 courses

Airline System Operations SITA, SABRE & BABS

3 years experience as Office Manager

3 years experience as Managing Director of a Travel Agency

3 years experience as Sales & Marketing Manager of a Travel Agency

8 years as Chargehand of the bus company very much involved with the daily operational side of the daily running of the company.

(these persons applied for the post as they felt they could meet the requirements of the internal vacancy's expectancy as laid down by the then Director Mr Paul Martinez –see page 3 – vacancy as directed by Paul Martinez)

Mr Speaker: Does the hon. Member have any supplementaries?

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, *[inaudible]* (Interjections)

Mr Speaker: That is a separate issue.

160 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, by way of clarification, this is a rather long... or rather, the information contained in the schedule is quite lengthy. I am trying to get my head round this as quickly as I possibly can.

Now, as I understand it, Mr Speaker, this is basically a snapshot of the employee situation as at 8th November 2012. I did ask as well, Mr Speaker, in the first limb of my question, what the position was as at 9th December, with the idea that I would also get information not only of promotions and the movements, but also of any new employees that have come in.

If I look at this now, I am not sure what the position was, as at 9th December 2011, unless I have misread or am not reading the schedule in its entirety. Perhaps the Minister can explain?

170 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman asked me to provide details of the persons employed in the Bus Company, which I have set out in a page-and-a-half schedule. He has asked me for the details: the positions are also listed on the third column. (**Hon. D J Bossino:** Yes.) He has asked me about promotions: those that have been promoted have, on the fifth column, a citation to the new positions to which they have been promoted. He has also asked me for any demotions. There are no demotions; therefore, he will find none in the schedule. He has also asked for earnings, which, as I told him in my original answer, I will not provide across the floor of the House, but that I will provide it to him in confidence.

180 **Mr Speaker:** If you look at the question again, it is about... He is asking initially for details of the individuals employed as on 9th December 2011. Were all these people employed (**Hon. N F Costa:** Oh, I see.) on 9th December 2011 or were they not?

Hon. N F Costa: Oh, Mr Speaker, I would not have the answer to that. I will have to go back and find out. I see the point that the hon. Gentleman is making.

185 I do refer him to a previous answer that I gave, when I noted the number of people that had been dismissed, but I will have to go back and obtain that information for him. I see the point.

Hon. D J Bossino: I am grateful for that clarification, Mr Speaker. That was precisely the intent of the question.

190 Mr Speaker, if I had an opportunity to read the schedule which has been handed over to me in respect of the supplementary to Question 833/2012 and ask supplementaries in relation to that?

Mr Speaker: I am going to allow you to ask any question for clarification as if this were a statement that has been made. Clarification only.

195 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I am not sure whether what I am now about to ask is a clarification but no doubt, Mr Speaker, you will no doubt reprimand me accordingly or stop me.

200 Mr Speaker, the question I was going to ask in relation to the answer to supplementary to Question 833/2012 is: is the Minister satisfied...? He has given me a list of qualifications which are held by Mr Alfred Traverso and Mr Clive Martinez, who are the recent appointees, but really the point I was driving at, at the last sitting, but I was not permitted to continue by yourself, Mr Speaker, was whether he is satisfied that these qualifications are the qualifications required pursuant to the Transport Act 1998. I am not sure whether I can ask that question, Mr Speaker.

205 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I have already answered the question, which was that the board that selected these candidates were satisfied.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

Gibraltar Bus Company Limited Provision of advertising

215 **Clerk:** Question 929, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Public Transport advise the House which company, and if not a company, the individual who now provides advertising on the bus fleet of the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited?

220 **Clerk:** Answer, the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port.

Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, advertising on the bus fleet of the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited is now being undertaken by Big Publications Gibraltar Limited.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, I am not sure what process was carried out before this particular company was able to secure this contract. Can I ask the Minister that specific question: what process was carried out before this company was chosen?

Hon. N F Costa: Yes, of course, Mr Speaker. The process was carried out by the former Head of Procurement, Ms Cynthia Eagle, who is my Principal Secretary. The way that it worked was that Ms Eagle requested for the Bus Company to obtain proposals from different companies and therefore different companies were approached. These companies – four in total – provided proposals to the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited. The persons involved in discussing and reviewing the proposals were Ms Cynthia Eagle, another civil servant and the two managers of the Bus Company. Out of the four proposals received, the most favourable proposal and the one recommended to me was Big Publications.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can I ask the Minister whether the choosing of the new company... I am assuming Big Publications did not previously enjoy the benefits of this particular contract and, if that assumption is correct, I will predicate this question based on that assumption.

Mr Speaker, can the Minister tell me whether the requirement to appoint a new company arose as a result of the previous company's contract having finished?

If I can assist, was the company which was the beneficiary formerly of this contract... was that contract terminated as a result of Government action or did it just reach the end of its contractual life?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, I do not know exactly the answer, but I doubt that the former Head of Procurement would have advised me that they had to initiate a process to procure the services of advertising for the buses without the contract having expired, but because I do not know the answer, I do not want to say that that is the answer.

I can check and revert to him, either in writing or at the next session of the House.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, I have a further supplementary. (**Mr Speaker:** Yes.)

The Minister, Mr Speaker, has said that he has relied on this, if I can put it in those terms, 'board' which has dealt with the procedure. Is the Minister who is politically responsible for this company satisfied that this company which is called Big Publications Limited has a required pedigree and requisite experience to deal with advertising?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman always prefaces by saying 'they do have political responsibility for these responsibilities'. I always accept that I do have ultimate political responsibility for my constitutional responsibilities and therefore am answerable in this House.

I did not personally either interview or review the proposals. I accepted the recommendation that was made to me by the selection board that advised me.

I do have, however, a chart that explains to me the reasoning why this particular company was chosen and in the first place, it sets out that the printing will be carried out in Gibraltar; that the Board did themselves attend to make sure that the printing would be carried out in Gibraltar; and it proposes to generate net revenue for the Gibraltar Bus Company, through the advertising, of £60,000.

The proposal in terms of artwork, etc was seen as the most exciting and dynamic, and because the hon. Gentleman knows that I have been very keen to stress in the past that we need to start to knuckle down on costs, the fact that this company did provide revenue generation for the Company is obviously something that would have been looked at favourably by the Board.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, is the Minister able to confirm whether there was a net revenue arrangement with the previous contractor? As far as I have been made aware, I was certain there was such an arrangement in place.

Hon. N F Costa: Well, Mr Speaker, I would need specific notice of that question, but the table that has been prepared for me says that the offer of revenue to be generated for the Bus Company of the other companies stands as zero pounds, and this company stands as £60,000.

Hon. S M Figueras: Zero pounds versus £16,000?

285 **Hon. N F Costa:** Six zero – net six zero – sixty.

Hon. S M Figueras: For the new company – sixty?

Hon. N F Costa: For the new company, sixty.

290 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful for the answer, just one final supplementary, certainly from me in this respect.

Is the Minister satisfied and I suspect that he will say that he has because he has already said that he has accepted the Board's recommendations. Is he satisfied that the quality of the product offered by the new contractor will match the quality of the work that was produced by the previous contractor?

295 I say this because, as a user of the bus service, Mr Speaker, I have become concerned about the appearance of the publications on board and the general state of the buses. I was wondering whether perhaps he is satisfied that that will indeed be the case?

300 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, as I just answered to my other hon. Gentleman, Mr Bossino, the Board did personally inspect the quality of the production, as I said before. I was only shown the artwork once the Board had made their recommendation and it looked quite vibrant, modern and dynamic to me. But I did not physically go to inspect it, as I keep repeating.

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**Trade licensing for supermarkets
Government policy**

310 **Clerk:** Question 930, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Tourism, Mr Speaker, advise the House whether it is the Government's policy to continue with the Direction issued by the previous Government in relation to the trade licensing of items sold at supermarkets other than foodstuffs, domestic consumables, beverages and tobacco?

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Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port.

Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, no, it is not our policy to continue with this Direction and the Authority has been accordingly advised.

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Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, that is a very clear answer.

Can I ask the Hon. Minister why that is the case? We took a view, when we were in Government, that in order to protect particularly businesses in our main commercial thoroughfare, which is Main Street, and in other areas of Gibraltar, it is important, Mr Speaker, that this Direction ought to have been followed, pursuant to the provision in the Trade Licensing Act which basically requires the Trade Licensing Authority to consider, in connection with the public interest consideration, which they have to take into account before coming to the decision, the public interest in Gibraltar plc or Gibraltar inc, in having the commercial entities in Main Street protected.

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This really arises, Mr Speaker, because it has come to my notice, it has been advertised in the *Gazette*, that there is an application by a company, I think it is Rotunda Holdings Ltd, to sell items which include things like televisions and radios, all kinds of audio and video equipment, DIY goods. The ambit of the application is indeed very wide and in fact overlaps in respect of those items which we, when we were in Government, were very concerned to protect.

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So I appreciate, Mr Speaker, it is a long preamble. I normally do not like to give them, but it is a really short question and the question is why?

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Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, I am a little surprised about the supplementary, not least because the hon. Gentleman, before he asked me the question in this House, in fact called the Trade Licensing Secretary to ask that very question, and there was an answer provided to him by e-mail, which was:

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'Good morning Damon.

Sorry for the delay. I have attached the Direction in question and I have confirmed that the Direction was issued *ultra vires*.'

That answers the question straightly and simply, so he does already know the answer. It is interesting he should have asked me the question after he had asked the same question to the Trade Licensing Authority (TLA).

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, I appreciate if that is the reason why, presumably if I can interpret the answer, it is because the Government has received legal advice and it is *ultra vires*.

I appreciate that I would be breaching, I think, the Rules of the House, if I would ask him for his view as to whether that is in fact the case. Certainly, my view as a professional – and not only as a politician; as a professional – I do not think it is *ultra vires*. I think the Government does have the authority to do so under... I can take him to the precise section. It is in relation to the matter we will hopefully be dealing with in this sitting of the House, the amendments to the Trade Licensing Act. I do have a copy of the substantive Act and there is a provision, Mr Speaker, which allows the Government to issue Directions in order to assist the Trade Licensing Authority, in relation to public interest matters.

I personally do not think it is *ultra vires*, the provisions of the Act.

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, without wishing to make this into a legal submission in reply, may I answer my hon. Friend by saying that, of course, I did receive legal advice from Peter Rodney, who is the legal adviser to the Trade Licensing Authority on all matters. He in fact sits with them at hearings and his view was that the Ministerial Direction that the hon. Gentleman describes, the one that we are talking about, was issued in good faith by the previous Government, but in his view, it appears, on consideration, that it may have been issued wrongly, in that the correct legal powers to issue it were not used.

That was the advice that he gave the TLA and, as a result of that advice, it was the TLA that decided to disregard the Direction, since the problem was brought to its attention. So, in other words, it is not that the Government took a look at the Direction, decided that it was *ultra vires* and directed the Licensing Authority; it was that, as a result of a hearing, advice was asked for, advice by Mr Rodney was proffered, the advice being that he did not think it had been issued appropriately; and it was the TLA which is entirely independent that took the decision that, as a result of the advice, it would disregard that Direction. Of course now we, the Government, are considering whether or not we have any Direction in relation to supermarkets.

I hope that clearly sets out the sequence of events that led to this Direction being disregarded by the Authority, rather than by the Government deciding that it was not to follow that Direction.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, I am not sure whether I am able to ask this question and no doubt –

Mr Speaker: I will allow you one last supplementary.

Hon. D J Bossino: Not just because of, perhaps, the length of the exchange; it is simply to ask for your advice, Mr Speaker, across the floor of the House, as to whether I can ask the Minister –

Mr Speaker: I think there is a limit to the extent to which you can get involved in purely debating legal questions. There is a limit to that.

Hon. D J Bossino: Yes, the question is whether the Minister would be able to provide me with details of... If the advice has been proffered in writing, whether he would be able to provide me with that advice.

Mr Speaker: Very well.

Hon. N F Costa: With your indulgence, I could give him the answer in one sentence, to avoid the need for me to have to write later and we can finish this legal argument.

Mr Speaker: Do so and then we will leave it at that.

Hon. N F Costa: The specific advice given to me by Mr Peter Rodney was that section 48 of the Gibraltar Constitution notes of the delegation from the Governor to the Government of certain powers, but that through oversight or otherwise, the powers were not properly delegated from the Governor to the Government and that therefore the Direction was not properly issued, as a result of this.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

**Old Ice Box building
Resurfacing works progress**

410 **Clerk:** Question 974, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port advise us as to progress of the resurfacing works being undertaken at the site of the old Ice Box building?

415 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port.

Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, as the Government announced by way of Press Release 314/2012 on 23rd May, the works to carry out repairs and improve the condition of the surface along several areas of the Western Arm were completed in June of this year.

SPORTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE AND YOUTH

425 **Fire station
Installation of new smoke extractor system**

Clerk: Question 931 the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

430 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for the City Fire Brigade inform this House when the new smoke extractor system for the fire station was installed and if not yet done, when it will be installed?

435 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, the extractor system installers, Independent Air Conditioning Ltd, have advised us that the installation works commenced last Tuesday, 13th November, two days ago and estimate that the system will be fully installed and operational by mid-December.

440 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, could the Hon. Minister advise when did this service go out to tender?

445 In January's Parliament, he said that it would not be going out to tender because there were only two companies that could provide the service, i.e. Nederman from Sweden and Ecovent from Germany. When did the service go out to tender and why were those two companies that he mentioned back in January then not considered?

Hon. S E Linares: Mr Speaker, I would need notice of that question, because as I understand it...

450 **Mr Speaker:** But have you not said that it did not go out to tender?

Hon. S E Linares: No, it did not go out to tender

455 **Mr Speaker:** It did not go out to tender, because there were only two –

Hon. S E Linares: Right, that is the first thing but yes, I understand what she is saying, because it seems that it is the name of a different company than the two stated.

460 I will go back to the City Fire Brigade and ask them whether they have any relationship. Maybe some of the companies are subsidiaries to the two that I mentioned, but I will give her the answer, Mr Speaker.

**City Fire Brigade
Full audit costs and findings**

465 **Clerk:** Question 932, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Minister with the responsibility for the City Fire Brigade state when the full audit of the City Fire Brigade was completed, how much it cost and what the findings from it were?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, the full audit of the City Fire Brigade will commence on the 25th November, therefore the costs and fundings are not yet available.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

**New Fire Station
Commencement and location**

Clerk: Question 933, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Minister with responsibility for the City Fire Brigade state when Government will be starting work on the new Fire Station and where it will be located?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, the answer to this question is the same as the reply given to Question 354/2012. Government is not in a position to state where the new Fire Station will be located.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister confirm that this is because a decision will be made after the audit is completed?

Hon. S E Linares: Yes, as has been stated before. I have mentioned that before in the House, that we are waiting for the audit, but not necessarily just straight after the audit will we have a location. What we are looking at is the whole thing holistically.

Clerk: Question –

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: I am grateful for that. I just only ask the question because you did state in the manifesto that within three months of the Election, as a priority, would commence work on the new Fire Station. I just wanted to establish the answer.

Hon. S E Linares: Was that a question, Mr Speaker?

Mr Speaker: She can rephrase it as a question.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Is that so?

Mr Speaker: ‘Did the Hon. Minister not say –?’

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Yes, exactly – did the Hon. Minister not say that?

Hon. S E Linares: Yes, Mr Speaker.

