



PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

AFTERNOON SESSION: 3.40 p.m. – 4.57 p.m.

Gibraltar, Friday, 9th September 2016

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The Gibraltar Parliament

The Parliament met at 3.40 p.m.

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

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

Order of the Day

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Standing Order 7(1) suspended to lay papers

Clerk: Meeting of Parliament, Friday, 9th September 2016.
Suspension of Standing Orders, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

5

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, I beg to move under Standing Order 7(3) to suspend Standing Order 7(1) in order to proceed with the laying on the Table of a Report.

10

Mr Speaker: Those in favour? (**Members:** Aye.) Those against? Carried.

Clerk: Papers to be laid, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

Tribute to Mr Derek McGrail

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, before I proceed to lay the report on the table, can I ask the House to reflect for a moment on the sad passing recently of a member of the local Press Corps, Mr Derek McGrail who was for many years, the Editor of one of our local newspapers, *The Vox* which recently became an online only medium.

15

He passed away over the period of the summer break and I am sure the whole House will want to reflect on the work that Derek did in the period that he was with us as a journalist, a member of the press.

20

Members of the press discharge an extraordinarily important function in getting the message of politicians to the general public and in challenging and testing the message that we wish to put out. Derek was an exemplary member of that corps. He will have had contact with all Members of the House in that context and I am sure that we will all sadly miss him. He was well known, Mr Speaker, amongst all of us for turning up to the most formal function in the most informal of gear, and well loved by all of us for that.

25

I have no doubt that the whole House will want to associate itself with my call for reflection on his passing.

**Celebrating National Week –
Welcome to friends of Gibraltar from other Parliaments**

30 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, can I also, before I move to lay on the Table, can I recognise in the Gallery a lot of friends of Gibraltar from many other Parliaments – not just from the United Kingdom Parliament, but also from the European Parliament – who are with us to enjoy the celebration of National Week, many who are returning to celebrate National Day with us, some who are coming for the first time; all of them, however, people who have long been looking out for Gibraltar and the issues that concern this community beyond our shores.

35 They are, of course, not just welcome in Gibraltar for these events, but also in this Parliament, given that we are lucky enough to be sitting this week, just ahead of our National Day celebrations.

PAPERS TO BE LAID

40 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the Table the Annual Report of the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority for the year ended 31st March 2016.

Mr Speaker: Ordered to lie.

45 **Clerk:** The Hon. the Minister for Health, the Environment, Energy and Climate Change.

Minister for Health, the Environment, Energy and Climate Change (Hon. Dr J E Cortes): Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the Table the audited accounts for the Gibraltar Electricity Authority for the financial years ending 31st March 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

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

Clerk: The Hon. the Minister for Education, Justice & International Exchange of Information.

55 **Minister for Education and Justice & International Exchange of Information (Hon. G H Licudi):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the Table the Annual Report of the Parole Board for the years 2014 and 2015.

Mr Speaker: Ordered to lie.

60 **Clerk:** The Hon. the Minister for Business and Employment.

Minister for Business and Employment (Hon. N F Costa): Mr Speaker, I have the honour to lay on the Table the Employment Survey Report 2015.

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

Questions for Oral Answer

TRANSPORT, TRAFFIC AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

Q385/2016

**Disabled bays –
Plans regarding unauthorised use**

Clerk: We now continue with Answers to Oral Questions.

We commence with Question 385, the Hon. L F Llamas.

70

Hon. L F Llamas: Mr Speaker, what plans does Government have to take action against the unauthorised use of disabled bays?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

75

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, I want to start by condemning the improper and unconscionable abuse of disabled bays by unauthorised drivers. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

80

Government is aware of the current unauthorised use of disabled bays which appears to be mainly by foreign vehicles. We are constantly reviewing this unacceptable and abusive behaviour as part of the provision for Blue Badges under the Sustainable Traffic, Transport and Parking Plan and trust that the new parking enforcement arrangements will ameliorate the situation.

85

I want to end, Mr Speaker, by saying that anyone who uses a disabled bay without authority should be ashamed of themselves. (*Banging on desks*)

A Member: Hear, hear.

Q386/2016

**Mid-town Small Boats Marina –
Publication of list of owners; annual rental income**

Clerk: Question 386, the Hon. L F Llamas.

90

Hon. L F Llamas: Mr Speaker, does Government intend to publish a list of the owners, together with details of the vessels registered to each berth and the annual rental income payable at Mid-Town Small Boats Marina?

95

Clerk: Answer, the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, publication of such lists breaches data protection legislation. Allocation of berths has been carried out strictly by the berthing waiting lists and in accordance with the Small Vessels (Mooring Control) Rules 2016 and to those applicants without Government arrears.

100

Annual rental income information will be managed by the elected Mid Harbour Small Boats Marine Association in line with the constitution of the Association.

Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, May I?

105 Mr Speaker, the Small Boats Marina has cost the Taxpayer £24 million. That is £37,000 per berth. That is the cost to the Taxpayer.

110 Has the Hon. the Minister received advice to the effect that providing this information is actually in breach of the Data Protection Act and I mean legal advice from the Attorney General's Chambers. Because quite frankly, I cannot see – and I speak from my own knowledge as a lawyer – that it could possibly breach the Data Protection Act to provide details of the owners of the berths who have benefitted from these berths to the tune of £37,000 of Taxpayer's money per berth.

A Member: Hear, hear.

115

Minister for Education and Justice & International Exchange of Information (Hon. G H Licudi): Mr Speaker, it is the view that has been taken by the Government.

The view that has been taken by the Government is the disclosure of this information *would* be in breach of the Data Protection Act.

120 The hon. Member says that the Marina has cost £24 million. That is correct, that is £24 million very well spent. Or is it that the hon. Member has not made his way round the Marina as the rest of Gibraltar has? Is it that he has not seen the 700 boats that are now currently berthed at that Marina? Is it that he has not seen how Catalan Bay, Sandy Bay and Eastern Beach is, every single day of the summer, teeming with boats, with families, with children, enjoying something which they were never able to do when they were in office? Has he not seen that? (Banging on desks) (A Member: Hear, hear.)

125

Certainly money well spent, certainly we would have done it again, but what we certainly cannot do is disclose the names of the berth holders. (Banging on desks)

130 **A Member:** Hear, hear.

Hon. D A Feetham: Well, Mr Speaker, of course it is a jolly good idea to provide berths at the cost of £37,000 per berth to everybody that wants one, Mr Speaker. But the reality is that when you govern, there are priorities and the Government has spent, Mr Speaker, let me remind them again, £750 million in four years, which is more than we spent in 16 years when we were in Government, Mr Speaker.

135

And it is about priorities. There are many more priorities that the Government could have spent £24 million, rather than providing berths at a cost of £37,000. A pop, Mr Speaker, for each individual and therefore it is incumbent on the Government in these circumstances, to come to this House and to provide the information that allows the Opposition to hold it to account. Because we want to know who has benefitted, Mr Speaker, of this largesse of £37,000 per berth.

