



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE GIBRALTAR PARLIAMENT

**AFTERNOON SESSION: 2.15 p.m. – 4.58 p.m.**

**Gibraltar, Wednesday, 21st December 2016**

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# The Gibraltar Parliament

*The Parliament met at 2.15 p.m.*

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

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

## Questions for Oral Answer

### HEALTH, CARE AND JUSTICE

**Q869/2016**

**Care Agency –**

**Number of social care workers**

**Mr Speaker:** Perhaps one should explain to hon. Members that a lockout has prevented Parliament from meeting at 2 p.m.

5 **Clerk:** We continue with answers to Questions. We start at Question 869 and the questioner is the Hon. L F Llamas.

10 **Hon. L F Llamas:** Mr Speaker, as at 9th November 2016, can the Government disclose how many social care workers employed by the Care Agency were physically working as social care workers at each of the following establishments: Dr Giraldi Home, Children's Home and Rehabilitation Services?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

15 **Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I am uncertain as to what the hon. Gentleman means by this question of whether social care workers are physically working as social care workers. Is the hon. Gentleman asking whether social care workers work remotely by digital means?

20 **Hon. L F Llamas:** Mr Speaker, what I am asking is of the social care workers who are employed by the Care Agency, how many were physically in attendance at those establishments on that particular day.

25 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, that is not what I understood from the hon. Gentleman at all. If he wanted a headcount for a particular day, that is not what I had read the question to ask me.

If what he wants is to know how many care workers were actually at Dr Giraldi, the Children's Home and Rehabilitation Services, I will get that information for him.

30 **Mr Speaker:** I think it is obvious, but could I suggest in the first place that Hon. Ministers, or whoever in their Departments first sees questions, if they are not certain about the meaning of

the question and they are not able to contact the hon. Member of the Opposition who has asked that question, that they inform my staff here in Parliament and we will endeavour, by any means, to ascertain what is behind the question immediately. If there is a need to rephrase it, we will exercise our good offices in that respect. I think it is obvious, but perhaps it is something that is worth keeping in mind. Okay?

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, does the hon. Gentleman not have the actual complement of social workers in each of these three institutions –

**A Member:** That is not the question.

**A Member:** It is the headcount.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** It is the headcount, yes.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, no, the hon. Gentleman is asking me how many people were physically working there on that day. I will get him the headcount. He is not asking me for the complement, and if he is it is in the Budget book. *(Interjection)*

Mr Speaker, if what they want is a physical headcount as at 9th November, I will ask my staff to actually go to the records and determine how many people were physically working. If they want to know what the complement is, they can look at the book of estimates.

Indeed, Mr Speaker, at the last Question Time, notwithstanding that the answer to the question of the hon. Gentleman is in the book of estimates, I gave the answer to the Hon. Mr Trevor Hammond. They asked me a question which I should have answered by saying 'Look to the public document.' I do not do that. I actually prepare the documentation and I give it to them. They asked me the same question but as at a particular date, and they want the information again.

Mr Speaker, we have to be serious about the business we conduct in Parliament.

**Minister for Housing and Equality (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Every month they ask the same questions.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I am sorry but this particular question has never been asked before, and if I have been –

**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, it has.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** This particular question has been asked before?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, it has.

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Every month.

**Mr Speaker:** It was asked by the Hon. Trevor Hammond on behalf of the Hon. Lawrence Llamas.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Only last month.

**Mr Speaker:** Only last month.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** But not on this particular date. Mr Speaker, I have used the term 'complement' and if I have used the term complement wrongly I apologise, but the actual

question is clear on the face of the question. I was just asking whether the hon. Gentleman had the actual figures. If he does not have it, he will have to ask it next time round, but I have to say to the hon. Gentleman, with respect, nobody has intended to start this meeting on a bad footing. He should not take it so personally that I have made a comment using the term 'complement' the way that he has taken it.

**Mr Speaker:** May I enter a comment? I am sure the Hon. Neil Costa feels a bit hot under the collar, having delayed the sitting of Parliament and having to come here in a rush.

There are a number of questions here which I perceive could be – I want to phrase the thing very diplomatically, as diplomatically as possible – which could give rise to some exchanges, let us say, so let's see whether we can start off on a good basis.

The main point is this: if there is any doubt on the part of a Minister, or whoever is drafting an answer on the Minister's behalf, when that person sees the original question ... If there is any doubt, inform the staff here in Parliament. We will try to clear up the doubt immediately and then the question can be rephrased by the Clerk or even by myself, sometimes. I was here last time, dealing with the questions. The question can be rephrased in order to make it absolutely clear as to what it is that the hon. questioner is after.

So let's see if we can keep the temperature down for the rest of this meeting.

#### Q870/2016

#### People with disabilities – Numbers attending establishments in Spain

**Clerk:** Question 870. The Hon. L F Llamas.

**Hon. L F Llamas:** Mr Speaker, can the Government provide details of how many people with disabilities attend establishments in Spain on a daily basis and for what purpose?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

**Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I am afraid that the way that the answer is drafted may raise the temperatures slightly more.

I am afraid I am also unable to answer this question, as we are not in a position to inform this House who, whether, when or for what purpose persons with disabilities attend establishments in Spain. The Care Agency does not have access to data or records in respect of the type of information the hon. Gentleman requests.

**Hon. L F Llamas:** Mr Speaker, I am not asking for specific details of who actually attends services. Perhaps if I rephrase in a supplementary, the Minister will be able to answer.

Are there any service users, who would normally attend establishments here in Gibraltar, who do go to Spain on a daily or weekly basis to another centre across the border?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I am afraid that I would not know if service users of Gibraltar use other establishments in Spain. I do not know the answer to that.

**Hon. L F Llamas:** Therefore, Mr Speaker, is the Minister then saying that there are no service users who are being funded access to go to other centres across the border?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, no, I am not saying that.

130 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, therein lies the point. I quite understand that the hon. Gentleman may come to this House and may say 'I don't know who is using services in Spain if the Government doesn't fund it, because it is an entirely private initiative by private individuals'; but if the Government is funding, then of course the Government must know.

135 Does he not have any information as to how many service users are actually being funded in order to use institutions in Spain? That is something that the Government ought to be capable of answering.

140 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I have again, in the last session of this House, answered the question of how many adults with learning disabilities receive care outside of Spain, and within the information that I have provided to the Hon. Mr Hammond in the absence of the Hon. Mr Llamas, I noticed that there was one adult with disabilities who received care in Spain, and that is in Estepona in Spain.

**Q871/2016**  
**Respite care –**  
**Availability of beds**

**Clerk:** Question 871. The Hon. L F Llamas.

145 **Hon. L F Llamas:** Mr Speaker, further to Question 717/2016, can the Government confirm the three available beds for respite care have always been available during the past five years; if not, on how many occasions and for how long have they not been available?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

150 **Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, in the first instance I refer the hon. Gentleman to Answer 717, to which he himself refers. In my answer, I noted that there are four available beds for respite, comprising of three beds and one bed for emergencies.

155 Further, Mr Speaker, please note that the following dates highlight periods where less than three beds were available for respite care: during January of this year to March of this year there were two beds available for respite; and during the end of November 2016 to date, two respite beds are available for respite.

160 If I may just add, Mr Speaker, anticipating the supplementary question of the hon. Gentleman, the hon. Lady, Samantha Sacramento, has very kindly been able to provide to the Disability Services a satellite flat in the community so that, I am told by way of supplementary information, that by 23rd December, in two days' time, there should once again be the four beds available for respite.

**Q872/2016**  
**St Bernard's Hospital escalators –**  
**Number of reported accidents**

**Clerk:** Question 872. The Hon. R M Clinton.

165 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government advise how many accidents have been reported in respect of the use of the escalators to St Bernard's Hospital since their installation?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

**Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, one incident has been reported.

170

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Hon. Minister for his answer. Can I ask him if the escalators have been permanently shut down for safety reasons? Certainly I tried to use them the other day and they were not operational.

175

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in the first instance I would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that he walks up, because it is good exercise. In the second place I would tell the hon. Gentleman that the escalators are not permanently off, no.

180

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, the Minister has come to this House in a mood of jest this afternoon. I tried to use the escalators because I was going for an X-ray for my foot and therefore I entered as a patient; but since he tells me I should walk up since it is good exercise, maybe he will tell that to the rest of the people of Gibraltar.

185

Mr Speaker, I noticed that the Senior Citizens' Association have an issue with the escalators and are trying to meet with the Minister in order to discuss an alternative of a lift. I would ask the Minister: is he seriously considering replacing the escalators with a lift and therefore removing the escalators, or is he proposing to install a lift somewhere else; and would he therefore agree that the escalators were perhaps a bad idea in the first place?

190

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in the first place I had not realised that the hon. Gentleman had to use the escalators because he had suffered an injury in his foot, in which case of course the lift would have been more suitable in the circumstances.

The hon. Gentleman is right: I believe it is the Seniors Association who have asked for a meeting. In fact, I bumped into Mr Ruiz today. We are meeting – if I recall correctly, but please do not quote me – in the second or the third week of January.

195

In the event that the GHA were to accept the proposal of a lift, it would be additional to, and therefore no, we do not think that it was a bad idea to include the escalators. Whereas certainly having an accident is regrettable, I do not think that the fact of one accident diminishes the benefit and the amenity that the escalator has meant to the many patients who use it.

200

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Hon. Minister for his answer. Can he indicate what the problem is with the escalator? Will it be back in operation soon, or is it operational today?

205

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the escalator should have been operational yesterday, and they were not today. They assure me that it will be operational by before the end of the week.

#### Q873/2016

#### Dementia Day Care Centre – Awarding of contract

**Clerk:** Question 873. The Hon. R M Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government now advise to whom the contract has been awarded in respect of the Dementia Day Care Centre?

210

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

215 **Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, a preferred bidder has been identified and notified. The GHA is in discussions and I expect to make an announcement shortly.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, if I may ask the Hon. Minister: when he says 'shortly', could he be more precise?

220 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I recall the time when I asked, as a Member of the Opposition, what 'shortly' meant, and I will refer the hon. Gentleman to *Hansard* and the answer that Sir Peter gave me at the time. But I will be infinitely more helpful and tell him that I expect to be able to make announcement in the first week of January.

**Q874/2016**  
**Dementia Care Home –**  
**Contract holder**

225 **Clerk:** Question 874. The Hon. R M Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government confirm that the contract for the residential Dementia Centre is still held by Grand Home Care?

230 **Clerk:** Answer the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

**Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the contract in relation to the Dementia Care Home is ... to answer his question in the affirmative, yes.

**Q875/2016**  
**Dementia Care Home and Day Care Centre –**  
**Opening dates**

**Clerk:** Question 875. The Hon. R M Clinton.

235 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, does the Government have an anticipated opening date for the residential Dementia Centre and the Dementia Day Care Centre, and why have there been so many delays in their opening?

240 **Clerk:** Answer the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

**Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the delays in respect of the Dementia Care Home have been as a result of the building not being handed over by the contractor.

245 I am delighted to note, as I said in my previous question, that I will be in a position to announce the opening of the Dementia Day Centre shortly – as I have just revealed to the hon. Gentleman, in the first week of January.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Hon. Minister for his answer.



250 Can I ask: when he says the building is not handed over by the contractor, is that in respect of  
the residential centre, but the day care centre has been handed over? If he could perhaps  
illuminate on that point.

