



PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

AFTERNOON SESSION: 3.00 p.m. – 5.40 p.m.

Gibraltar, Friday, 15th February 2013

The Gibraltar Parliament

The Parliament met at 3.00 p.m.

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

[ACTING CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENT: P E Martinez Esq *in attendance*]

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PRAYER

Mr Speaker

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Procedural

Mr Speaker: As hon. Members are aware, we have convened this quorum in order to recess the House to 4.00 p.m. this afternoon, as we are allowing the other Members of Parliament who are not present here today to attend the funeral of Police Constable Jenzen Santos and Police Constable Josephine Guiling Savignon.

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So the House is recessed until 4.00 p.m. this afternoon.

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The House recessed at 3.05 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 4.00 p.m.

OBSERVANCE OF ONE MINUTE'S SILENCE

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Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart to ask the House to keep a minute's silence in honour of the two police officers who passed away off duty in Spain two days ago and have been buried today, both of whom were well known to the House, sometimes keeping security here and below.

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Members stood in silence.

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, may I thank hon. Members and you for your co-operation in the adjournment at 3.00 p.m. to enable Members to attend the funeral.

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Order of the Day

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

45 **Acting Clerk:** Confirmation of Minutes – the Minutes of the last meeting of Parliament which was held on 14th and 15th January 2013.

Mr Speaker: May I sign the Minutes as correct? (**Members:** Aye.)

50 *Mr Speaker signed the Minutes.*

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

55 **Congratulations to Hon. D A Feetham
on election to Leader of the Opposition**

Acting Clerk: Communications from the Chair.

60 **Mr Speaker:** I should like to congratulate the Hon. Mr Daniel Feetham on his election as Leader of the GSD and consequently as Leader of the Opposition in this House.

I can assure him that the Clerk, the staff and I myself will always be at his disposal in order to help him in exercising his functions as Leader of the Opposition.

65 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much for those kind words indeed, and thank you as well to everybody out there in this community that have, over the last few days, the last couple of weeks, wished me well in my endeavour, both supporters of the GSD and also supporters of the Party opposite, because at the end of the day, it is an essential part of the democratic process that, as well as a strong Government, there will also be a strong Opposition.

70 Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity provided to me to make a short personal statement to the House, pursuant to Standing Order 49, on the occasion of our first meeting since I became Leader of the Opposition.

75 It is of course an honour and privilege for me to lead my party in Her Majesty's Opposition in this Parliament. I am conscious and indeed humbled, that I follow some very distinguished Gibraltarians, not least you, Mr Speaker, my very good friends, the Hon. Maurice Xiberras and the late the Hon. Peter Isola, the Father of the House, the Hon. Joe Bossano, the Hon. Sir Joshua Hassan and my great friend the Hon. Peter Caruana. To that list, I of course add the Hon. the Leader of the House, the Chief Minister.

80 I have this week met with my Shadow Cabinet colleagues in order to agree with them the distribution of Shadow Ministerial responsibilities amongst us. The aim has been to reshuffle some of the responsibilities, whilst at the same time provide for some continuity. I believe it is right for me to make that announcement here in this House first.

85 Mr Speaker, I will of course take primary responsibility for shadowing the Chief Minister and I will therefore be relinquishing some of my former responsibilities. I will therefore be dealing with the economy and public finance including taxation and Customs; enterprise and business; constitutional and external affairs; elections; broadcasting and information; public service and administration, including the Gibraltar Development Corporation, e-government, parliamentary, political and democratic reform.

90 Given the delicate situation the gaming sector finds itself in, with the UK decision to tax bets at source, I will retain responsibility for the time being for gaming. It is my intention to work closely with my hon. and learned friend, Mr Figueras and eventually to transfer this responsibility to him.

95 Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar Savings Bank and the way it operates in future is critical to the public debt debate and the position taken by the GSLP Liberals at the last election in that debate, and also any reputational or liability exposure of the Government and the Taxpayer and this community. I have therefore retained responsibility for the Gibraltar Savings Bank, but I will be assisted and work very closely with my hon. and learned friend, Mr Bossino.

I have asked the Hon. Jaime Netto to take on responsibility for the environment, utilities including electricity, water, postal services, refuse collection disposal and telecommunications and he will continue with his shadow responsibilities in respect of Health and Safety.

100 Mr Netto was extremely passionate for the environment when he was Minister with
responsibility for the environment in the 2003-07 GSD Government. That was reflected, Mr
Speaker, in the 2007 election result, where he placed third. I have asked him to be positive in his
approach to this Shadow Portfolio. It will be his task not only to scrutinise and ask searching
105 questions of the Government on its policies, such as the current Ape Management Policy, but to
also project a strong sense of our own suggested policies, which he will no doubt put to the Hon.
Minister Cortes in this House, during the course of the next three years. It is for the Government to
then decide whether to adopt or decline any suggestions put to them.

Mr Speaker, given that the Hon. Mr Netto has taken on these important responsibilities, I have
asked the Hon. Isobel Ellul-Hammond to take over responsibility for the care services; the elderly;
110 family and children; and equality and civil rights. She will continue to have responsibility for civil
contingencies including fire and emergency services and also health. On this side of the House, we
certainly feel there are common synergies between health and care services.

The Hon. Damon Bossino will continue with tourism; airport and aviation; port and shipping.
In addition, he will be shadowing the Hon. Minister Bossano in all of his portfolio, except for the
115 Gibraltar Savings Bank. That includes inward investment; employment and training; social
security and social assistance. The Government's record on employment will feature highly, in my
view, at the next General Election, and this is a significant responsibility which I could not have
hoped to bestow on a more able individual.

The Hon. Selwyn Figueras will have responsibility for transport, planning and the city,
120 including roads, parking, traffic, licensing of vehicles and public transport. He also takes over my
responsibilities for justice and home affairs, including the Police, prison, tribunals, legal aid and
assistance, consumer protection, personal status and immigration. He also takes over financial
services and e-commerce, where he will be working very closely with me, in order to develop our
policies over the next three years.

125 Finally, the Hon. Edwin Reyes takes over Education from the Hon. Isobel Ellul-Hammond,
and will continue with housing, culture, heritage, youth, sports and leisure.

Mr Speaker, much has been made in recent times about style of politics and exchanges across
the floor of this House. Whilst at times those exchanges may be on the wrong side of a very fine
balancing exercise we perform every time we meet in an essentially adversarial system, we do so
130 less often, in my view, than in other places outside this House.

The Government will find us a tough and searching Opposition over the next three years, but
we will also be constructive on any issue of vital importance to this community. It will be our
intention during the course of the next three years to make more use of parliamentary motions, as a
device to debate areas of Government policy, but also as a device to project our views on how
135 issues of vital importance to this community should be tackled.

I have already given notice to this House of a motion I intend to move at the next sitting, notice
permitting, in respect of our suggested approach to the new challenge facing Gibraltar, in relation
to statements made by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom that he intends to renegotiate the
UK's membership with the European Union. It is a neutral motion, suggesting the creation of a
140 cross-party committee to look at the possible scenarios and implications for Gibraltar and how we
react to them: essentially, a pro-active cross-party approach in relation to all those scenarios.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank, yet again, Mr Caruana for the many years he has
served this community in front-line politics, as Chief Minister and as Leader of the Opposition.
We all owe him, in my view, a huge debt of gratitude.

145 Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. (*Applause*)

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, may I take this opportunity to recognise the
hon. Gentleman's role as Leader of the Opposition is an important one. I became Leader of the
Opposition some months before I became Chief Minister with, I believe, the distinction of having
150 been the person who has served in that post for the shortest period.

May I just say as a matter of record, I believe that the hon. Member has become Leader of the
Opposition today in this House and not before, because it is this House that gives him the post of
Leader of the Opposition, in the recognition of his parliamentary colleagues that he leads their
parliamentary group. That he has become Leader of his Party is something that happens outside
155 the Parliament, but I think as a matter of parliamentary procedure, it is at the first meeting of the
House that the hon. Member has become, in effect, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Speaker, I am pleased that the hon. Gentleman has taken the opportunity to make a
statement in this House in respect of the Shadow Portfolios that Members of his benches will
fulfil. I think it is an opportunity that is bestowed upon him by the fact that this Government now
160 calls monthly meetings of the House and it is therefore possible, on occasions but not always, to
make important statements in this House, rather than outside it.

165 Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman will find that the Office of Speaker and of the Clerk and Ushers will be an extremely useful resource to him as they are, as they were to me when I was Leader of the Opposition and as they were to all of us on this side of the House who were Members of the Opposition, because they are always generous to a fault in the way that they assist Members. I am sure that they will extend to him that level of generosity which they extended to us and no doubt have been extending to Members opposite since their election.

170 But importantly, Mr Speaker, I want him to know that he will also find the Government generous in the way in which it desires to work with parliamentary colleagues across the floor of the House in the best interests of Gibraltar. That is the way that it should be.