**Gibraltar Cricket Association and/or Gibraltar Rugby Football Union
Discussions re renewed facilities**

Clerk: Question 934, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Sports and Leisure state if he has, since his answer to Question 843/2012, held discussions with the Gibraltar Cricket Association and/or the Gibraltar Rugby Football Union, in respect of providing renewed facilities for the playing, teaching and development of their respective sports and if so, provide details of any agreements reached?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, since my answer to Question 843/2012, barely a month ago, I have had the pleasure of meeting the Gibraltar Rugby Football Union, where we discussed the provisions for the renewed facilities for the playing, teaching and development of their respective sports.

No agreement has been reached.

Sports Grants Details of payments

Clerk: Question 935, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can the Minister for Sports and Leisure provided details of payments made since his answer to Question 844/2012 in respect of Sports Grants for the following: (a) Grants to Sporting Societies; (b) International Competitions; (c) Sports Development Projects and (d) Hosting of special Sports and Leisure events?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, I now hand over to the hon. Member opposite the details requested in relation to the payments made since my answer to Question 844/2012 in respect of the Sports Grants.

ANSWER TO QUESTION No: 935/2012

(22) Grants to Sporting Societies

Pool – Competition UK	£7,250.00
Tenpin Bowling – World Cup	£1,053.22
Darts – Pro Players Grants	£6,000.00
Athletics – Competition in Barcelona	£ 264.74
Darts – Competition UK	£1,725.00

(23) International Competitions

Nil.

(24) Sports Development Projects

Triathlon Association Electronic Systems	£2,500.00
Athletics – Congress Malta	£ 595.00
Pool – Professional Coaching	£ 872.96
Rowing – National Rowing Champs	£4,809.90
Triathlon – Congress New Zealand	£ 389.50
Football National Squad Competition	£7,500.00
Climbing – Competition UK	£1,169.50
Badminton – Schools development	£2,363.63

(25) Hosting of Special Sports and Leisure Events

Gibraltar Masters Darts - Deposit	£30,000.00
Tenpin Bowling Rock Masters	£10,000.00

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, does the Hon. Minister have slightly more information on the penultimate item listed here, the Gibraltar Masters Darts? I see there is £30,000 allocated as a deposit. Would he perhaps expand a bit further – a deposit in respect of what event?

Hon. S E Linares: Mr Speaker, this is about a European circuit darts competition that will be held in June next year. The organisers want us to commit ourselves to doing that, therefore they have asked for a

565 deposit of £30,000. They will be bringing all the world champions to Gibraltar, a very exciting... I am
very excited about the tournament they are doing. They will be bringing television in. It will not be
beamed live, but it will be another programme like we did with the Strongman Competition, in which a
570 50-minute programme will be beamed on Sky Sports. As everybody knows, darts is becoming an up-and-
coming sport. We are then bringing them over here and this will be one of the European circuits. That
means that they are developing a circuit where they already have a championship in Vienna, they have
one in Berlin, they have one in Ireland and Gibraltar will be part and parcel of that European
championship. Therefore, because it is important that we are part and parcel of this ranking tournament,
they ask for a deposit of £30,000.

575 **Hon. E J Reyes:** And Mr Speaker, if the deposit is £30,000, does the Minister have any sort of
estimated figures of what are the further payments that will be made, ending up in which grand total?

Hon. S E Linares: Not at this stage, because it is a thing that we need to evaluate with production and
all that, so it is a deposit of £30,000. Obviously, it will be more, but I cannot, at this stage, give the hon.
580 Member an exact figure. But I can tell you it is not a bottomless pit.

Hon. E J Reyes: I was going to say, Mr Speaker, we have made a deposit of £30,000. Surely
somewhere within the budget, there must be a figure saying, 'Look, more or less, with a 10% or 20%
margin up or down.' Is this going to be a £100,000 contribution at the end of the day or just £50,000? Can
585 I at least have some sort of indication of what figure we are aiming towards?

Hon. S E Linares: We are talking about the range of £100,000.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

**Victoria Stadium, Pitch Number 1
International Rugby Board approval for use**

595 **Clerk:** Question 936 the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can the Minister for Sports and Leisure confirm if the new playing surface recently
installed at Pitch Number 1 at the Victoria Stadium also enjoys or will very soon enjoy, full approval and
600 certification by the International Rugby Board (IRB) for the playing of international rugby matches?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Yes, sir, I can confirm that
the new playing surface installed at Pitch Number 1 at the Victoria Stadium will enjoy full approval by
605 the International Rugby Board for the playing of international rugby matches.

Hon. E J Reyes: And just for the sake of clarification, Mr Speaker, may I ask the Minister to confirm
that that means that if it carries the full approval, therefore scrums and so on will actually be permissible
on the new playing surface, as opposed to that having been curtailed in the previous version of the pitch
610 that was available?

Hon. S E Linares: Well, Mr Speaker, I am not an expert in rugby but if the International Rugby
Board is happy that an international rugby match can be played there, I am sure they are not going to now
abolish the scrums. So I am assuming that is the case.

Hon. E J Reyes: Would it at some stage be possible for the Minister to be able to confirm to me...? I
accept the honesty that all he can say at the moment is that he assumes, but I would like to know as a
reality whether it will or will not.

Hon. S E Linares: Well, Mr Speaker, in the answer I say I can confirm that the new playing surface
installed on Pitch Number 1 will enjoy *full approval* by the International Rugby Board. Now, what I am
saying is that if the International Rugby Board is happy that international rugby matches can be played
there, it would have to be a change of the rules in rugby that scrums are now allowed.

So that is why it is an assumption, because I doubt very much that any rugby international match will
625 not have a scrum.

**Victoria Stadium, Pitch Numbers 1 and 2
Gibraltar Rugby Football Union use**

Clerk: Question 937, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can the Minister for Sports and Leisure explain why no allocations have been offered to the Gibraltar Rugby Football Union at either Pitch Number 1 or 2 within the Victoria Stadium Complex during weekdays after 6.00 p.m. so that adults can attend to coach junior players or train in the sport themselves?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar Rugby Football Union (GRFU) has not, in past years, ever been granted allocations after 6.00 p.m. in either the Victoria Stadium Main Pitch or Pitch Number 2.

Allocations for junior rugby coaching are made available to the GRFU in Pitch Number 2 on Wednesdays at 3.30 p.m. and on Sunday mornings and in the range area, during the week after school hours.

An allocation in the Westside School synthetic turf area was offered during the weekday evenings, as in previous years, but this was rejected by the GRFU, as they considered that the surface was not suitable for their current needs.

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, thank you for the analysis of previous allocation and so on. My question was specific for this time round based on information that the Hon. Minister has provided me in the schedule in his answer to Question 845.

What I am asking for is weekdays, that is Monday to Friday, after 6.00 p.m. there is no allocation for example Pitch Number 2, which in the past there had been. So I am asking why this year that is not provided, because that curtails then the ability for the coaching of junior players and so on.

Hon. S E Linares: Mr Speaker, the question has been answered. It has not in the past ever been granted allocations and therefore if it has not been granted, I am assuming again that the GSLA will not grant those allocations this year.

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, can I propose that the Hon. Minister actually checks and he will find that in the past, on weekdays after 6.00 p.m., the Rugby Union has enjoyed the use of Pitch Number 2, and then perhaps we can carry on the discussion of that, because at the moment he thinks, given the information he has, that has not come across, and I recall that allocations have been granted. So otherwise we will just be talking at cross purposes. I think the Minister deserves an opportunity to check on the information.

Hon. S E Linares: Well, I will check with the person who has answered the question!

**Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth
Trainee placements and accredited qualifications**

Clerk: Question 938, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, further to his answer to Written Question W144/2012, can the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth state the following: (a) until when will the training periods in which the various trainees placed within his Ministries last; (b) what training has been provided within the 'Job Description' undertaken by the trainees; (c) what accredited qualifications, if any, will the trainees attain at the end of the training period/placement?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, further to my answer to Written Question W144/2012, the answer is (a) the training period for the trainees with different Ministries will last as and when the Employment and Training Board notifies us that they will be moved to acquire further skills; (b) the training provided depends on the trainee, department and job

description; and (c) the trainee will obtain experience on the job that will serve for their personal CV and their future job applications.

690 **Hon. E J Reyes:** In reply to section (b), he has given me a very general type of answer, without specifically saying what training is being provided, just saying that training is being provided. I have asked *what* training is being provided within the job description. I was expecting at least a bit of meat on the bone.

695 **Minister for Enterprise, Training and Employment (Hon. J J Bossano):** Mr Speaker, I think I need to remind the Member that the people who are in the public sector are not being trained for public sector jobs. They are being trained to... because we have got them placed there pending an opportunity to move them to the private sector, when there is a provider, in line with the answer that I gave before.

700 So really, (*Interjection*) they are used in the public sector in many cases, because there were people from the VTS on 1st February. We gave everybody the commitment that we would take them on and when employers who had them placed with them said they did not need them, they would not sign a partnership agreement and would not give them employment, since we were paying them anyway, we have shifted them somewhere else, where we would get some return on the investment we are making in their skills. But they are all available to be moved at any time. (*Interjection*)

705 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, the Hon. the Minister for Sports says that is the answer that he has given. May I ask the Hon. the Minister for Employment: so therefore the answer that the Hon. the Minister for Sports gave me a few months ago, that in fact placing them in the public sector was designed to actually give them an edge in case any vacancy arose in the public sector, that is not the case and that is inaccurate.

Hon. J J Bossano: Well, Mr Speaker, I think if the hon. Member remembers the answer and the question, he remembers the comments that were made at the time.

715 In case he has forgotten them, which apparently it suits him to forget, the reality is that it is not an unreasonable assumption that, when people go for an interview and they have been in a department, they will have some knowledge of the work with a department, which may assist them, but as he knows from other questions that he has put, when people are selected, that is a factor that may or may not be taken on board by the interview board. That is the decision of the interview board.

720 **Clerk:** Question 939, the Hon. –

Mr Speaker: The Hon. Mr Reyes.

725 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I just wanted to ask one other small matter. On part (c) of my question, I asked about accredited qualifications. I know that in the past – and I hope that it still continues to do so – that the GSLA offers courses that allow both members of GSLA and other sports lovers to attend and get accredited qualifications, in respect of sports development, introduction to coaching and so on. Is the Minister in a position to confirm if any trainees who may be within the Sports and Leisure Authority, of which in the past he has confirmed that there are, are they attending these courses and therefore he could fall under the category that he has reason to expect that they will attain accredited qualifications?

735 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, as I understand it, there is only one trainee in the GSLA and that trainee is doing administrative work – or at least administrative *training*.

Hon. D A Feetham: Yes, I looked at the answer that you gave during the last session of the House –

Mr Speaker: ‘*Mr Speaker*, I looked at the answer that the Hon. Minister gave.’

740 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I looked at the answer that the Hon. Minister gave last month to the questions of how many trainees were receiving training within his Department. Now of course, we have now heard the Hon. the Minister for Employment say the policy of the Government is to actually hopefully shift those trainees from the public sector, where they are receiving training, into the private sector.

745 May I ask him what relevant training is a 64-year-old trainee receiving within his area of responsibility, his Department, as a librarian to be shifted into the private sector?

750 **Hon. J J Bossano:** Well, Mr Speaker, I think we would need to look into it, but I can tell the hon. Member opposite that probably no more sophisticated training than was being received when the GSD was in power and they had somebody in the Home who was 65 and was a trainee in the VTS –

A Member: On the Youth Training Scheme?

755 **Hon. J J Bossano:** As part of the Youth Training Scheme.
So I suppose a young 65 was probably being treated no differently from a young 64 – and the question is being answered by a young 73!

Mr Speaker: Next question.

760
**International Symposium on ‘History of the Spanish Masonry’
Breakdown of expenses**

765 **Clerk:** Question 939, the Hon. E J Reyes.

770 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to his answer in reply to Question 836/2012, is the Minister for Culture now in a position to provide a full and detailed breakdown of expenses in respect of his Ministry’s £28,000 sponsorship of the International Symposium on the ‘History of the Spanish Masonry’, which was held in Gibraltar during the month of October 2012?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

775 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, full details of payments have not been finalised. Government will be in a position to do so, once the organisers of the International Symposium have received all invoices appertaining to the said event.

780
**Gibraltar Music Festival 2012
Payments to Axel Media and Word of Mouth**

Clerk: Question 940, the Hon. E J Reyes.

785 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Further to his answer in reply to Question 838/2012, is the Minister for Culture now in a position to provide a full breakdown of payments made, or committed to make, in favour of Axel Media and Word of Mouth in respect of the production and organisation of the 2012 Gibraltar Music Festival?

790 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, payments in respect of the production and organisation of the 2012 Gibraltar Music Festival are: Axel Media, £25,000; Word of Mouth, £30,000.

795 I must add that these payments appertain to two individual invoices only.

Mr Speaker: ‘To two individual invoices only’.

800 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Does the Minister have any breakdown of how the £25,000 adds to that total and likewise for the £30,000?

805 **Hon. S E Linares:** No, Mr Speaker, that is why I said that there were two individual... This was the fees that they were asking for the organisation of the Festival, and that is one payment. There is no breakdown as such; it was the whole works that they did.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, just to clarify one question I have in my own mind, is the Minister expecting to receive more invoices, or would that be an incorrect interpretation of his answer?

810 **Hon. S E Linares:** I think there are a few invoices still left, but I would need a little bit of notice for that. But I think nearly all of them have come in already, but there might be one or two still pending. I am talking about different issues of maybe somebody who has covered the surface or some other small invoices that need to come in.

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**Cultural Grants
Details of awards**

820 **Clerk:** Question 941, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Can the Minister for Culture provide details of further Cultural Grants awarded, if any, since his answer to Question 839/2012?

825 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): Mr Speaker, there have been no further Cultural Grants awarded since my answer to Question 839/2012.

830 I must add that this information is posted on the statistics page of the H M Government of Gibraltar website, and updated as and when required.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

835

**Clarendon Fine Art Gallery, Mayfair, London
Government's financial contribution**

Clerk: Question 942, the Hon. E J Reyes.

840 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Can the Minister for Culture state what financial contributions, if any, Government has made towards the exhibition held recently at Clarendon Fine Art Gallery in Mayfair, London?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage And Youth.

845 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, the only contributions made by Government towards the exhibition held recently at Clarendon Fine Arts Gallery in Mayfair, London are: (a) the cost of air freighting the artworks to London, £2,534.25; (b) flights for a Clarendon representative to visit Gibraltar, which was £465.48.

850 Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in this venture and helping in fulfilling the Government's policy of exporting our artworks abroad.

855 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, when the Minister said that he paid towards the flight of a representative from Clarendon to come over to Gibraltar, for what purpose did that person come to Gibraltar?

Hon. S E Linares: Mr Speaker, the person who owns the Clarendon had to view the artwork before taking it over. She did not know what type of artwork she was going to take over, so she flew to Gibraltar in order to assess the artwork, before she packed them to take them over.

860 **Hon. E J Reyes:** To choose the...?

Hon. S E Linares: To choose them.

865 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, for the sake of clarification, can the Minister then confirm that those artists whose works were chosen and therefore were so proudly shown at the Clarendon Gallery, those who attended did so under their own financial resources, without any grants in any respect being offered?

870 **Hon. S E Linares:** Mr Speaker, apparently most of them attended the opening and were there and they went of their own accord. The Government did not sponsor anybody to fly over for the opening or for the duration of the exhibition. As I understand it, the only expense was the one that I have just stated.