255 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker, that is why I prefaced my answer by saying that the delay in  
respect of the Dementia Care Home has been as a result of the building not being handed over  
by the contractor, and then separately we will be announcing the opening of the Dementia Day  
Centre shortly. So the delays in respect of the contractor relate solely to the Dementia Care  
Home.

260 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Hon. Minister.  
The obvious question, really, is: has the building now been handed over to the Government  
in respect of the dementia residential centre?

**Hon. N F Costa:** I am afraid not, Mr Speaker.

265 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, this is somewhat concerning to hear that it has not been  
handed over, since you obviously have a contract for the service provider and yet the building is  
not ready, and then conversely you have the building ready for the day care centre but no  
service provider as yet.

270 What is it that has caused the delay for the contractor to hand over the Dementia Centre?  
This is something, as we all know, of great concern to service users or potential service users and  
their families, and I find it somewhat concerning to hear today that the building itself has not  
been handed over, whereas I was, perhaps mistakenly, under the assumption it was a question  
of putting together the services and the support staff necessary for the operation of the centre.  
Can the Minister advise what the problem is with the building?

275

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the information that I have for him is that the contractors will  
hand over before April and we should be in a position to proceed with the services then. So we  
are talking about, latest, April of this year.

280 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Minister for the answer. I would invite  
him to perhaps communicate this – or maybe if he has not communicated already –  
communicate to the relevant stakeholders in respect of the residential care, because there is  
obviously an expectation in the community that ... I think, as per the *Viewpoint* programme, he  
said hopefully some things would be open in January. I had not appreciated that this was solely  
285 in respect of the day care centre. I would invite him to advise the relevant stakeholders so they  
can manage their expectations accordingly.

Thank you.

290 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, yes, the cynic in me notes that April is obviously after  
31st March, which is the end of the financial year. Is the fact that this is going to be handed over  
in April to do with the fact that the Government has spent so much money over the last five  
years, £750 million in capital projects alone, that unfortunately there is not enough in the kitty  
for this to be opened earlier?

295 **Hon. N F Costa:** No, Mr Speaker. He is a cynic, but I can assure him that the information that  
has been passed on to me from the professionals at ERS and at the GHA is that it is only to do  
with the handing over of the building by the contractors; it is nothing to do with finances. On the  
contrary, I am, as he can imagine, being intensely pressed to open as soon as is humanly  
possible. As he can also imagine, that is also the desire on this side of the House.

300 Surely he should be happy that his cynicism should be dispelled, if only for a few hours this  
afternoon.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, coming back to the question of the residential dementia  
305 centre and the fact that Grand Home Care have the contract, can the Minister confirm that the  
Government is not paying any form of retainer until the period at which the building is handed  
over to the Government? Otherwise, you are also going to be paying for a service which cannot  
be used by anyone.

And how does he expect Grand Home Care to manage in the interim, in terms of  
recruitment?

310

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, he has asked me two supplementaries. In respect of the first  
one, I will need to check the documentation but I would find it incredibly odd if we were paying  
Grand Home Care anything, and certainly –

315 **Minister for the Environment, Energy, Climate Change and Education (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):**  
Not in my time.

**Hon. N F Costa:** My hon. Friend Dr Cortes has said certainly not in his time, and I can assure  
320 him certainly not in my time either, but I will certainly get back to him in any event to assuage  
his concern and, now that he has raised it with me, to assuage my own concern that we are not  
effecting any payment whatever until the opening of the Dementia Care Home.

In respect of whether the contractor will be in a position to be able to recruit sufficiently  
quickly to be able to ensure that services may be provided, whereas I did not sit on the selection  
board, I very much suspect that one of the primary questions put to the contractor would be  
325 that when it is open, by the time that we tell you, within a certain lead-in period you would be in  
a position to deliver so many nurses etc., and the answer surely must have been ... because  
whereas I do not have the information with me, there will have been various companies that will  
have bid for that particular, and the board, I need to assume, would have been extremely  
rigorous, and one of the main issues would have been 'Would you be able to provide these  
330 professional staff to be able to deliver these services once the home opens?' I can see that  
Dr Cortes is nodding next to me, so we can also be assured of that.

**Hon. T N Hammond:** Mr Speaker, if I can just confirm that I have understood the Hon. the  
335 Minister correctly, he is suggesting that services will commence the day after the building is  
handed over by the contractor, so presumably all other provision will be in place for that date.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I did not say the day after the building is handed over; what I  
said was what I had read out, which was that we would be able to proceed straight after that. In  
other words, the recruitment and the systems that need to be in place, with equipment and so  
340 on, will be in place by then, and we just need to make sure, of course, that when the building is  
handed over there is ... I do not want to misquote my officials ... that essentially when the  
building is handed over there has to be cleaning, furnishing and that sort of thing that you do to  
a building to make sure that it is safe and that the work that has been contracted to be carried  
out has been carried out very shortly after the building is handed over to the Government.

**Q876/2016**  
**Parental Alienation Syndrome –**  
**Specialised training**

345 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Clerk:** Question 876. The Hon. E J Phillips.

350 **Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, does the Government agree that we need to look towards targeted and specialised training for social workers, the judiciary and legal profession, so that we can ensure that we recognise cases of Parental Alienation Syndrome early on?

**Clerk:** Answer the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

355 **Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman will be happy to know that the Children's Services already work under the auspices of the Children and Families Court Advisory and Support Services (CAFCASS). The Children's Services continue to work in accordance with CAFCASS best practice.

360 The Court Welfare Team has both developed and administered the co-parenting programme to deal with parental alienation. This was researched, created and produced and presented to the Supreme Court for its perusal and recommendations in 2004. The co-parenting programme ranges from six to 10 sessions for each client depending on necessity – acrimony/level of alienation – has been assessed.

365 Sessions are structured and run individually with each client, and further consist of joint work with both ex-partners at the beginning and at the end of the programme. The context of mediation is focal.

Sessions initially present the purpose and importance of co-parenting and, importantly, the impact and abusive nature of acrimony and alienation for the child or children involved. This is re-enforced throughout each session.

370 The Therapeutic and the Court Welfare Team work together and deliver the co-parenting programme to families involved in acrimonious separation and divorce cases. They have been delivering this programme for almost 14 years. The courts make recommendations for such programmes to be delivered to families.

375 The programme continues to be reviewed and updated by the Care Agency's social worker and psychologist. Both have significant experience in this field. It is important to highlight that the social worker attended further mediation training in September.

Both practitioners recognise that there has been an increase in the Parental Alienation Syndrome. The Care Agency is therefore in the process of arranging a meeting with the Supreme Court judges to discuss these issues.

380 I should further note, Mr Speaker, that the psychologist as well as the social worker are aware of what constitutes emotional abuse as a result of parental alienation. Emotional harm per se is already a huge component of the safeguarding training. The Care Agency psychologist has been delivering this training to frontline professionals approximately for the past 10 years.

385 A Supreme Court judge's ruling in the two most recent acrimonious and complex cases commended both social workers and the psychologist involved for their assessments, evidence and recommendations.

390 Further, training for lawyers may curb the increasing trend in parental alienation through a better and more thorough understanding. I will seek to raise the issue with the Bar Council at our next meeting. I also intend to raise this issue with the Hon. the Chief Justice at our next meeting.

Finally, the Care Agency has advised me of a sure way to decrease parental alienation, a proposal which the hon. Gentleman may well dislike, and it is as simple as implementing a cap

on legal assistance for divorce proceedings. The premise of the advice is that unlimited legal  
assistance results in cases of parental manipulation and, in some instances, some lawyers'  
395 inability to prevent cases from escalating.

**Hon. E J Phillips:** I thank the Minister –

**Hon. N F Costa:** If I may just add that that is not a proposal that I am seeking to implement. I  
400 want to make that clear.

**A Member:** We would not want to be unpopular ... *[Inaudible]* *[Laughter]*

**Hon. E J Phillips:** I am not too sure I want to comment on an unlimited cap in relation to  
405 those matters, but I think it is right and I welcome the suggestion that the Chief Justice will be  
contacted. I also welcome further training for family lawyers in this field, because those are the  
ones particularly at the front line when it comes to divorces and issues affecting young children.

I have it quite regularly now – I would not say on a daily basis – from fathers who approach  
me with this issue, and the heartache clearly from them is that when their children come to  
410 them for access there is this vitriol which has been transferred from the mother, in this  
particular example, to the father, which causes very difficult access arrangements between the  
father and the children.

My understanding is we are not doing enough as a community to deal with parental  
alienation syndrome. That is why I have raised it in Parliament; that is why I have raised it  
415 outside this House as well in order to improve awareness in relation to parental alienation  
syndrome. In the United Kingdom, for example, I understand that between 11% and 15% of  
divorce cases have parental alienation syndrome. I would welcome very much further training  
for our judiciary, particularly the family judge.

I just wanted to know, really, when this meeting will be arranged with the Chief Justice. Do  
420 you have any idea as to when that will happen?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, in the first place to say to the hon. Gentleman that although it  
has now – I cannot believe this – been five years since I was in private practice, I do personally  
recall acting as a family practitioner and there being clear instances of parental manipulation.  
425 Unfortunately, in my case it happened to be the dads who would suffer mostly, because they  
would be the persons who did not have children with them at home and therefore contact  
arrangements had to be arranged. I do recall witnessing that particular emotional heartache and  
I agree with the hon. Gentleman that it is right to therefore have raised it. But, as I have also  
said, the Care Agency also confirmed to me that there has been an increase in parental  
430 alienation syndrome and this is why I have agreed, further to the hon. Gentleman raising it by  
way of his own article, to raise the matter with the Hon. the Chief Justice at our next meeting. I  
will seek to include in the agenda, subject to his blessing ... I will discuss it with him and I am sure  
that he will be happy to do so. Similarly, I have various meetings pending with the Bar Council in  
respect of separate matters, but at the very first meeting with them, although a meeting to  
435 discuss certain items, I will also seek to add that item for training in relation to lawyers.

I have to say that I did try to politely enquire as to whether or not Supreme Court judges have  
sought any additional training in respect of parental alienation. They have not. That does not  
mean to say that they would not welcome it should it be offered, which is why I seek to raise it  
with the Hon. the Chief Justice when we next meet.  
440

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Just one point: to be helpful, I am quite happy to work with the Hon. the  
Minister in relation to that, and quite happy to attend the meetings as well with the Chief Justice  
if it helps.

445 It is a matter which I think is really important, particularly when it revolves around the  
sensitive issue of children and their ability to access either one of the parents who is being  
alienated. But I would say as well that there is a link here, a very strong link, towards parental  
alienation syndrome and the failure of a certain parent – particularly the father, in many  
instances – to pay maintenance. I wonder whether the Minister has had any thought as to how  
450 we can enforce those arrangements and have greater protection for the mothers who are not  
being paid their monthly maintenance awards, either through the courts or through agreement.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, it is almost as if the hon. Gentleman read my mind when I was  
giving him my answer to his supplementary question. I always used to advise my clients that if  
455 there was a certain amount that the former partner or the former spouse was asking, that to  
show good will and good faith that they should try to exceed that amount where those personal  
circumstances allowed.