175 There may be times, Mr Speaker, when we have to disagree and it is appropriate in an adversarial parliamentary system such as ours that we do, but that adversarial system should not lead us into conflict where it need not and it should certainly not lead us into conflict for the purposes of partisan political gain. For that reason, Mr Speaker, although we will be generous in seeking to work together constructively, we will also be unforgiving when that generosity is abused for party political gain.

180 So, Mr Speaker, I sincerely hope that the hon. Gentleman will accept the opportunity to work together with the Government when it is possible that we should do so. I regret, Mr Speaker, that the statement made today by the hon. Gentleman under the auspices of recognition from the Chair, should have in part alluded to some of the partisan issues which appear to divide us in respect of the Savings Bank, for example, an issue which I think it is important for the community to feel absolute confidence is being handled in the absolutely most appropriate way by the Ministry for Finance and for the Minister with responsibility for the development of the Savings Bank. There should be not one nuance allowed to suggest the opposite.

185 I note, Mr Speaker, also that the hon. Gentleman has only referred to Mr Netto as having been requested by him to act positively in the exercise of his Shadow Ministerial responsibilities and I will assume that was just his pen driven to remark upon that in respect of Mr Netto, and that he actually meant, as I am sure he did, that all Members should engage positively in their Opposition role with their Government colleagues.

190 So, Mr Speaker, I shall certainly look forward to the debate in the next three years in this House. In the course of his intervention, the hon. Gentleman has said that he has asked individuals to shadow other particular individuals. He is not able to make such determinations. He decides which portfolios they shadow; it is for me as Chief Minister to decide who it is that carries those portfolios on the part of the Government. So it may be, Mr Speaker, that Mr Netto is not shadowing Mr Cortes for three years or that Mr Bossino is not shadowing Mr Bossano for three years. Whatever it is, Mr Speaker, let those shadows be positive shadows, designed to deliver always the best politics for our nation and in that light, Mr Speaker, I welcome the opportunity that we should have more debates in this House by way of motion, as you have been entreating Members opposite to do and that we might move away from a Question Time that is designed to become a debate and is actually an opportunity for information to be given and, with that information, that we might have properly informed debates.

200 As for the motion that the hon. Gentleman has alluded to, which he has put on the Order Paper, I shall deal with that motion at the appropriate time and not now, but I do give notice to the hon. Gentleman, if he has not had it yet, that there is also another motion from the Government in respect of the procedures of this House, on which I trust I will be able to count with his support and the support of those sitting with him in his parliamentary party. *(Applause)*

210 **Acting Clerk:** Petitions; Announcements; Papers to be laid.

DOCUMENTS LAID

215 **Acting Clerk:** The Hon. the Chief Minister.

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the Table a Report to Parliament on Democratic and Parliamentary Reform.

220 **Mr Speaker:** Ordered to lie.

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

225 **Minister for Sports, Culture, Heritage and Youth (Hon. S E Linares):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the Table the Report and Audited Accounts of the Gibraltar Electricity Authority for the year ending 31st March 2012.

Mr Speaker: Ordered to lie.

230 **Acting Clerk:** Reports of Committees. Answers to Oral Questions.

Questions for Oral Answer

235

TOURISM, COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS, PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND THE PORT

240 **Tourist sites' refurbishment works
Cost**

Acting Clerk: Question No. 84/2013, the Hon. D J Bossino.

245 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism advise what the cost of the recent refurbishment works being carried out at various tourist sites amounts to, broken down in respect of each site?

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

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Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, I hand to the hon. Gentleman a schedule with the information he requests.

SCHEDULE TO QUESTION NUMBER 84/2013

LOCATION	COST	LESS EU FUNDING	TOTAL COST
JEWS GATE	96,543	28,963	67,580
ST. MICHAEL'S CAVE	571,950	141,183	430,767
APES DEN	42,053	12,616	29,437
GREAT SIEGE TUNNELS	206,375	44,420	161,955
MOORISH CASTLE	34,798	-	34,798
100 TON GUN	27,324	-	27,324
LORD AIREYS BATTERY	3,673	-	3,673
UR SIGNS	3,959	-	3,959
TOTAL	986,675	227,183	759,492

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Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, from a brief reading of the schedule, the total cost – in effect the net cost – amounts to £759,000-odd. That is actually very close to the £1 million which I think had been budgeted for this particular purpose. Is the Minister able to advise this House what further works he had planned to fill in that gap of about £200,000-odd?

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Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, if the hon. Gentleman recalls, when I answered the question the first time in this House, I set out what the works were and how much they would cost and they added up to £1 million. The reason for the decrease in the cost is thanks to the measure taken of applying for EU funding, which will therefore mean that we will be able to do all the projects we have promised to do at less price and therefore have a saving to the Taxpayer.

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He will see in fact from the second column, which is called 'Less EU Funding', that we are saving £227,183.

270 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, the Minister may require notice of this question. There is an item in the schedule which refers to the cost expenditure in relation to the Moorish Castle which

amounts to £34,798. Now, in the information which is set out in the Government website, there is a table which I must say caused me some confusion. I was reviewing it in preparation for this meeting because it has been the subject of some change, but certainly one version that I have –
275 and I think it survived the second version, which I also saw recently – where it talks about direct allocations over £2,000 since the General Election, there is an Item 74 which is described as remedial and refurbishment works carried out at Tower of Homage at Moorish Castle. The recipient, if I follow this correctly, is in fact not a company – but I stand to be corrected; it is a Mr Louis Edwards and the amount is for £8,820. My first question is whether that figure forms part of the greater figure set out in this schedule?
280

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, I am afraid I will not be able to assist the hon. Gentleman. I will require notice of the question. I do not have the information to hand.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, I have asked a specific question as to whether it is included as part of the £34,000; but does he know, and again he may require notice of the question, what Mr Louis Edwards did? I just find it strange that an individual should have been the recipient of money, as opposed to a company.
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Hon. N F Costa: Well, Mr Speaker, without getting into the intricacies of the legal system, of course you can trade as a sole trader without having to establish yourself as a legal entity like a company or something else.
290

But in respect of the substance of the question, as I said, I will need notice of it, to be able to answer the query, because I do not have that information with me.

Hon. D J Bossino: Irrespective of the legal position, presumably the Minister does not know now what Mr Edwards is said to have done for the £8,000-odd. Is that correct? Does he also need notice of that.
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Hon. N F Costa: Yes, that is correct, Mr Speaker.
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Mr Speaker: Any other supplementary?
Next question.

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DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

Government housing stock Summary of building projects

310

Acting Clerk: Question 193, the Hon. S M Figueras.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, good afternoon.
Can the Deputy Chief Minister provide, in the planning context, a summary of the position in
315 relation to the building of Government housing and low-cost residential accommodation including, but not limited to the Aerial Farm project, the Europa Point project and the Coach Park project, including confirmation of whether it will be going ahead with each of these projects and, if so, whether they will be used for Government housing stock or for low-cost ownership?

Acting Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister.
320

Deputy Chief Minister (Hon. Dr J J Garcia): Mr Speaker, the Government has presented five residential projects to the DPC to date.

The projects at Europort Avenue, the Aerial Farm and the Coach Park have gone out to tender.
325 The projects at North Gauge and Europa Point have not gone out to tender as yet. The Government has to date taken the decision to proceed with all the projects except the one at Europa Point, which remains pending.

The expectation is that these projects will provide about 950 flats, of which about 140 will be for rental. The final number depends on the exact room specifications which will be known once a
330 tender has been awarded.

Hon. S M Figueras: I am grateful for the answer, Mr Speaker, perhaps... I did not quite catch the three projects that have gone out to tender, which are Europort Avenue, Coach Park and...?

335 **Hon. Deputy Chief Minister:** The other one is the Aerial Farm.

Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, can he also, because I did not hear... the number of rentals in that. He said 950 – (*Interjections*)

340 **Hon. D J Bossino:** One hundred and ninety and then 140.

Hon. D A Feetham: There seems to be some confusion on our side.

345 **Hon. Deputy Chief Minister:** Nine hundred and fifty flats, of which 140 are for rental.

Hon. S M Figueras: Indeed, but would the Deputy Chief Minister be able to provide or rather confirm, of those 140 rental properties, which developments will include those?

350 **Hon. Deputy Chief Minister:** Yes, Mr Speaker, those are divided between the Aerial Farm project and the Europort Avenue project... Sorry, Mr Speaker, the *Coach Park* project and the Europort Avenue project.

355 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, in respect of the Coach Park, we have had representations from concerned residents in the area with certain concerns about the impact this project may have on the area. I am also mindful of the fact that it is at the Development and Planning Commission for consultation.

Unfortunately, the minutes of the DPC are suffering somewhat of a delay between the conclusion of the meeting and the publication on the website, and this is causing a certain element of difficulty, in terms of preparing the Questions for these sessions on a monthly basis.