140

And, Mr Speaker, he has not answered the question, because the question was has the Government obtained advice. I am not interested whether the Government collectively, as a Government, has taken the view that it infringes data protection, I am interested in whether the Government has obtained legal advice to that effect. That is the question.

145

Mr Speaker: May I warn the Hon. Minister that in answering the previous question, he was debating.

150 **Hon. G H Licudi:** Yes, thank you, Mr Speaker.

Of course it is about priorities. Of course being in Government is about exercising judgement and of course it is about deciding how we spend Taxpayers' money. And the Marina has not been started in the last few months; it was finished a few months ago. But it was started a couple of years ago during the first term in office. And let me remind the hon. Member, how

155 many was it? Almost 70% of the electorate voted to return this Government to office (*Banging on desks.*) in the last election! (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.)

Why did they do that? They did that because they saw that we were building the Marina at a cost of £24 million and therefore the electorate endorsed that, 100% endorsed that. They also saw that we built a university. They also saw that we built two new schools and everything else that we did in the first term of office, something which no other Government has done in the history of Gibraltar (*Interjection*)

160 And let me also remind the hon. Member, when he criticises this, that it is not just the berth holders that are enjoying the 700 berths. Has he not seen the road and the facilities that are provided there? Has he not seen the people fishing, giving back the sea to the people after a lot of reclamation has been done and denied access to the sea during the 16 years that they were in Office? Has he not seen that, has he not gone with his family to enjoy what every single Gibraltar is now enjoying as a result of the policy that we have taken? And has he not seen the super yachts that now visit Gibraltar and –

170 **Mr Speaker:** No, no, order. Super yachts have nothing to do with the Small Boats Marina. (*Interjections*) You are beginning to debate once again and you are not answering the question, you are actually asking questions yourself.

Hon G H Licudi: Mr Speaker, the project that we have built was for a small boats marina for 700 berths, a public promenade with fishing facilities and a super yacht wharf. That was the project. That is what we spent £24 million on – not on just the berths.

175 So when the hon. Member just divides the figures by 700 and comes up with that figure, he seems to forget that we have a public amenity there. And not just a public amenity, a commercial amenity also for the Port, which is actually generating revenue, something which Gibraltar has never had, the possibility of attracting super yachts to berth in Gibraltar for a while and to be able to benefit, for the whole of Gibraltar to be able to benefit.

180 We are very proud of what we did, we are very proud of the commitment and so is the rest of Gibraltar. (*Banging on desks*)

185 **Several Members:** Hear, hear.

Mr Speaker: The Hon. Roy Clinton. A supplementary question, I take it?

Hon. R M Clinton: Yes, it is.

190 Mr Speaker, I will be brief and I would be grateful if the Minister could advise this House, whether he has personally been allocated a berth in the Small Boats Marina?

Hon. G H Licudi: Sorry, whether I have been personally allocating berths or allocated a berth?

195 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Allocated a berth.

Hon. G H Licudi: Yes, Mr Speaker, I do have a berth.

I had a berth in Water Gardens Marina and all berth holders at Water Gardens Marina were offered the opportunity of transferring to the new marina, which I did.

200 I was also, as it happens, on the Port waiting list, irrespective of the berth that I had in the Small Boats Marina, I was number four hundred and something on the list. So given that we have 700 berths, I would inevitably have been able to enjoy, as with the rest of the Gibraltarians, the right to be allocated a berth, in accordance with the criteria set out in the Small Vessels Mooring Controls Rules, which has been strictly controlled by the Captain of the Port, strictly controlled by the Captain of the Port and his team.

205

And we set out, for the first time in legislation, how that criteria was to be adopted. We are 100% convinced that that criteria has been faithfully adopted by the Port Authority and that those who were entitled to a berth – and let me say including myself – have been allocated the berths.

210

Mr Speaker: Next question.

Hon. R M Clinton: Mr Speaker, if I may just ask one more supplementary on that. While the question has been answered, I wanted to be absolutely clear in my mind that while it is the... I understand the position of Government, that it is not necessary under the Data Protection Act, or not possible under the Data Protection Act to release the names of berth holders, as it is the view of the Opposition that it should be possible to release those names, that no advice has definitively been received from the Attorney General that those names should not be released under the Data Protection Rules?

215

220

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): No, Mr Speaker that is not the position. The hon. Gentleman has not got it right and he needs to understand what the position is.

I have told them before but of course because of the politics that they want to do of this, the answers that they get are not relevant because they are not going to assist them in what they want to do.

225

I have told the House before, Mr Speaker, in the context of lists relating to housing, that the Data Protection Commissioner has told us that we are not to publish lists, because those lists with names are not things that the Government, as a data controller, should publish.

Whether it is a list of people who have taken berths at the Small Boats Marina, whether it is a list of people who have put their names down on the housing waiting list for 2 RKB or 3 RKB or any other permutation, the advice the Government has from the Data Commissioner in Gibraltar, is that that, as a data controller, the Government cannot publish, Mr Speaker.

230

So it is not the Attorney General, Mr Speaker, it is actually the authority itself that has the obligation to protect the information that we have gone to and who has given us that advice. And if, Mr Speaker, they do not like it, they might like to reflect upon the fact that that was a piece of legislation that they brought to this House that they enacted in this House, the Data Commissioner that they appointed in keeping with European obligations and that therefore, we have to comply with.

235

So, Mr Speaker, I think it is abundantly clear that the position of the Government is based on advice, not from the Attorney, it is based on advice from the party that determines and has in law the right to determine whether or not something being published is in breach of the Act or not in breach of the Act.

240

Now, Mr Speaker, if what they are saying is that we should publish just because they want lists even though we put ourselves in breach of their law, I would not be surprised. Because given how they are taken to act contrary to the things that they used to do when they were in power, I would not be surprised to see them ask us to act against one of their own Acts.

245

Mr Speaker, but now that I am on my feet it may be a propitious moment to add to the things that the hon. Gentleman, my hon. Ministerial colleague, was saying in the context of these answers relating to the Small Boats Marina.

250

Because if the issue, Mr Speaker, is cost and the list should be published because they want to know who has benefitted from the costs that we have incurred, Mr Speaker, and who has advised us that we cannot publish the list, well Mr Speaker, I must tell them the cost is (a) very close to just double the amount that they sunk in a hole in the ground at the Theatre Royal, for which there has been no benefit to anyone.