There are already mechanisms in place through the magistrates' courts, and if you recall  
correctly it was the former Minister for Justice, when he introduced the Children Act, who  
introduced those mechanisms. So the legal mechanisms exist; the question is are they being  
460 enforced. That is certainly something that I would be more than happy to look into.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, we are not just simply talking about parents, we are also  
talking about grandparents because often there is fallout in relation to the grandparents and any  
parental alienation towards the father, for example, is often translated also to the grandparents.

465 That is one of the reasons why in the Children Act we included – and our law differs from the  
United Kingdom ... from England, I beg your pardon, and Wales ... not Scotland; Scotland is the  
same as ours – we included as well the right for grandparents to apply for access to their  
grandchildren, which does not exist in England and Wales. So I would invite the Hon. the  
Minister for Justice to obviously extend that to them as well, because here, in a small  
470 community like Gibraltar where grandparents play such a pivotal role in the extended family,  
that they should not be alienated.

Having said that, let me turn it into this question: parental alienation is multi-faceted and it is  
something that I grappled with when I was Minister for Justice and one of the reasons why we  
introduced the Children Act in 2009. It not only needs training but it also needs the facilities as  
475 well, and a critical and crucial facility in order to allow Social Services to help with the question  
of parental alienation is a family centre.

Very often what happens is that the alienation gets to such an extent that the children simply  
do not want to sit and see the father or the grandparent. So the only way that they can have any  
kind of contact is in a family centre. We asked in January about the family centre and when that  
480 was coming on line, and we were told that it was going to be imminent. I wonder whether that is  
something that the Hon. the Minister for Justice can also shed some light on, because that is  
absolutely critical in a situation where the children simply do not want to see the father and  
obviously there is no other way of doing it other than through, unfortunately, supervised access.

**Minister for Housing and Equality (Hon. Miss S J Sacramento):** Mr Speaker, yes, the hon.  
Gentleman is right that sometimes there needs to be a neutral ground for parents to see the  
children with whom they have contact. He is right; to say that it has to be a family centre  
exclusively is not correct, though.

While we have already announced in the Parliament that we are in the process of having a  
family centre, we already have, as I have said in Parliament before, alternative premises which  
we are using for those purposes. So, while the hon. Gentleman is right in saying what he is  
saying, in answer to that, by way of assistance to my hon. Friend, that is already happening, and  
I have already mentioned it in this Parliament before. We have a premises which we are using  
akin to a family centre, which is outside the Social Services building. Of course the Social Services  
building itself within it has now rooms which we have refurbished, so they do not look like they

did before – they look more comfortable and warmer and less institutional. So that is perfectly acceptable for these purposes as a neutral ground, but even beyond that we have other Government premises and facilities which we are using, which are quite anonymous, and it is not widely known that they are used for these purposes, other than the people for whom they are being used – for obvious reasons, because of course as part of this we wanted to be discreet.

In addition to that and further to that, we are nevertheless developing another premises which we have identified for this purpose.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, the reason why I mentioned the family centre is because if you read the Children Act, the Children Act refers to a statutory obligation in terms of a family centre. It is not ‘some other kind of building’ – it is a family centre.

Further, the reason why I mentioned a family centre was because I was asked about this during the last election in the Mackintosh Hall. There was a discussion in relation to this and the Government has consistently said that that family centre will be provided online, compliant with the Children Act, imminently, we were told in January. I just wondered how imminent that was now, having reached December 2016.

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Mr Speaker, the statute is not prescriptive in the sense that it says there has to be a room that is this size and has this, that and the other. What the statute provides for is that the Government provide a facility for a family centre. The hon. Gentleman, I am sure, knows that a family centre is more of a concept than a physical building, but in any event we provide both already in a location that we have that is using a Government premises that is used by Social Services.

If you recall, Mr Speaker, in response to this question the hon. Gentleman suggested that while they were in government they were considering having an area in the leisure centre. Certainly when it was my responsibility I did not feel that that was an appropriate location and that it should be somewhat more discreet. We are using more discreet premises at the moment and I am certainly satisfied that we are providing for what needs to be done under the requirement of the Children Act. Of course, we are not looking at vast numbers of children who require the service, but nevertheless what we are planning is something that will enhance the facility which we already have.

I cannot give a specific date – of course, I am no longer involved with that – but I am sure that the coming on line of the new facility which will be used for a family centre cannot be far off.

485 **Hon. E J Phillips:** I understand that obviously you are trying to meet the needs of your manifesto commitment where you state:

We will continue to ensure that the Social Services Court Team are better resourced to be able to deliver the requirements of the Children Act including the setting up of a family centre as required by the Act.

So your commitment still is to set up, as it states at page 93 of your manifesto, a family centre, albeit it seems to be slightly different to what you are saying now in terms of the resources that you currently have, and working towards that? Just to clarify.

490

**Hon. Miss S J Sacramento:** Yes, Mr Speaker, just to clarify, what I have said is that while we prepare the family centre, which is the building that we envisage to be used as the family centre, we already provide alternative premises which are being used for the purposes of a family centre at the moment. It is just that the one that will come on line will be even better. I am saying that what we are doing now with the new premises that we have ... are already compliant both with the manifesto commitment and with the responsibility under the legislation. It is just that we will have another one and a different one coming on stream not far away.

495

**Q877/2016**

**CCTV –**

**Policy re use in public areas; complaints; civil liberties;  
sharing with law enforcement agencies**

**Clerk:** Question 877. The Hon. E J Phillips.

500 **Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, can the Government explain their policy for the use of CCTV in public areas in Gibraltar?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

505 **Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question together with Questions 878, 879 and Question 880.

**Clerk:** Question 878. The Hon. E J Phillips.

510 **Hon. E J Phillips:** Can the Government confirm whether or not it has received complaints regarding the use of CCTV from members of the public and can the Government give details of those complaints?

**Clerk:** Question 879. The Hon. E J Phillips.

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**Hon. E J Phillips:** Can the Government explain what measures are in place to ensure that the use of CCTV does not infringe civil liberties?

**Clerk:** Question 880. The Hon. E J Phillips.

520

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Can the Government explain how CCTV still images and video are shared with law enforcement agencies?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

525

**Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, the Government's policy objectives as set out at paragraph 4 of the 'Public CCTV Code of Practice' and the basis for the processing of data are to enhance community safety, reduce the fear of crime, deter and detect crime, and deter and detect acts of anti-social behaviour.

530

Complaints against police officers made by members of the general public are lodged with the Police Complaints Board (PCB). All complaints made to the PCB are fully investigated and logged by the RGP's Professional Standard Department. The Royal Gibraltar Police has not logged any complaints against police due to misuse of the public CCTV system.

535

Government's public CCTV system is managed by the Royal Gibraltar Police from New Mole House. In its management of this system the RGP applies its Public CCTV Code of Practice. The aim of this policy is to provide a clear framework for the operation and control of all public CCTV systems in Gibraltar, highlighting what it will be used for and ensuring that evidence is secured, retained and made available as required so that there is absolute respect for everyone's rights.

540

Furthermore, the CCTV system is designed to ensure it blocks out any potential intrusion by automatically blacking out areas of the video feed where a camera angle could potentially intrude into a private dwelling or other location that is private. The operating system was accredited by the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner before being launched.

The public CCTV system is operated by the Royal Gibraltar Police, which is the primary law enforcement agency in Gibraltar insofar as the use of the public CCTV system applies and

545 therefore the need for sharing does not ordinarily arise. If there is a need to share upon request  
from another of the Gibraltar law enforcement agencies, this will be done in strict compliance  
with the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act, the Data Protection Act and the RGP's Public  
CCTV Code of Practice.

550 **Hon. T N Hammond:** Mr Speaker, if I might just ask the Hon. Minister ... I am aware that the  
Department of the Environment does, or certainly has sent out CCTV images when fining people  
for littering, for instance, particularly in residential estates. Is it the case that the RGP routinely  
share CCTV images with the Department of the Environment, and how does that Department  
obtain those images?

555 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the Hon. Dr Cortes will speak to his question in respect of  
whether the Environmental Agency shares the information, or whether the RGP shares with  
Environment.

560 In respect of whether we routinely share, just to remind the House of what I have just said,  
which is that the system is operated by the RGP, which is the primary law enforcement agency  
insofar as the use of our public CCTV system applies, and the need for sharing does not  
ordinarily arise. If there is a need to share upon request, then the sharing is done in strict  
compliance with the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act, the Data Protection Act and the  
RGP's Public CCTV Code of Conduct.

565 **Minister for the Environment, Energy, Climate Change and Education (Hon. Dr J E Cortes):**  
Mr Speaker, if I may assist, the Department of the Environment and the Environmental Agency  
have specific targeted cameras which target, for example, litter hotspots and that sort of thing,  
and that is processed separately using all the legal frameworks, so the system we use is the  
570 same. I do not believe we have ever shared with the Police, because we have never identified  
anything of another nature that needed to go to the Police. Otherwise, obviously we would have  
a duty to report it if we saw any crime performed in front of one of these cameras. The system  
runs pretty well in parallel and, as I say, they are specifically targeted at the hotspots and the  
like.

575 **Hon. T N Hammond:** Mr Speaker, in which case, as there appear to be two separate CCTV  
networks in operation here, is the Government aware of any other Departments which have  
their own separate CCTV networks operating in public places?

580 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, given that the question was specific about the RGP's code of  
practice and so on, I do not know the answer. If there is additional CCTV around Gibraltar, I  
suspect it will probably be from private estates or indeed security companies and so on.  
Certainly as far as I am aware, the answer is no, and my hon. colleagues could jump in to  
contradict me if I am wrong.

585 **Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, with your leave, just one further question. The reason why I  
asked that set of questions before, of course, was relating to the incident with the Guardia Civil  
at the Frontier, where they pushed the car right across back on the Spanish side and one of the  
issues was that this CCTV footage came into the public domain. Clearly there must have been  
590 some ... Yes, I think there was some form of breach. Was there an investigation in relation to the  
use of that CCTV and the posting of it on Facebook and other social media?

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, Customs is my responsibility and it is a matter  
that led to an investigation into the whole issue of whether disciplinary proceedings should be  
595 taken or not.



**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, just arising from the Chief Minister's answer to that question, is it the fact that the RGP have linked CCTV footage to Customs in those particular sites? And if that is the case, then (*Interjection*) is there a different CCTV system relating to solely Customs?

600 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman should give notice of that question; I do not think it arises from the question. I am going to give an answer which may or may not be correct.

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, with respect, I do not think that is right. I said:

Can the Government explain how CCTV still images and video are shared with law enforcement agencies?

605 Quite clearly there is a sharing of CCTV footage between the relevant law enforcement agencies, which is a good idea, but that was the nature of the question and therefore it is within the remit of the answer.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the supplementary is not about that; the supplementary is about the CCTV systems the Government has. The Government, I can tell him off the top of my head, has a CCTV system surrounding No 6 Convent Place which does not belong to any of the enforcement agencies, but if something goes wrong in the area around No 6, it is provided to the law enforcement agencies. The hon. Gentleman's supplementary is 'What CCTV systems does the Government have?' Well, in order to give him an accurate answer – I am not saying we are not going to answer it – he needs to give notice of that question.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, certainly Customs have their own system – and I would classify Customs as law enforcement; can he confirm that? I think at least he can confirm that.