360 I was wondering whether perhaps the Deputy Chief Minister would be able, or inclined even, to share the minutes with me any earlier than publication on the website, if that is at all possible? And particularly in respect of the Coach Park, is the Deputy Chief Minister able to confirm whether the Government has had any objections filed on it or through the Development and Planning Commission?

365

Hon. Deputy Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, the Hon. Member should bear in mind that the meetings of the DPC are now public, so obviously it is for you to attend and to listen to what goes on. Also, the minutes are now published; before, they were not published at all.

370 But the reason for the delay is simply that the minutes of one meeting are approved in the next meeting, so it is not really a delay; it is simply just waiting for the meeting to take place in order for the minutes to be approved. After that, they go on-line.

In relation to his question, I can tell him there were some views expressed which were mainly of an environmental nature; also some of a traffic management nature and those issues were discussed by the Commission and put forward [*inaudible*] to the Government.

375

But he should also bear in mind, Mr Speaker, that in their own manifesto they also had a promise to use the Coach Park for housing. So they had it as well.

A Member: Two references.

380 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Grateful. (*Laughter and interjections*)

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, may I ask the Deputy Chief Minister for a little bit of clarification. On the figure of 140 homes for rental, have I understood correctly in saying that those were to be in respect of the Coach Park and the Aerial Farm projects?

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Hon. Deputy Chief Minister: In respect of the Coach Park and the Europort Avenue project.

Hon. E J Reyes: Coach Park and the Europort Avenue; not the Aerial Farm then.

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Hon. Deputy Chief Minister: No.

Hon. J J Netto: Can I ask the Deputy Chief Minister in relation to the 140-plus for rental, whether at this stage they know what is the breakdown for those flats in relation to how many rooms those flats have?

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Hon. Deputy Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, I am told the final composition of the flats will depend on the tender because tenderers, apart from what the Government has suggested, are free to make suggestions of their own to improve the... increase the number of rooms or whatever

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So once we have the final tender awarded, we will know what the exact composition is going to be.

Hon. J J Netto: To some extent, will the tender be determined by the kind of pressures that the Department of Housing may have in relation to some of the list which has more demand than others? Would that be factored into the decision-making process?

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Hon. Deputy Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, the hon. Member is right in what he has said. It will be factored into the process. That is right. The actual number of people on the waiting list and the room composition requirements are what is driving the composition of the flats.

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Hon. J J Netto: Is it therefore that they are targeting, in the main, single persons on the one hand, which seems to be a big demand for that, and also perhaps the very large families – which are a minority nowadays, but nevertheless because there are large families with lots of children, we find themselves with not sufficient stock in the Government houses, which needs to be cared for as well?

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Hon. Deputy Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, these are primarily housing issues of a housing nature, if he sees what I mean – a housing rental nature – which I do not deal with directly.

My understanding is that the requirements that were there on the housing waiting list on 8th/9th December, when we got into Government, are the ones that are driving the housing projects that we are building.

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So if there was a considerable demand for one or two, one-bedroom flats, then that will be reflected in the composition of the flats.

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, if I can be of assistance.

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Those one-bedroom flats, as the hon. Gentleman knows, are 2RKBs. There are a lot of young people who are on the list for 2RKBs who have been on the list for very long, so demographically I think it is likely that those people who are seeking 2RKBs, many of them will actually soon become couples and we actually see that a lot of the people who are both down as individuals are now still single but couples and are looking, potentially, to buy a 3RKB, which is two bedrooms. There is that opportunity that people may want to buy something, if they are now on the cusp of marriage or civil partnership or whatever it is – if that is possible after the House considers the Bill in the future – and they want to buy something, then they may want to buy something slightly bigger than what they have been on the housing waiting list for, and that is being factored into the equation.

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Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, the Government proposes to have 140 rental flats from a number of 950. Can the Government at this stage, either the Chief Minister or the Deputy Chief Minister, provide us with some information in relation to how many rental flats does the Government actually envisage at the end of the day, the three-year period that it is actually going to be building, in order to cater for people who do not want to buy, but people who want to rent from the Government?

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Hon. Chief Minister: Not at this stage, Mr Speaker, but I can tell him that most people are very interested in buying.

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Mr Speaker: Any other question?

Next question.

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**TOURISM, COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS,
PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND THE PORT**

UKGTA

Number of meetings and attendees

460

Acting Clerk: Question No. 85, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Tourism state how many meetings of the UKGTA have been held since he took office, together with the dates and locations of such meetings; who the attendees were, to include details of who ordinarily attend such meetings but failed to do so?

465

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

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Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, there have been three meetings of the UKGTA since I took office.

The first meeting was held on 24th April last year in Gibraltar at the Mons Calpe Suite. The second meeting was held on 26th June last year at Gibraltar House in London. The third meeting was held on 9th October last year in Gibraltar at the Finance Centre Boardroom.

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I now hand over to the hon. Gentleman a schedule with the detail of those who were invited to attend the meeting and those who sent apologies.

The meetings are ordinarily attended by members of the UKGTA, members of the Gibraltar Tourist Board, members of the team from Gibraltar House in London and myself. The next meeting of the UKGTA is scheduled for 20th February of this year at the Millennium Copthorne Hotel in Birmingham, UK to coincide with a tourism road show being held by the Gibraltar Tourist Board. The event is aimed at promoting the start of flights secured by Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar from Birmingham to Gibraltar operated by Monarch Airlines.

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The event will allow industry partners to showcase their products and services to travel agents from the Birmingham area and will serve as a marketing event for the Rock, highlighting this to be the perfect short-break destination.

SCHEDULE TO QUESTION NUMBER 85/2013

UKGTA Meeting - Tuesday 24th April 2012

Attending:	Apologies:
Minister Neil Costa MP MTTP	Albert Poggio OBE – UK Representative
Nicky Guerrero – GTB	Vanda Bauer – Classic Collection Holidays
Paul Martinez, Principal Secretary MTTP	Daniel Lerner - GTB
Peter Canessa - GOG	
Audrey Vella – GTB	
Juliet Perrett – Monarch Airlines (Chair)	
Catherine Read - easyJet	
Raj Kumar – My Gibraltar	
Chris Hagan - Superbreak	
Sixto Parody - Parodytur	
Bob Pugh - Southern Garages Management/Parodytur	
Tim Mitchell – Gibraltar Gala Casino	
Franco Ostuni – The Caleta Hotel	
Mary Kinch – O'Callaghan Elliott Hotel	
Stephen Davenport – The Rock Hotel	
Ronald Ignacio- Gibraltar Taxi Association	
Henry Catania – Calypso Tours	
Mandy Gaggero – MH Bland	
Henry Catania – MH Bland	
Nuria Saccone Wright – Bland Group	
Ian Leyde - GTB	
Tracey Poggio – GTB	

UKGTA Meeting - Tuesday 26th June

Attending:	Apologies:
Minister Neil Costa MP	Ali Gayward - easyJet
Nicky Guerrero – GTB	Chris Hagan - Superbreak
Peter Canessa - GOG	Tim Mitchell – Gibraltar Casino
Albert Poggio OBE GOG	Vanda Bauer – Classic Collection
Audrey Vella GTB	Bob Kumar – My Vacations
Paul Martinez GOG	
Lt.Col John Perez Bland Group	
Nuria Saccone Bland Group	
Sixto Parody - Parodytur	
Ronald Ignacio- Gibraltar Taxi Association	
Mandy Gaggero –MH Bland	
Franco Ostuni – The Caleta Hotel	
Mary Kinch The O'Callaghan Elliott Hotel	
Ian Leyde - GTB	
Tracey Poggio – GTB	

UKGTA Meeting - Tuesday 9th October 2012

Attending:	Apologies:
Minister Neil Costa MP	Vanda Bauer Classic Collection
Nicky Guerrero - GTB	Albert Poggio OBE GOG
Peter Canessa - GOG	Keith Chuter BA
Marcello Sanguinetti - GTB	
Audrey Vella - GTB	
Stuart Finlayson - GTB	
Chris Hagan - Superbreak	
Bob Kumar - My Gibraltar	
Liz Mason - Thomas Cook/Cresta	
Ali Gayward - easyJet	
James Massey - Monarch Airlines	
Nuria Saccone - Bland Group	
Sixto Parody - Parodytur	
Bob Pugh - Parodytur	
Albert Parody - Parodytur	
Ronald Ignacio - Gibraltar Taxi Association	
Mandy Gaggero - MH Bland	
Henry Catania - Calypso Tours	
Mary Kinch - O'Callaghan Elliott Hotel	
Franco Ostuni - Caleta Hotel	
Stephen Davenport - Rock Hotel	
Tim Mitchell - Gala Casino	
Ian Leyde - GTB	
Tracey Poggio - GTB	

**Airport
Commitment to new terminal**

485

Mr Speaker: Next question.

Acting Clerk: Question No. 86, the Hon. D J Bossino.

490 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism confirm that he is fully committed to the promotion of the new airport terminal?