255

But principally, the people who have benefitted from the Small Boats Marina are the people who have been on waiting lists for the 16 years that they were in Government. People who were laid up with their boats not in the water (*Banging on desks*) for the 16 years that they were in

Government, and as for the amount of money that we spend, Mr Speaker, we spend it on this and all the many other great things that we did, including the creation of homes for our people, which when it is convenient to them, Mr Speaker, they urge us to do more of because there is a question on the Order Paper from the Hon. Mr Clinton, asking us when we are going to get on with the housing estates. So, on the one hand they tell us not to spend and on the other they are going to ask us when are we going to spend. On the one hand they tell us that Brexit is the most important thing and we must not complete our manifesto and on the other hand they tell us that we have not completed our manifesto. *(Interjection)* Mr Speaker, it is such obvious contradictory politics that even the most basic journalist could see through it, and the electorate certainly has. *(Banging on desks)*

A Member: Hear, hear.

Q387/2016

**Gibraltar Development Plan –
Date for completion of update; publication of the revised plan**

270

Clerk: Question 387, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Minister say when will the Gibraltar Development Plan update be complete and when will the revised plan be published?

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Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, instructions have been given to commence a review of the 2009 Development Plan. The detailed work is yet to commence so it is therefore not possible to provide an indication of the time that this process will take at such an early stage.

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The House will recall that the precursor of the 2009 Development Plan was dated 1991.

Q388/2016

**Installation of speed cameras –
Date for coming into service**

285

Clerk: Question 388, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: In a Press Release of 9th November last year, Government announced that all infrastructure work for the installation of speed cameras had been completed and that combined with a review of the speed limits, the measure would go a long way in reducing the incidents of indiscriminate speeding which will no doubt make our roads safer for all.

290

The cameras do not appear yet to be in service. When does the Government believe that they will be in service?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

295

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, this project is currently at a very advanced stage and it is hoped that the cameras will become operational in the next few months.

300 The Traffic (Amendment) Bill, Mr Speaker is in the agenda and may be proceeded upon in this meeting of Parliament. These statutory amendments are required for the implementation of the speed cameras.

305 **Hon. T N Hammond:** So, Mr Speaker, just referring to the Press Release by the hon. Gentleman, issued on 9th November last year, when he said that the project is expected to go live in early 2016 after a period of public awareness. Does the Hon. the Minister agree with me that the project is now somewhat delayed from Government's initial expectations as to when that project will be delivered?

310 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, as I replied in my answer, without this Bill going to Parliament it is impossible for us to proceed with the speed cameras and that is the reason why they have taken that bit longer.

Q389/2016
Speed limits –
Publication of review

Clerk: Question 389, the Hon. T N Hammond.

315 **Hon. T N Hammond:** Mr Speaker, has the Government completed its review of speed limits announced seven months ago, in fact now nine months ago and if so, is it intending to publish that review?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

320 **Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, the Government can confirm that the speed limit review of all existing roads in Gibraltar has been completed by the Highways Section of the Technical Services Department.

325 The review has drawn on data obtained from multiple speed radars erected around Gibraltar's roads, as part of the development of the Sustainable Traffic, Transport and Parking Plan. Implementation of the speed limit review will be phased and it is therefore not considered prudent to publish the document whilst works are ongoing.

330 As part of this review I can now confirm that the Technical Services Department in consultation with the Royal Gibraltar Police, have already effected changes to the current speed limits from Waterport Roundabout to Coaling Island Roundabout through North Mole Road, Europort Avenue and Bishop Caruana Road. This has seen the existing speed limits in the area increased from the previous 30 km per hour to 40 km per hour.

335 Full details of all changes to existing speed limits will be advised to the general public as each phase of works is implemented.

Q390/2016

**Road resurfacing programme –
Roads resurfaced since 1st January 2016**

340 **Clerk:** Question 390, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Transport say what roads have been resurfaced as part of the road resurfacing programme since 1st January 2016?

345 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, as part of Her Majesty's Government's Highways Resurfacing Plan for 2016-2017, sections of Reclamation Road and Queensway at the entrance and exit points to the new Midtown multi-storey car park have been completed resurfaced.

The Technical Services Department are currently finalising the contract documents for further resurfacing works at both the Sundial Roundabout and the north section of Cumberland Road.

The tender for these works will be announced imminently and will see a continuation of Government's ongoing commitment to Highways resurfacing which, in 2015-2016 saw the resurfacing of the southern section of Queensway from the Dockyard roundabout until the entrance to Commonwealth Park, as well as resurfacing of the roundabouts leading to Morrison's supermarket on Europort Avenue.

Q391/2016

**Redibike scheme –
When it is due to be made available to the public**

360 **Clerk:** Question 391, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: Further to Question 74/2016, can the Minister for Transport say when the 'Redibike' scheme first announced by Government nearly a year ago now during the election campaign, will actually be ready and available to the public?

365 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, the Government is presently considering options to outsource the management, running and maintenance of the scheme by a third party. We are waiting to carry out the final infrastructural works until the scheme is absolutely ready to launch to avoid unnecessary damage to the hardware.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, to quote the Minister, in August, in fact, last year, he said:

I am pleased to announce that the Government received a consignment of bicycles and the associated infrastructure on 5th August. All enabling works for the bicycle stations has now been completed...

It would seem therefore, from the Ministers answers, that there are still infrastructural works to be completed and does the Minister really believe it is reasonable that 13 months ago now when this scheme was announced imminent and to be launched early in 2016, that in fact the scheme has still not been launched.

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, the scheme, as the hon. Member rightly says, the bicycles were received back in August and they are kept ready for the launch of the project. In fact the reason why a very small part of the infrastructure has not been completed is because there was a need for some negotiation as some land was privately owned. One of the locations where the bicycles were meant to be situated the land did not belong to Government; hence we needed to negotiate with the private company.

In doing so we have decided to relocate the bicycles to a nearby location and that is the reason why the infrastructure part of the project has not been completed.

Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, surely if the Hon. the Minister makes an announcement and he says he has received a consignment of bicycles and their associated infrastructure and he says, all enabling works for the bicycle station have now been completed and we are aiming to be in a position to be able to launch by early 2016, surely he must have undertaken all the necessary enquiries to determine whether the land on which that infrastructure is going to be located is land available to the Government.

I mean otherwise, Mr Speaker, what he has clearly done is used this as an election gimmick, because this is something that he announced, as I understand it, during the course of the election campaign. Now does he accept that it was an election gimmick?

Minister for Financial Services and Gaming (Hon. A J Isola): Mr Speaker, of course not. The hon. Members opposite seem too keen to clutch at any straw to grab a stick and if the hon. Member takes the trouble to walk around Europort area, he will see that the area where the bikes were previously placed has since actually been dug up and it is in the process of being re-laid.

Consequently, that kit and that infrastructure could not be left so if you have a walk round you will see that it is still dug up, the new paving has not been laid and the infrastructure works cannot be set in. That is simple. No need to make accusations, allegations of cons or tricks as the hon. Member continues to do. There is a very simple explanation, if he asks the question, he will get the answer.

Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, with respect to the hon. Gentleman that does not answer the question unless, of course, the hon. Gentleman is confusing the answer that he has given.