620 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am very grateful for the concession from the GSD that Customs is a law enforcement agency, because for the 16 years that they were in government Customs found that they were not regarded as a law enforcement agency. It was a big issues of contention – (*Interjections*) Well, I understand, Mr Speaker, that the hon. Gentleman takes a completely different view, now that he is the Leader of the new GSD, to the position he used to take when he was a Minister for Justice responsible for law enforcement in the GSD about what is or is not a law enforcement agency. But I have come to the conclusion that this chameleonic approach to every policy subject is one that we have to expect from the hon. Gentleman.

Customs is a law enforcement agency and it has CCTV systems.

630 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q881/2016**  
**Gibraltar Health Authority –**  
**Staff moral survey**

**Clerk:** Question 881. The Hon. D A Feetham.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, does the Government plan to conduct a staff morale survey within the entirety of the GHA or parts thereof?

635

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

**Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, in the first place, I wish to reiterate that obviously I have the highest respect for all clinicians and the incredible vital public service that they provide; there can be no question of that.

As I have also said, I intend to leave no stone unturned and spare no effort in ensuring that I build on my predecessor's formidable legacy and improve, where we can, the quality of the services that we deliver. I am currently engaging as widely and thoroughly as possible with all stakeholders to make sure that we get things exactly right.

I am currently systematically meeting with all levels of management, and until I have concluded all of my meetings I will not be in a position to determine if there is a need for another survey. What I can assure this House is that I intend to make sure that all genuine concerns brought to my attention are investigated and appropriate action is taken.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, does the hon. Gentleman accept that there is a morale problem, particularly at the hospital, amongst staff?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, we have ventilated these issues in public via our press releases, but if he wants to do it in the House I am delighted to engage.

In the first place, the hon. Gentleman in his press release, which was delightful by its brevity but for no other reason of content, failed to mention that the sample of doctors consulted did not include the GPs. He must accept that if there is going to be a morale survey of an institution and we want to know how people are feeling in terms of morale, then you need to include the consultants and the GP doctors, and it does not make sense to have an informal documentation that only asks the question of a particular group. So there were 30 people asked out of a total of 82 people, but he fails to mention in his brief press statement that, notwithstanding what is said, 61% of the 30 doctors who were asked the question said they did not feel low on morale.

I genuinely do not want this to become a partisan issue, because I think he and I both agree that the Health Services provide an excellent service. They have to be non-political to the extent that both he and I will need medical care at many different points in our lives and the care has to be provided to the best quality irrespective of political strife.

Since I took over as Minister for Health I am meeting systematically, methodically – it is going to take some time – to meet with all levels of management and also clinicians, nurses and everyone who will clearly have an opinion as to how the GHA is working.

I also need to make the point that my Ministry is not the GHA. My Ministry is separate to the GHA, although of course my Ministry and the GHA have to work hand in glove in respect to how medical services are delivered.

I am going to leave it there, because I do not want to get into the type of questions that were asked, how they were asked and whether they would elicit a different reply had they been phrased differently. So I will conclude to say that in a Government entity as large as the GHA there will undoubtedly be pockets where people will not be entirely satisfied with the way that management has dealt with them. I think it was James Neish in an opinion piece who said that management does have to walk sometimes an impossible tightrope between the demands of the patient and perhaps what professionals and clinicians may be willing to be able to provide at any particular point, for perfectly good reasons, and management needs to always strike that balance between clinicians, professionals, nurses, allied professionals and the demands of the patient.

So, as I say, I do not want him to leave the House thinking that I have dismissed the idea of another morale survey. All I am saying is that until I conclude my own meetings with all clinicians and allied services and nurses, I cannot commit to that because it may be that the issues that they raise with me are issues that can be dealt with without one.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, thank you very much for the answer.

690 The point about the survey conducted by the doctors I think has been lost on the hon.  
Gentleman, because when he says that it is only a sample of 31 doctors out of a total  
complement of 80 or 81 the reality is that it was a survey conducted of the doctors at the  
hospital, not the entirety of the GHA, and it was never represented as a survey of all the doctors  
within the GHA. It was a survey of the doctors at the hospital. Even if it had been otherwise, 38%  
– or 36%, I cannot recall the exact percentage of what it equates to – is a very high sample  
695 indeed. Does he not think at the very least that the fact that doctors have gone to the extent of  
conducting and participating in a survey of this nature at the hospital does indicate that perhaps  
there is a level of discontent amongst doctors at the hospital that obviously is something that  
needs to be looked at?

I will ask him some more supplementaries and move on to more substantive issues in a  
700 moment.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, on the basis that I did come into this House hot under the collar,  
given that I arrived late, I will allow the hon. Gentleman to have said to me that a point has been  
lost, but that is the only one I am going to allow him today.

705 The point has not been lost on me, because I told him that notwithstanding that in my view  
the results have to be skewed, and we accept at its highest this informal documentation ... Let's  
say that he and I agree that it was perfectly proper for this doctor to simply consult the 30  
consultants and leave everyone else out – (*Interjection*) Yes, hospital, but I do not agree that he  
should have done so leaving the GPs out. But let's say that I agree with him, for the sake of  
710 argument. He seems not to want to remember – and he certainly left it out of his press release –  
that of those polled, and irrespective of my concerns as to how the questions were asked ...  
because he knows, as a barrister, that if you want to put words into somebody's mouth he you  
ask a closed question. Yes, you ask a closed question. The question was not asked: how would  
you portray morale at the GHA – excellent, very good, good, get me out of here? That is not how  
715 it was portrayed, and any reputable polling company will tell you that to achieve an accurate  
assessment of anything you need to ask open questions, because the moment that you ask a  
skewed, loaded question, you are more or less telling people what to say. And, apart from that,  
doesn't he accept that if there is a particular doctor who is clearly not entirely satisfied with  
something and those questions have been done face to face, not anonymously with open  
720 questions in a proper scientific methodology, which I am sure the hon. Gentleman –

**Mr Speaker:** May I tell both hon. Members, both the Minister and any other Member of the  
Opposition who wishes to ask supplementaries, that I am not going to allow exchanges or a  
debate on the appropriateness of this survey. It is the subject of the question. The matter has  
725 been amply ventilated outside Parliament. I am allowing a certain latitude in the exchanges, but  
we are not going to have a debate about whether certain questions were appropriate, the  
manner in which the survey was carried out, or even its authenticity or what have you. I am not  
going to allow a debate on that. I think the Hon. Minister should stick to the question that he has  
been asked, because I am not going to allow the Opposition either to widen the ambit of their  
730 questions.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I did say in my first answer that I wished to steer entirely clear of  
looking into the methodology etc. of the survey. And so, having said what I have said, and after  
your intervention, Mr Speaker, I will leave it at that. But the point I was getting to was that even  
735 accepting the survey at its highest, 61% of those polled said that they were not low on morale –  
not part of the supplementary question to me, not part of his press release.

Mr Speaker, there has never been more engagement and consultation between management  
and the doctors than under my predecessor, Dr John Cortes. Doesn't he know that the Medical  
Advisory Committee, the statutory creature made specifically to consult doctors and consultants

740 and surgeons and nurses and allied health professionals, did not meet under the GSD? Did he not know that?

**Mr Speaker:** No, but that has got nothing to do with the matter under discussion. (**Hon. N F Costa:** No?) (*Laughter*) You have been asked a supplementary question: whether you accept that there is a problem with morale. That has got nothing to do with how many meetings the Medical Advisory Committee ... [*Inaudible*]

**Hon. N F Costa:** Then, Mr Speaker, the answer is no, sir.

750 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Well, Mr Speaker, I have to say that I find the answer difficult, bearing in mind that you have this survey that indicates that 94% were dissatisfied with management at the GHA and 74% thought that morale was low amongst doctors within the hospital.

Perhaps moving on to potential solutions and looking towards the future, and bearing in mind that we are spending an awful lot of money on the Health Service ... I think projections are likely to reach about £120 million a year, which is £10 million per month, and therefore we should be getting much more higher satisfaction ratings for the amount of money that we are actually spending – and well spent, because that is an area where we *should* be spending money. But does the hon. Gentleman envisage that the Government might conduct in the future some kind of root and branch review, particularly of what is happening at the hospital to see what areas can be improved to make sure that the public gets value for money and to make sure that there is a better morale at the hospital amongst staff than is at present the case?

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman clearly did not care to listen to my answer. I said that I was currently engaging as widely and thoroughly as possible with all stakeholders to make sure that we get things exactly right. I also told him that I am currently systematically meeting with all levels of management, and until I have concluded all my meetings I am not in a position to determine if there is a need for another survey. I have also told him that if there is any concern or any issue that any clinician has, all they need to do is write to me to make sure that I fully investigate any such concerns.

770 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q882/2016**  
**Primary care frontline desk –**  
**Staff manning as principal duty**

**Clerk:** Question 882. The Hon. D A Feetham.

775 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, can the Government state how many (a) public servants and (b) employees subcontracted through recruitment consultants have as their principal duty the manning of the primary care frontline desk?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

780 **Minister for Health, Care and Justice (Hon. N F Costa):** Mr Speaker, I will answer this question with Question 883.

**Clerk:** Question 883. The Hon. D A Feetham.

785 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Can the Government state how many employees have as their principal duty the manning of the primary care frontline desk?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Minister for Health, Care and Justice.

790 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I refer the hon. Gentleman to Answers 352 and 353/2016.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, prior to asking this question I have obviously looked back at the questions that I have asked. I cannot recall asking this particular question, unless the hon. Gentleman has answered it tangentially in relation to another question that has arisen.

795 Perhaps he could draw my attention to the substance of the answer that was given, so that if there are any supplementaries I can ask them during this session of the House.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman asked in Question 353, to which I have just referred to him, on 29th June, so we are within the preceding six months. He said:

Mr Speaker, how many workers employed by Government, Government-owned companies, authorities and agencies are currently working in the Primary Care Centre?

800 The Hon. Dr John Cortes gave the answer and I equate that question with his question:

Can the Government state how many employees have as their principal duty the manning of the primary care frontline desk?

They are in all respects exactly the same. And then, in his previous question, he asked:

Can the Government state how many public servants ...

which has to mean Government employees. So, he asks in Question 882 how many public servants and he has asked in Question 883 how many public servants. And then he says:

and (b) employees subcontracted ...

And he asked in Question 352:

805

How many workers not employed by Government, Government-owned companies, authorities and agencies are currently working in the Primary Care Centre?

They are, with respect to the hon. Gentleman, exactly the same in substance – exactly the same.

810 **Hon. D A Feetham:** With respect to the hon. Gentleman, unless the answer is this ... But they are not the same, and I will tell you ... unless the answer is as I am going to tell him.

815 That question related to all employees in the Primary Care Centre. This relates to the manning of the primary care frontline desk. It would be the same if all the employees working at the Primary Care Centre also manned the frontline desk. That is a perfectly acceptable answer, but is that what the hon. Gentleman is telling me the position is? The questions that I asked originally were about how many different types of employees were working at the Primary Care Centre. The question today is about the manning of the primary care frontline desk – unless everybody works at the frontline desk.

820 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, I think the issue here is that we read his questions differently. The question asked by Mr Feetham at 353 was:

How many workers employed by Government, Government-owned companies, authorities and agencies are currently working on the Primary Care Centre counter?

I read that as meaning primary care frontline desk, and therefore that is why I say the question has already been answered.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, may I please ... because I can clarify this quite easily by just referring to my supplementary. The supplementary to Question 353 was this. I said:

So he could not tell us how many of those 11 are actually covering short-term maternity or long-term illness that he has outlined and for other reasons.