Hon. E J Reyes: Thank you for the clarification, Mr Speaker.

875

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

New power station Progress made

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Clerk: Question 943, the Hon. S M Figueras.

Hon. S M Figueras: Yes, Mr Speaker.

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Can the Minister for the Environment provide details to this House about progress, if any, made in relation to the building of a new power station and any steps it is taking to provide Gibraltar with a stable and predictable source of power for the future?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

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Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, an interim solution has been devised which will not only instantly improve local air quality, but will also provide security of supply during the coming winter months. This was announced publicly last week.

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To this end, the Government has entered into a two year-arrangement (with the option to extend to three) with Energy International Inc of the United States, for the supply of temporary, electrical power using rental turbine power, dual fire generating sets which will allow the servicing of existing generating plants to be undertaken, whilst increasing the resilience of the installed generating capacity. The units will be fuelled with diesel.

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The turbine units will be installed at the north-western end of the North Mole, away from residential areas. These units operate on proven technology and are extremely reliable. They also incorporate 'SoLoNox Low Emission Technology', which is considerably more environmentally friendly compared to the diesel engine technology that has been used in Gibraltar for power generation for the last 80 years.

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The new temporary units will each provide up to five megawatts of generating capacity and are designed to run 24 hours a day. The 12 skid generators imported by the previous administration (eight rented and four bought outright) were capable only of one megawatt generating capacity each and were not designed to be run continually. These skid generators may soon become surplus to requirements.

910

The Government envisages that the new temporary power plant will be fully operational by mid-December this year. This is just before the winter peak demand. The new facility will enable Government to improve security of supply during peak demand periods when power cuts have previously occurred as a result of a lack of generating capacity.

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The advent of the new temporary power station will also, importantly, permit for variations in the operating regimes of all three existing power stations in Gibraltar, resulting in an overall lowering of emissions. In particular nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions are predicted to reduce by 40% immediately.

The aim is also to reduce the operational running of the power stations in the South District and in the Waterport area, whenever demand allows during the silent hours, without the security of supply. This will immediately massively lower the emissions and reduce the noise levels in these areas during these periods.

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The Government is also continuing to identify alternative ways of further reducing the emissions arising from the production of electricity in Gibraltar. To this effect, Government is already working with Energy International on the fitting of catalytic reduction technology (known as 'scrubbers') to these turbines. The fitting of such scrubbers will further reduce emissions by another 97%.

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The Government's first priority, however, has been to secure the reliability of electrical supplies for the winter peak demand and to service the existing engines to improve their reliability and performance, which in turn further increases security of supply and reduces emissions.

Mr Speaker, I must state at this point that this does in no way suggest that we are, for one moment, not giving the long-term solution its due attention. We, the Government are all too aware of the fact that investing in a sustainable power solution for Gibraltar needs a long-term solution and we are working hard to ensure this is achieved as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, due to the seriousness of the situation, we had to provide an interim solution, something that was not being contemplated by the last administration.

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The Government of Gibraltar also continues to engage with main players in the energy industry, exploring alternative technologies to determine a permanent solution to Gibraltar's electrical needs. This

solution must provide secure supply and reduce Gibraltar's carbon footprint. To this end, reduction of consumption, or at the very least reduction of the rate of increase in consumption, remains our aim.

As stated by the Chief Minister last week – and I quote:

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'The next step is to finalise our determination on the long term solution by the decision on what permanent power solution is to be chosen. Again environmental, noise and cost issues will be relevant alongside security of supply in the final determinations we have to make in this respect. At the same time, we are at a very advanced stage in the introduction of renewable energy sources from different types of technologies. These are the right decisions for our community and I am delighted to have led the Committee in its deliberations to date and going forward to the stage when we announce the permanent solution for power generation for the future.'

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I am of course quoting the Chief Minister, and I end the quote there.

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Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the reply.

Might I suggest – I do not know how appropriate it is – that the Minister consider answering Question 951, which is in relation to alternative energies, perhaps, to deal with this whole matter together, if he feels it is appropriate. If he does not, then... It is just because, obviously, the conversation will take us naturally in that direction and it may well be – (*Interjections*) Well, there is obviously going to be a conversation on as important a matter as this.

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Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I am happy to answer the question put to me; that is your prerogative, not mine.

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Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I will just carry on and I will just ask the supplementaries in respect of this particular Question.

Does the Government consider...? In the first place, actually, I should say that, obviously I welcome the statement. It is a statement which the Opposition notes with some satisfaction, certainly, because a temporary solution is one that we are all very keen on... Well, the issue of power generation in Gibraltar is a very important one and the announcement of this temporary solution is, certainly in our view, a positive one.

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In respect of the temporary power plant, the Minister has said that the agreement is for two years, with an option to extend to three. Is the Government satisfied that three years, at the long end of the agreement, will suffice for the delivery of a permanent solution for power generation for Gibraltar?

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Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, I lead the Inter-Ministerial Committee on power generation. This question has been prefaced to the Minister for the Environment, assuming that the main issue that the hon. Gentleman is concerned with, given his shadow portfolio, was the Environment, but I rise to answer this question, which deals with the detail of the agreement entered into.

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Mr Speaker, of course we consider that, in three years, we should be in a position to have a permanent solution, otherwise we would have done a temporary deal for longer.

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Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, before I ask my next question, just to clarify that power generation and environment, frankly, go so hand in hand that it is a matter that I am dealing with. I do not see that there is any controversy in that whatsoever, Mr Speaker.

Further, in the Government's answer to the Question, the Minister has referred to the new generators incorporating SoLoNox technology, which reduces emissions significantly. Is this technology, however, in the diesel-fuel context to which it will be applied, in the specific Gibraltar application, as effective in delivering those emissions savings as well?

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Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: I have no reason to think it is going to be any less efficient in Gibraltar than it would be anywhere else in the world. As I said in my answer, it is proven technology and we are satisfied that this is what will be delivered.

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Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, perhaps I will clarify for the Minister: I was referring to the SoLoNox technology being known to be very effective in reducing emissions in the context of gas powered turbines; obviously the Minister has made reference to the fact that these turbines will be powered by diesel. I am asking the question – he may or may not have the answer, but I am just keen to understand.

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Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, the details were given to us and the calculations and the figures given were based on diesel being the fuel.

Hon. S M Figueras: I am grateful for that answer, Mr Speaker.

995 Is the Government satisfied that the proposed location of the temporary power plant is appropriate in the context of existing infrastructure, which we are told is currently in that area?

Hon. Chief Minister: Obviously, Mr Speaker.

1000 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Grateful, Mr Speaker.

How many sets, perhaps the Minister can provide me, are being installed as part of the temporary power plant?

1005 **Hon. Chief Minister:** That matter has been fully set out in the press release, that dealt with the matter, Mr Speaker, that they are five.

1010 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, I reviewed the press release and I asked the Question in Parliament – obviously, a Question that was asked before the press release was issued and therefore a matter that I certainly feel should be discussed, or should be the subject of questions in this House, simply because our question preceded your release. (*Interjection*) Yes, it may be public, but it was made public after I asked the Question in this House. If the Chief Minister wants to take that issue...

Mr Speaker: Has it not been made public now, that it is five that we are talking about? (*Interjections*)

1015 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Yes, yes, yes. I am grateful. Yes indeed.

Hon. Chief Minister: [*Inaudible*] before the supplementary.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the answer.

1020 **Mr Speaker:** Fine.

Hon. S M Figueras: In relation to the temporary power plant again, Mr Speaker, does the Government have a total amount of the cost of this project?

1025 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the total amount of the cost of the project has also, I think, been set out publicly, but if the hon. Gentleman wants me to repeat it, I am not going to simply rely on the fact that it is public. It is £4 million, over the period of the contract, from which the hon. Gentleman would be wise to deduct the cost of rental of the skid generators and the capital value of the generators bought – or the realisable value of the generators bought – which will mean that the difference between the temporary solution that *did not* work and the temporary solution that we hope – I hope, across the floor of the House – *will* work, is £200,000 in the period of the contract, in the two-year period, and that is without including the fact that these engines, or these turbines, are so much more efficient in the way that they burn fuel, that it is very likely, although an actual figure cannot yet be provided, that we will save well in excess of those £200,000 because of the fuel efficiency that these turbines will bring.

1035 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, whilst I of course disagree with the premise that the solution brought in by the previous administration in the shape of the 12 skid generators failed to do the job it was designed to do, I am grateful for the answer in respect of the other aspect of the question.

1040 Is the Chief Minister able to provide this House with a net cost of this project for the community, bearing in mind what he has said in relation to the savings of the rental of those eight skid generators which were rented and the capital return on the four bought outright?

1045 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman cannot have it both ways. He cannot get up and say, ‘We’re very happy that you have done a temporary solution, because we are all very concerned about the security of supply’ and tell us that the temporary solution that they did was working, now in the preamble to his paragraph; but I will not dwell on that in trying to deal with what the hon. Gentleman has asked at the tail end of that intervention.

1050 The answer is very simple and it is again to refer to him exactly the figures I have given to him. The *net saving* – not the net cost, but the net *saving* – to this community, as a result of the temporary solution that we have now brought, cannot yet be calculated, because the fuel efficiency of these engines has not yet resulted in a calculation. In fact it could not, other than on hedged fuel prices as at today, because we have not yet started to see the efficiency in action and we would be working on somebody else’s figures and we have not yet done that calculation.

1055 But from what I am telling him, we should be able to work out that there could be here a net *saving* for our community, not a net cost.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, again I disagree entirely with premise the Chief Minister raises in the first part of his answer, that I cannot do both – that I cannot welcome this solution and also say that we had a solution that had worked at the time when it was brought to Gibraltar. I entirely disagree with that premise.

The Chief Minister is now saying that that saving cannot be calculated; yet he has been perfectly happy to say that we are going to have savings and he mentions figures. I would be grateful if the Chief Minister... Well, the Chief Minister *has* indeed confirmed that he is satisfied that there will be a saving; the extent of that saving he cannot offer this House, and I acknowledge that.

Moving on from this particular issue, have any consultants been taken on in respect of the planning of this temporary power plant? Can the Chief Minister provide further details as to how the arrangement with Energy International has come to pass, how they were identified and the process in the build-up to entering into the agreement with Energy International Inc?

Hon. Chief Minister: The hon. Gentleman runs the risk of falling into ridicule. He cannot say in the premise to his supplementary a moment ago that he shared the concern about power generation and was therefore very happy to see that we had done a temporary solution and then tell us that the temporary solution that we inherited was working perfectly well. He can *say* it – of course he can – because we believe in freedom of speech, but he cannot be consistent in his understanding of the issue, if he does that.

Mr Speaker, as to what I have said about potential net savings here, I have already given an answer and my answer is that reflected in *Hansard* and not the way that the hon. Gentleman has chosen to paraphrase it – in case that needs to be said.

As to the other issues, as I understand it – and this is a matter, of course, being handled by the technicians in the Gibraltar Electricity Authority – there is no consultant engaged in respect of engaging these entities. The Electricity Authority has engaged with the number of entities around the world that do these type of solutions, which is not a great number, has brought to the Inter-Ministerial Committee all of the options and Inter-Ministerial Committee has worked with the technicians to choose which is the best option for Gibraltar.

Hon. P R Caruana: Mr Speaker, if I could just ask the hon. Member, for speed and convenience, two supplementaries together, I am sure he will be able to disentangle them.

The first is pursuant to his answer to the hon. and learned Mr Figueras, the concern that the Opposition has about power supplies is the same one as we had in Government and that is that there is a long-term threat to the continuability of power in Gibraltar, which in our judgement – and we think that they will come to the same conclusion, if they have not already done so, when they have finished reviewing the options or re-reviewing our options – which can only be resolved by building a new power station of some sort. Therefore, to that extent, both our temporary solution and their temporary solutions were both *interim*, to tide over until the concerns could be addressed – which could *only* be addressed by building a new power station. We can have a debate – I am not sure how –

Mr Speaker: No, you cannot! You cannot have a debate.

Hon. P R Caruana: We could have a debate at some different time! I could invite the hon. Member for coffee downstairs. I will not suggest we should have it now here, but I could invite him to coffee downstairs and we could there and then have a debate about whether this or that tiding-over solution is the best.

But will the hon. Member firstly share with me the view that, whatever we debate about interim solutions, the *real* concern is the long-term replacement of the electricity generation supply capacity, in one way or another, in one place or another, by one project or another? We had ours; they are reviewing it and others and will come up with their own conclusions.

The other question that I would ask him is this: is he aware that the reason why we bought two of those little machines was that it was part of Gibraltar's accumulation of civil contingency planning resources? In other words, it was thought appropriate that we should have two small and easily transportable generators that could be put anywhere in Gibraltar, that might be temporarily cut off from supply by a landslide, or a rock fall, or a fire, or anything like that.

So when he speaks of the realisable value and netting the realisable value, as he did in answer to my friend, my colleague, Mr Figueras, about... to work out the net cost, it was not the intention that those two purchased units would be dispensed with, once the transitional need for temporary power was over, but rather that they would be retained as physically deployable around Gibraltar, generating capacity when bits of Gibraltar by some, unenvisageable now, civil contingency might be disconnected from the traditional source of supply.

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, let me deal with both of those issues.

We have had an exchange across the floor of the House – let us not call it a debate – before, on these issues, and he knows that we agree, Mr Speaker, that the finalisation of a permanent solution in respect of power is one of the most important issues facing our community. I have said it on a number of occasions.

Indeed, Mr Speaker, he will recall that I referred him to the 1999 Manx Report, which I know he had commissioned, which talked about Waterport Power Station and the Gibraltar electricity generation infrastructure generally being seriously doubtful after 2003.

So of course we understand those concerns and as I said before, the review that we are doing, relates both to technology, geography, fuel, emissions and costs of what the new facility should be. We are confident, Mr Speaker, that we will come up with a solution that I hope will be welcomed by Members on both sides of the House, if we are able to deliver on all of those in a more satisfactory manner than the previous proposed permanent solution might do.

Mr Speaker, I hope that, if we do, Members will say, ‘Look, fair enough, you have found a better solution.’ It may be a better solution that was not findable then – technology is changing in these respects in many ways – at the time they entered into the arrangements which they sought to make permanent.

In respect of what he calls ‘the little machines’, my concern about those little machines at the moment is that (a) they are not designed to run 24 hours a day, (b) that they run only for one megawatt, if they were to run to full capacity – and nothing in electricity generation, as he will have learnt in his time and I have now learnt, runs at full capacity, but closer to 80% or 90% capacity – and that where these skids, as they are known, are presently located means that they are not as easily redeployable as they should be for emergency purposes. We are looking, Mr Speaker, at other options for easier-to-deploy generating capacity around Gibraltar.

Some of these skids are in the northern part of Gibraltar in the area of Waterport. I think some of them are also at the New Harbours area – at the entrance to New Harbours – but I am advised, not so easily redeployable as might first have been thought. So we are also looking at how to better deal with those civil contingency issues which – the hon. Gentleman is right – these skids were also designed to deal with and in fact which he referred to in this House, when he explained what the two that were being bought for were essentially being bought for.

Mr Speaker, I hope that deals with the issues that he has raised.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Lady was going to ask a supplementary.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, does the £4 million include recruitment of staff to man the station, the cost of the diesel to power the temporary station and the maintenance of these generators?

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, I have already said on a number of occasions, when I got on my feet this morning, it does *not* include fuel. I do not know why the hon. Lady has not picked that up.