As I understand it, the answer that he has given is, we are not able to complete this because part of the land on which these stations or some of the infrastructure has been located does not belong to the Government and the Government is negotiating.

The point that I am making is, well surely that was something that was known to the Government, and to the Minister, when the Minister made his announcement with great fanfare in November of last year, during the course of the General Election. I think it is a fair enough question for me to ask him, well look if you knew that at the time and therefore you must have known that you could never have met that deadline, was it an election gimmick?

That is the question and perhaps he can enlighten me on that.

Hon. A J Isola: Yes of course, Mr Speaker.

The land on which the pavement areas which were going to be used for the siting is partly public and partly private, so it is public and private land. The developer has agreed to re-pave the entire area and consequently the area where the bikes are going to be situated is part public and part private and those discussions are ongoing.

So there is no misrepresentation, there is no secret, it is a simple fact of the paving being done and therefore the statement made, aiming to be ready in early 2016, was true and accurate at the time it was made but since the new paving works have started in the last months, it has delayed the implementation of this programme. It is quite simple.

430 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, if I may ask the Minister, in the original statement there was talk of a private sector sponsor I believe Gib Oil and I believe they would be sponsoring Phase 1 comprising 105 bicycles and 120 docking points spread over 11 locations.

I would be grateful if the Minister can confirm that Gib Oil will be meeting the cost of Phase 1 in full or is it on a fifty-fifty basis and does he have an estimate of what Phase 2 might cost?
435 Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, if I may rise to deal with that question. I understand that Gib Oil paid all of the capital cost of the bikes and of the ancillary kit (*Interjection*) and the installation of kit, the hon. Gentleman will be pleased to know. But I am
440 grateful that the hon. Gentleman has opened the issue of election gimmicks, Mr Speaker, because I do recall many of them. Not in the manifesto headed 'Strongest Foundations' but in the one that dealt with the issue of – Mr Speaker

Mr Speaker: Yes, I am beginning to get a bit hot under the collar –
445

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman... Mr Speaker, you will know and you will have seen for longer than me –

Mr Speaker: Hon. Members are debating –
450

Hon. Chief Minister: No, Mr Speaker –

Mr Speaker: Let me tell the Chief Minister one thing. I had intended to make this afternoon a statement as to my attitude and how I intended to proceed in future Question Times. I did not
455 do so because there were Members of Parliament from the UK here present and therefore it was not an appropriate occasion.

But I must insist that hon. Members do not debate at Question Time. I have not got any power unfortunately to curtail the length of answers from Ministers but, of course, I urge them to make them reasonably short and certainly not to go back to what happened at previous
460 elections, I mean that is past history.

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker seems not to want to recall the way that this Parliament is modelled on the British Parliament, where although in answers one is not debating, one is allowed to deal with the politics of the subject. Mr Speaker, the Government will deal with the
465 politics of the subject brought up by the Opposition in answering their questions in the context of answers and that is why, Mr Speaker, I want to remind the hon. Gentleman that there were many gimmicks at the last General Election. None of them, Mr Speaker, in the manifesto entitled 'The Strongest Foundation'. Many of them, Mr Speaker, in the policy booklet that they referred to as a manifesto and all of them, Mr Speaker, in the context of the campaign that they run and the public demonstrated that they saw through them with the result of the last election.
470

And this Parliament, Mr Speaker, is having to see that a lot of what we were treated to at the last General Election, they had absolutely no intention of seeing through, because the minute that the votes were counted and they were licking their very many wounds, they abandoned all of the arguments that they were deploying.

475 An election gimmick, Mr Speaker, it was to try and play with the security of our nation and its fuel supply for the future. An election gimmick, Mr Speaker, it was to talk about the finances of our nation as if there were an issue with them, Mr Speaker. An election gimmick it was, Mr Speaker, it was to present to people a short booklet that frankly in any other democracy they would have been ashamed to present as a serious programme for Government.

480 Those, Mr Speaker, were the gimmicks deployed at the last General Election, everything that we said we would deliver, we will.

Q392/2016

MOT tests –

Time for each test; number conducted

Clerk: Question 392, the Hon. T N Hammond.

485 **Hon. T N Hammond:** Mr Speaker, could the Minister say how long an MOT test takes on average and how many have been conducted by day, on each day since 1st January 2016?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

490 **Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, the Roadworthiness test takes 20 minutes on average, except for lorries and buses which take 40 minutes. There are an average of 20 tests carried out per lane, per day.

The statistics that have been requested regarding the number of MOTs conducted since 1st January 2016 is available online for the general public.

Q393/2016

**Southern Waters of Gibraltar Management Scheme –
Installation of oil interceptors in storm drains**

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Clerk: Question 393, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Government say if oil interceptors are now installed in all storm drains, as recommended by the Southern Waters of Gibraltar Management Scheme?
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Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, with respect to the public storm water system, the Technical Services Department works very closely with the Ministry for the Environment to review areas where there is a risk of oil contamination entering the system.
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The Government can confirm that oil separators or interceptors are being placed whenever new public storm drains are laid.

510 In fact as part of the recent developments at both Mons Calpe Mews and Beach View Terraces, three separate oil separators have been placed at the following locations: Eastern Beach Road by the beach multi-storey car park; at the east side or east end of Devil's Tower Road by the new roundabout currently under construction and the Commercial Mole Road by Mons Calpe Mews.

515 We would also like to take this opportunity to confirm that there are several existing oil interceptors at various locations around Gibraltar which are strategically placed to reduce the risk of oil contamination entering the storm water system.

520 These interceptors are located at Varyl Begg Estate, the ex-coach park by the Mons Calpe Estate interceptor pit, Sandpits Car Park, by the Park and Ride on Devil's Tower Road, Landport Ditch and at all petrol stations.

The Technical Services Department is not responsible for placing obligations on private developments for the installation of oil separators.

525 **Hon. T N Hammond:** Mr Speaker, can I confirm or otherwise then, that the Government is satisfied that it has dealt with the recommendation in the Southern Waters of Gibraltar Management Scheme that oil interceptors are installed in all storm drains?

530 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, all storm drains that have been built, as the question has been replied to, all storm drains that are in place have adequate oil interceptors apart from the oil interceptors that already exist. So as new developments proceed, these interceptors are placed as they are constructed. So, as I said, from this stage forth this recommendation has been observed, yes.

Q394/2016
Sewage infrastructure –
Enhancements made since 1st January 2012

535 **Clerk:** Question 394, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, can the Minister say what enhancements have been made to the sewage infrastructure system since 1st January 2012?

540 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, the Technical Services Department is responsible for the public sewage and surface water infrastructure network in Gibraltar. Since 2012 numerous works have been carried out to the network and they are as follows:

545 To the sewage network the main sewer at Line Wall Road from the manhole 4A, opposite the bus stop at City Hall, to manhole 12 at the junction with Bomb House Lane, the repair of collapse by The Haven, cleansed and reinforced crown of sewer, construction of a new manhole opposite City Hall to access overflow for maintenance and cleansed outlet down to Reclamation Road. Relined the main sewer from the junction with King Street to junction with Bomb House Lane.