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

495 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar has already stated publicly and on various occasions that the new terminal has to be used fully in order to try and recover the exorbitant amount of public money that was spent on the new Air Terminal. In order for the hon. Gentleman to fully appreciate the efforts required to try to recover even some of these costs, I need to provide some important and necessary context.

500 The project has been completed over a number of years and the total cost has been £82.97 million.

505 The expenditure charged to the I&D Fund over the years is made up as follows: 2008-09, £2,710,845.08; 2009-10, £14,833,979.28; 2010-11, £23,138,104.17; 2011-12, £37,960,050.45 – noticeably an election year; 2012-13, £4,333,569.07. That brings the total, Mr Speaker, to, as I say, £82,976,548.05.

510 Mr Speaker, it has to be borne in mind that these costs include an inadequately long baggage carousel and no weather-proof equipment to cover passengers when traversing from the terminal to the airplane. You would have thought, Mr Speaker, that at almost £83 million we would have had a plethora of suitable weatherproof equipment and adequately sized carousels.

515 With this in mind, Mr Speaker, not only am I fully committed to promoting the terminal by being actively involved in seeking new air links for the good of Gibraltar as a whole, but also to generate as much revenue as possible. This includes resourcing the Government agencies that operate there, maximising the business potential of the concessions within the terminal and ensuring that high standards of service are maintained.

520 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, it was really the last bits of his answer that I wanted to hear, given that... Well no, it is actually not even being political about it; (*Interjections*) no, Mr Speaker it is obvious I wanted to hear just the last bit of his answer because that was my question. I just wanted to know whether he is fully committed to the promotion of the new airport terminal.

525 Mr Speaker, the reason why I asked that question is because I have here in my hands the Gibraltar Port Authority Handbook, which quite frankly gives... it is a very poor show, if it is a Government truly committed behind the marketing of the airport. The only thing it is able to say is that Gibraltar has flight connections to several cities in the UK and almost 400,000 people enjoy flying to and from the Rock every year.

I also have in my possession... (*Laughter*) Look, the Members opposite can snigger and they may find this uncomfortable hearing, but the fact is – (*Interjections*) No, Mr Speaker –

530 **Mr Speaker:** Order! Order!

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, they really ought to calm down! (*Interjections*)

Mr Speaker: Order!

535 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I also have... So much for a change in the attitude in this House! (*Interjection*) He is the one that started, Mr Speaker!

Mr Speaker: Order!

540 **Hon. D J Bossino:** I asked for a specific answer and he has gone into a tirade *à la* election mode, *à la* Opposition mode, because he just cannot help himself, Mr Speaker. (*Interjections*)

545 Mr Speaker, there is a draft which has come to my attention, right, and I will ask him whether he has had any participation, any involvement in changing that draft because the draft of this handbook, the Port Authority Handbook, which deals at page 51 with the airport, the original draft stated things like, reasonable things like:

'Gibraltar's new air terminal, a striking architectural design against the iconic backdrop of the Rock is now open for business...'

550

I am not going to read the whole thing, but it also says things like:

555 'the impressive steel and glass building boasts a modern spacious interior equipped with top end facilities for passengers'

and things like:

560 'The air terminal also includes a dedicated wing built to premium specification for handling private and corporate jets with seamless service, privacy and security.'

And yet, Mr Speaker, all that this Government was able to bring themselves to say about this airport is that Gibraltar has flight connections to several cities in the UK and almost 400,000 people enjoying flying to and from the Rock every year. What hand has the Minister had to play in the drafting of this book, Mr Speaker?

565

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, in the first place, he does realise that he prefaced his question to say that it was a 'Port Handbook'. I shall leave that there.

570 Mr Speaker, I have, during the course of interviews, I have in fact just recently approved an article that will appear in a specialised air terminal magazine, which I did not know existed, but there are enthusiasts of air terminals and we are promoting the air terminal through business-to-business magazines and we spent an entire article describing the magnificence, the architectural beauty, the intricate designs of the air terminal otherwise known as the crystal palace, white elephant and pharaonic project.

575 But given that he takes grave issue about the fact that I had to provide the necessary costs, Mr Speaker, because if he asks me whether I am committed to promoting the air terminal, given that it has cost £83 million, Mr Speaker, the answer in short is yes. I am very committed to promoting the air terminal because, good grief, we ought to, we must, because it's Taxpayers' money! And given that he took such exception to what I said, let me repeat what I have said already: €6 million, almost, as a result of the personal contributions of the previous Leader of the Opposition was added to the £82-million bill. Peter Caruana had, in his own hand, decided to interfere in changes that added to almost €6 million. That is political and that certainly will have been *à la* Opposition mode.

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585 But it is not Mr Speaker because we are the Government, we are responsible for the public purse, the public is certainly entitled to know that they decided to, in their infinite wisdom, £33 million during the course of an election year, spend as much money as they did.

585

590 Short tirade aside, Mr Speaker, let me tell him that, through the good offices of the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Nicky Guerrero of the Gibraltar Tourist Board, myself, as I have said now on various occasions during GBC interviews and at UKGTA meetings – and I appreciate that I do not have the article that I approved recently, but I wish that I had – I spent an entire page describing the beauty of the air terminal.

590

595 And Mr Speaker, as to the hon. Gentleman suggesting that I have had some underhand motive or reason to changing the Port Handbook and whether I had a hand in it, well of course I had a hand in it, Mr Speaker. I am the Minister for the Port, the draft was sent to me, I made a whole raft of changes and there is nothing untoward about that. If he were Minister for the Port, which he is not, he may have decided to add a few more lines, rather than deleting them.

595

600 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, may I assist the House. The hon. Gentleman might also like to quote from the report prepared by the report company, which was sponsored, as he knows, by the Government of Gibraltar, which sets out in detail the changes in the airport terminal from the old terminal to the new terminal and sets out in quite splendid fashion exactly what it is that the new airport terminal is capable of and how much it costs, thereby demonstrating the Government promoting the air terminal as he suggests.

600

605 I am surprised that he has picked on a Port Handbook to talk about 'air ports' and how the Government promote the new terminal; but I just wish him to know that in another publication which involved the Government there was a completely different approach to the 'air port'.

605

610 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I will not be asking a question, but I would like to have the opportunity to clarify this issue about picking from a page from the Port Handbook, because the fact is, Mr Speaker, that although it is a Port Handbook and it really was a predictable defence the the Hon. the Minister for the Port and now I am surprised that the Chief Minister himself alights on the same defence to... which quite frankly, Mr Speaker, is weak on the basis that this same Port Handbook also extolls (*Interjections*) no, also extolls the virtues of Gibraltar's resilient economy.

610

615 A Port Handbook, nothing to do with the Port but it also extolls the resilience of Gibraltar's
resilient economy. In fact, it is entitled 'Gibraltar's Resilient Economy' and it says things like...
two pages that are dedicated to Gibraltar's resilient economy and saying things like the British
Territory's Gross Domestic Products in the year to March 2011 reached £1.05 billion; officials
620 estimate 5.1% growth, not 10% in the year to March 2012, and it goes on to talk about 'the Rock,
a spectacular tourist destination'. Two pages again: it talks about heritage, nature, a variety of
tourist attractions, and all those things that Mr Costa, the Hon. the Minister for the Port has said he
needs to fix because it was in such dire straits. And yet, Mr Speaker, simply repeating the point
that in relation to the airport, this magnificent airport which the GSD Government left to the
population of Gibraltar is only dedicated three short lines.

625 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in the first place, is there a question from the hon. Gentleman?

Mr Speaker: I think that hon. Members are now in danger of debating what I will not call 'an
old chestnut', because it is a new air terminal!
So next question.

630 **Acting Clerk:** Question No. 87, the Hon. D J Bossino.

635 **Procedural
Statement by the Chief Minister**

Hon. Chief Minister: Can I just make this point, before you move on?
I am quite concerned at the idea that hon. Members can stand up and say, 'I am not going to
ask a question, but...' at Question Time. I just want to record that, although I know the hon.
640 Gentleman wanted, because obviously he feels 'thin on the ground' on this issue of the amount
spent on the air terminal, that he wanted to lay out a defence because having been entirely and
properly rebuffed by the Hon. the Minister for Tourism and by my reference to the report
company, he wanted to set up some defence but as it is Question Time, I think it is really quite
645 astonishing that Members can get up and say, 'I am not going to ask a question but...'

650 **Open-air swimming pool, East Side
Construction project**

Mr Speaker: Let us go on to Question 87.

655 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Tourism advise what stage the project to construct an
open-air swimming pool on the East Side has reached?

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

660 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F
Costa):** Mr Speaker, the commitment to construct an open-air swimming pool on the East Side is
at the design stage.

665 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can I ask this question and depending on how it is answered, it may not
meet further supplementaries. There are a series of some seven items listed in the same section of
the website I referred to earlier, Gibraltar Government website, which is Table GC1 and it refers to
matters such as 'structural design and project management for new public pool, first payment'.
Then it goes on, Mr Speaker, but it does not specifically state the geographical location of the pool
or the nature of the pool and really, what I wanted to know is whether those items – and I can read
670 them to the Minister if it assists him, relate to the open-air swimming pool which they are
electorally committed to provide, which is to provide on the East Side, by Eastern Beach, whether
those items relate to that pool.