Secondly, this is an operation and management contract so it is a contract price that includes operation and management, meaning that we will not have to be involved in paying any individuals, or finding individuals to run the station. It is literally a contract where we buy electricity from the operator.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I will ask the Chief Minister to forgive me, if he did answer this, but I am not certain I picked up whether there was a tender process, or equivalent to it in terms of the assessment of the options, of the cost of the various options that he did refer to, that he did say the Inter-Ministerial Committee had considered.

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, in the sense that I explained to him that there are very few operators in the world that do this business and the GEA went directly to those that they considered to be reputable, received some others and considered all of them and presented the Inter-Ministerial Committee with the options as to price and emissions, which are the two things that were most important to the Committee, as well as the reliability of the technology being provided. The GEA – the Chairman of the GEA and the Government’s Chief Technical Officer as well, with the Financial Secretary – made recommendations to the Government, to the Inter-Ministerial Committee and those are the recommendations that have been accepted.

Hon. S M Figueras: I am grateful for that answer, Mr Speaker.

I wonder if perhaps, the Chief Minister will be able to provide us with some details of how the Government is planning to finance this particular project?

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, the financing of a £4 million commitment over two years is not something that causes the Government of Gibraltar any serious concern that requires us to go out to seek funding from third parties. Commercial entities do not have to lend to the Government of Gibraltar for it to be able to afford £4 million over two years.

1180 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful, Mr Speaker, I just wanted to be sure that we can in fact afford that kind of activity, on the basis of their Election slogan in 2011.

1185 However, I will carry on, Mr Speaker, with another supplementary in relation to the building of the permanent power station. I note that the Chief Minister and my hon. and learned Leader of the Opposition have had a discussion about this. Has there been any progress in the determination of the location of the permanent power station, at this stage?

1190 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, our Election slogan at the last Election was 'Change'. I did not mean loose change; I meant change of the characters that were in administration and the party that was in administration. I specifically said, during the General Election campaign... although the hon. Gentleman likes to ignore it in all of the material that he puts out, that we were somehow alleging that Gibraltar was bankrupt. I have to remind him that the only person who has ever alleged that Gibraltar was bankrupt, was the now Leader of the Opposition, during the course of the 1996 General Election campaign.

1195 I have specifically said, even when complaining about the levels of net debt and gross debt that Gibraltar was finding itself in, which was the issue that we discussed during the General Election campaign, that Gibraltar was not bankrupt. So if he wants to be honest with the electorate, he should reconsider making statements such as that, which – if he did not already know were untrue, he should have known were untrue, he will after today, no doubt, remember after I have told him – are untrue, because I never said that Gibraltar was bankrupt.

1200 What I said, Mr Speaker, was that we had too much debt and that we were wasting money and what will not happen under this administration is that we will overspend on projects like an airport terminal by £60 million. We will not spend, Mr Speaker, £10 million making a hole in the ground where the Theatre Royal was. Those are the things that mean that when we need money to do things which are necessary, like pay for a temporary generating facility like this one, over a period of two years, Gibraltar has the money to pay for it.

1205 Mr Speaker, as to geography, the hon. Gentleman will know more when we make an announcement on the permanent solution.

Clerk: Question –

1210 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, I have further supplementaries on the power station.

Mr Speaker: Yes, go on. Make sure that they are relevant.

1215 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Yes, indeed, absolutely, Mr Speaker. I will endeavour to do so and obviously I have seen the famous podcast. I also paid –

Mr Speaker: I am making that point because I am not prepared to allow a debate on the Government's debt situation. Okay.

1220 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I accept that, Mr Speaker and I will be happy to move on.
Is the Government able to offer its view of the anticipated cost to the community of the permanent power station?

1225 **Hon. Chief Minister:** No, Mr Speaker.

1230 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, the Government said in its press statement to which I am making reference – because I am not certain that the Hon. the Minister for the Environment referred to that specific point when delivering the answer to the Question – Government explained that they were speaking to the unions in order to ensure that current operatives in the current facilities would not be victims of these developments in the new power station.

Is the Chief Minister – or the Minister, indeed – able to provide more details as to how they are working on this and how they are seeking to avoid this from happening?

1235 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, we are in contact with the union on these matters. It would be inappropriate for me to give more information at this stage.

Hon. S M Figueras: And finally, Mr Speaker, can the Chief Minister confirm that the permanent power station will be delivered within this term of office?

1240 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, that is certainly our intention, and I trust that, if the permanent solution that my Government proposes to the people of Gibraltar provides for the same or more

megawatts than was planned under the previous administration, at less cost and for less emissions, they will applaud our choice.

1245 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: One final supplementary, Mr Speaker.

1250 **Mr Speaker:** Yes, this is the last supplementary on this subject.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Yes. Can the Government confirm that the utility bills will still remain frozen throughout this term of office?

1255 **Hon. Chief Minister:** I am tired of telling them, but delighted to repeat, the Government is committed to all the matters that it committed itself to in the General Election campaign with the general population, including those – although I do note, having been elected, that the solution that was proposed by the Members opposite had they returned would have included, I believe – correct me if I am wrong – in the order of a 5% increase per year for the next 20 years, which even the hon. Members opposite will be able to calculate would have included a 100% net increase in the cost of electricity to the consumer.

1260 **The Speaker:** Next question.

1265 **Commonwealth Park**
Expected completion date

Clerk: Question 944, the Hon. S M Figueras.

1270 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment tell this House when the Government expects the Commonwealth Park to be completed?

Clerk: Answer the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1275 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this Question together with Question 945/2012.

1280 **Commonwealth Park**
Award of works contract

Clerk: Question 945.

1285 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment say, in light of the extension of works on the Commonwealth Park to the rest of the Commonwealth Parade, whether the contract for the works has now been awarded?

1290 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, excavations have continued on the southern half of the Commonwealth Parade car park site as part of the work being dealt with by GJBS. No award has yet been made on the other works for the project.

1295 A definitive project completion date cannot be provided at this stage, but the aim is to plant the mature trees in autumn 2013, as this would be the right time of year to do so.

If I may explain, Mr Speaker, the trees have to be planted in the autumn and therefore there would be certain disturbance to the ground, so the laying of lawns and so on would have to follow that, so that the completion should be perhaps several months after that.

1300 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful for the reply by the Hon. Minister.

I suspect I know the answer to this question, but I am going to ask it anyway, because I think it is relevant in the context of the answer that he has given us.

1305 **Mr Speaker:** It is always advisable to know the answer to supplementaries! (*Laughter and interjections*)

1310 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Can the Minister advise this House of the Government's estimated cost of the Commonwealth Park at its completion, so that we may be better able to assess when that comes to pass, whether in fact this project was delivered under budget?

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I suspect the hon. Member will realise that he *did* know the answer, because I am not able to provide that information.

1315 **Clerk:** Question –

1320 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Sorry, one more question, Mr Speaker – and perhaps by asking this question, I am going to limit myself in future sessions of this Parliament, and I do not do it lightly – is the Minister happy that at any point...? Thank you. Will the Minister, at any point before the completion of the Commonwealth Park, be happy to provide for this House details of their anticipated cost of that project?

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, when I have that information available, I will certainly be happy to provide it. I do not have it as yet.

1325 **Mr Speaker:** But is the Hon. Minister clear what the question is – *before completion of the project*? At some stage, before completion of the project.

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Precisely. If I had that information available, but it is clear that with any project, before completion, there can always be things that happen which do affect the actual final costs.

1330 I could, if we had an actual accurate enough estimate before completion of the project, that is something I will be happy to share, but it is speculation because we do not know where we are with that.

Hon. S M Figueras: And will the Minister ever be able to share with this House and the public what their estimate for the building of the park was?

1335 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, *every* meeting of this House, since the Election, the hon. Members opposite... the hon. Member in particular has wanted to get from us what it was that we as Opposition – well, even then, not Opposition Members; as *candidates* – attributed as costs to each project in our manifesto in the offices of the GSLP.

1340 Look, Mr Speaker, he and I can go downstairs and have a coffee and talk about many things. When we do we usually have a right riot of a laugh, because we have known each other for many years and enjoy our company a lot. But what we are not going to do, Mr Speaker, in this House is break the tradition of parliaments around the world and become answerable for things that were not our responsibility as Ministers. Here we answer questions for our Ministerial responsibilities – not for what we thought before the people of Gibraltar saw fit to elevate us to office.

1345 **Mr Speaker:** That is the correct constitutional position, as I understand it.

1350 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, but does the Chief Minister not accept, Mr Speaker, that of course that is true that you are not responsible in this House for something that you may have said before you entered into Government; but of course, once you became the Government of Gibraltar, does he not accept that any prudent Government, deciding whether to embark on a project that had been, according to them, costed before they entered into Government... does he not accept that it would have been prudent for you to obviously conduct the necessary enquiries as to how much this project would cost you as a Government? Did he do so and what is the cost?

1355 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I think the hon. Gentleman has taken leave of his political senses. How is it that he gets up to ask me that question, when he sits with a Government which is responsible for perhaps the grossest overspend in history – ?

1360 **Mr Speaker:** No, with respect, I am now drawing this matter to a close.
Next question.

1365

**Car parking spaces
Provision**

1370 **Clerk:** Question 946, the Hon. S M Figueras.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment confirm when double the number of car parking spaces which were available at Commonwealth Parade will be made available to residents of Gibraltar?

1375 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, this will be provided during this term of office.

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**Procedural
Ruling by the Speaker**

1385 **Mr Speaker:** Before the next question is called, may I make clear to hon. Members that I am perfectly happy to sit for any length of time that is required for the House to debate any motion on the subject that we were dealing with a moment ago. That is the correct procedure. I invite Members to do that if they want to, but I repeat what I have said previously.

1390 Under the guise of Question and Answer, I am not going to allow a general debate, on what was said in a manifesto or what was not said, to allow a general debate in this House on such issues. If they want to have such a debate, a motion can be tabled and I will sit here until doomsday for that motion to be debated.

1395 **Hon. P R Caruana:** Mr Speaker I am grateful for that which is clearly a statement and an obvious one of the position. That is not the aside comment that the Speaker may have heard that prompted him to make that remark, which was this. My learned colleague, Mr Feetham, asked a supplementary which Mr Speaker obviously did not consider to be inappropriate, because he allowed the Hon. the Chief Minister to get up to answer it. Mr Speaker, therefore, then clearly did not like something that the Chief... or a direction in which the Chief Minister was going and called the Chief Minister to stop, the effect of which was that the supplementary which the Speaker had allowed was not answered.

1400 Instead of saying to the Chief Minister that is not the question that you were asked.

Mr Speaker: With respect to the Leader of the Opposition, he must know that I am prepared to be reasonably liberal, but when matters begin to degenerate, I will put a stop to the situation.

1405 I allowed a supplementary. (**Hon. P R Caruana:** Yes.) It was answered –

Hon. P R Caruana: No, it was not.

1410 **Mr Speaker:** I am not going to allow another supplementary, another answer and then a debate.

Hon. P R Caruana: No, Mr Speaker, it is not the most important issue in the world, but a supplementary was asked on a question that had *not* been asked before – namely, regardless of what the position is in terms of responsibility of pre-election position, once you become a Government, is it not reasonable to expect – or words to that effect – that the Government will then have an estimate of the cost of its projects? That was the thrust, if not the wording of the supplementary, a perfectly proper one, since Mr Speaker allowed it. Instead of answering that question, the Hon. Chief Minister went off at a tangent, which the Hon. Speaker, in my humble estimation, rightly stopped – but in stopping him, he in effect prevented the question that he had allowed from being answered. That has got nothing to do with debates.

1420 **Mr Speaker:** The Hon. the Chief Minister said that over a long period of time, no doubt since the last Election and I was not here, this is a matter that has been continually coming up. It was the first time that it has come up, during my time as Speaker. It did not come up at the last meeting. It has come up now. That is why I allowed it.

1425 But if I had been sitting here since January 2012, I would not have allowed any supplementary on that issue, because I would have felt that it had been more than amply vented, and I would have made my position clear beforehand.

I am making it now and that is the end of the matter, with all due respect. We will now proceed to the next question.

1430 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, I had another supplementary on another line – (*Interjections*)

Clerk: Question 947 the Hon. S M Figueras.

1435 **Mr Speaker:** No, you can ask a supplementary certainly, yes. Please do. I am not going to...

Hon. S M Figueras: I am grateful.

Mr Speaker, in relation to the question of the car parking spaces, is the Minister able to provide the number of car park spaces that have already been provided. Does he have that information with him at this time?

1440 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have a recollection of the number, so if the hon. Gentleman will not hold me to it, I will tell him that it is already 20 more than there were at Commonwealth Parade. Twenty more, from memory – it may be 23, but about 20 more.

1445 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful.

Just one final supplementary: the Ragged Staff Gates car park – which, I have been observing over the last few weeks, is nearing completion – can the Government confirm that this is part of that provision?

1450 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I think that the hon. Gentleman asked another question about Ragged Staff car park last time and he was given an answer, because Ragged Staff car park as far as we know –

Hon. S M Figueras: If he will give way, I will explain.

1455 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Let me just tell him how we answered the question and how I would answer his question now. The car park where what we all know as *El Patio Chico* used to be and that is not included in the calculation and was not up for redevelopment.

1460 **Hon. S M Figueras:** So, just to clarify, I have perhaps unhelpfully referred to the parking I am thinking of as the Ragged Staff car park. There is a new car parking facility nearing completion, from what I can observe, past the Ragged Staff roundabout on the Queensway in the direction of the New Harbours area. Can the Minister confirm whether that is a Government initiative or entirely unrelated to Government activity?

1465 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, right now I get it. Well, Mr Speaker, that is actually called the Gun Wharf car park. It was a car park which was started during their term in office and it is part of the provisioning for the MOD at Rooke and other areas. So, Mr Speaker, that car park when completed will be handed over to the Ministry of Defence, who will then have this parking area closer to the Tower, which will be their presence in town, so to speak, after they give up Rooke.

1470 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful for the answer, Mr Speaker.

1475 **Hon. Chief Minister:** And if I may say so, just to answer the reason for his supplementary, as he expressed it, before we got mixed up with names, that is not included therefore in the count.

Barbary Macaque Management Plan Completion and implementation

1480 **Clerk:** Question 947 the Hon. S M Figueras.

1485 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Can the Minister for the Environment confirm, further to his indication in the October session of Parliament of the imminence of its completion, that the Barbary Macaque Management Plan is now in place and provide a date by when he expects its implementation will begin?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1490 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the plan is not yet in place. However, aspects of it are already being implemented, such as contraceptive implants in females, procurement of trapping devices to improve management, clearing of vegetation on the Upper Rock to provide greater foraging habitat.

It is likely that for the next few months, aspects of the Plan will be introduced in stages.

1495 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful to the Minister for his reply.

Can the Minister confirm whether or not it is the plan to publish this Plan any time soon? I note that the Hon. Minister is saying that parts of it are being implemented. I do not understand why it is not at a sufficiently complete stage that they can publish it, but could the Minister perhaps shed some light on why it is not yet public in its revised form?

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Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, it is not yet finally completed. It is going through a process which includes consultation with experts outside Gibraltar and which include involvement by experts and universities outside Gibraltar and those arrangements have not yet been agreed. Therefore, it would be premature to publish it.