And I said:

What I am obviously getting at ... Is he satisfied that we do not have a situation here where there are non-public service employees almost working on a permanent basis in these jobs at the counter in the Primary Care Centre?

And then the answer came back:

Mr Speaker, they are temporary engagements. As I have explained before, I do not have a breakdown. I was asked for figures, I have given him figures, I do not have a breakdown.

The point was that I asked in this question for overall figures. I never asked about the frontline desk, except in a supplementary and the hon. Gentleman was not able to give me the answer because he did not have a breakdown. That is the point.

Other than obviously obtaining the statistics and seeing how those resources are being utilised, there is no point having an exchange across the floor of the House in relation to this. If he can provide me with that information I would appreciate it, but it has not been provided yet – unless the answer to the question is that everybody who works at the Primary Care Centre also works at the frontline desk. That could be the position – I do not know.

**Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, if that is what he wanted to ask, then this should not be the question either. The hon. Gentleman should know that an official will have a job description, but, whereas that is the case, that official may be required to do things that are not necessarily their main primary function, but may that day or during a week or whatever be at a particular counter.

If what he wanted to know was how many of the 11 are actually covering short-term maternity, that is an entirely different question.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I am asking how many employees, public servants or employees subcontracted through recruitment consultants have as their principal duty the manning of the primary care frontline desk. That is not a question I asked in June, because in June I was asking how many employees were there in the Primary Care Centre.

**Hon. N F Costa:** No – the Primary Care Centre counter.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** No, that was in a supplementary.

**Hon. N F Costa:** No, Mr Speaker, the question –

**Hon. D A Feetham:** All right, is the answer then that there are 11? That is fine – is that the answer?

860 **Hon. N F Costa:** No, Mr Speaker, it is not fine. Let's please clarify, because one could not make this up. The hon. Gentleman has stood for three supplementary questions and asked me an entirely different question, and he has disputed with me that the question he is asking now was not the question he asked in June – and with the greatest of respect, it *is* the same question. The question is –

865 **A Member:** It is the same again.

**Hon. N F Costa:** – can the Government state how many employees have as their principal duty the manning of the primary care frontline desk. How many workers employed by Government are currently working in the Primary Care Centre counter – not the Primary Care Centre, the Primary Care Centre counter.

870 The next question is: how many public servants or employees – in other words, he is asking the same question again in the other one – have as their principal duty the manning of the primary care frontline desk.

875 And he asks: how many workers employed by Government, Government-owned companies, authorities and agencies not employed by Government are working in the Primary Care Centre counter?

They are *exactly* the same questions. (*Banging on desk*)

880 **Mr Speaker:** Hon. Members should keep in mind that the Hon. Dr Cortes, in his answer to Question 352, said:

Mr Speaker, I have taken the liberty to include counter in the plural as there are many counters in the Primary Care Centre and it was not clear which one was being referred to.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Obviously it is all of them.

885 **Mr Speaker:** This is obvious. Anyone visiting, going as a patient to the centre, will see that in each of the coloured areas and elsewhere in the building there are reception counters which are being manned by nurses and so on. It is all over the Primary Care Centre. That is what Dr Cortes was pointing out.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Well, thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the –

890 **Mr Speaker:** But my view was that the question should be allowed because it was not entirely clear from our assessment here, the Clerk and myself, that we should rule it out, and therefore I tend to give the benefit of the doubt usually to Members of the Opposition – though they may not always think that I do, of course! (*Laughter*) And then I expect the Minister, if he thinks it is the same question, to say so in the answer.

895 **Hon. N F Costa:** Mr Speaker, the reason why I am arguing the point is only because he stood up to argue with me. I really do not want to quibble. If what the hon. Gentleman actually wants to know is what he asks in his supplementary, then I am perfectly happy not for him to have to wait until the next Question Time. I am perfectly happy to write to him to give him the answer.

900 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Well, thank you very much. The position is that all I want to know is how many employees are manning that frontline desk. That is all I want to know. And I want to know what the division is between public servants and employees of recruitment consultants. That is all – it is very simple – and if he could provide me with that information I would be very grateful because, reading the answers that were provided by Dr Cortes, I am not sure that he has in fact  
905 provided me with the answer, except that overall it is 11.

910 **Hon. N F Costa:** Yes, Mr Speaker, that is exactly correct. What I am telling him is that the question he is asking me in the supplementary today is the same question he asked of Dr Cortes also by way of supplementary, but the questions he asked in the Order Paper within the last six months and today are also the same questions. In other words, he asks questions in the Order Paper which are answered by the Hon. Dr Cortes. He is not satisfied with that answer and he therefore asks for a particular breakdown in the supplementary, which obviously I read before I came to the House. But if that is the information he wants to have, I am happy to give it to him by way of writing.

**DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER**

**Q914/2016**

**Hong Kong office –  
Total running costs**

915 **Clerk:** We now move to Question 914. The questioner is the Hon. E J Phillips.

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, can the Government confirm the total cost of running the Hong Kong office by reference to salaries and benefits, rent, expenses including flights and all other costs relating to Gibraltar's representation in the region?

920

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister.

**Deputy Chief Minister (Hon. Dr J J Garcia):** Mr Speaker, the total cost of running the Government of Gibraltar office in Hong Kong is £400,000 per year. This includes salaries, benefits, rent, expenses and flights.

925

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Just one supplementary question: does the Hon. the Deputy Chief Minister agree with me that, in light of the answers by the Minister for Financial Services and Commercial Affairs yesterday relating to the pulling of certain contracts relating to inward investment, that £400,000 is an awful lot of money to be spending on a Hong Kong office in the region which is supposed to be bringing work and inward investment to our jurisdiction?

930

Could he also explain why, in relation to that particular point, the original question, in relation to this House on the cost of Mr Cruz of £250,000, the increases – do they relate to rent and also flights for Mr Cruz to move back and forwards from Gibraltar?

935

**Hon. Deputy Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, my hon. Friend the Minister for Financial Services will answer your question.

The Government does not agree with the hon. Member's assessment, but I should explain that for administrative reasons the Hong Kong office has been bundled together with Brussels and with London and comes under the Office of the Deputy Chief Minister.

940

But really, in terms of the work that it does ... London and Brussels are obviously far more political and Hong Kong is mainly commercial, so it is really the Minister for Commerce who deals with the substance of what the office actually does, and he will be happy to answer your question.

945

**Minister for Commerce (Hon. A J Isola):** Mr Speaker, the Opposition seem to have some sort of obsession with Jason Cruz, with the Hong Kong office and with everything else relating to it – and I do not understand why. If they understood anything about marketing, if they understood



950 anything about what the private sector is asking Government to do ... this is precisely what they are asking us to do and precisely what we are doing.

If the hon. Member is suggesting that £400,000 is too much of a cost to have an office open in China, the biggest powerhouse probably over the next 10 to 15 years, then I struggle to understand how they could possibly have come to that conclusion – unless, of course, they have an obsession with Jason Cruz in the Hong Kong office. It must be the cheapest office internationally in the world, and Gibraltar would be going in the opposite direction to Jersey – which has an office in Mumbai, in Delhi, in Hong Kong, in China – to Guernsey, to the British Virgin Islands. Even the Isle of Man has got an office in all of these countries and the Opposition is telling the private sector today that for £400,000 Gibraltar should not have an office in Hong Kong. I think it is absolutely incredible. *(Interjection)* Yes, you have. And you mentioned that the Hon. Minister for Financial Services said yesterday, of contracts ... I did not. I said about one transaction that did not come through because of Brexit, but of course there are many other transactions that have come through and that have happened, and there are businesses all over Gibraltar today working with Hong Kong and China that were not before we opened the office.

960 So I think the hon. Members should think before they open mouth, and engage brain before they do that, Mr Speaker, because it is absolutely striking that at £400,000 this Government has a representative for the whole of China – and they think that is a bridge too far. Absolutely staggering, Mr Speaker. *(Banging on desks)*

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Mr Speaker, everyone in Gibraltar wants Hong Kong to be a success. Of course we do. We all want inward investment.

**Hon. A J Isola:** You want to close it!

975 **Hon. E J Phillips:** No, of course we don't want to close it! What we want to do is to make sure that the money going into this project delivers results for this economy. That is all we want to do.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Absolutely. Hear, hear.

980 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, that did not sound to me like a question. That sounded to me like an attempt to wriggle of a hook that the hon. Gentleman had made for himself. He has had to face the inexorable logic of what the Minister for Financial Services has told him, because after Brexit ... is it that they do not realise that we will not be able to trade so easily with the rest of the European Union and that we will have to trade with the rest of the world, and that one of the biggest opportunities for trade is with China and that having an office in China is exactly what we should be doing?

985 If they are saying that it should cost less than £400,000, Mr Speaker, I will bring to this House next time, if they like, anything they did which cost less than £400,000 – because they did not do anything in England or in the United Kingdom that cost less than £400,000. The furniture that they bought for some of the rooms in Gibraltar House in London cost more than £400,000! Or is it that they do not realise the legacy that they are carrying into this House? Mr Speaker, a hole in the ground where there used to be a theatre cost £9 million. That is the sort of education that we have to take from them in respect of cost.

990 **Mr Speaker:** May I suggest to Hon. Members that we move on to the next question? Really!

**CHIEF MINISTER**

**Q915/2016**

**Ministerial and parliamentary allowances –  
Update on Parliament website**

**Clerk:** We now move to questions to the Hon. the Chief Minister.  
We commence with Question 915. The Hon. R M Clinton.

1000 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Can the Government please advise what are the ministerial and parliamentary allowances for 2016-17 and why have these not yet been updated on Parliament's website?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1005 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, the information requested has now been uploaded on the Government website. Nevertheless, I now hand over a schedule with the information requested by the hon. Gentleman. That's a waste of £400,000, if I ever saw one.