Hon. N F Costa: Yes, Mr Speaker, as with the first question the hon. Gentleman asked me,
given the specificity of it he will need to give me notice of the question.

675 **Hon. D J Bossino:** If I can assist, if I can assist, Mr Speaker, the total amount, if one adds up all the items relating to the new public pool, is £167,600.94. Does that figure ring any bells in the Minister's mind, as to the costs which the new pool has already incurred?

680 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, the question of the new pool is one which is still in the process of development, so I cannot tell him whether that is the amount incurred to date, whether that amount was incurred at a particular time or not, without having specific notice of that question. He has asked a question in this House that asks us at what stage the project stands. He has not asked us and given us notice of a specific figure on a specific page of something, so if he wants to have that information, I am quite happy either to reply to him if he cares to write to me or
685 to answer his question if he cares to put it to me. It is a project that I am dealing with, I am running with from Convent Place.

Hon. D J Bossino: I am grateful for that.
690 Mr Speaker, is the Chief Minister at least able to tell me... It was a commitment in the Election manifesto of the Alliance, and he did say I think, in fairness, during the course of the Election campaign that all the commitments had been costed. Can he at least tell me how much he envisages the cost of the new pool will be?

695 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I have given on a number of occasions in respect of such questions.

Hon. D J Bossino: I know I am letting myself in for a bit of a ding-dong here, Mr Speaker, or a wild goose chase, but what was the answer, can I ask the Chief Minister?

700 **Hon. Chief Minister:** It is simple, Mr Speaker: that the costings that we attributed to things when we were Members of... well, in fact, not even Members of Opposition, when we were *candidates* for the Election, are not matters for which we are answerable in this House. I have had that 'ding-dong' as the hon. Gentleman describes on a number of occasions with the hon. and learned Mr Figueras. We will answer for the estimates that we have to provide for these projects in
705 Government, but we will not answer for the calculations that we had in respect of those costs as Opposition, in the same way – well, not even as Opposition; as candidates – in the same way that the hon. Gentlemen would not be answerable for what calculations they may have done as a Political Party or as candidates in the General Election campaign, so we will not disclose those figures. I have said that *ad nauseum* to the hon. Gentleman, but we are obliged to disclose figures
710 in respect of costs which are on-going or estimates which we may have, in the context of the Appropriation debate.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, I made a reference to the Election manifesto and I am just going to put that point that the hon. Member has just made to one side.

715 Really, what I want to get at is the Hon. Chief Minister now sits in No. 6 Convent Place; he is also the Minister for Finance. Does he therefore have an idea or a notion at least – I will put it in the tamest terms possible – as to what he thinks the cost of the pool is going to be?

720 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes, Mr Speaker.

Hon. D J Bossino: Is he able to impart that information to the House this afternoon?

Hon. Chief Minister: Not at this stage, Mr Speaker, because there are very many different permutations and very many different potential costs that the Government, because it is at the design stage, is still looking at what those permutations could mean. So when the Government is ready and has chosen exactly what permutation the design is going to take, the Government will make the announcement and will deliver an estimate of the costs.

725 He will recall, for example, Mr Speaker, that the Hon. the previous Chief Minister, previously Leader of the Opposition, issued a statement once which was featured in the *Chronicle* that I was accused of taking everywhere with me during the course of the General Election campaign, that predicted the cost of the air terminal would be £24 million ; we have just heard today that it was £83 million. So in order to give the public information which is more accurate, we will make a statement about that and other costs that have been incurred in respect of Government projects,
730 when we have accurate Government estimates of those amounts.

735

740 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I have no idea what a pool will cost. Certainly, I suppose a lot depends on the location, the size of it and issues of that nature, but is he satisfied that given that this project seems to be at its very early stages, that an expenditure already, subject to what the Minister would say, but it seems there has already been an expenditure of £167,000 in relation to this pool. Would he be concerned if indeed that expenditure related to the new pool on the East Side – unless... he may not admit that it does relate to the new pool on the East Side.

745 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, that is a hypothetical question because I said to the hon. Gentleman that I require notice of a question as specific as that and therefore I am not going to commit myself, but a large pool for a community is going to cost a lot more than a small pool for a family, so I would not be surprised to see that the cost will far exceed that sort of sum.

750 **Hon. S M Figueras:** Mr Speaker, is the Hon. Chief Minister able to without notice say whether the Government has a time frame in mind or an estimated date of completion for the pool?

Hon. Chief Minister: Yes, Mr Speaker, I expect people to have happily bathed there before I call the next General Election.

755 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, does the Hon. Chief Minister at least have an idea of what the expenditure is to date in relation to the new pool? Does he not have that information given that he is the one that is personally dealing with it at No. 6?

760 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I have an idea what the expenditure has been but I do not talk about ideas. In this House, I would rather be specific and if the hon. Gentleman wants to know what the figure is, he can either write to me, as I have said, or he can ask me the question and I will come armed with every pound, shilling and pence that has been spent.

765 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

FITUR exhibition Costs of Gibraltar's participation

770 **Acting Clerk:** Question No. 88, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Tourism provide a full breakdown of the costs relating to Gibraltar's participation in the FITUR exhibition?

775 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

780 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the full breakdown of the costs are as follows: cost of meeting for space reservation, £981; space and stand, £16,690; subsistence, £3,788; miscellaneous expenses, £3,558; stand expenses, £370; hospitality, £1,611; hotel accommodation, £2,192; travel expenses, £1,098; less participation fees of £6,600. The total comes to £23,688.

785 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, the Hon. the Minister normally gives me the courtesy of providing me with a schedule of...

790 **Hon. N F Costa:** If you would give way for a second, Mr Speaker, yes, I ordinarily do provide a schedule. For some reason, they have written it out without having provided a schedule. I am perfectly happy for the kind lady, if she were to photocopy and pass it on to the hon. Gentleman.

795 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I have nevertheless taken a full note and the point that really I was getting at is what the expenditure was in relation to – and I quote him from a report in the *Gibraltar Chronicle*... Yes, it is from him which refers to his new policy of live entertainment at the stand. Now, from the information which he has just given me and I have taken a quick note of, I do not see a specific reference to the live entertainment. I would be very interested to know why that is, or what it is indeed.

800 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I am not sure, now that I do not have the paper in front of me, but I suspect there must have been a space there for miscellaneous expenses. Is there? (*Interjection*) miscellaneous... (*Interjections*)

805 Alright, in respect of the miscellaneous expenses, I can tell him that the re-enactment service fee was £160 and the expenses for the re-enactment services were £258. We also had refreshments of £19 and the public relation services of Miss Silvia Martinez, who is a lady that works in Madrid and has been used by the previous administration at every FITUR. She is a Spanish national and is very useful at the event, because of course she knows the ropes in and out and she was £923.

Hon. D J Bossino: So the live entertainment was exclusively provided, do I take it, by the History Alive re-enactment group – is that correct, Mr Speaker?

810 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, sir.

Hon. D J Bossino: Now, it is also quoted in the press as referring to... Well, I will just read the quote, Mr Speaker. It says:

815 ‘Our new policy of live entertainment at the stand, in addition to adding interactivity, is intended to showcase the many magnificent tourist offerings that Gibraltar has to offer.’

820 Now, presumably, the History Alive re-enactment group does not add interactivity. There must be other resources which were put at play here. Can I ask the Minister what he was referring to by ‘adding interactivity’?

825 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman should try not to presume anything. The re-enactment society provided *excellent* interactivity. The very fact of them being there was so that they could, in their full regalia, interact with the public. When people walked past the stand, they asked questions not just of the tour operators and our tourism partners; they were very much drawn by these gentlemen in their full regalia and they were answering questions on history and culture and heritage and I am told, that their very presence there was one of the features that drove more people than normal to attend the stand, and there were a higher number of enquiries in respect of Gibraltar, by virtue only of having these two men fully dressed in the uniform of the day and answering questions.

830 I do have plans for more interactivity in the future, but I shall keep him in suspense until I announce it by way of a press release.

835 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker can he advise this House whether there have been any new business opportunities as a result of his new found initiative in terms of providing...? But no, the serious point is, it is an expensive venture. I know we did it when we were in Government. He has made a lot of emphasis on the fact that he now has live entertainment, but I think that seems to be the only, if I may say so, the only feature which is slightly different.

840 But the serious point is, can the Minister advise this House whether any new business opportunities have materialised since the FITUR fair?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, prefacing questions with a lot of narrative prompts me to have to answer the prefaced elements.

845 In the first place, I have said on many occasions that the costs of doing business abroad, by way of trade shows, etc have to be kept down and we need to work harder and we need to make sure that we can measure results.