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I have every intention of publishing the Plan once it is ready, but because these things take time which are outside my control, certain aspects of it, as I said, have already been started in order not to delay things. For example, the implanting of contraceptives in females had to be done now, because this is the mating season. That could not have awaited the completion of the Plan. Also, the opening up of habitat within the Upper Rock to increase the foraging areas on the Upper Rock also was something that did not need to be delayed and therefore the aspects that could have been implemented have been implemented; but the Plan has yet to be finalised.

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Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister say how soon... and I will understand if he finds difficulty with the answer. Can he say whether he has a view of how soon this Plan as implemented, whether published or not, will start to have an effect or a reductive effect on the unwanted interaction with these apes? I can just say to this House that my personal observations are that apes are all over the Portland House area, in the Trafalgar Cemetery area now as well, and just yesterday, there was an ape bite incident reported of a passenger from a cruise ship. It is something that is obviously extremely important and certainly extremely urgent, because it can cause not just the physical harm that an ape bite incident might cause to the person who suffers it, but a reputational damage to Gibraltar as well.

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So I would be grateful to understand from the Minister what his view about how soon the success of the plan will be able to be able to be measured in real terms on the ground.

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Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I clearly share those concerns and this has been a situation that has been ongoing for decades – *at least* decades. There are reports in the 1800s of similar instances.

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Some of the effects will be seen clearly if we are implanting contraceptives in females: next breeding season there will be that number of decreased births. The strategy of clearing undergrowth on the Upper Rock to allow the monkeys to have foraging habitat – because now it is so dense that they have very little foraging habitat – will be an ongoing process which will increase. There are other aspects that also have to be implemented.

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As to how soon we will see a direct effect, nature is very hard to predict, so I would not like to hazard a guess, but I am confident that certainly, we will see things happening in the coming months.

Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister say whether he has been in touch or in discussion before with Police authorities in respect of the enforcement of the provisions that make feeding apes illegal?

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Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Yes, Mr Speaker, in fact my diary has a meeting, I believe, next week with the Police and other interested parties, with a view to discussing how we can enforce the law.

1540

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I am not going to venture down the road that will make them think that, whatever they say, they will be damned if they do, damned if they do not, in respect of the enforcement of it, but it is obviously a provision, the application of which one would expect would have a significant impact on the management of apes generally.

Will the Minister confirm that he will be happy to report on the findings of that or the discussions in that meeting in subsequent sessions or privately with myself?

1545

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Privately, certainly. I think discussing a Police Enforcement Plan publicly, depending on what that is decided to be, might not be a wise move. I think we have to see how this discussion develops. I am not going to commit myself.

1550

**Barbary macaques
Exportation**

1555 **Clerk:** Question 948, the Hon. S M Figueras.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for the Environment confirm whether or not there has been any progress with the exportation of Barbary macaques from Gibraltar?

1560 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, no, sir.

1565 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, does the Hon. Minister expect that there will be any kind of progress in this context in the short to medium term? Is this in fact an initiative which he considers worth exploring? Does he consider that this is an initiative worth exploring further?

1570 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I am confident that there will be much more progress than there has been over the last 16 years. This is an issue which is complex, but I am convinced that the contacts that we have will deliver a destination for these monkeys within this term.

Hon. S M Figueras: It appears that the Hon. the Chief Minister is unable to get out of his electioneering mode because obviously I disagree with the premise that there was no progress in this matter over 16 years. It is an important matter of interest to the community today and I am seeking to move forward.

1575 In that context, Mr Speaker, do we have the Hon. Minister's assurance that this is a matter, along with other initiatives relating to the management of the Barbary macaques, that he will be pursuing as a matter of priority?

1580 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, first of all, I must say that the progress that there was over the past 16 years was progress thanks to the work of yours truly, who was involved in the only successful exportations, (*Laughter and interjections*) but that is something for the past. Certainly, the Government gives great importance to obtaining successful exportation of the Barbary macaques.

1585

**Barbary macaque population
Details**

1590 **Clerk:** Question 949, the Hon. S M Figueras.

Mr Speaker: Has the hon. Member realised – perhaps we should have realised here – that in the Question, there is a reference to Question 207/2012 and that, in fact, is incorrect.

1595 **Hon. S M Figueras:** It is 507, I seem to recall it as 507/2012.

Mr Speaker: Question 207 was a question from the Hon. Mr Feetham, on the superannuation scheme.

1600 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Yes the number strikes me as odd.

Mr Speaker: The number is wrong.

1605 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Yes in my recollection is that it was 507 when I was drafting it, so unless it was a typo which was not identified.

Mr Speaker: Anyway, just to make the point.

1610 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Yes, yes of course. I am certain it was 507, and I am happy to ask the question in that context. I am happy to concede that there was a typo certainly.

I will ask the question anyway just in case the Minister has in fact spotted that it was not that question and that it was a question further to the discussion of the population.

So can the Minister for the Environment provide details to this House of the population of Barbary macaques in Gibraltar, further to Question *not* 207/2012 – the question relating to the population asked earlier this month?

1615 If he feels uncomfortable answering the Question, then he can just say so, and I will ask it again next month.

Mr Speaker: Let us hear the main answer.

1620 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, Question 207 was in relation to the Guaranteed Superannuation Fund and it was asked by the Hon. Mr Feetham.

1625 **Mr Speaker:** Now, does that mean that the Hon. Minister does not have the information about the population of Barbary macaques?

1630 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I have had to assume what information he wants, but if he wants to be more specific, then perhaps he can ask it on another occasion.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I think the information I am looking for is rather obvious, although I will concede that the typo has made the Question wrong in content, certainly. But it is an update to the number of apes, as far as the Government is concerned.

1635 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, in order to be helpful and to assist, the official tally of the number of monkeys is actually tallied on 1st January, where we summarise all deaths and all births and that is when we officially change the figure.

1640 Clearly, if he asks it again either in December, when we will be closer, or in January, then I can provide that information. From memory, in order to be helpful, I believe there have been about 40 births and probably of those, maybe half a dozen died young and there have been a number of road traffic accidents. That is a general figure, but I will be happy to provide the accurate figures at the next meeting, if he asks the question again.

1645 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful to the Minister for his helpfulness.

**Feral cat population on Upper Rock
Policy re culling**

1650 **Clerk:** Question 950, the Hon. S M Figueras.

1655 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Can the Minister for the Environment say whether it is extending its policy decision against culling of wide life to the feral cat population on the Upper Rock?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): No, sir.

1660 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

Hon. D A Feetham: May I?

1665 **Mr Speaker:** Yes certainly.

Hon. D A Feetham: Yes, well, Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister then inform this House how he intends to protect the iconic species of the Barbary partridge, which he conceded earlier on this year has been decimated by feral cats?

1670 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I am not certain whether the hon. Member understood my answer. My answer was that the Government is not extending its position to culling of wildlife to the feral cat population.

1675 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Oh, I beg your pardon. So it is culling.

**Alternative/clean energy production
Exploring solutions**

1680 **Clerk:** Question 951, the Hon. S M Figueras.

1685 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Can the Minister for the Environment say whether the Government is currently exploring any large scale alternative/clean energy production solutions for Gibraltar?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1690 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, Government is currently exploring a number of potential projects for different renewable sources. For reasons of commercial sensitivity, details cannot be at this point revealed.

However... Sorry I have skipped because a line has been repeated.

However, they include solar thermal, solar photovoltaic, marine ocean currents and energy from waste.

1695 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister provide some information as to whether these projects that they are pursuing are large or small scale generation projects?

1700 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, some of them are pretty new technology, so we are looking at relatively small scale initially, but if successful, they could deliver potentially a great deal more energy. I think that is about as much as I can say at this point in time.

We are talking about a potential of some of the projects could deliver perhaps 10 to 15 megawatts eventually, but I will not be held to that, because some of them are fairly new technology.

1705 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, perhaps it might assist the Hon. Minister if I say that, when I refer to 'large scale', I am referring to projects that the Government or other entities invest in the development of to deliver power to the grid for use by the community; and by 'small scale', I am referring, in my mind, to Government initiatives that allow home owners themselves to generate alternative energy from alternative sources.

1710 Allied to that issue, there would be an additional question, which I was going to ask him in the discussion of the power station, and that is whether the permanent power solution will bring with it an enhanced power grid that can take plugging in for solutions such as feed-in tariffs, despite the debate on how useful those are, and whether such solutions will indeed be available on a small scale?

1715 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, that is quite a complex question. The answer then is correct, in the sense that my interpretation of 'large scale' was the hon. Member's former interpretation, which means that they will be plugging in to the distribution system.

Micro-generation will also be encouraged in other ways, but that is not the thrust of my answer nor, from his explanation, the thrust of the question.

1720 Regarding the robustness of the grid, that is a fairly technical question, Mr Speaker. Having a new power station in itself would not provide that robustness and that is something that, as I say, is more of a technical question. I would need notice and possibly it would be the Hon. Minister for Utilities who would answer that, if it is asked again.

1725 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I will be happy to ask that question, and since I also shadow Utilities, then certainly there will be no issue there. I will look forward to asking that question in January.

The Hon. Minister makes no reference to wind as a source of alternative energy. Is he able to provide any indication as to why this is the case?

1730 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, at the moment, none of the renewable sources that I can recall at this point in time include wind. One of them was going to, but then they changed the technology, so at the moment, we are not looking at wind.

1735 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Is wind turbine technology something the Government would be happy to consider as an option, if proposed by a commercial entity?

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, in the right location, certainly.

Hon. S M Figueras: Are there any locations that the Minister would discount as appropriate locations for the erection of certain wind turbines for the production of that energy?

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I am not an expert in wind turbine technology, so I cannot answer that question.

Hon. S M Figueras: Yes, Mr Speaker, but you are an expert in respect of migrating sea birds and I suppose you *could* arguably be said to have an opinion on whether there is any particular location in Gibraltar that would cause difficulty in that context.

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, that is partly hypothetical and partly straying from the original question. Therefore, I do not feel I have to answer it.

Hon. S M Figueras: I will be happy to pose a question on this...

Thinking Green Conference
Tickets, sponsorship, transport and business generated

Clerk: Question 952, the Hon. S M Figueras.

Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister for the Environment tell this House how many tickets were sold for the Thinking Green Conference, broken down by tickets, class and not including tickets allocated to sponsors as part of the sponsorship arrangements, nor the seats allocated to pupils from schools who attended free of charge, as well as tickets issued by Government to employees in the Civil Service and other community representatives?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, I will answer this Question together with Questions 953 to 959.

Clerk: Question 953.

Hon. S M Figueras: Will the Minister for the Environment now provide this House with details of the extent of the sponsorship of the Thinking Green Conference by the Nature Group and Hassans?

Clerk: Question 954.

Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister for the Environment provide a full account to this House of the expenses incurred by the Government in the hosting of the Thinking Green Conference in October?

Clerk: Question 955.

Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister for the Environment provide details of those companies which have expressed an interest in establishing or investing in Gibraltar as a direct result of the Thinking Green Conference held in October this year?

Clerk: Question 956.

Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister for the Environment confirm the cost of the Gibraltar-registered Toyota Priuses – although there is some controversy about how you say the plural of that word – for the purposes of ferrying dignitaries and guests from and to Gibraltar Airport and the Tercentenary Hall and St Michael's Cave on the occasion of the Thinking Green Conference and Gala Dinner?

Clerk: Question 957.

Hon. S M Figueras: Would the Minister for the Environment please provide details to this House of the deployment of the Gibraltar-registered Toyota Priuses first seen on the occasion of the Thinking Green Conference within the Government's fleet and in what capacity they will be deployed?

1800 **Clerk:** Question 958.

Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister for the Environment confirm the tender process through which the Gibraltar-registered Toyota Priuses, first seen in Gibraltar, were acquired and when the acquisition occurred?

1805 **Clerk:** Question 959.

Hon. S M Figueras: Can the Minister for the Environment explain why the Gibraltar-registered Toyota Priuses seen on the occasion of the Thinking Green Conference were emblazoned with the logo of an Algeciras-registered Toyota dealership, namely Automoción Tomax, despite being registered on Gibraltar number plates?

1810 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

1815 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, the information on the tickets requested by the hon. Member is contained in a schedule which I will hand over to him now.

I will refer to other schedules, so I will hand them altogether, if that is alright, Mr Speaker. So I will now hand him that, when I have finished my answer, as there are other schedules as well.

1820 **Mr Speaker:** That is in respect of Question 952?.

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Question 952 I have a schedule, and I have another schedule for the later Questions, and I would like to hand them altogether, so that the question can be taken together, if that is alright.

1825 **Mr Speaker:** Okay.

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: In relation to Question 953, sponsors contributed a total of £100,000 towards the event. The sponsors' relationship with the event extended to its financial support as well as agreement with the philosophies behind the subjects that were raised at the Conference – that is, the impact of climate change, the importance of an environmentally sustainable economy and the changing habits towards sustainable living. Once this successful event closed, there were no further links or commitments from any of the parties in this context.

1830 Other sponsors supported by not charging for their services, although preferring to remain anonymous.

1835 In relation to Question 954, the processing of outstanding invoices is still being finalised, so a full account of expenses cannot be provided. It is anticipated that the final accounts will be available as from the first week of December, but I will now be handing over to the hon. Member a schedule of the projection of the total cost.

1840 In answer to Question 955, in relation to companies wishing to set up, invest or extend the kind of activity of services delivered in Gibraltar as a result of the Conference, I cannot disclose these details for commercial reasons. What I can say is that interest has been created from companies local and from abroad from a variety of business sectors. I have a list of 28 companies, ranging from ones already in Gibraltar to those interested in trading here.

1845 In relation to Question 956, Mr Speaker, I can confirm the following costs paid to Bassadone Motors: (a) hire of three Toyota Priuses, £1,125; (b) fuel costs, £28.33; a total of £1,153.33. There were no other costs directly related to this.

To Question 957, the Toyota Priuses in question were rented for the Thinking Green event and will not be deployed for other events.

1850 Question 958, quotes were sought from various local car dealers, namely Mercedes and Toyota, for the renting of hybrid cars for the Thinking Green event. The only car dealer which responded was Toyota.

The final Question, the reason why the Toyota Priuses were emblazoned with an Algeciras-registered Toyota dealership is because these cars were not available locally and had to be rented out for the occasion. They were registered with Gibraltar number plates.

1855 I now hand over the schedules to the hon. Member in relation to those two Questions.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 959

Answer to Question 952

The Ticket sales are as follows:

Ticket Class	Sales
Block A	14
Block B	17
Block C	5
Block D	33
Block E	123
Total ticket sales	192

ANSWER TO QUESTION 959

Answer to Question 954 of 2012

Expenditure	Legal / Contractual	
	Chrand Contractual payment	£166,351.38
	Legal Services	£1,755.00
	Staff Matters	
	Staffing - Overtime	£6,663.84
	Thinking Green Conference/ Trade Fair	
	Conference Costs	£14,456.30
	Gala Dinner (St. Michael's Cave)	
	Gala Dinner Costs	£6,700.00
	PR & Logistics	
	Marketing	£4,191.59
	Transportation	£1,953.33
	Electrical Supply	£5,300.00
	Security	
	Security	£1,711.00
	Misc.	
	Entertainment	£22.10
	Stationery	£6,570.20
	Total	£215,674.74
Income	Sponsors	£100,000.00
	Ticket Sales	£10,000.00
	Exhibition Receipts	£4,400.00
	Total	£114,400.00

Grand Total -101,274.74

Hon. S M Figueras: So, Mr Speaker, perhaps the Minister can explain: if the vehicles were rented and sourced from a Spanish dealership, can the Minister identify whether there was any requirement for them to be registered with Gibraltar plates on a temporary basis? I assume from the answers that the Minister has given that those vehicles are no longer in Gibraltar.