550 Commonwealth Park; upgrading and enlargement of combined sewer overflow.

Wellington Front and Queensway; re-routing and upgrading of the combined sewer overflow from Line Wall Road under Wellington Front and Queensway.

The New Eastside Sewage Pumping Station to facilitate growth and development from Beach View Terraces and future eastside development.

555 Europort Avenue, new sewer for the discharge from Charles Bruzon House and future development in the area.

Re-routing improvement and enlargement of combined sewer overflow and surface water under Mid-Town development, Reclamation Road and Queensway.

560 Devil's Tower Road enabling works in preparation for the programmed relining of the sewer runs along the north and south of Devil's Tower Road from the junction with Eastern Beach Road to the Sundial Roundabout.

565 Europort Avenue, replacing and upgrading of a section of the old large diameter combined sewer overflow, phase 1. Phase 2 has been advertised and consists of rerouting and upgrading the section from the east boundary of Charles Bruzon House to junction with Queensway (Regal House).

The main sewer at Rosia Road, desilting and survey from manhole 32 to manhole 37A.

Main Street, desilting of sewer from Bell Lane to King Street down to Line Wall Road.

Desilting of the combined sewer overflow from City Hall to Europort. Part of the system was rerouted under the Mid-town development.

570 Now to our surface water network: The Marina, enlargement and upgrading of the downstream end of the large diameter surface water culverts, enlargement of the outlet through the quay wall and construction of additional manhole to facilitate maintenance.

At Chatham Counterguard, new surface water system and pumping station and inspection. The study and design of improvement to system at Main Street north junction with Cooperage Lane. Flood alleviation measures.

575 Ex-Coach Park North Mole, laying of new surface water system to remove flooding by the entrance.

Engineer Road surface water system, upgrading of the downstream section.

580 Commercial Mole, new surface water system to drain the road and provide for the connections from Mons Calpe Mews development.

Re-routing, enlargement and re-routing surface water system from Wellington Front.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

Q479/2016

Development & Planning Commission – Adoption of recommendations; rejections

585 **Clerk:** Question 479, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, since 1st January 2012, and in reference to Government projects submitted for guidance to the DPC, have any DPC recommendations not been adopted and can the Minister say which, if any recommendations were thus rejected?

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Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): No, Mr Speaker. It is impossible to provide this information without doing a detailed exercise which would involve a large amount of resources.

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The information that the hon. Gentleman has requested would require a pain-staking exercise which would take at least three months by the Town Planning and Building Control Department, as the information being requested is not presently available in any of their databases.

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Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, that answer does surprise me considering I have just asked for Government projects. But I should point out that this question was actually tabled back in June, so the three month timeline being required I would suggest has been available to Government to provide an answer to that question.

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Will the Government come back and provide an answer to the question at the earliest opportunity?

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, what I have said and I do not think the hon. Gentleman has understood, is that the amount and drain on our resources does not merit us having to go through the very cumbersome and painstaking exercise of sifting through many hundreds of files to make sure, to see whether recommendations given by the DPC are something which our Government did from 2012 onwards. Before Government policy did not go for recommendations to the DPC. Now this is something which increases the transparency of the whole project, it is impossible for us to go through all these files to see whether the guidance provided at DPC stage has been implemented or not. I am pretty sure that things like on many

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occasions swift nests or swift boxes, our hon. Member and Minister for the Environment is very adamant that these are observed because it is a very important environmental feature. But many of these projects also may not have been completed so maybe a project has gone to DPC and it still has not been completed so it is impossible for us to see whether the project is ongoing, has been completed.

So, as I said, it is too laborious for us to use our staff, to actually tie them down for months on end, just to provide an answer to the question that the hon. Gentleman is asking.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, Can I ask the hon. Minister how many Government projects there have been passed through DPC over the period, even approximately?

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Well, Mr Speaker, the Government would have to have notice of that question.

Very often a lot of what these questions are trying to get at are matters which are public. I have one complaint with the way that the Hon. Minister expressed his answer to the hon. Gentleman is that he also did not add, because we now all rightly take it for granted, that the DPC now meet in public, Mr Speaker.

So the conditions imposed are imposed publicly, or the advice given is advised publicly and the erection, if I may put it that way occurs also in public, Mr Speaker. So it is a Government project, it is erected as a building in public and if you have been told to put swift boxes on it, you can go and check whether you have. So in effect, Mr Speaker, we are almost being asked to do the hon. Members work for them. They can sit in the DPC and scribble what the conditions advised are and they can go and look at the erection and decide whether the whole thing has the swift boxes in the place required. It is that simple, Mr Speaker.

Hon. D A Feetham: Well, Mr Speaker, I will avoid talking about erections in this House. But, Mr Speaker, the hon. Member answers the question in his usual style and he has done this before he has done it before in relation to Credit Finance and mortgages. *(Interjections)*

Mr Speaker: Do not even utter the words 'Credit Finance'. *(Laughter and banging on desks)*

Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, he has done it before in relation to it that shall not and cannot be named, Mr Speaker.

But, Mr Speaker, how can the hon. Gentleman expect the Opposition to go round Gibraltar with a list and ticking off whether birds' nests have been erected here or there, Mr Speaker.

I mean surely, Mr Speaker, it is the obligation of the Government to be accountable to this House and accountable to the Opposition in relation to Government policy and this is Government policy and it is their policy in this regard that is being tested.

And it must follow that it is a proper question to ask the hon. Gentleman whether the Government has followed its own policy and how many times the Government has not followed its own policy.

Mr Speaker, is it that the Government refuses to provide this information or will the Government provide this information in the future if there is some difficulty in compiling this information, because certainly it is information that I think is perfectly proper.

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman poses his question in the style that we have become accustomed to. *(Laughter)*

Let us be very clear, Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman makes complaint that we have grown the public sector. Well, we will have to grow it even more, Mr Speaker, if we are going to invest public employee time in compiling the sort of information that the hon. Gentleman wants, which in any event I am saying to him, would be information that is available to him.

He needs to understand, Mr Speaker, that the regime changed and the policy changed. A policy which hon. Members opposite not only did not believe in, Mr Speaker, because they did not implement it when they were in Government, that there should be public meetings of the DPC, they actually spoke against from Opposition.

So when we implemented public meetings of the DPC and when we made the Town Planner Chairman, we were urged from those benches to reconsider. We did not reconsider, Mr Speaker. The meeting is now public. In fact the hon. Gentleman, the Deputy Chief Minister, was very keen to subject Government projects for guidance and advice from the DPC. We were told by the greatest Gibraltarian of all time, as he by then was Mr Speaker, Sir Peter Caruana, that we should not pursue this folly.