850 The cost of this year, when we planned it, was £23,687. When they planned it in 2009, it was £53,770 without the re-enactment society. So I think we are getting value for our money in respect of the entertainment that we provided and as I told him, I think, Mr Speaker, that having the services of the re-enactment society, which is a group that provides an excellent entertainment value every morning on Saturday mornings, when we are sat down at the Piazza and enjoying a coffee and having them there to illustrate the different cultures between Spain – we are in Madrid – and Gibraltar. The fact that we can boast of a proud military heritage which sells in tourism circles is a fantastic thing and for the price that I have quoted is extremely negligible – which was 855 £160 and £258 – and considering that we were able to achieve that at £23,000, rather than £53,000, I think he should be applauding the re-enactment society rather than trying to nit-pick on the cost. (*Applause*)

860 **Hon. D J Bossino:** I am not sure that I have had an answer to my question. Once again, I will ask the question: have any business opportunities materialised? That was my question. If they have not, then that is the answer; maybe it is unreasonable to expect them to materialise in a relatively short space of time, but I am not sure I have had an answer to my supplementary question.

865 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, as the hon. Gentleman also knows, because he has quoted part of my press release, I believe I have several... eight or nine meetings which are with prospective business opportunities. The hon. Gentleman will know, because we also recently announced it from the Mons Calpe Suite that Pullmantur will be returning to Gibraltar this year with an additional nine calls next year. That was as a result of FITUR last year.

870 The meetings with these potential investors and potential business partners with Gibraltar were only held in January, at the end of January, of this year. It is only mid-February: it is *far too soon* to be able to say whether any one particular meeting would produce a result, but I shall be calling him to tell him, the moment that one does materialise.

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

Hon. D J Bossino: No, Mr Speaker. I am grateful.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

880

Gibibikes Details of rentals

885 **Acting Clerk:** Question No. 89, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for Transport provide details of rentals of Gibibikes further to his answer to Question 351/2012?

890 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

895 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with Question 91.

Gibibikes Update re provision

900

Acting Clerk: Question 91, the Hon. D J Bossino.

905 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Can the Minister for Transport provide this House with an update in relation to the ongoing provision of the Gibibikes service?

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

910 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the information presented to me shows that since my reply to the hon. Gentleman in May of last year, Gibibikes has 446 members in the scheme.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, since May 2012, a total of 27 new members enrolled in the scheme.

915 Further to my answer to Question 927 of last year, My Bike Station advised the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited that as a result of various issues, in particular an issue with My Bike Station's suppliers, they have, at present, been unable to roll out the second phase of the Gibibikes scheme as agreed with the previous administration.

As a result, Mr Speaker, we are currently engaged intensely with My Bike Station to try and resolve the issue and will make an announcement in due course.

920 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Just a point of clarification. Did the Minister, Mr Speaker, refer to ‘my’
bike station? Presumably that is the company that provides the stations?

Hon. N F Costa: Yes, Mr Speaker, My Bike Station Ltd is the company that supplied the
925 Gibibikes scheme to Gibraltar.

Hon. D J Bossino: And is he able to tell this House, Mr Speaker, what the issues are. I can
well understand that it could be subject to confidentiality.

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, at this stage, all I am prepared to say is precisely what I have,
930 which is, that when I came to the House on the last occasion, the question was asked, I was able to
happily say that we were at the point where issues had been resolved and agreed, and that the
Gibibikes scheme would be rolled... the second phase of the scheme would be rolled out.

Unfortunately, subsequently, we were advised by My Bike Station that they were having
935 various issues, the most important one was in respect of their supplies and that is the reason for the
delay.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, can the Hon. Minister say whether there is... and again, I
ask the question subject to the understanding that there may be certain sensitivities involved in this
940 matter, but is he able to say whether there is any prospect whatsoever that the issues are incapable
of being resolved?

I ask the question only if it is appropriate, to allow the Hon. Minister to allay any concerns that
the public may have of losing the service.

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, as I referred to the hon. Gentleman, my office, the Gibraltar Bus
945 Company and I have been working quite intensely on being able to resolve the issues. I am
hopeful that they may be resolvable. I am not entirely certain today whether they are, but I am
hopeful given that the previous administration spent around £320,000 and paid for the full roll-out
of the scheme, not just the first phase. In other words, Taxpayers’ money has already been spent
950 on something that has not been completed. I am hopeful that we will be able to resolve the
situation.

But as I say also in the answer, I will make a statement in due course, if the situation changes.

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

In relation to an earlier answer he gave, the question asks for details of rentals of Gibibikes
955 further to your answer in Question 351 and I noted the number of new members since then. I am
sorry, did the Hon. Minister – apologies – provide any information in respect of the rentals
themselves, as asked for in the question? I may well have missed it.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, if it assists, the question which I posed was further to my
960 Question 352, which I posed on 17th May, and the information provided in the scheduled answer
took us to March 2012.

Hon. N F Costa: Oh, I see.

Hon. D J Bossino: But we have not had, I do not think, the information from March to date.
965

Hon. N F Costa: No, that is correct, Mr Speaker. The drafter to the answer mistook ‘new
970 members enrolled’, rather than ‘rentals’. Given that he did ask the question and I have not
provided it, I shall make sure that he receives it very early on next week. I apologise for that, Mr
Speaker.

Hon. S M Figueras: I am grateful, Mr Speaker, and grateful certainly for the clarification.

Given that he has in fact provided information in relation to new members, which was
975 incidentally an issue that my hon. and learned friend, Mr Bossino, and myself had been discussing,
is the Minister able to confirm that Gibibikes is closed and has been so to new members for some
time and if so, for how long?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, I have not. I would not be able to tell him the exact time that it
980 has been closed; it has been closed for new members for quite some time for this very reason –
the reason being, of course, that because we have not been able to roll out the second phase, we have
not been able to obtain a higher number of bikes. As he also knows, unfortunately, the My Bike

985 Station, the stations did suffer initially, during the time that they were in office, from quite severe vandalism and it did damage quite a few bikes and we have been able to repair some, but not all of them. The solution here is to bring the second phase over, but until this issue is resolved, I am afraid that it would not make any sense to allow any further members, because all it will do is to make an already over-stretched system even worse.

Hon. S M Figueras: Indeed, Mr Speaker, I certainly concur with the observation.

990 In the context of the fact that Gibibikes is closed to new applications, is the Minister able to say whether applications are received, despite the fact that they cannot be processed and become memberships. Is the Minister able to say whether those applications are being taken and held, in order that... right... and in that case would the... and I am happy to give notice of the question for the next session, but I am mindful that there are two months that we are going to miss – is the Hon. Minister able to provide the information in respect of the number of applications received, along with the information he will providing next week in relation to the rentals?

1000 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I know that the Bus Company keeps the application, for the very simple reason that many times, of course, as is natural in Gibraltar, not only do they write to the Bus Company but they also write to me, or I am informed down Main Street that they have written in and that they have not been able to become members of the scheme.

1005 I would not know the number of applications received that have not been able to have been processed; I do know that the Bus Company always does reply to say that unfortunately, until the second scheme is rolled out, they will not be able to process their application, but there is of course a record of who has applied to become a member of the scheme.

Hon. S M Figueras: Mr Speaker, if I were to give notice to the Member, would the Bus Company be able to sift through those applications? It is just in order to provide an indication of the continued interest by the public in the service.

1010 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker, it would take some time no doubt, but like with every other question posed by the hon. Gentleman opposite, we will endeavour to make sure that we have the answer.

1015

Gibraltar Bus Company Limited Changes to employee complements

1020 **Mr Speaker:** Question 90.

Acting Clerk: Question No. 90, the Hon. D J Bossino.

1025 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Since his reply to Question No. 928/2012, can the Minister for Transport advise whether there have been any changes in the employee complements at the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited and, if so, can he provide details of what these changes have been, including promotions, demotions, appointments and terminations of employment, with details of the reasons given for such terminations, if any?

1030 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

1035 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, since my reply to Question No. 928/2012 and by referring the hon. Gentleman to the schedule that I handed over to him at the time, I wish to inform him that: there have been no demotions within the Company; there have been no terminations within the Company; there have been no appointments within the Company; there was one resignation within the Company; there was one promotion within the Company.

Firstly, I will take the last point, which is the promotion.

1040 Mr John Chacon was promoted from driver to bus inspector following an internal vacancy which arose following the retirement of one of the inspectors in September of last year.

A total of six drivers applied for the vacancy and an independent selection board, not comprised of any employee of the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited, was appointed.

A Mr Tarraf resigned.

1045 Mr Speaker, I also wish to inform the hon. Gentleman that he will notice that Mr Moreno, a supply driver, and Mr Francis Chipolina, who was the gentleman that retired in September did not appear in the schedule I handed over to him in November in my reply to Question 928, as a result of an oversight by the Gibraltar Bus Company, for which I apologise on their behalf.

1050 **Mr Speaker:** Is there any supplementary?
Next question.

Acting Clerk: Question No. 92.