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, the Government has, I believe, three number plates which it uses for special occasions when cars are obtained from abroad. I believe the last time they were used was for the Royal visit and I am informed that, on other occasions, these number plates are placed on cars from abroad. That is information I have been given by the relevant Department.

Hon. S M Figueras: I am grateful for the answer. It is quite intriguing because certainly the previous event which was the occasion of the visit to Gibraltar of the Earl and Countess of Wessex, certainly given my track record as a petrol head and fascination for all things motor cars, I observed were locally sourced vehicles and that in this case, they were foreign sourced vehicles. I have asked the question, Mr Speaker, because, frankly, I simply cannot see the point of re-registering vehicles on Gibraltar plates, when they are already registered.

In relation to the other Questions, Mr Speaker, if I am given an opportunity to review – there were many Questions – the Minister in relation to Question 955 has said that he has a list of 28 companies local and foreign. He has the list, but will he provide it to me, even on a confidential basis, certainly, because I am interested to understand what interest has been generated by the Conference?

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, personally, I would have no problem with that, but I do think it would be fair, as I said in answer to another question on the same lines last time, that I would need the permission of these companies for me to share it. They approached Government in confidence and I feel that there may be commercial reasons. If anybody else finds out, there may be competitors who are interested in coming in. I would be uncomfortable in just giving the list.

I can show him that I have a list, but I would hesitate, without the permission of those companies, so I would have to consult them. Some of them will have been clear and public, because some of them did exhibit in the Trade Fair, but there are others that did not and therefore perhaps they feel that they have commercially private discussions with Government and I do not think I should share this.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I am particularly interested in those companies from outside Gibraltar that have expressed an interest in investing and trading here as a result of, as the Government themselves have claimed on a couple of occasions, the Al Gore Conference and I think it is a relevant point to make.

I shall not take too much offence at the suggestion that providing me with this information in confidence could cause any jeopardy whatsoever to those companies, because it was handed to me on that basis, and they would certainly be kept on that basis, in the same manner as the fees for Al Gore were shared with myself confidentially and have remained so to this day, despite the account.

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I was in no way implying that the hon. Member was going to divulge confidential information. I was just expressing my discomfort at sharing it, but I would be happy to have a conversation outside this House and certainly to indicate, certainly at least in broad terms, the areas in which these companies are working. If then the hon. Member is not satisfied with our private discussion, then obviously he can always ask a question again.

Hon. S M Figueras: I am grateful for that. Sorry, *[inaudible]* Yes, I have other supplementaries on the other questions.

Mr Speaker: Yes.

Hon. D J Bossino: With the Speaker's permission? Mr Speaker, in answer to Question 955, the Hon. Minister for the Environment mentioned 28 companies I think he said 'ranging from those already in Gibraltar and those interested in trading here'. What we are interested in to find out as an Opposition is what international interest this Conference has elicited. In those circumstances, is he able to tell this House, Mr Speaker, provide a breakdown, of the 28, which of those are in Gibraltar and which of those are from outside?

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, certainly that information can be provided. I cannot do it now because I would have to go through them one at a time and see which are already trading here and which are not; but I will undertake to provide that information as a breakdown.

What I can say is that some of the companies are actually already in Gibraltar, but are considering bringing in other products or other services as a result of this green initiative and, therefore, the fact that they are already here does not imply that they may not bring other activity to Gibraltar.

Hon. D J Bossino: And can he also say – I am interested to find out, Mr Speaker – of the 28 who have expressed an interest, have any of them entered into any formal contractual commitments?

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, not as yet. We have had discussions and meetings – certainly, I recall on the list, I have personally been involved in two of them, but no contracts have yet been entered into. This is only about a month ago, so it requires a bit more than that.

1935 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, in relation to Question 953, the Hon. Minister kindly offered the answer that £100,000 was the total sponsorship contribution from Hassans and the Nature Group. Is he able to provide a breakdown of that contribution?

1940 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Yes, Mr Speaker, if you would bear with me, I have my notes here. Hassans provided £50,000; the Nature Group, £25,000; and an associate of the Nature Group, Burando, £25,000; Gibtelecom provided certain services in kind and another provider of services in kind has requested that they remain anonymous.

1945 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Not to be mischievous, but I cannot help myself: is there any particular reason why they have requested this remain in confidence?

1950 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I offered them acknowledgement in the material and they said that they preferred to make the contribution in an anonymous manner. There were services in kind, but I feel that I have to honour that request. (*Interjection by Hon. S M Figueras*) It was their decision, certainly not mine. I would have only been too happy to acknowledge their contribution, but they preferred that it should not be aired publicly.

1955 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Far be it for me to suggest that the Minister should betray confidence in that manner, though it does strike me as odd that a company that provides services to the Government should do so anonymously, as there are implications and other issues surrounding the general provision of services to the Government.

1960 However, moving on to Question 952, which is in respect of the ticket sales, I note from the schedule that there were 192 total ticket sales. How many were in attendance at the Conference and how many seats were available at the Conference? I know that you may need notice, but just in case.

1965 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, it is speculation. I have not had anybody actually count, but from the size of the venue the various estimates that I have been given are between 700 and 900 people present. That is the estimate that I have been given by people who, I suppose, know how to estimate these things.

1970 I am capable of estimating the size of a flock of migrating Honey Buzzards, but I am not as good at estimating the size of people in a hall.

1975 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful for the offer, but I do not think it will be relevant in this specific context.

1980 I believe there was one more supplementary I wanted to ask – but no, it has slipped my mind. I am grateful for all the answers the Minister has provided.

1985 **Mr Speaker:** Yes.

1990 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Just returning back, Mr Speaker, to the issue of the anonymous provider of services in kind, is there any particular commercial sensitivity on the part of the Government, in relation to this particular company or individual for the non-provision from the Government, or is it just a request by the service provider? That is one supplementary.

1995 And if it is, does he not accept that the Government is obviously under an obligation to provide an account to this House for information, particularly inclusive of service providers that provide services to the Government, and that it is quite improper for the Government to actually agree to anonymity, when of course the Government knows that it is accountable to this House, and therefore that it is likely to have questions of this nature?

2000 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I would need to take counsel on the second part of that question. Certainly, there was never any intention that that should be. If it were that kind of situation, then I feel that I would be obliged to divulge the information and obviously, I would have to do so.

2005 However, I spoke to the Chairman of that particular company and I offered that, because of the contribution that was being made by that company, it should be included in the publicity and he said that he preferred that it should not. So, it was entirely at their request.

2010 I will now take back the comments of the hon. Member and if I feel that it can be seen to have been... there has been any impropriety of any sort, then I will clearly discuss it once again and I am certain, knowing the person that it is that I spoke to, that he would not wish this to cause any embarrassment to the Government and then, obviously, the name would be revealed.

2015 I think we should not make too much of it. I can assure the hon. Member there is nothing that we want to keep from anybody – purely out of respect of a conversation that I had with the Chairman of the company, but I will take advice.

- 1995 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I am not for one moment, in fact, suggesting any impropriety nor am I suggesting that there is any improper motive. In fact, I am not concerned about it *personally*, although my hon. and learned Friend, Mr Figueras, has asked the questions. Personally, I am concerned about the principle of someone who is providing services to the Government to then claim, 'I am providing you services, but please do not reveal my name in the House.' That is the principle.
- 2000 Indeed, I go further, if it assists – so that I can formulate it in terms of a question – will he when he goes back to this particular company, if there is no problem after you have discussed it, could he reveal the information on a confidential basis to us, because it may well be that, after you reveal the information outside, we really have no interest in it?
- 2005 It is the principle that concerns me, nothing else.
- Hon. Dr. J E Cortes.** Certainly, Mr Speaker, I accept the concern and, as I say, I will look into the matter formally, but I will have a conversation with the hon. Member and I am sure that we will be able to reach some understanding.
- 2010 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, working in a very collegiate fashion, I have had brought to my attention another couple of questions which are actually quite pertinent and I had not had an opportunity to assess.
- In the answer to Question 954, the schedule of expenditure, the Hon. Minister will see that in that schedule, there is a reference to the Chrand contractual payment of £166,000. Is the Minister able to confirm now, publicly, what the fee paid to the speakers was?
- 2015 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, I did provide that information confidentially to the hon. Member. I do not have my notes here, but I think it was in the region of 140,000 – but I stand to be corrected – and that is for speakers' fees.
- 2020 Let me just say that this company –
- Mr Speaker:** Is that 140,000 pounds, euros, dollars? (*Interjections*)
- 2025 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** That is 150,000 euros. (**Mr Speaker:** Euros.) I need to confirm that, because I do not have that information. That was included in the fee to the company who were the agents of Vice-President Gore and acted also for Mr Juan Verde, and that included everything, which included deployment from the United States. In fact, Vice-President Gore was going to address a conference in Barcelona the day before. That was cancelled because of the situation in Catalunya. It had involvement of the *Generalitat*, and because they were in an electoral process, that was postponed actually. So Vice-President Gore actually flew from the United States exclusively to come to Gibraltar, but we were not charged additionally for that. That was assumed by their agents.
- 2030 So I just wanted to point that out, even though, in a way, we were going to be sharing with the Barcelona event, the fact that that was postponed did not incur us in any additional expense.
- 2035 **Hon. S M Figueras:** I am grateful. I am happy to hear that that was the case.
- Just one more observation that was made by my hon. Colleague, there is a reference to transportation here of £1,953 and the cost of the three Priuses was in the region of £1,125, in accordance with the detail given in answer to Question 956. Now, I am certain £1,953 in the schedule does not cover the costs of the private jet to fly *out* of Gibraltar, certainly, by Vice-President Al Gore. Is the Minister able to explain what that cost was? It is rather insignificant, to be perfectly honest, in the grand scheme of things, but it is a point that was referred to me that I thought worth raising.
- 2040 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, this is the breakdown that I have been provided. I would have to look into that. There may have been other transportation costs of other participants or collection, perhaps, from the airport. I am not sure. I would have to seek advice on that and I will do so.
- 2045 **Clerk:** Question –
- 2050 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I also have a supplementary in relation to the schedule that we are now considering. There is a fee for Legal Services of £1,755. Can the Hon. Minister tell me which firm provided those fees?
- Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Again, I would have to seek the information and I would be happy to provide once I have sought it. I do not have that information.
- 2055 **Mr Speaker:** Yes?

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, coming back to Question 952, in supplementaries, I think I understood correctly that the Hon. Minister said that between 700 and 900 people attended. If those were the number of attendees, what were the number of seats that were available?

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Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Once again, I do not know the seating capacity of the Tercentenary Hall. In addition, there were seats on the ground level, but again that is information that has not been specifically requested and therefore I would have to find out.

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Hon. E J Reyes: I ask, Mr Speaker, because I do not know if the Hon. Minister is aware, I do recall in my capacity as the then Minister for Culture, I actually issued the licence, because conferences, stage performances and so on, where people have to pay for entrance, that establishment has to be licensed. I remember having issued the licence in favour of the Tercentenary Sports Hall, but there was a clause there that there was a maximum number of people who could attend in that venue, because that had to be certified by the Chief Fire Officer.

2070

Can the Minister, at some stage, find out what certification was given as a maximum number by the Chief Fire Officer, just to make sure that we have not contravened the rules of what has actually been licensed for under my tenure as Minister for Culture?

2075

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, my hon. Friend, the Minister responsible for Sports has just advised me that he can obtain that information and certainly that will be obtained.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, I have absolutely one final –

2080

Mr Speaker: There is a point which I think the hon. Member, if he looks at Question 952, he will realise that, other than in the case of allocations made to pupils from schools, the question dealt with tickets sold, a question of tickets. Therefore, in the supplementary you are not asking about tickets now; you are asking about the number of people actually attending and the capacity of the hall. They are different issues.

2085

Hon. E J Reyes: I accept that, Mr Speaker, and I was asking a supplementary following a reply to a supplementary that the Hon. Minister had given, where he said... I know it is stretching a bit much, but I just asked, in case the Hon. Minister....

2090

Mr Speaker: It is a very straightforward thing to get the information and it will be obtained.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, absolutely one final supplementary. Again, I am grateful and I suspect that the Hon. Minister will need to go back and get more information on this.

2095

It is just that it strikes me that there is an entry under PR and Logistics on the schedule of expenditure. I will give the Minister an opportunity to look at it. Under PR and Logistics, electrical supply, £5,300: it just strikes me as an inordinate amount of money, which I suppose will only be explained if we were... I do not know what we were powering that evening, but it is quite a significant amount of money for that particular event. Does he have any further information on that?

2100

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I do not. I believe that there was an issue with power supply in St Michael's Cave and there was a back-up generator going to be on site, but I am not certain that that is that.

2105

But again, I will need to go back and get the information and I will. I will write to the hon. Member with all the information that has been requested today, which I have made a note of.

GHA trainees Length of training and qualifications attained

2110

Clerk: Question 960, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2115

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, before asking my Question, I would like to through the Hon. the Minister for Health congratulate the Primary Care Centre Staff for an excellent job done on 1st November for managing the new advance appointment system and that there was no repetition of the scenes that we witnessed on 1st October. We are on this side of the House very happy that the new system is working so far.

2120 Now if I turn to my Question 960, Mr Speaker, further to his answer to Written Question 156/2012, can the Minister for Health state the following: (a) until when will the training periods in which the 13 trainees placed within the GHA last; (b) what training is being provided within the type of work undertaken by the trainees; and (c) what accredited qualifications, if any, will the trainees attain at the end of their training period or placement?

2125 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

2130 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, first of all, if I may thank the hon. Lady for thanking my staff, I too am very satisfied and proud of the work that has gone into it. We held a number of inter-disciplinary team meetings, tweaked it after the October difficulties and I must say that I have to pay tribute to them and to the public in Gibraltar for responding so positively to various initiatives. I am very satisfied that the Primary Care Centre is now a place where people can go in the comfort that they can be given an appointment in time and the whole atmosphere has changed. I would like to state that publicly as well. I am very proud of the commitment of the staff there.

2135 Mr Speaker, I will now proceed with the answer to the question and I provide the following information in relation to the 13 trainees: firstly, part (a), there is no fixed training period, the employing company can redeploy the trainees elsewhere at any given point in time; secondly, training is provided on the job; and thirdly, point (c), no accreditation or qualifications will be obtained at the end of the trainees' training.

2140 **Mr Speaker:** Any supplementaries? Next question.

New Mental Health Facility Alterations to former Government plans

2145 **Clerk:** Question 961, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2150 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health provide this House with an inventory of any alterations made to the former Government's plans for the new Mental Health Facility and the cost of these changes?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

2155 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, an early priority for the Government was to review the working plans for the new Mental Health Facility that were in existence with the lead clinicians. The main area of concern related to compromises that had been made because of a requirement to locate all existing and new Mental Health Services within a confined footprint located on four floors in the block allocated at the former Royal Naval Hospital.

2160 Given that the design and enabling works at this stage were advanced, the clinicians consulted were of the view that any benefits to undertaking radical re-design and planning at this late stage would be offset by the significant time delays to the delivery of the project.

2165 The overwhelming advice was that the patients in KGV had already waited far too long for civilised living conditions and this could not be delayed any further. Therefore, by their own choice, some of the improvements they would have wanted could not be affected as a result of their not having been consulted in the past.