So we were wrong to make the DPC public; we were wrong to subject our projects to guidance and advice, that is our policy. And now the hon. Gentleman gets up and says we want to check whether you are complying with the policy. He should complete the sentence, Mr Speaker. We want to see whether you are complying with the policy that we think you should not be complying with and if it requires a lot of public sector employee time to do so then, well, if you have to employ some more do so. And all, Mr Speaker, to follow up things which are now, as a result of our policy which they were against but we have insisted on, public.

Mr Speaker, you could not make this up. I think that I shall continue to be grateful for the Opposition that I have been blessed with, Mr Speaker. But the hon. Gentleman needs to know that if he thinks that it should not be up to the Opposition to keep a list of the conditions and to check whether they have been implemented, well Mr Speaker, it certainly should not be up to us to get somebody to check what conditions have been imposed on us and whether they have been implemented.

We are a Government that acts in keeping with advice and guidance because that is why we are voluntarily subjecting ourselves to advice and guidance being provided on our projects. But we are not going to divert precious public sector time in doing the Opposition's homework for it.

I have no doubt, Mr Speaker, that he will get up and pose again.

Mr Speaker: The Hon. Roy Clinton.

Hon. R M Clinton: Yes, if I may continue. Perhaps I can make it a bit simpler for the Members opposite or the Minister.

Could the Minister confirm yay or nay whether the Government has actually taken on board all DPC recommendations in respect of Government projects? Surely he must know that.

Hon. Chief Minister: No, Mr Speaker. But let me try and make it simpler for the hon. Member to understand. What we are saying, Mr Speaker, is that if we were able to provide *that* answer, we would have done the exercise, Mr Speaker.

Now I know that logic may not be his forte, but if I am saying to him that we are not going to do the checking against the list of advice and guidance that has been given, I must also be saying that I cannot give a confirmation that all of it has been done. Otherwise I would have answered in the first place, giving that answer.

Hon. R M Clinton: Mr Speaker, if I may complete the thread of logic, following on logically, then obviously the Minister or the Chief Minister in this case, must be saying to this House he just does not know, because if he did know he would have given us the answer.

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, what I am saying is a little bit more sophisticated than that. But let me make it simple for the hon. Gentleman to understand, because I thought the Hon. the Minister put the answer across very clearly. Some projects may not have been completed yet. Some projects may have had parts done and other parts not done yet, Mr Speaker. And there may be some projects where guidance and advice has not been possible to pursue.

720 Now, Mr Speaker, it would be potentially possible to do the exercise of going back to the very first project, analysing what the DPC said, going to the building and checking on the building whether the things that the DPC said have been done in the way the DPC said they should be done.

725 But, Mr Speaker, there is also the process of round robin which every applicant to the DPC can take advantage of, which is to go back and say look, we are unable to find ... let's give an example: swift boxes that are two by two and we are going to use swift boxes that are three by two, is that alright. And you may look at the building if you are going to do the checking and you will see a three by two swift box instead of a two by two swift box.

730 Therefore, Mr Speaker, this is a complete and utter waste of time. The Government is not here to waste its time and we are certainly not going to waste our time for the Opposition's benefit. If they want to waste everybody's time they should go to the meetings, they should make a note and then they should go and check against the buildings whether those things have been done in that way, varied or otherwise.

735 Until then, I hope they will congratulate us, again, for holding meetings of the DPC in public for subjecting ourselves to guidance and advice and for developing this nation in the way that it deserves and not holding such meetings in private, not even publishing the minutes and then people finding huge 30 storey erections appearing in the centre of town.

Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, I am very grateful to the Chief Minister for his answer actually.

740 So, can I just, for my own benefit, be clear then that what the Chief Minister is saying is that he is inviting me to go into any building in Gibraltar that has been subject to a Government project, including No. 6 perhaps, and do the rounds and check whether what the DPC has said about the building itself or the project, the works within the building comply with the recommendations of the DPC. Is the Chief Minister actually saying that I am welcome to do this at any time?

750 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, invitations to the Opposition are things that I now routinely have thrown back in my face. I send them invitations and some of them send them back because they are not prepared to enjoy a drink which is funded by the Taxpayer with all the consequences that will have. Because, of course, I take them at their word and if they do not want to have a drink which is paid for by the Taxpayer and, of course, that is not all of them because they are divided on everything, I shall take them at their word, Mr Speaker.

755 But I am certainly not inviting the hon. Gentleman into any public building but most of the conditions that are imposed relate to the outside of buildings, Mr Speaker, because the Development and Planning Commission deals with the look of things in most instances. And if he does not like it, Mr Speaker, well I suppose that he will have to say that although I have told him that these things are public there may be some, because they relate to a corridor of a public building where he may not be able to see whether we have done what the DPC has asked us to do or not.

760 But then, of course, he would then have, Mr Speaker, a short finite list of things which he can ask us whether we have done or not, which would not mean that public servants have to spend many hours pursuing a frolic of the hon. Members opposite and we will be able to give him a list of a few things that he cannot observe from the outside of the buildings. Although he knows, Mr Speaker, that as long as he is not elected to be there, he is very welcome at No. 6 for a cup of coffee and a discussion on any matter of policy on which we might agree.

770 **Hon. T N Hammond:** Of course, Mr Speaker, this is not a frolic. This is a genuine test of Government policy and whether it is adhering to its policy. And going back to the Minister's original answer, which was that this process could be done in three months, is the Chief Minister reversing that and saying that this process cannot be conducted at all and it is not possible for the Planning Department to conduct the audit?

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Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, given the issues that affect the affairs of our land today, to see the Opposition concentrate on this subject is either hugely potentially beneficial to the Government or a real waste of Taxpayer's money. But, Mr Speaker, let me just take them through it again.

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If Members opposite ask us something which it would take us three months to do, what we are saying is, we are not going to do it because that is not proportionate. We are not going to invest three months of public sector time, of a public officer going off to do the exercise for the hon. Members, of checking whether we have complied with all the advice and guidance that we have been given in a public meeting of the DPC, which they have not bothered to attend, they have not bothered to make a note of, although it is now available to them, and they have not bothered to check off against a facade which is where most of these things manifest themselves.

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What I am prepared to do, if the hon. Gentleman does the exercise, and says of the however many conditions of guidance and advice that have been provided, I have been able to observe on the outside of buildings so many of them, these relate to the inside of buildings, can you please go and check this finite list of things which relates to the inside of public buildings. That, if it is a sufficiently short list, we will surely check. Other than that, Mr Speaker, in terms of checking the Government, holding us to account and checking our policy, it is their job to do it, Mr Speaker, and they are doing a mighty terrible job of it if what they are trying to do is to get us to give them our notes so that they can then use them to attack us.

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I mean, Mr Speaker, really you could not make this up. They should be ashamed of themselves.