1055 **Hon. D J Bossino:** There is a supplementary.
Mr Speaker, if the Minister has the schedule which he provided to me in answer to Question 928/2012 – (*Interjection*) Sorry, if the Minister for Transport has the schedule in front of him which he gave me in answer to Question 928/2012. (**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes.) I did a comparison between that schedule and the schedule he provided me later where I was able to see the movements between when he was elected into office and the position as at November 2012, and I
1060 I notice that there were six new employees. Two of them are Future Job Strategy – I imagine FJS stands for Future Job Strategy trainees – and I just wanted to know whether all these positions have been the subject of vacancies at the Employment and Training Board and whether they were also the subject of the same procedure that other people who have been promoted within the company had been subject to – in other words, they went to a board, they were interviewed and
1065 then recommendations were made to the Minister – whether the same procedure was followed. I do appreciate it is a double pronged question and I would be grateful for an answer.

Hon. N F Costa: Well, Mr Speaker, in the first place, I do have the schedule in relation to Question 928/2012, but he is referring me to two schedules, the one that I gave him in Question
1070 928 and a previous answer. I do not have both schedules, so I am not able to cross-reference one from the other.

What I will be able to tell him, however, is that clearly if there is any vacancy within the Bus Company or indeed any other of my responsibilities, any such vacancy will have to be notified and registered with the ETB in the usual way. In fact, in respect of the question that I answered to him
1075 right now there is the one promotion which was one from driver to bus inspector and that was conducted in exactly the way that the hon. Gentleman suggested which was of course a vacancy, internally, then a selection board independently, not from anyone from the Gibraltar Bus Company Limited and their recommendation to the Minister.

1080 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Presumably, Mr Speaker, the vacancy is also published at the Employment and Training Board not only internally.

Hon. N F Costa: Well, Mr Speaker, by what I mean internally is internal to the company and not to the world at large, because of course, if we were opening a vacancy internally and
1085 externally, we would have to advertise it internally and also in the *Panorama* or the *Gibraltar Chronicle*.

I think what the hon. Gentleman is referring to is the fact that there has to be a notification of vacancy at the ETB. That is under the Employment Regulations and that must be adhered to, of course as he knows as an Employment lawyer but advertising it is a choice for us whether we
1090 advertise it just internally, or internally and externally, and the policy is always that we advertise internally first and in this case, an internal applicant was successful.

Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, he may need notice of the question and if he does, of course I will give it, but I notice here the two individuals, which are presumably FJS – Future Job
1095 Strategy Scheme – and they are both drivers. Does he know, given that it is his Department... He may not know because of course Future Job Strategy is the responsibility of Minister Bossano, but does he know what kind of training these two individuals are receiving? Is this the case, for example, of the two individuals actually being allowed to drive a bus on routes or are they, for example, following an experienced driver on the bus and being shown the ropes?
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Can he just perhaps throw some light on that?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, I do not know the answer to that particular question. I do know that, for example – because we have had reason to discuss the Future Job Strategy cadets, as to how they are doing, for various reasons, when I meet approximately weekly with the management

1105 of the Bus Company – I know that, for example, the FJS painter and the FJS bike mechanic essentially shadow an ordinary employee.

But the question of the FJS driver has in fact never arisen during the course of my meetings with the Bus Company. Now that he has asked me, of course, I shall investigate. He can either give me notice of the question or he can write to me and I will write back to him.

1110 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, again, he may require notice of this particular question, but five of the individuals that are identified in the schedule he provided to me in November –

1115 **Hon. N F Costa:** Was that Question 928?

Hon. D J Bossino: Correct, Mr Speaker, the schedule which he has in front of him. None of these appeared in the schedule which he gave me, in fact after, because he did not give me a complete reply in November. So the information which he gave me in January represented the situation before the information which he gave me in November and none of these employees formed part of the employee complement when the Minister assumed office, so I can only assume, Mr Speaker, that these gentlemen... I think it is a fair assumption to make that these gentlemen were employed from outside the Gibraltar Bus Company complement.

1120 But if he needs notice of this question... It is just that I am following on from what he has ably described as the normal procedure, which is vacancy internally and usually the complement... rather the vacancies are filled by the employees currently employed within the Bus Company, but I have identified these five individuals who were not there in December and they were there in November, suggesting to me that they came from outside of the Company.

1125 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker. I do not have even a recollection on that. I am sure that it must have been discussed with me at some point in the course of our meetings, but I am afraid I cannot assist without notice of the question. If he does give me notice, of course I will make sure I have the answer or he can write to me and I will write back to him.

1130 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, I will do so, because there is one issue which concerns me which is that given the concern which the Hon. Minister has expressed in the past as to the cost of the Bus Company, I do see that now the Bus Company has two... it says 'G/Operatives'. I presume it is garage operatives, which I assume enjoy a higher salary than a driver. In fact, one new garage operative was employed. I can provide the name: the name is Antonio Rocca and I just wanted to know whether he recalls anything in relation to that particular appointment.

1135 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I wish the hon. Gentleman would stop assuming, because I am not entirely certain whether it would be the case that a general operative earns more than a driver.

Also, Mr Speaker, as the hon. Gentleman I am sure will appreciate, there are quite a few, many people employed in the Bus Company so that if he has specific questions on any particular position, given that he has had the answer to the questions previously, by way of two schedules, and he has been able to cross-reference both and there are some things that do not quite appear intelligible to him, if he asks those questions, fair enough, he can ask me, but without having both schedules before me – only having one in front of me – and given the number of people employed by the Bus Company – I do not want to assume anything, so he would have to give me notice of the question.

1140 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

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Small boat owners Provision of facilities

1160 **Acting Clerk:** Question No. 92, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Further to Question No. 689/2012, can the Minister for the Port state what stage the projects for the provision of facilities for small boat owners has reached?

1165 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with Questions 93 and 94.

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**Small boat owners project
Inter-ministerial committee**

1175 **Acting Clerk:** Question No. 93, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for the Port provide details of the membership of the inter-ministerial committee which is driving the small boat owners project forward and how many times it has met?

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

1185 **Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with Questions 92 and 94.

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**Small boat owners project
Project Manager**

Mr Speaker: Question 94.

1195 **Acting Clerk:** Question 94, the Hon. D J Bossino.

Hon. D J Bossino: Can the Minister for the Port advise who is managing the project for the provision of facilities for small boat owners?

1200 **Acting Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port.

Minister for Tourism, Commercial Affairs, Public Transport and the Port (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, the inter-ministerial committee is comprised by the Hon. Gilbert Licudi QC; the Hon. Dr John Cortes; the Hon. Joe Bossano; and myself.

1205 The inter-ministerial committee met once and appointed Mr Chris Riddell, Director of Strategic Planning, Projects and Business Development at the Ministry of Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice, as Project Manager. Mr Riddell enjoys the direct support of the Chief Technical Officer, Technical Services, the Captain of the Port and the Ministry for the Environment.

1210 Mr Riddell has reported directly to the Hon. Gilbert Licudi QC and to me, on the project. We in turn have communicated regularly with other members of the inter-ministerial committee, which tends to be during the course of Cabinet sessions on Mondays and have reported to the entire Cabinet on several occasions.

1215 Plans have been drawn up for the small boats marina. The project is at the: technical assessment phase in terms of analysing a wave study and commissioning geotechnical, bathymetrical and topographical surveys; environmental stage of commissioning the appropriate EIA; maritime navigation assessment phase.

1220 Consultation has been carried out with the respective representatives of Europlaza, Europort, the Mediterranean Rowing Club, the Calpe Rowing Club, the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club and Kings Wharf Limited.

1225 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, in respect of one of the answers given in relation to one of the questions, he has advised this House that Mr Riddell is the Project Manager. Mr Riddell, as I understand it, is also the – and I may be describing his position incorrectly or inaccurately – the CEO of the Postal Service. Is this in addition to that?

Hon. N F Costa: Mr Speaker, as far as I understand the position, no. As I said in the course of my answer, he is now the Director of Strategic Planning, Projects and Business Development at

1230 the Ministry of my hon. and learned colleague, Mr Gilbert Licudi, so he was... he did fulfil the
position that the hon. Gentleman described, but that was at least six or seven months ago, and no
longer.

1235 **Hon. D J Bossino:** So presumably, Mr Speaker, Mr Riddell now conducts these duties
exclusively and my question, Mr Speaker, is what are the terms under which he is employed for
this purpose? What does he receive in terms of remuneration? How long is he employed for? That
is the type of information which I would like to hear from the hon. Gentleman, because in fact it
is, I think, that type of information which... some of that information not only in relation to Mr
Riddell, but I think in relation to others, and I stand to be corrected, is in fact already publicised in
1240 the Government website for consultancy services. This may not fit the bill as far as that is
concerned, but I would be interested to know whether the Minister is able to provide this
information to this House.

**Minister for Education, Financial Services, Gaming, Telecommunications and Justice
(Hon. G H Licudi):** Mr Speaker, perhaps I can assist.