2170 Changes to the plans as they were developing that *were* made included a decision not to build a day facility in what was to be a garden area between the blocks and instead provide an area in one of the blocks that had been identified to provide accommodation for staff. That is, *had* been identified; I do not want this to appear that we have provided accommodation for staff. The block that would have provided accommodation to staff will now have the facilities that were going to go in the garden area.

Therefore the garden could now be designed to accommodate needs including therapy and recreation for the uses of the complex. This building would have cost about £500,000.

2175 Further to the drafting of this answer, I am told that the garden will cost about £200,000 to provide in the way that I have described.

Other changes relate to layout of rooms, types of furnishings, etc which are considered largely cost neutral.

Other specific changes include those related to sustainable technology. These are – and they are construction budgets only; they do not include fees, the figures that I am about to give:

2180 Change to LED lighting for the buildings and associated external areas: the benefits of LED lighting are cheaper running costs and longevity. Anti-ligature LED fittings have had to be researched and developed with the lighting industry to obtain a suitable solution. This cost will be £70,000.

2185 A water-heating solution: this is where the generated waste heat in powering the air conditioning condenser is recovered and linked to a hydrobox as the primary heating source for water. Additional system resilience is built in by re-locating one of the two calorifiers that were intended for Block B to C. This is at a cost of £20,000.

Solar panels, 10 in number, linked to the thermal storage circuits, offering additional resilience to the system adopted in item 2 above: that is £54,000.

These will all result in considerably lower running costs for the site.

2190 In addition, following professional advice, a central pharmacy will be provided and created within the existing Block C footprint, having the ability to dispense medication to Block C occupants, visiting community attending Block D and the Dementia Block residents. This is expected to cost around £30,000.

2195 One thing that I have learned from the clinician colleagues is that there is a lot more to plans than merely the building itself, crucial though these are, given the cramped conditions at KGV. Where the Government is making the greatest changes is with respect to the philosophy of care for mental health patients and the crucial work we have to do with respect to de-stigmatising mental illness in our society. With this in mind, there are a number of important alterations to and development of the former Government's plans.

2200 This includes more commitment to work in the community and rehabilitation, including exploring opportunities to encourage employers across Gibraltar to do the same. The GHA will also be working to ensure that the rehabilitation flats, which will house seven residents within the new facility... that the occupants are helped to move out into the community as soon as possible, once the rehabilitation programme is completed.

2205 Finally, the Government is encouraging young people to view careers in Mental Health as rewarding and fulfilling.

Clerk: Question 962 –

2210 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker...

Mr Speaker: Yes?

2215 **Hon. D A Feetham:** The Hon. the Minister... I think there are two areas in relation to changes, as I understand it. One is in relation to the garden area, where effectively, the Government is making a cost saving because it has decided not to go ahead with the building; he said that was £500,000. The cost to the changes to the landscaping, the garden itself is £200,000, so they are making a cost saving in relation to that. Now, in relation to the building itself, am I right in saying – and my maths is not particularly good – that the total cost of the alterations to the mental hospital is £100,000?

2220 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, the maths are certainly not good. If we add what I have said, it is more in the region of £170,000, if we go by the list that I have costed, and that is information that I have at the moment.

2225 **Hon. D A Feetham:** And can he confirm that apart from this... I calculated £100,000; he says £170,000. It makes no difference for the purposes of the information that I am trying to elicit.

Can he confirm that, apart from this, the original cost of the mental hospital which was £10 million, that continues to be the cost at present, as far as you are aware?

2230 **Hon. Dr. J E Cortes:** Mr Speaker, the Question specifically asked the cost of the alterations. It did not ask the general cost of the project. I have no information to suggest that it is different to what the hon. Member has said, but I cannot confirm it, either. I will have to have the specific question and then I could come up with the overall cost of the project. I have costed, in reply to the specific Question, the specific alterations.

2235 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes. Mr Speaker, does the Hon. the Minister accept that, in the context of a project of £10 million – that was the original cost of this project – that alterations of between £100,000 and £170,000 – the £170,000 is the figure that the hon. Gentleman says that these alterations cost, and in fact given that the alterations, which are fairly minor, in terms of lighting and the like – sit simply does not justify the way that the hon. Member has characterised the project in the past as having been rubbish and subject to a plethora of changes?

2240

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: I do not think I have ever used the word ‘rubbish’ in this context, Mr Speaker. It is a word that I rarely use anyway, so I think my recollection will be correct.

2245 Mr Speaker, as I have explained, there have been other changes which I said were cost neutral, or largely cost neutral, which includes the alignment of the rooms, the setting out of the rooms, where the furniture is placed, the type of furniture and so on, which has responded more to what the clinicians have said is wanted. The second, very significant part is how Mental Health is going to be taken forward in the new facility and, again, that is a considerable consideration.

2250 So there have been changes. Some of them will be cost neutral, others will not. Remember that we are talking about, if the project is indeed £10 million, we are talking about a large project that regardless of what you do to it, the general enabling works and the general converting the fabric of the building into one that will sustain a mental unit, or any other facility, will be the main cost. Therefore, you would expect that the main cost would be similar. What you do to it inside will usually be less expensive and therefore we cannot use the ratio of £100,000/£170,000 to £10 million as an indication as to the significance of what that money has been spent for.

2255

**St Bernard’s Hospital seafront garden
Opening up for patients and visitors**

2260

Clerk: Question 962, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2265 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health advise whether he will consider the request by the Gibraltar Senior Citizens’ Association to open up St Bernard’s Hospital seafront garden to patients and visitors?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

2270 **Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes):** Mr Speaker, the garden is already open to visitors, patients and staff. What the Senior Citizens’ Association requested was to improve access, for example for the elderly or persons in wheelchairs. This does not need any consideration and was clearly supported immediately.

Plans are being developed to facilitate this and funding has been identified.

2275

**IVF clinic
GHA services and referral system**

2280

Clerk: Question 963, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, is the Minister for Health now in a position to say which IVF clinic will be offering their services to GHA patients and how the referral system will work?

2285

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

Minister for Health and Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, the tender for the provision of IVF services to the GHA was awarded to the Medrano Clinic. The details of the referral system and procedures are being finalised with the professionals.

2290

The service is expected to commence on 1st January 2013.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Minister tell us where the Medrano Clinic is?

2295

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I believe it is in Algeciras.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: And, Mr Speaker, will patients be referred through the Sponsored Patients Scheme as part of Tertiary Care?

2300

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, as I say, the actual procedures are being finalised. We are not sure that Sponsored Patients is the correct way; it might well go through that, but as I say it is being finalised, we are talking to the professionals to see what the best way of streamlining this is, but we will be ready to

go – at least we expect to be ready to go – on 1st January. But certainly, when we decide how it is going to work, we will make it public so that everybody is well aware, including the hon. Lady.

2305

**Health records
Tender for electronic health technology**

2310

Clerk: Question 964, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker can the Minister for Health inform this House when the electronic health technology for health records will be going out to tender?

2315

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

2320

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, a number of presentations from various suppliers of Health Information Systems have been made to myself, clinicians, managers and staff of the GHA over recent months. These included earlier this week a presentation from representatives on the technology used by the Basque Health Services.

All of these presentations will now be evaluated against the needs of the GHA, with a view to preparing the tender documents.

2325

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, have all the clinicians submitted their views on this new project?

2330

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, clinicians were involved in a committee that was discussing the various options and clinicians have been present at the presentations. There was one several weeks ago which included clinicians; and the one by the Basques was in fact earlier on this week and there were clinicians across the range, including doctors, nurses, therapists, laboratory staff, so they have all been involved in the process, yes, sir.

2335

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Finally, Mr Speaker, when will a final decision be made as to which company to hire for this technology and who will be making that decision?

2340

Hon. Dr. J E Cortes: Mr Speaker, I am not sure when the final decision will be made. Their intention at this point in time is to go into a selection procedure and there will be a board appointed, which will of course include clinicians, which will take the decision and make their recommendations.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

2345

**GHA Board
Next meeting in public**

Clerk: Question 965, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2350

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Health advise when the next GHA Board meeting in public will take place?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health and the Environment.

2355

Minister for Health and the Environment (Hon. Dr. J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, the next GHA Board meeting in public will take place on Wednesday, 19th December this year.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

2360

2365

**Good wishes to the Minister for Housing and the Elderly,
Hon. C A Bruzon**

Clerk: Question 966, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2370

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, if I may, I see from a note here that the Minister for Housing and the Elderly will not be in Parliament today. May I take this opportunity to convey him my best wishes and I hope he recovers well. I take it that he has recently undergone some surgery and he is a very, very old friend of mine. I certainly wish him all the best and I think I speak as well on behalf of all Members on this side of the House. *(Applause)*

2375

Mr Speaker: I would like to associate myself with those remarks.

Hon. E J Reyes: Thank you Mr Speaker.

2380

Deputy Chief Minister (Hon. Dr. J J Garcia): Mr Speaker, can I, on behalf of the Government, also wish our colleague a speedy recovery. We've heard it's gone well and we are hoping to see him soon with us in this House.

2385

HOUSING AND THE ELDERLY

**Housing and the Elderly
Details of trainees and placements**

2390

Hon. E J Reyes: Now, Mr Speaker to the Question: can the Minister for Housing and the Elderly provide details, giving a breakdown by age, gender and nationality, of all trainees and placements with any of the Ministries for which he has responsibility, indicating the Department, Agency or Authority where they are placed and indicating the type of work they are currently undertaking?

2395

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services, on behalf of the Hon. the Minister for Housing and the Elderly.

Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, I now hand the hon. Member a schedule containing the information requested.

2400

ANSWER TO QUESTION 966

The Ministry for Housing currently has four trainees on placement from the Construction Training Centre, as follows:-

Placement	No. of Trainees	Age	Gender	Nationality	Type of Work
Housing Department	None	-	-	-	
Housing Works Agency	4	19 & 20	Male	British	Carpentry and Masonry

2405

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, I wonder if the Hon. Minister can clarify something for me. I gather from the schedule that there are four trainees. Between the four of them, they are the ages of 19 or 20 – it does not really matter all that much if three are 19 or only two – but when it says the type of work is carpentry and masonry, does he happen to have any information whether these individuals are actually, for example, enrolled within the construction training centre and are therefore carrying this out as placements working towards their NVQs or are they not in any connection to the Training Centre?

2410

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, the former is in fact the case: they are actually placements from the Construction Training Centre.

Hon. E J Reyes: Working towards the NVQs?

2415

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, that is correct.

Hon. E J Reyes: Thank you for the clarification, Mr Speaker.

Housing and the Elderly
Trainee placements and qualifications attained

2420

Clerk: Question 967, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2425

Hon. E J Reyes: Can the Minister for Housing and the Elderly state the following in respect of all trainees, if any, currently in a placement within any Ministries for which he has responsibility: (a) until when will the training periods in which the various trainees placed within his Ministries last; (b) what training is being provided within the 'Job Description' undertaken by the trainees; and (c) what accredited qualifications, if any, will the trainees attain at the end of the training period/placements?

2430

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

2435

Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, the trainees currently in placements with the Ministry for Housing will: (a) be in training with the Housing Works Agency for a period between three and six months, as requested by the Training Centre; (b) The trainees are being trained to undertake the complete range of duties associated with their chosen trade with adequate supervision. They are being jointly supervised by members of the Housing Works Agency and their instructors from the Training Centre; (c) The trainees are training towards obtaining a National Vocational Qualification in a building construction trade and their placement in the Ministry forms part of their programme of studies.

2440

Government rental accommodation buildings
Scaffolding

2445

Clerk: Question 968, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2450

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing provide an updated list of all Government buildings used for rental accommodation which currently have scaffolding, including dates when the scaffold was first erected, the cost incurred to date and estimated date of dismantling?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

2455

Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, I will now hand the hon. Member a schedule containing the information requested.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 968

Location	Date Erected	Estimated Removal	Cost to Date
Wilson's Ramp	12/12/2009	Completion Date Pending	£386.25
Bado's Building	12/01/2010	Completion Date Pending	Cost Included In Contract
Naval Hospital Hill (26)	23/04/2012	Completion Date Pending	Cost Included In Contract
South Barrack Road (10)	27/04/2012	Completion Date Pending	Cost Included In Contract
Sandpits House	Being Erected	Completion Date Pending	No Cost to Date
Danino's Ramp (14)	31/10/2012	Completion Date Pending	No Cost to Date
Calpe House	31/08/2012	Completion Date Pending	£2,850.00
Renown House	28/09/2012	Completion Date Pending	£480.00
Flat Bastion Road 62	24/10/2012	Completion Date Pending	£420.00

2460

Alameda House, Alameda Estate
Lift breakdown and repairs

Clerk: Question 969, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2465

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing say how many times any of the two lifts at Alameda House within Alameda Estate have broken down since 1st October 2012 and provide details of how long the repairs have taken to be fully completed since the report was first lodged?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

2470 **Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, during the period 1st October 2012 to 9th November 2012, the lifts at Alameda House required to be attended nine times as follows: the north lift on six occasions; and the south lift on three occasions.

However, due to the rainwater penetration, the north lift has had to be stopped on 30th October 2012 and is awaiting spare parts.

2475 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, is he able to offer me any information towards the latter words of my sentence, how long the repairs have taken to be fully completed since the reports were first lodged?

2480 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, unfortunately, I have not been provided with the information requested by the hon. Member, so I am happy to pass this information to him at a later date.

Hon. E J Reyes: I will be very grateful, I accept, Mr Speaker, if the hon. Member can write to me as soon as possible with the information.

2485

**Bow Wave House, Mid-Harbour Estate
Lift breakdown and repairs**

2490 **Clerk:** Question 970, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing say how many times any of the two lifts at Bow Wave House, Mid-Harbour Estate, have broken down since 1st October 2012 and provide details of how long the repairs have taken to be fully completed since the report was first lodged?

2495 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

2500 **Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, during the period 1st October 2012 to 9th November 2012, the lift at Bow Wave House required to be attended on four occasions: both lifts on three occasions; and one lift on one occasion.

All corrective action is undertaken within the time the lift is attended by the service provider, which is OTIS.

2505 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Sorry, Mr Speaker, I did not quite catch the last words, something, whatever preceded...

Mr Speaker: OTIS.

Hon. E J Reyes: What preceded OTIS?

2510 **Hon. P J Balban:** I will repeat, Mr Speaker: all corrective action is undertaken within the time the lift is attended to by the service provider, who is OTIS.

Hon. E J Reyes: I do not quite understand, 'within the time' – what length of period is that?

2515 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, what it is saying is that when the lifts are reported, obviously the problems need to be reported, the service provider comes down and they are repaired there and then.

2520 **Hon. E J Reyes:** May I, Mr Speaker, perhaps I need a bit of your guidance. I am very conscious sometimes when I ask these questions that some information is provided by the Government on the website. If I can refer to Table H.28, which is on the website, that was last updated on 2nd November and referred to the breakdown of lifts and so on. Therefore it did not mean that I had to ask a very long question: most information was there.

2525 Just for future reference, Mr Speaker, at the top of Table H.28, under the heading of 'Lifts and Government Estates 2012', it lists in one column the estates and then it says 'faults reported up to October 2012'. Unlike other tables, where in other tables it says if it is 31st October or whatever – there is a specific date, that then allows me to clarify whether 'October' means the beginning or the end of the month – may I humbly ask the Minister to convey to whoever compiles these details that, to allow me to even reduce the number of questions asked that when we have tables like this that say 'faults reported', like the Hon. Minister has so nicely done today – he has given me a period 1st October to 9th November,

2530 I can actually home in on the number of days or weeks – that likewise the published tables say whether it is 31st October or 1st October. Therefore it could save me a lot of future questions.