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Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, the only shame is in the answers that we are getting this afternoon, Mr Speaker. And of course, Mr Speaker, we do not control the agenda, we do not control which questions are asked today and which questions are asked next week. Of course, there are many, many questions on a very wide range of topics, because this Opposition is in fact on top of its brief on a very wide range of issues, Mr Speaker.

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But is the hon. Gentleman not even prepared, Mr Speaker, to provide us with information of how many of these recommendations have actually been accepted? Not completed, but accepted. Surely that is something the Government ought to be prepared to provide. That is far less onerous, even though I do not accept the arguments that have been postulated by the Government from the benches opposite.

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Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, Opposition and brief I think are statements that are worth considering including in a different sort of sentence. Because I think they are going to have very brief Opposition careers, Mr Speaker, if they carry on as they are, and not because they come over to this side, but because the public will soon be tired of hearing this sort of petty nonsense at a time when we are looking after serious issues which affect our nation.

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And logic, Mr Speaker, seems to have evaded the hon. Gentleman. I can neither tell him the bits that we have not complied with or tell him that we have complied with everything because we do not have a list against which to check. That is what I was discussing earlier with the Hon. Mr Clinton. So in the same way as I cannot say I have completed everything, I also cannot say we have not done the following. I cannot start the list from the top, Mr Speaker, or start it from the bottom.

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But, Mr Speaker, let us be clear, because I do not think they have got it. This is now something that happens in public. We have made a rod for our back, Mr Speaker, because we

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are democrats and because we believe that people should have an influence in the shape that their nation takes physically, we have made this public. They tried to persuade us to keep it private, secret. We could have legitimately asked them, Mr Speaker – look any Government projects that have been subjected to the DPC – oh no, because they did not subject their projects to DPC control even when the DPC was private and secret. And, Mr Speaker, we could have asked them about any conditions imposed on private sector developments and whether those had been followed and they might have had to tell us because it was secret, only they had access to the information. They might have deployed the answer they frequently deployed which we very infrequently deploy but which we are deploying today. It is just too onerous to compile that information. But with the added lair, Mr Speaker, that this onerous information to compile, this information which is too onerous to compile *is public*. And so, Mr Speaker, they can go and check for themselves.

Mr Speaker, if they do not get it now, I do not think they will. This debate is really descending into having an argument for the sake of it. We are not going to give the information because it is too onerous and it is public. You can go and get the information. And if you are not able to go now because you cannot go back and sit in on those meetings of the DPC, you should make sure that you are at every meeting of the DPC and you make a note of everything that is said there. That is why you are paid the salary that you are paid to be available not just when this House is called, but to do your job for the community 24 hours a day, as we all do.

Mr Speaker: This matter has been sufficiently ventilated –

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon: Could I just –

Mr Speaker: I am going to allow a supplementary to the hon. Lady as she has not intervened previously and then we are going to move on to the next question.

So this is the last supplementary on the matter.

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon: I am sorry to interject. I do not know enough about the e-Government or how things have been placed on the digital sphere but one thing is – and I understand the side of the argument that the Chief Minister is putting that it is for Opposition to try and find out and it is our job, especially if we are going to test them on their policies, but how about the commitment of Government to be more transparent. Would they not want to publish their decisions on digital format or on Government websites and have procedures carry on in the name of transparency, which they have committed to?

Thank you.

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, if I may say so, the first sensible suggestion I have heard this afternoon certainly in relation to this matter. Except for one aspect, Mr Speaker, which is that it all already is online.

All of the Government's applications are entirely online. So the hon. Lady has actually put her finger in the wound if I may say so. If they have not had the time to attend the DPC meetings, then hon. Members can download all of the Government's applications. In fact, I am reminded by the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister, we have compelled ourselves by law to put those things online (*Interjection*) in the new Act, Mr Speaker. Therefore, we are doing it already, they are online, they can download our applications, they can go outside the building and they can say this is what you applied for; you have not done that, why?

Mr Speaker, we could not be more transparent. We could not have gone further than we have. Compared to where we were, Mr Speaker, it is not five years since I have been Chief Minister, that happy anniversary will be on 9th December this year. And in those five years we have abolished the secretive planning system that was in place under the GSD.

875 We have ensured that everything happens in public and we have subjected Government
projects to that DPC control for guidance and advice. The former power station, which hon.
Members insisted on building before the 2011 Election and before the 2015 Election, was an
emanation of no advice. The GSD wanted it there, there it went, no planning. The current power
station has gone to planning, it will have received guidance and advice and yesterday, Mr
Speaker, on the way back from the procession hon. Members were treated to a fantastic view of
the huge progress already being made in that respect.

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Q480/2016

**Blue bus fleet sale to Calypso Transport –
Inclusion of spare parts in sale agreement**

Clerk: Question 480, the Hon. T N Hammond.

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Hon. T N Hammond: Mr Speaker, further to Questions 191 and 192 of 2016, can the Minister
say whether as part of the sale of the blue bus fleet to Calypso Transport at £1,000 per bus,
there was a transfer of any spare parts or engines associated with those buses and if so, whether
those parts were part of the sale agreement or were sold separately to Calypso Transport and if
the latter, at what price?

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Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, no,
there was no transfer of any spare parts or engines associated with those buses.

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Hon. D A Feetham: Mr Speaker, may I just refine or scope in to the answer. The question was
in relation to the spare parts and engines in relation to, or associated with those buses.

Were there any other engines or spare parts that were not associated with those buses that
were transferred to this particular company?

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Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, not that I am aware of.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

Q481/2016

**Register of road vehicles –
Breakdown according to petrol, diesel, hybrid and electric**

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Clerk: Question 481, the Hon. T N Hammond.

Hon. T N Hammond: Of the road vehicles registered in Gibraltar, can the Government
provide a breakdown of how many vehicles were petrol, how many were diesel, how many
hybrid and how many fully electric, as of 1st June 2014, 1st June 2015 and 1st June 2016?

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Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, the
information requested by the hon. Gentleman is detailed in the schedule I will now hand over.

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Mr Speaker: It is a short schedule, it is not very long, so I am going to give the hon. Member an opportunity to have a look at it and if he wishes he can ask any supplementaries.

920 **Hon. T N Hammond:** Just one question. Does the Government consider, in terms of its policy towards encouraging the use of electric vehicles in Gibraltar, that policy to have been a success, when in the two years since 2014 the number of electric vehicles on our roads has risen from 15 to 25, by 10 vehicles – when you consider that there are over 25,000 petrol vehicles on the road at the same period?

925 **Hon P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, the Government has got rid of the import duty on these vehicles. Apart from actually paying for the vehicles ourselves and encouraging people to buy them in that respect, in as much as, and there is also cash back, we do give, I think it is £1,000 if I am not mistaken, to encourage people and incentivise people to buy electric vehicles. But it must be said, electric vehicles are still more expensive than their petrol or diesel counterparts.
930 Hence people when they are purchasing vehicles, their economic situation may not allow them to buy an electric vehicle and I think that is really the battle at hand.