Table MPAL  
Summary of Members of Parliament and Ministerial Salaries, 1996 - 2016

	01/09/1996	01/09/1997	01/09/1998	01/09/1998	01/09/1999	01/09/2000	01/09/2001	01/09/2002	01/09/2003	01/09/2004	01/09/2005
Chief Minister	Office	36,518	41,176	42,411	43,330	47,506	49,976	52,575	56,038	61,041	66,222
	Member	36,518	36,518	42,411	43,330	47,506	49,976	52,575	56,038	61,041	66,222
Minister	Office	24,346	27,461	28,274	30,853	32,303	33,983	35,750	39,464	41,506	45,029
	Member	24,346	27,461	28,274	30,853	32,303	33,983	35,750	39,464	41,506	45,029
Speaker	Office	18,259	20,588	21,205	22,629	23,456	25,780	26,780	28,173	31,101	35,487
	Member	18,259	20,588	21,205	22,629	23,456	25,780	26,780	28,173	31,101	35,487
Leader of the Opposition	Office	18,259	20,588	21,205	22,629	23,456	25,780	26,780	28,173	31,101	35,487
	Member	18,259	20,588	21,205	22,629	23,456	25,780	26,780	28,173	31,101	35,487
Members	Office	12,173	13,725	14,137	15,450	16,600	17,380	18,284	19,335	21,234	23,333
	Member	12,173	13,725	14,137	15,450	16,600	17,380	18,284	19,335	21,234	23,333

  

	01/08/2006	01/08/2007	01/08/2008	01/08/2009	01/08/2010	01/08/2011	01/08/2012	01/08/2013	01/08/2014	01/08/2015	01/08/2016
Chief Minister	Office	69,874	71,179	73,773	76,518	79,857	83,341	89,776	92,020	94,551	97,151
	Member	25,235	26,042	26,991	27,995	29,034	29,760	31,921	32,847	33,668	34,594
Minister	Office	46,000	48,949	50,163	52,029	53,959	55,307	59,322	61,042	62,568	66,057
	Member	25,235	26,042	26,991	27,995	29,034	29,760	31,921	32,847	33,668	34,594
Speaker	Office	11,727	12,102	12,543	13,010	13,493	14,834	14,834	15,264	15,646	16,518
	Member	25,235	26,042	26,991	27,995	29,034	29,760	31,921	32,847	33,668	34,594
Leader of the Opposition	Office	17,243	17,794	18,442	19,128	19,838	20,334	21,810	22,442	23,003	24,286
	Member	25,235	26,042	26,991	27,995	29,034	29,760	31,921	32,847	33,668	34,594
Members	Office	42,478	43,836	45,433	47,123	48,872	50,884	53,731	55,289	56,671	59,331
	Member	25,235	26,042	26,991	27,995	29,034	29,760	31,921	32,847	33,668	34,594

Updated 16 December 2016

Note:  
During 1996 to 1998 the Ministers salaries were linked to the Attorney General's salary as follows:-  
Chief Minister 75%, Ministers 50%, Speaker 37.5%, Leader of Opposition 37.5%, Member 25%.

Attorney General's salary  
01/08/1996 48,631  
01/08/1997 No Increase  
01/01/1998 54,901  
01/08/1998 56,548

(f) On 08/12/98 a motion was proposed to remunerate Ministers and Members as they worked full time.  
Salaries were 01/01/1999 were set as follows:-

Chief Minister 56,000  
Minister 42,880  
Speaker 21,970  
Leader of Opposition 25,250  
Member 15,000

On 10/01/2001 the above salaries were revised with retrospective 01/01/1999 (as per table above):-  
Chief Minister 57,680  
Minister 44,166  
Speaker 22,629  
Leader of Opposition 26,007  
Member 15,450

Source: No 6 Convent Place

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I thank the Chief Minister for the schedule and information, and I am gratified that the parliamentary website has been updated.

1010 Just to confirm my maths, the Chief Minister and everybody else in this House has had the standard public sector pay increase of 2.75%?

1015 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I believe so. I believe that is the way it is applied across the board and that is the way it has always applied. And I believe, just to confirm my maths, that given that we are here, on average, three days a month and that we do not sit in two months of the year, that would make about 30 days, which means that the Leader of the Opposition is earning about £2,000 a day that he comes to Parliament. Apparently, from what I heard on City Pulse, he thinks that is part-time wages.

1020 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I fail to see what that has to do with my question, and I take it maths of course is not his strong point, so I will not ask him any more questions when it comes to calculations.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, it may not be my strong point according to him, but I realise that he does not think I have any strong points – but 30 x 2 is one I can do quite easily.

**Q916/2016**  
**Election manifestos –**  
**Upload to Government websites**

1025 **Clerk:** Question 916. The Hon. R M Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, would the Government agree that it is inappropriate for political election manifestos to be uploaded to Government or Government agency websites?

1030 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1035 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Well, Mr Speaker, it depends on the circumstances. For example, if the Parliament were to upload the manifestos of all political parties contesting an election, that would seem appropriate. Once a party wins an election, their manifesto in fact becomes a programme for Government – although I have heard some people say that manifestos are just a wish list, but I am speaking for myself and my party. There might be a good argument, in fact, to suggest it should then be uploaded to the Government website so that citizens can check that the political party that won the election is delivering on its commitments. There could be other relevant circumstances where it might also be appropriate and some where it might not be.

1040 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the Chief Minister's answer. I wonder whether he would think that having the 2011 GSLP manifesto on the GHA website is appropriate. I can direct Members to the GHA website now as we speak: [gha.gi/media/general-publications](http://gha.gi/media/general-publications). I would be grateful for the Chief Minister's opinion.

1050 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, my answer remains exactly as I set out, and if that decision has been made in order to set out what our agenda for the GHA was in 2011 I think it is a point well made, and in fact I did not realise until the hon. Gentleman asked the question that we had not uploaded the 2011 and the 2015 manifestos to the Government website. I think it is in the interests of citizens that they see that the Government elected in 2011 has delivered on its programme and that the Government elected in 2015 is delivering on its programme, and I shall ensure that the election-winning manifestos of all parties that still provide them online are uploaded to the relevant Government website as soon as possible.

1055 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I take it then that the Chief Minister agrees that it is entirely appropriate for the GHA to have a political manifesto on its website and that the Government has no intention of removing it.

1060 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman seems not to want to hear the answer that I am giving him, but in fact what I am saying to him is that I am grateful that he has pointed it out, because I am going to have uploaded to the Government website and to the GHA website the election-winning manifestos of all the political parties that have them available digitally,

1065 which means that people will see that when the parties on this side of the House win elections  
they deliver against their manifestos, and when the parties on that side of the House ... I have  
said 'parties', of course, out of deference to the hon. Lady but she has not been in Government  
yet. She may yet do what she says, if she ever wins an election. When the party on that side of  
1070 the House has won elections it has regarded its manifestos as what the Hon. the former Chief  
Minister, known to some on that side of the House as the greatest Gibraltarian of all time, said  
that manifestos were a wish list, and people will be able to see on the GHA website, on the  
Government website and on every other website that the Government has – that we deliver and  
they do not.

**Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon:** Mr Speaker, can I just ask is this common practice in other  
1075 western democracies? Does the UK provide their manifesto on government websites? How does  
it work exactly?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the position in other democracies is not something I can  
answer for right now. It may be that some do and some do not, but this is a simple democratic  
1080 issue and I am very grateful that the hon. Gentleman has brought it up because people are  
voting for something and during a general election campaign it is just party political material; it  
is out there for people to choose. That is why I have suggested that at general election time,  
what we should do is have all the political manifestos uploaded to the Parliament website, and  
in my view the Parliament website might be very appropriately updated by providing pdfs of all  
1085 the political manifestos of all time, so that people can see what has been said before.

When a party wins an election, that manifesto – which is the manifesto of the political party –  
in our view, becomes the programme for Government. It becomes the route map for  
Government. Therefore, I think it is entirely appropriate that people should then be able to look  
at it; hon. Members should then be able to look at it without the party that is responsible simply  
1090 getting rid of it from its website and hoping that people lose the hard copies and not being able  
to hold us to account.

Hon. Members obviously have access to our magnificent manifestos – both the first one,  
which is the 'New Dawn' manifesto, and the second one, 'The Strongest Foundations' manifesto.  
I promise them an even better one for the next General Election. They ask us questions about  
that manifesto. Why would they object that the general public should have easy access to what  
1095 we have said we are going to do, so that the general public, and not just they, can then point out  
that we may be failing, or actually point out that we are delivering? Why should something live  
on the ether and not be easily accessible?

Mr Speaker, I am quite happy, in fact, to also upload Opposition Member's manifestos so that  
1100 the public can have access to them, not just on the Parliament website but also on the  
Government website, because then people will be able to go back and see some of the nonsense  
that people have defended at a general election.

**A Member:** May I suggest to the Chief Minister that he also publishes the lovely glossy  
1105 pictures in his 'magnificent' – so described by him – of the schools on the Bayside website.  
(Interjection by Mr Speaker)

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am delighted to do so, because it will be a much better  
1110 copy than what they provided on Rooke.

**Mr Speaker:** It is nothing to do with the subject of the question.  
Next question.

1115

**Q917/2016**  
**PAYE October 2016 –**  
**Drop in collection amount**

1120 **Clerk:** Question 917, the Hon. R M Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please explain why PAYE collections in October 2016 fell to £6.59 million as opposed to the average of £10.91 million per month for the previous nine months?

1125

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, according to the monthly statistics published by the Income Tax Office in relation to the amount of PAYE tax collected per month in 2016 – which are available on Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar's website – the amount of PAYE tax collected in October 2016 amounted to £9.35 million. Although not significantly below the calculated year-to-date average of £10.91 million, there are nevertheless a number of factors that contribute to variances in the amount of the PAYE tax collected. Examples include changes in remuneration and staffing levels within employers in Gibraltar, in addition to the timing of when payments of PAYE are made.

1135

Under the Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 1989, employers are required to settle their PAYE tax deducted from employees on or before the fifteenth day of the following month and therefore changes in employer payment patterns would offset the collection yield for that month, with a corresponding increase being noticeable subsequently.

1140

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Chief Minister for that answer.

So, given that the reduction represents something like a 39% reduction month-on-month, is the Chief Minister or the Income Tax Office satisfied that there is no underlying problem in respect of PAYE collection?

1145

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, it can only represent a 39% fall if we take the figure that he has provided. If you take the figure that I have provided, I do not think it represents 39%.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Well, Mr Speaker, I hope I am using the same statistics as he has, which I downloaded from the Government website, updated 3rd November 2016 – source: Income Tax Office. It shows gross receipts of £10.79 million in September and gross receipts of £6.59 million in October, and that is the reduction I referred to. My question is, is there any concern in the Income Tax Office that there is a problem?

1150

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I think the hon. Gentleman needs to listen to what I have said. The figure that I have been provided with to give to the House is £9.35 million and I have then given an explanation, so it is not £6.59 million.

1155

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, may I ask whether the Chief Minister's update is 3rd November or was it dated later, or has he just been given a number directly by the Tax Office? As I say, I did download this schedule from the Government's website only a couple of weeks ago.

1160

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am going to read what I have been given again, so that the hon. Gentleman has the benefit of hearing it again. According to the monthly statistics published by the Income Tax Office in relation to the amount of PAYE tax collected per month in 2016 –

1165

which are available on Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar's website – the amount of PAYE tax collected in October 2016 amounted to £9.35 million. That is what I have been given.

1170 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I have just been handed the updated schedule by my  
colleague, Mr Llamas. It looks like the statistics on the Government website were updated on  
15th December, which then reflects the number the Chief Minister has referred to of  
£9.35 million, and then in November £10.7 million, so I apologise to the House if there has  
1175 been any mistake on my part but certainly those were the numbers that were on the  
Government website as at 3rd November.

**Mr Speaker:** Next question.

1180

**Q918/2016**  
**Gibraltar Capital Assets Ltd –**  
**Professional advisers for meeting with the Opposition**

1185 **Clerk:** Question 918, the Hon. R M Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please name the professional advisers  
with whom the Chief Minister is trying to arrange – or has arranged – a meeting with the  
Opposition in respect of the £300 million loan raised by Gibraltar Capital Assets Ltd?

1190

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, the professional advisers will include the  
Financial Secretary, the Directors of Gibraltar Capital Assets Ltd and the company's legal adviser.

1195

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I thank the Chief Minister for his answer.  
From that list then, I take it there will be nobody from James Stocks & Co, the merchant bank  
or investment banker?