1245 Mr Riddell works directly for my Ministry and is based at my Ministry at Europort. His terms
continue to be exactly the same as they were when he was CEO at the Post Office, so he works to
exactly the same terms and conditions of employment, except he fulfils now a different role for
Government, within my Ministry.

1250 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, can the Hon. the Minister for Education – and other
Departments, (*Laughter and interjections*) I am not going to go through them now – for the
Government! – can he confirm that he is receiving exactly the same remuneration as he was
receiving as CEO of the Post Office? (*Interjection*) Yes, that is why I am asking for specific
1255 confirmation in respect of what I think is an important point, and also can he tell me what that is?

Hon. G H Licudi: Well, Mr Speaker, I can tell him that he is receiving exactly the same as he
used to get when he was engaged by the previous administration as CEO for the Post Office. I do
not have the information off-hand as to what those terms exactly are. We will be happy to provide
the answer if the hon. Member were to ask, but I certainly do not have the information off the top
1260 of my head.

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, this is clearly a highly technical project and given that Mr
Riddell is the Project Manager is the... I am now directing the question presumably to Mr Licudi.
Is the Minister satisfied that Mr Riddell – who I know certainly formed part of our profession as a
1265 barrister at one point in time and I have dealt with him professionally – has the required technical
knowledge, experience and qualifications to run a project of this nature?

Hon. G H Licudi: Mr Speaker, to answer the question directly, I and the Government are
entirely satisfied and have full confidence in Mr Riddell being able to fulfil this position.

1270 I can also by the way of background say that Mr Riddell is an engineer, with wave and coastal
engineering studies, has been a successful project manager in both naval and building construction
projects, a lawyer practised in the building and construction industry, has both Government
finance and project finance experience, has unquestionable local boating experience and is a keen
underwater environmentalist, hence could not be more befitting for this project.

1275 **Several Members:** Hear, hear. (*Applause*) (*Laughter and interjections*)

Hon. D J Bossino: Mr Speaker, does the Minister know... Oh, he is also from Catalan Bay –
1280 that probably qualifies him for the position. (*Laughter and interjections*)

A Member: Immediately qualified!

1285 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Mr Speaker, does the Minister know and is he able to advise this House
when was the last time that... only because I know this particular gentleman and it surprises me
that he should be in charge of such a technical project. I was not aware, Mr Speaker, of the detail
of his qualifications, but one may have a qualification which one has not practised for many years.

So can I ask the Minister whether he knows the last time that Mr Riddell was involved in a
project of this nature?

1290 **Hon. G H Licudi:** Mr Speaker, if the question is when was Mr Riddell involved in a small
boats marina in Gibraltar, the answer is I just do not know, but I think he was not, as far as I am
aware. (*Interjections*) But let us remember that Mr Riddell has not been engaged as the engineer
for this project or as the architect for this project, or to carry out the mathematics study or the
1295 waste study or anything. He has been engaged to manage the project and he has got eminent
qualifications to do precisely that. It is the Government's choice and the Government is entirely
satisfied that Mr Riddell is the right man to manage this particular project and to bring together the
expertise that will be required in terms of the engineering, the maritime issues that will arise, so
whenever professional requirements arise, those professionals are being brought in and will
continue to be brought in to this project. Mr Riddell is managing the project.

1300 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman has listed an impressive array of
qualifications on the part of Mr Riddell: engineering; a lawyer; experienced with construction
contracts. But can he perhaps tell this House when was the last time... We do not know, perhaps
1305 he does have a lot of experience in project management, but when was the last time that he
actually managed a project of any technical nature? Also, does he know how many projects Mr
Riddell has actually managed of a technical nature in his career?

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker on a Point of Order, if I may just be allowed,
1310 before the hon. Gentleman replies, I think it is fair, given that we are debating an individual who is
not in this House and who cannot defend himself, that I should also point out that Mr Riddell has
also been a teacher at the Gibraltar Technical College, so that all of those who are listening can
also have that important aspect of his CV in mind.

1315 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I can assure and indeed I would not want anybody
listening to this to get the impression that we are actually focusing on Mr Riddell, the person; we
are talking, we are really focusing on the qualifications of the individual for the job. He happens to
be Mr Riddell; it could have been somebody else. We are not attacking the individual; we are just
really exploring with the Gentlemen opposite the qualifications and in fact what experience he has
1320 in the past in relation to project management.

Perhaps at this stage now he can answer the question that I have asked.

1325 **Hon. G H Licudi:** The question, as I seem to recall, when has Mr Riddell managed or recently
managed a project of a technical nature? Although I do not know exactly what the involvement
was, my understanding is that Mr Riddell was the project manager for St Peter's building which
was done during the time that the hon. Members were in office. That was a building project which
was certainly of a technical nature, but it involved a building.

1330 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes and my second supplementary – I asked two – was does he know
how many projects Mr Riddell has in fact managed during his career?

Hon. G H Licudi: No, Mr Speaker, I do not know that.

1335 **Mr Speaker:** I do not think the Hon. the Leader of the Opposition can really expect an answer
to that question to arise from the three questions that we have been dealing with, but if he were to
give separate notice, I am sure that the information can be provided.

1340 **Hon. D A Feetham:** No. Absolutely, well, Mr Speaker, I am not insisting on the answer and
indeed, if we were particularly keen on obtaining that information, we will ask a question, but it is
not unusual, Mr Speaker, for questions to be asked. We were talking about this gentleman's
qualifications, the Government was extolling this gentleman's qualifications for this particular
project and I focused not on the academic qualifications, but of course on his experience to do the
job. If they cannot provide the answer, they cannot provide the answer. We will provide notice, if
we require it.

1345 **Hon. G H Licudi:** Mr Speaker, what I can say is that Mr Riddell was chosen by the party
opposite to manage, to be the Chief Executive of the Post Office and I am sure that there were
projects in relation to the Post Office which Mr Riddell managed. So I do not know what type of
projects... But he says 'what projects has he managed ever in his lifetime?' (*Interjections*) I am
1350 sure there were a number of them. As I understand it, he seems to have managed the Post Office
very well and certainly to the liking of the Hon. the Chief Minister and the Minister who was
responsible for the Post Office previously.

1355 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, but Mr Speaker – I do not really want to take it much further than this – but does the hon. Gentleman not accept that there is a world of difference in managing a Post Office to project managing a project as technical as this and of this nature? Does he not accept that?

Hon. G H Licudi: Yes of course there is a world of difference, Mr Speaker, but the Government is entirely satisfied.

1360 What I can say, in relation to projects which Mr Riddell has managed recently and particularly since the time that he has moved to my Ministry, is that one of the first projects that he managed was the extension to Notre Dame School. That was a project which was managed excellently, which has resulted in a magnificent extension to that school, a much needed extension to that school. It was done in record time over the summer months, it has been done to a very high specification and all that was managed by Mr Riddell.

1365 Mr Riddell is also managing, by the way, the extension that we are carrying out to St Martin's School and I hope the hon. Members will welcome that. Building is to start imminently in respect of that extension. Preliminary works have been done in terms of clearing the site. We have in fact moved a couple of trees from the site – one of them has been replanted at Alameda Estate. That was an exercise that was carried out over a weekend, so the site has been prepared and that is another project that Mr Riddell is managing for the Government. *(Applause)*

Mr Speaker: Any other question?

1375 **Hon. D J Bossino:** Yes, Mr Speaker, I have a supplementary to the first of the trilogy of questions which I was asked to pose and it relates to what stage the project for the provision of facilities for small boat owners has reached. Now, is the Minister able at this stage to advise this House as to when he expects the project to complete?

1380 **Hon. N F Costa:** To complete?

Hon. D J Bossino: Yes, complete.

Hon. N F Costa: Two thousand...

1385 **Hon. D J Bossino:** On the last occasion that I asked this question which was in September of 2012, which is now five months ago, he did tell me then that it was at the EIA stage and I just wondered... I think he has answered in his first answer what progress there has been since then, but I just wondered, Mr Speaker, whether he has a date when he envisages the project will actually finish.

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Hon. N F Costa: No, Mr Speaker, as I told him on the last occasion, we do not have an exact date, but it will certainly be before the next General Election – as we also said on the last occasion.

Mr Speaker: Any other question?

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ADJOURNMENT

1400 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, before I move the adjournment, I recognise the Hon. Mr Caruana back in the Chamber. I do not think I have missed him quite so much as I have this afternoon! *(Laughter)*

May I now please move that the House do adjourn to Thursday, 21st February at 3.00 p.m.

1405 **Mr Speaker:** I now propose a question, which is that this House do now adjourn to Thursday, 21st February at 3.00 p.m.

I now put the question, which is that this House do now adjourn to Thursday, 21st February at 3.00 p.m. Those in favour? **(Members: Aye.)** Those against? Passed.

1410 The House will now adjourn to Thursday, 21st February at 3.00 p.m.

The House adjourned at 5.40 p.m.