With time, I am pretty sure that the manufacturers of vehicles will be reducing the prices of these vehicles and that in itself would encourage people to buy them. If you look at Hybrids, Hybrids have increased and we are seeing an ever increasing amount of hybrids being sold. The
935 jump from 10 back in 2014 to 113 in 2016 is really proof that our policies to encourage people to purchase more environmentally friendly vehicles is actually happening, it is actually working.

Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon: Excuse me, are there enough charging stations for these electric vehicles because it is one thing encouraging them but is there an infrastructure to keep
940 them going?

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, every time a new car park is built or constructed, the Government had the foresight, from the very beginning, to include electric power points in all the garages. So in fact, every single car park intended for public use as Mid-town is and as Devil's
945 Tower Road is, or if it is a car park which is dedicated to residents only, as for example Theatre Royal or Engineer Lane, they all have that facility.

Now in the future, should... and there has never been any complaints brought to my attention, so there is no need to have electric power points elsewhere. Most of these cars can be charged from a normal electrical point, you do not need special chargers. So as and when we
950 hope in the future more people buy electric cars, then we will need to consider whether we place in sufficient locations, electric charging points for that purpose. But at the moment, I think we are extremely well catered for.

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

955 I think one of the things that is relevant, of course, is that people do not just buy cars to use in Gibraltar, they buy cars which they want to use in Gibraltar and take abroad so to speak. And when one is abroad, Mr Speaker, there is a dearth of charging points on the road.

I was able to discover that there is one charging point on the highway between Gibraltar and Seville and it may be possible to use my electric vehicle to Seville now, as a result of that
960 charging point which we have discovered. But there is literally one place that does it. It has one charging point with chargers going in one direction and another, two charging points for every vehicle between Los Barrios and Seville. So I think the issue is not just charging where you park, but also, given the range of these vehicles in some instances, charging *en route*.

Q482/2016

**Residential parking scheme –
Consideration for south district**

965 **Clerk:** Question 482, the Hon. E J Reyes.

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, arising from the answers given to Questions 663 and 664 of 2014, has Government now made a decision in respect of a possible residential parking scheme for the whole of the south district which could or could not include Alameda Estate and which
970 was being considered under the Government's Traffic and Parking Plan?

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban): Mr Speaker, I can confirm that the south district and Alameda Estate are being actively considered in order to
975 introduce a residential parking scheme in the near future. We hope to make further announcements in the coming months on conclusion of this review.

Hon. E J Reyes: Mr Speaker, so as in 2014 it was actively being considered. Can I press the Minister for more or less by when does he expect a decision will be taken, given that it has been
980 under this consideration for a couple of years now?

Hon. P J Balban: Mr Speaker, the actual concept of the residential parking scheme is one that we promoted in our manifesto and is something which we are committed to. As to when the south district and Alameda Estates will be included, that is a different question.
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The planning of the residential parking scheme is far more complex than even I would have imagined and there are many, many factors that need to be considered for this to be done correctly.

At the moment we are very advanced and actually what we have done is, we have gone for the hardest part of Gibraltar first. The previous administration when they did their traffic plan and their residential parking scheme, they went for an area which was relatively simple, which
990 was part of the north district where there was an ample amount of, well at least more parking spaces available to be able to accommodate the cars.

Our plan is to concentrate on the hardest part first and that is the centre of town. The centre of town is an area where residents compete with people coming to town for commercial matters, for shopping etc. and they are the ones who suffer most, in my opinion, when it comes
995 to parking in Gibraltar.

So we are concentrating on the centre of town as a whole, including the upper town and that will be our first scheme. Following on from that, we will then move out in that respect. So it is impossible for me to give a date as to when the residential scheme will happen in the south
1000 district but it is something that will progress from the centre of town.

Q483/2016

**Cyclists as road users –
Initiatives to increase awareness**

Clerk: Question 483, the Hon. E J Phillips.

Hon. E J Phillips: Mr Speaker, can the Government confirm what initiatives are in place to increase the awareness of cyclists as road users and thank you very much for contacting me this
1005 week to clarify the nature of the question.

Clerk: Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services.

1010 **Minister for Transport, Traffic and Technical Services (Hon. P J Balban):** Mr Speaker, there have never been any initiatives in place to increase the awareness of cyclists on our roads.

Happily, however, under this administration, two of the key objectives in the section Promoting Cycling in the Sustainable Traffic and Transport Parking Plan make reference to educating other users of the hazards confronting cyclists, publishing and promoting cycling and raising awareness amongst all users.

1015

Hon. E J Phillips: Mr Speaker, it is all well and good having that in the Traffic Plan but what initiatives does the Government intend to roll out in respect of education for our young people and in fact other road users so that they respect cyclists?

1020 I think the Minister will agree with me, that cycling is a very healthy activity and it is important to encourage cycling in our community and the respect of cyclists.

1025 **Hon. P J Balban:** Mr Speaker, there are many aspects to cycling. One of them is to increase the awareness of cyclists themselves, which is the subject of a conversation we had, and actually highlighting the risk to other road users, this was the confusion in the question. When it comes to cyclists themselves, some cyclists cycle proficiently and are very sensible, others will overtake vehicles and act in ways which are dangerous to themselves.

The RGP themselves, they have cycling proficiency courses whereby they try to educate and teach cyclists that they are also a vehicle on our roads and they need to observe all of the traffic signs, indicate etc. So that is one of the things that already happens.

1030 The Government is looking at initiatives to be able to help cyclists even further. As part of the Traffic Plan we are exploring the possibility of, I think they are called 'Advanced Junction Boxes', which in a nutshell is allowing an area just by the traffic lights where vehicles cannot stop, where only cyclists and motor cycles can stop, giving cyclists especially that bit of extra time to get cycling before the cars come after them. So those advanced stop boxes, I think they are called, is something that we are actively considering.

1035 Now as far as teaching or educating other drivers, that is something which we will explore because it is in fact the Traffic Plan itself which is telling us that this is something that should happen. I have an excerpt of that which is a similar public document which we will be looking at how to teach people to keep their distance from bicycles as they overtake for example. So it is all part of the plan which I committed to some time back which should be seen sometime towards the end of this year.

1040

ADJOURNMENT

Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo): Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the House do now adjourn until Thursday, 15th September at 3.00 p.m.

1045 **Mr Speaker:** May I ask the Hon. the Chief Minister, we have now dealt with all the questions that were originally submitted for the July meeting. I understand that there are a number of questions that have been submitted by the Opposition since then. Are we going to be dealing with those on Thursday of next week at 3.00 p.m.?

1050 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Yes Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker: Thank you.

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The House will now adjourn until Thursday 15th September at 3.00 p.m. in the afternoon.

The House adjourned at 4.57 p.m.