1200 **Hon. Chief Minister:** I did not envisage bringing them, Mr Speaker, at huge cost to the  
taxpayer, just to have a chat with Members of the Opposition.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I note that in a press release he said he was 'trying to arrange  
to gather together all the individuals.' The Financial Secretary is obviously at his disposal; the  
1205 Directors of the company, I presume, are at his disposal; and his legal advisers, I presume, are  
one, namely, Hassans, which I presume are also in Gibraltar. I wonder what was the difficulty in  
arranging the meeting?

**Mr Speaker:** No, I am not allowing that supplementary. It is nothing to do with it. The dates  
1210 on which the meeting is and any problems that there may have been in arranging the meeting  
have nothing to do with the persons that the Chief Minister has stated are going to attend that  
meeting.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** I apologise, Mr Speaker. May I ask the names of the legal advisers who will  
1215 be present?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, the hon. Gentleman seems to have a very low regard  
for the level of complexity of the work that the people who I have referred to do and their travel

1220 schedules, because, for example, the company's legal adviser is the founder of the GSD, Peter  
Montegriffo, who has a considerable practice at Hassans which takes him out of the jurisdiction  
often, and he is not somebody who can be available at the drop of a hat to meet with retired  
bankers.

1225 The Directors of Gibraltar Capital Assets Ltd include James Levy, for example, who as we all  
know is one of the engines of the Gibraltar economy all on his own. The Financial Secretary, of  
course, the hon. gentleman is at my disposal, but I respect people greatly and I do not expect  
them to behave as if they were serfs. With my busy diary and their busy diaries, finding a vector  
which allows all of us to be present has not been easy.

1230 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Chief Minister for his answer. When he  
says 'legal advisers', he has mentioned just one person. Is that the only person to be present  
from Hassans?

1235 **Hon. Chief Minister:** No, Mr Speaker, James Levy is going to be present from Hassans; Peter  
Montegriffo is going to be present from Hassans. I do not know whether he has junior people  
working with him on this matter, but, look, I am not going to ask him to bring all his juniors. I  
think that between Peter and James they will be able to field hon. Members' questions. And, of  
course, the Leader of the Opposition, I have been told, will also be present and he is also from  
Hassans.

1240 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, my final comment on this observation is that I am grateful to  
the Chief Minister for the participants of the meeting. I notice that all of them are residents in  
Gibraltar and I hope they all continue [Technical interference].

1245 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the Government is not responsible for the residence of  
people – and I did not detect a question – but I am delighted that the hon. Gentleman at least  
agrees with me that all those I have mentioned are resident in Gibraltar. I do not know where his  
line of questioning is going or whether he just wants to make it a habit of getting up and ending  
a line of questioning with a comment, which of course would be entirely outside the Rules of the  
House.

1250

**Q919/2016**  
**Financial performance to 30th September 2016 –**  
**Ministerial statement**

1255

**Clerk:** Question 919, the Hon. R M Clinton.

1260 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, will the Government undertake to make a ministerial  
statement in January 2017 in respect of its financial performance as compared to the 2016-17  
estimates for the six month period to 30th September 2016?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1265 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I will make a statement to this House on the  
Government's financial performance at Budget time and otherwise when I consider it  
appropriate to do so.

1270 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, may I remind the Chief Minister that his hon. colleague, Joe  
Bossano, undertook to give to me updated positions in January in respect of the positions up to



September, but I thought it would be more appropriate for that to be in the way of a ministerial statement, but if he so wishes I will table the question. Is that his preferred approach?

1275 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, whatever he considers appropriate or not appropriate is a matter entirely for him. What Joe Bossano has agreed to do – and all of the Government thinks is appropriate – is that they should have the information that we were given on the six-monthly basis because he asked the question, and that is exactly what we will do.

1280 What we are not going to do is make statements when he thinks that we should make statements, outside of Budget time, in relation to the financial position of the Government. The last time I did that, Mr Speaker, was when I was faced with the Doomsday memo from the former Financial Secretary and I had to explain to people the dire situation which they had left the public finances of Gibraltar.

1285 **Mr Speaker:** Next question.

**Q920/2016**  
**Gibraltar Home Loans Ltd –**  
**Licence as mortgage creditor**

1290

**Clerk:** Question 920, the Hon. R M Clinton.

1295 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, has Gibraltar Home Loans Ltd applied for and obtained a licence from the Financial Services Commission under the Financial Services (Investment and Fiduciary Services) Act in respect of acting as a mortgage creditor within the meaning of the Financial Services (Mortgage Credit) Regulations 2016?

1300 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, Gibraltar Home Loans Ltd has not applied for a licence.

1305 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, if the Chief Minister could perhaps confirm our understanding on this side of the House that this entity ... I believe, the Hon. Mr Bossano mentioned that at least one mortgage had been granted by this company. Would he not agree, then, that he needs to apply for a licence?

1310 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Absolutely not, Mr Speaker.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, may I ask him on what grounds?

1315 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the company is giving mortgages to its employees and therefore it does not have to apply for a licence.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, my understanding was that Gibraltar Home Loans had no employees. Is the Chief Minister telling me now that it has employees?

1320 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, it is a vehicle through which the Government provides loans to its employees. It is perfectly normal for any employer that is offering this sort of financial benefit to be able to do so through an SPV, and that is what it is doing.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, has the Chief Minister received advice in respect of that particular point? I will not ask what the advice is; I am just asking if he has had advice?

1325

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, the Government does not reveal the content of its advice and therefore does not need to reveal whether it has taken advice, but I would refer the hon. Gentleman simply to the Financial Services (Mortgage Credit) Regulations 2016. He might care to read them and then he would realise that anybody who reads English would not need legal advice in order to reach the conclusion I have reached.

1330

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, is there a reason why the Government is treating this particular company differently from other Government-owned companies, because really what he is saying is that, for the purposes of the provision of loans to public servants, there is no difference between the Government and its Government-owned company, namely this particular company. Now, we have had exchanges across the floor of the House on many, many occasions and his main defence to all the political points that we have made in that respect has been, 'It is a Government-owned company; it is not the Government.' Ergo, for example: the debt of those companies has nothing to do with the Government. In this particular case he is choosing to treat the company as if it were the Government.

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1340

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, he mischaracterises the position the Government has taken in relation to that debate. He is giving it the characterisations he wishes to give it. That is not the position the Government has set out and therefore the rest of his analysis is not one on which I need to comment.

1345

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, on what basis does the Government treat this particular company as an emanation of the Government, because that is what it is doing in this particular case? The only reason he has proffered for this company not requiring any kind of licence is he is saying, 'Well, these are public servants and the loans have been provided to public servants by this company, and because they are public servants they are employees of the Government; therefore, it is providing loans to its own employees.' Well, they are not loans to its own employees; they are loans to the Government. Now, what basis does he treat this particular company as the Government?

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1355

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I do not think the hon. Gentleman has ever detached himself enough from himself to hear what he says in the context of the debates that we have had. All of the companies that we are talking about – the ones that he likes to talk about and characterise in a particular way – all of them are Government-owned companies. Who has ever said that they are not Government-owned companies? The whole debate is based on the fact that they are Government-owned companies.

1360

Mr Speaker, when he alights on that point he might realise the answer that he is asking for now is one that becomes quite obvious.

1365

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, with respect, he has not answered the question.

Of course they are Government-owned companies. This is a Government-owned company; those are Government-owned companies, but he is treating this particular Government-owned company as if it did not exist; as if it is just simply some kind of agent of the Government or something of that nature, or piercing the corporate veil, which is a term that he will understand.

1370

A company has separate corporate personality, a separate entity. That is the arguments that he has used on many, many occasions to the Government. Now, what basis does he treat this particular company as an emanation of the Government? In other words, the Government for the purposes of providing loans, which would then mean that it would not require a licence.

1375 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, years from now when he and I sit around as friends and have coffees, re-reading the Hansards of the battles that we had in Parliament, he will feel ever so faintly ridiculous when he reads back that supplementary.

1380 Why am I treating this company as if it does not exist? Well look, Mr Speaker, at least I understand why it is that he had to remove all those chairs from the Charles Hunt Room in order to pretend it was full and why it is that he will not conduct a morale survey in the GSD. (Laughter) Mr Speaker, a Government-owned company giving loans to Government employees is what we are dealing with. It is that simple, Mr Speaker. Then, Mr Speaker, we will have a brandy chaser after the coffee and he will say, '*Mira, en esa tenías razón, Fabian*' – 'On that one, you were right, Fabian'.

1385

**Hon R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, if I may return to the original thrust of the question: my understanding, from the explanation given by the Hon. Mr Bossano for Gibraltar Home Loans Ltd, was that no one in Gibraltar would be left without a mortgage if they so needed one, given the potential constriction of mortgages in Gibraltar by lending banks.

1390 Would the Chief Minister agree with me that if any applicant to Gibraltar Home Loans Ltd was not an employee of the Government, it would not be able to give such a loan until they obtained this licence?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, in principle, yes.

1395

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think that is all I needed to know. Thank you.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Thank you for that last passing comment, which did not include a question, Mr Speaker. (Laughter) You see, Mr Speaker, if the hon. Gentleman had then wanted to develop the issue and say, 'Can we therefore be happy to note that nobody has been left without a mortgage and that Gibraltar Home Loans has not needed to even be asked by people who are not employed by the Government to grant loans', I would have been happy to get up and say, 'Yes.'

1405

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, so in order to provide the people of Gibraltar –

**Mr Speaker:** Are you going to ask a question?

1410 **Hon. R M Clinton:** I am going to ask the question. (**A Member:** Wahey!) Wahey, yes! (**A Member:** At last! At last!)

In order not to leave the people of Gibraltar without a loan from this wonderful company, from the wonderful programme that this wonderful Chief Minister has offered to the wonderful people of Gibraltar, will he apply for a licence in the event that people will need such a licence?

1415

**Hon. Chief Minister:** In principle, yes, and I am grateful the hon. Gentleman has recognised, in time for Christmas, how wonderful things are.

1420

**Q921/2016**  
**Financial Services (Money Lending) Act –**  
**List of licenced money lenders**

**Clerk:** Question 921, the Hon. R M Clinton.

1425

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government provide a list of money lenders licensed under the Financial Services (Money Lending) Act as at 30th September 2016?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1430

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, my answer remains as set out to Questions 389 and 442/2015. The details requested are not in the public domain, but I am again prepared to provide these details on a strictly confidential basis, if the hon. Member agrees. There are currently 19 money lending licences currently in issue. I remain happy to consider making a provision to publish the list generally in future.

1435

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Chief Minister.

I would bring his attention to the Money Lending Rules in respect of the application for licence, and it actually requires the application to be Gazetted and the application actually to be filed as a Gazette. Therefore, an applicant's name is public and yet there is no register of licence holders.

1440

I can find nothing in the Money (Financial Services) Rules of Money Lending that says that such a list of licence holders should not be made public. I would therefore invite the Chief Minister to consider whether perhaps it would be appropriate to make such a list public.

1445

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, that is a question he did not need to ask me if he had his ears open when I answered his first question, because the last sentence I read says, 'I remain happy to consider making provision to publish a list in future.'

My answer to Question 389/2015 ended with, 'I think it would be proper that this should be publicly available somewhere where the public can have access to it, perhaps on the Government website and renewed every year as the licences change or do not change.' I have absolutely no difficulty with that issue being dealt with in a way that is one that gives access to the public, because the public are the ones who have the service of borrowing money offered to them by these companies. Many of them may or may not advertise their service, so I see no reason why there should not be a provision that this should be published. In the same way that the hon. Gentleman says there is nothing to stop us from publishing a list, there is nothing requiring us that we are going to publish a list or advertising to lenders that we are going to publish a list.