2535 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, that message was in fact conveyed to the Ministry for Housing and in fact, in the future, you will notice that the statistics will be for the complete month. So it will be for the whole month of October, whole month of November, etc. At the moment, the questions are being asked and they include part of one whole month and part of another month; but the way they will be represented in the future is as whole months, and I will convey that message to the Housing Ministry.

2540 **Hon. E J Reyes:** I am grateful for that and will look forward to the future.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

2545 **Harbour Views Estate
Extension of lifts**

Clerk: Question 971, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2550 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing state when the works to extend the reach of lifts within each block of flats at Harbour Views Estate into the parking garages will commence, together with estimated completion dates?

2555 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, this matter and all matters relating to Harbour Views are being discussed with the Management Company.

2560 **Hon. E J Reyes:** I am grateful to know that they are being discussed, Mr Speaker, but does he have any indication of when the works will commence and any possible indication of completion dates?

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, unfortunately not. An announcement will be made in due course, when this information is available.

2565

**Government rental homes
Maintenance/repairs to lifts**

2570 **Clerk:** Question 972, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2575 **Hon. E J Reyes:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing provide details in respect of the number of times lifts pertaining to Government rental homes have required corrective maintenance/repairs since the information provided at Table H.28 on the Government's website updated 2nd October, indicating who carried out the maintenance/repairs, together with a full and detailed breakdown of costs?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

2580 **Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, the information the hon. Member is requesting is updated on a monthly basis.
I now hand over the schedule containing the information.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 972

Estate	Faults reported	Number of times the lifts required corrective maintenance/repairs
Alameda Estate	72	72
Penney House	6	6
Varyl Begg Estate	54	54
Glacis Estate	94	94
St John's Court	2	2
Mid Harbour Estate	82	82
Knight's Court	1	1

2585 **Mr Speaker:** I think that for the sake of accuracy, the schedule I think really, strictly speaking, is a Table – for the sake of accuracy, because there is then including who carried out maintenance repairs together with a full and detailed breakdown of cost.

I think that the hon. Minister should read out the other two sentences, which will then form part of the main answer.

2590

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, I will do. In attendance –

Mr Speaker: All attendance.

2595

Hon. P J Balban: Oh sorry! All attendance, maintenance and repairs, when required, have been carried out by OTIS, who is the service provider.

OTIS submits invoices on account on a quarterly basis. Therefore, a full breakdown of costs will not be available until the end of December 2012.

2600

Mr Speaker: Any supplementaries.

Hon. E J Reyes: No, Mr Speaker, I think the Minister has already sort of hinted: what he is saying is 'Wait until the end of December'. That is the only time when he can legitimately provide an accurate picture of cost.

2605

I will take that on board and pose it after December.

2610

**Affordable homes
Agreements with developers**

Clerk: Question 973, the Hon. E J Reyes.

2615

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing provide details of any agreements Government may have entered into with developers in respect of building affordable homes, on a scheme of purchases guaranteed by Government, as previously signified it is their intention to do, and stated through Press Release No. 530/2012, dated 22nd August 2012.

2620

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, the Government has not entered into any agreements with developers in respect of building affordable homes.

2625

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, I take it that the Government has still not entered... Can he clarify, are they in the process of discussion, with a view to entering, or is he able to enlighten me with any pertinent information?

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, tender documents are being prepared.

2630

Mr Speaker: Yes.

2635

Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, can the hon. the Minister – I know it is not part of his portfolio, but there are others perhaps who can provide the information if he cannot – can he assist the House in relation to the nature of the guarantee that the Government is providing these developers? Can he provide us with more information in relation to that, please?

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, this is actually one of the issues that is being finalised at the moment.

2640 **Hon. D A Feetham:** I accept that – ‘finalised’ – but does he have an idea of what we are talking about, when one talks about a guarantee? Is the Government looking at a guarantee that the developer will receive the contractual price? For example, if a developer tenders £30 million for a particular project, is the Government considering guaranteeing that the developer will receive that £30 million, bearing in mind that we are talking about flats that are going to be sold to members of the public. Is that what is meant by the guarantee or does the guarantee mean something else?

2645 **Mr Speaker:** Given that the hon. Minister with responsibility is absent and that another Minister is answering on his behalf, there is no need to channel the answer through him. If one of the other Ministers knows the answers, then it is perfectly proper that he should stand up and give the information, if he so wishes.

2650 **Deputy Chief Minister (Hon. Dr. J J Garcia):** Mr Speaker, it is difficult to elaborate at this stage. The Government is still negotiating. When we have a clearer picture, it will be easier to come back to the House and to answer the hon. Member’s question.

2655 **Hon. D A Feetham:** The Government has come out with a press release saying that they are going to out to tender on these particular projects, and they have said that it will be backed up by a Government guarantee. I am not asking for a huge amount of detail; just the outline of the policy. The Government must have had a policy, when it actually issued a press release saying that this would be backed up by guarantee. I am just asking for an idea, a general picture of what that guarantee entails – not the detail.

2660 **Mr Speaker:** Would hon. Ministers like to check on the details and perhaps, if they are not in a position to do so now, whether they are able to do so later today and then provide the answer?

2665 **Minister for Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice (Hon. G H Licudi):** Mr Speaker, we do not need to check. The position is that the documents are being finalised. The whole issue is being discussed at Government level at the moment before it goes out to tender. A press release has been issued announcing the matter and referring to the issue of a guarantee.

The hon. Member is now seeking details –

2670 **Mr Speaker:** No, he is saying that in the press release, there was an indication given that the purchases would be guaranteed by Government. I think what he is asking is: what is the nature of that Government guarantee?

Hon. D A Feetham: In general terms.

2675 **Minister for Enterprise, Training and Employment (Hon. J J Bossano):** Mr Speaker, it should be self-evident that what the press release is is what our intention is, in terms of the successful tenderer coming up with a number of properties at the sort of prices that we consider is within reach of people as affordable housing. When that materialises and if it materialises in the quantities and the prices that we want in order to meet the commitment to have everybody rehoused, it means that the developer will not be told, ‘If at the end of the day you cannot get people to buy the property, that is your problem, or we will go on the open market.’ These are properties that we do not intend should go on the open market, and therefore the Government would guarantee to step in, if the time comes.

2680 But we do not know whether it will or it will not, because that is the *intention* at the moment, and therefore, until we see what is available, at what prices... and in what numbers and sizes, because the whole idea is geared to the market that will be made up of people on the waiting list or people who release existing rented accommodation.

2685 But the final picture will not emerge until we see what is on offer.

2690 **Hon. D A Feetham:** I am very grateful to the hon. Gentleman. That answers my question.

2695

TRAFFIC, HEALTH & SAFETY AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

**Dudley Ward Tunnel
Opening to the public**

2700

Clerk: Question 975, the Hon. D J Bossino.

2705

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, just before I formally pose the Question –

Mr Speaker: Question 975 or 974?

Clerk: It is 975, because the Hon. Mr Costa answered 974 at the end of his batch of questions.

2710

Hon. D J Bossino: That's right.

Clerk: I recall the matter clearly.

2715

Mr Speaker: Okay.

2720

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, before I formally pose Question 975, after I submitted the Question to Parliament, there was a press release issued in the *Gibraltar Chronicle*, which states that the Dudley Ward Tunnel is, in fact, open. I will nevertheless have supplementary questions. Shall I pose it, Mr Speaker, formally?

Mr Speaker: Yes.

2725

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Traffic advise the House when the Government expects that Dudley Ward Tunnel will be open to the public?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

2730

Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, the Dudley Ward Tunnel was re-opened on Tuesday, 13th November 2012 at 13.00 hours.

Hon. D J Bossino: Yes, Mr Speaker, as indeed I stated a few moments ago and that was reported in the press, but after I had filed the Question in the House.

2735

I ask this supplementary, Mr Speaker: can the Minister advise this House what remedial works were undertaken in order to ensure the opening of the tunnel?

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Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, what happened in this case, is that the engineers actually went on site to have a look at whether they could actually see where the rock had come from, to try to assess whether there were any further hazards of further rocks falling. They declared to make safe, once they saw where the rock had come from. They cleared up and ensured... they, obviously waited until the bad weather ended – because obviously, living in a place like Gibraltar, with 400-odd metres of rock face, anything close to the rock face is obviously a hazard – and then decided it was prudent to reopen the tunnel.

2745

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, I take it from that answer that no works were undertaken and therefore there was not any cost to the Government?

Hon. P J Balban: The removal of rubble was carried out and that was the end.

2750

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, is the Government and the Minister, in particular, satisfied as to the safety of the area now? I know it is probably implied by the fact that the tunnel has been opened, but I will ask him to confirm that he is absolutely satisfied, and we can all lay our minds to rest in respect of that particular issue.

2755

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, as I mentioned earlier in the previous supplementary, a rockfall hazard will always exist, when we have a 450-metre-high rock, which is Gibraltar, so obviously it is impossible to state. It is something within reasonable... it is reasonable to suggest that it is as safe as can be.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, can the Minister say, whether in future instances of bad weather, the Government will be required to close Dudley Ward Tunnel again, as a precautionary measure at all?

2760 I ask it simply because the Minister has said that, on review, it was declared safe and the bad weather had passed. I am merely asking the Minister to exclude the possibility of this happening again as a *precautionary* measure.

2765 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, no, the closure of Dudley Ward tunnel will not recur just because there is bad weather.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, could the hon. Minister confirm who conducted a risk assessment of the area and said that the area was now safe?

2770 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, it was Technical Services engineers, who were on site and actually went to see where the actual rock had fallen from. It was Technical Services staff, in conjunction with one of the consultant experts who they work with, and they are pretty certain they have found where the rock came from. They assessed as to what the probability was that that could recur, and obviously results show that it was okay to do so.

2775

**Solar powered lamps by the frontier
Costs**

2780 **Clerk:** Question 976, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Traffic provide details of the cost of the installation and any other related costs of the solar powered lamps in the area by the frontier?

2785 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services.

2790 **Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, the solar lighting project in the area of the frontier was led by the Gibraltar Electricity Authority. I have, however, obtained the information that the hon. Member is requesting, which I will now provide.

The cost of the units was £27,216.90 and the installation costs were £4,800.

Hon. D J Bossino: Sorry, the £27,000-odd figure that the Minister has given, is that in relation to all the units or is it for each unit?

2795 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, the figure quoted is for all the units.

2800 **Hon. D J Bossino:** I am not sure how this actually works in practice, Mr Speaker. He did say that it was handled by the Gibraltar Electricity Authority. I am not sure, whether, in that context, there is a tender process. Was this a subject of a tender process? That is my question.

Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares): As Minister for Utilities, this Question was directed to the Minister for Traffic. It should have been directed to me, so I will answer the Question.

2805 There is no need for a tender process for this amount of money and this project anyway. What happened was that we decided, because it is a Government authority which did the works themselves, it does not need to go out to tender. The fact is that if it had been outsourced, then yes.

2810 The thing is that the cost was much less than was envisaged, had they needed to... because the lights were needed to be put there and all the infrastructure work to put the lights there, putting solar powered lamps was cheaper and the running cost is zilch, because it is only the maintenance and the batteries.

So at this point, what I am saying is that it was decided to do this because it was more cost effective.

2815 **Hon. D J Bossino:** I have not fully understood. That is the argument that was put to me in connection with the other sort of lamps at the other car park. (**Hon. S E Linares:** Yes.) But Mr Speaker, is the Hon. Minister saying that... or can he tell me which – if there was a company... The Minister is saying it was not outsourced, but can he tell me which company provided the infrastructure?

Hon. S E Linares: Mr Speaker, GEA did the infrastructure. What you are probably asking is, who is the company that sold the solar panels, not the infrastructure. The infrastructure was done by GEA. *(Interjection by Hon. D J Bossino)* I need notice of who exactly they bought the lamps from.

Hon. D J Bossino: To see if my maths are correct, how many units were there, Mr Speaker?

Hon. S E Linares: I understand there were four.

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, if I may come in there, in fact, the units installed: there were seven units were bought and six were actually installed.

**Procedural
Question 977 deferred**

Clerk: Question 977, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Minister for Traffic, Health & Safety and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, may I interrupt? In view of the next Question, if we recall the next question will be posed by the hon. Member, back in Question 890/2012, this Question's supplementaries led to discussing the actual issue of King's Wharf. In fact, that is actually dealt with by the Office of the Chief Minister with the Chief Technical Officer, so I am suggesting that if that is where the Question will lead, if we could maybe pose this Question again in the presence of the Chief Minister later on?

Hon. D J Bossino: I am not sure where the Question necessarily will be leading until I get the answer from the Government, but I am happy to delay this until Chief Minister's Questions, given that, in fact, I think the majority of the answers were indeed supplied by the Chief Minister on the last occasion, so I am happy to oblige, Mr Speaker.

EDUCATION, FINANCIAL SERVICES, GAMING, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND JUSTICE

**Department of Education
Training placements and qualifications attained**

Clerk: Question 989, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Further to his answer to Written Question No. 177/2012, can the Minister for Education state the following: (a) until when will the training periods in which the six trainees placed within the Department of Education last; (b) what training is being provided within the 'Type of Training' undertaken by the trainees; (c) what accredited qualifications, if any, will the trainees attain at the end of their training period/placements?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice.

Minister for Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice (Hon. G H Licudi): Mr Speaker, the trainees receive familiarisation with administrative procedures whilst deployed to the Department of Education. Their training will last until the company that employs them requires them to be deployed elsewhere.

Training is provided on the job. No accredited qualifications as such will be issued at the end of the training period.

**Teachers
Process for handling underperformance**

Clerk: Question 990, the Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond.

2880 **Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Education advise how the Department of Education streamlines the process for handling teachers who underperform or are inadequate?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice.

2885 **Minister for Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice (Hon. G H Licudi):** Mr Speaker, the underperformance of teachers is addressed by using a staged approach going from the informal to the formal. The informal stage is addressed at an internal school level and will be directed by the school's senior management who will identify areas for development. If required, the headteacher will invoke a more formal stage in conjunction with the Department of Education's Advisory Service, who will provide support and mentoring for the teacher in question, examine all of the factors and circumstances of the case, including the teacher's expertise, experience and appropriateness of the present placement.

2890 If this process does not result in improvement, then the case is reviewed by the Director of Education and the advice of the Government's Human Resources Department will be sought. The GTA would be consulted at all stages.

Hon. Mrs I M Ellul-Hammond: Mr Speaker, would the Minister consider the setting up of an independent unit like Ofsted, to provide assessment to monitor progress and to offer support?

2900 **Hon. G H Licudi:** Mr Speaker, as the hon. Lady will know, from a recent television programme in which we both appeared, one of the issues we are considering is the whole issue of school inspections. That is a matter that is actively being considered and discussed and we are not at the stage where we are in a position to announce where that will take us. If the school is inspected, then all these procedures will be looked at by the independent inspector – it would be an independent inspector, not an internal inspection – and this is an area which would be included in the whole area of procedures for such an inspection.

2905 **Mr Speaker:** Any other questions?

2910 Well, I think this is a convenient moment to recess until 3.00 p.m. this afternoon, when we shall be dealing with Questions addressed to the Chief Minister.

The House recessed at 12.40 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 3.00 p.m.