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1455

I think the conclusion I reached when I last discussed this with Members opposite ... It was then Damon Bossino – one is tempted to say one of the three doctors who has left the GSD since the last General Election, and another once since the last General Election as well, Miss Hassan Nahon, so that is four out of seven: a much worse ratio than three out of 85, but anyway.

1460

The way I left it then, Mr Speaker, was that I was quite happy to discuss with a Member Opposite in the anti-chamber how to give effect to a mechanism to publish this list. I think it is appropriate and should be something that we do.

1465

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Chief Minister.

Would he then undertake to publish such a list within the lifetime of this Parliament?

1470

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, because we are a different political generation, I do not envisage – and we do not work in the same firm when we are in practice – that he and I will be having coffee and brandy in the future. Perhaps, we will – who knows. We have enjoyed drinks in the past, when we were both students in the Students' Association. But I think, again, he will want to look at the Hansard and see what I have said and understand that his question, I do not think, is one that is relevant, because I have said I am quite happy to discuss with him in the anti-chamber how we might be able to do this, so I am not going to give an undertaking to do something that he and I have not yet discussed how we might do.

1475

1480 The word 'undertaking' has a particular meaning to a lawyer – at least to those of us who mean what we say – and therefore I am not going to give an undertaking, but I am quite happy to agree to discuss it with him in the anti-chamber and to try and find a mechanism to give effect to the idea that there should be a list published.

1485 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, as much as I am flattered by the Chief Minister's regard for my opinion, I do not see what discussion he could possibly have with me that would make it easier for him to publish a list. I therefore do not see any point in meeting in the anti-chamber, but again I would ask him to consider publishing this list sooner rather than later.

1490 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, there are times when one feels like just banging one's head against the table. Mr Speaker, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave a few moments ago – I think that is the appropriate term of art in a parliament elsewhere.

1495 **Q922-925/2016**  
**Expressions of interest for vehicle fleet –**  
**Details and policy**

**Clerk:** Question 922, the Hon. R M Clinton.

1500 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, is the Government satisfied that 10 business days with a submission date of 22nd December 2016 is sufficient time for interested parties in expressing an interest to submit a proposal to lease its vehicle fleet and, if so, why the urgency?

1505 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** I will answer this question together with Questions 923 to 925.

1510 **Clerk:** Question 923, the Hon. R M Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please identify the media outlets in which the official notice inviting expressions of interest for the leasing of its vehicle fleet were placed, including the number of days placed and the dates?

1515 **Clerk:** Question 924, the Hon. R M Clinton.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government advise why it is seeking expressions of interest in respect of the leasing of its entire vehicle fleet, comprising over 400 vehicles and motorcycles and 90 specialist vehicles?

1520 **Clerk:** Question 925, the Hon. R M Clinton.

1525 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, can the Government advise what was the policy decision to be taken on the 'future of the Garage and Workshop' referred to by the Principal Auditor in a conversation with the Chief Executive Officer of the Technical Services Department in paragraph 3.5.4 of the Principal Auditors' Report for 2014-15?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1530 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, the Government does consider that 10 business days is sufficient for interested parties to register an expression of interest with regard to leasing the fleet – and one would have assumed that to be an obvious answer given that is the time the Government has allowed.

1535 The advert was for the expressions of interest for the leasing of the Government's vehicle fleet and it was published in the Gibraltar Chronicle and Panorama on Tuesday, 22nd November 2016.

1540 Mr Speaker, as a consequence of the Garage and Workshop Section Collective Agreement and Early Exit Scheme, agreed by the previous administration, the operation of the Department has become extremely difficult due to the drain of skilled staff. As a consequence, we are looking at other models to deliver the service. One such model that would ensure that HMGOG has a safe, fully operational fleet would be the leasing of vehicles from the private sector.

1545 A leasing option would include the full servicing, repair and replacement of the whole fleet, ensuring that public sector employees have the possible resources to carry out their duties. We are currently in discussions with Unite, the union, on how best to introduce these changes in a way that will not have a negative impact on the workforce.

The future of the Garage and Workshop has been under review for a considerable number of years in order to identify the most efficient model for the future.

1550 The current expressions of interest recently advertised for the leasing of vehicles also form part of the overall review of the Garage and Workshop. Once these are received, the Government will be in a better position to decide on what option will provide the most efficient and best value for money.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I thank the Chief Minister for his answer.

1555 In terms of this transaction – I know he is loath to characterise anything, but – it would appear to be a sale-leaseback. Would it be correct that the first stage of this transaction is that the Government would de facto sell their entire fleet to whoever was the successful tenderer and then leaseback the same vehicles on whatever terms are agreed in future?

1560 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I do not know what the expressions of interest will result in. That may or may not be one of the ways that it is proposed by those who express an interest that matters should be dealt with.

1565 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, would the Chief Minister not accept that in the first instance the Government should receive a sum of money for its 400-odd vehicles?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, that is one way which it may happen. It may happen in another way.

1570 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Well, Mr Speaker, does the Chief Minister have an idea what that other way might be, because I frankly cannot see how you would effectively dispose of your entire vehicle fleet for no consideration?

1575 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Because the Hon. Chief Minister thinks there may be other ways of doing this other than disposing of the fleet.

1580 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, coming back to the expressions of interest, I actually have a copy of the terms and one of these specialist vehicles includes 'VIP vehicles', including the Chief Minister's vehicle. Since we established yesterday that there is only one provider in Gibraltar that can service the Chief Minister's vehicle, are we not really talking about one provider that has already been identified and hence why there is only 10 days in which to express an interest?

1585 **Hon. Chief Minister:** No, Mr Speaker, because different providers could deal with taking that vehicle to the provider that provides the servicing for that vehicle. The hon. Gentleman may realise that the Government's vehicle fleet is very wide indeed and there are some vehicles there that are provided by other providers – which is not that provider that he seems to have wanted to identify – and the provider that provides the service may have to go to other providers in the context of servicing. It is not just the G1 Tesla that can only be dealt with by one particular garage. There are many vehicles that the Government has that can only be provided for in one particular garage, and in particular the modern vehicles.

1590 If the hon. Gentleman wants to put his thinking cap on for more than the moment that it took him to try and come up with that, he might realise that some of the other VIP fleet are Mercedes which are provided for by another provider, and the only person that is going to have the computer that is going to go into the Mercedes is the Mercedes dealer.

1595 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, would the Chief Minister have an idea as to when he may want to put into place this type of transaction? Is it within the first quarter next year; the second quarter? Does he have a timeframe?

1600 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I have an idea but I am not here to answer for my ideas.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, does he have a concrete date as to when a decision will be taken as to whether the expressions of interest be accepted, or maybe none at all?

1605 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, 'Does he have a concrete date for when he will take a decision?' is not something that I think leads the House anywhere other than just to hypothesis and speculation as to when something might happen. When something happens, Mr Speaker, there will be an announcement and then the hon. Gentleman will be able to quiz us on what has happened, but until then he cannot ask us for a timetable which we impose upon ourselves so that he can then check us on it.

1610 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I will take a slightly different line on my supplementary now: in terms of the Garage and Workshop, how many jobs are at risk?

1615 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, the number of jobs at risk is really not something that I can answer. It is a question that he should ask the man who has been referred to by some on that side of the House as 'the greatest Gibraltarian of all time' because the Collective Agreement that gave rise to redundancies was the one signed by them, I think a few days before they called the General Election of 2011.

1620 It is the Collective Agreement between the Gibraltar Government, Unite and Gibraltar Mechanical and Electrical Services Ltd, which provided for people to leave on an early-exit basis and for those who were employed in a Government Department to be moved to a company. So really, Mr Speaker, the Government is not envisaging any particular number of redundancies or anything like that. We are left with the agreement for redundancies that they signed.

1625 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, returning to the question about the fleet, the Hon. the Chief Minister was implying – perhaps I have got it wrong, and I am asking him about this – that what might be envisaged is a transaction involving Mercedes going to one particular garage or a deal with one particular garage in relation to Mercedes; in relation to the others, a different garage. Is that what the Government is considering, or is what he is saying that it will go to one particular entity and that entity will then have carriage of sending a Mercedes, for example, subcontracted to the Mercedes garage?

1630

1635 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I was not envisaging anything. I was dealing with the hypothesis that was put by the hon. Member to his left. I am waiting to see what the expressions of interest provide, as other people who have proposed this to the Government from inside the Government, and to see what is proposed and what is best for the taxpayer. Once that happens, we will be in a position to make an assessment of what is in our best collective interest.

1640 What I was dealing with was the point the hon. Member, his colleague, was making to suggest that there was only one potential provider of these services, because one vehicle has to be serviced by them, and I gave them the example of five vehicles that have to be serviced by somebody else.

1645 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, this will be my last supplementary. If the Government receives no expressions of interest, what is its fall-back position? Will it be to just continue as it is with its own garage and its own fleet control?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, that is a hypothetical question and I do not think it is appropriate for me to get embroiled in answering hypothetical questions.

1650 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, in relation to the question of the redundancies ... And, of course, if the Gibraltar Government, the new administration coming in in 2011, felt that there was something unfair in the Collective Agreement that had been negotiated by the GSD administration, it was always open for them to try and renegotiate.

1655 Mr Speaker, obviously I would have envisaged that any early retirement that had been taken by people under that Collective Agreement would have probably been taken shortly after 2011, 2012, 2013. Is he saying that there are still individuals that can take up the terms of that Collective Agreement that had been negotiated in 2011, or is he saying that there is nobody employed by the Garage and they are all employed by a company? I have not understood the answer that he has provided. Could I ask him to clarify it?

1660 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, you would have to give me specific notice of some aspects of that question, but I can tell him that nobody is employed by the Garage because when he was Minister for Justice they all transferred to Gibraltar Mechanical and Electrical Services Ltd.

1665 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, I understand that, but the hon. Gentleman, in an answer that he provided to my hon. friend, Mr Clinton, referred to this Collective Agreement. Now, unless what the hon. Gentleman is just simply doing is making a political point – which would be cheap at that, I have to say, because it does not take matters any further – there must be some relevance to the Collective Agreement and the position today. Because the question, as I understand, that was made by Mr Clinton, was does he envisage that there is going to be any forms of redundancy, loss of jobs? It is not in the Garage, but it is in this particular company. Therefore, there has to be a link – unless there is none and he just simply wanted to mention the Collective Agreement that we negotiated – between the position today and the Collective Agreement.

1675 I just wonder if we can return to the original question which was, how many, does he envisage that there are going to be any people that are going to be taking up redundancies or are there going to be loss of jobs within this particular company?

1680 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, to provide a political answer to a political question in a Parliament seems to me to be exactly what we have been elected to do and are here to do. It does not seem to me to be a cheap shot to remind the hon. Gentleman that they signed an agreement in relation to this particular Department which then saw all employees transferred to a company. But, look, it does seem to me as if it is becoming clearer and clearer that he had very little idea of what it was that was happening a floor above where he used to work, Mr Speaker.



1685 The reason why it has been referred to is because the first question – not supplementary –  
that was put in relation to this subject was, ‘Can the Government advise why it is seeking  
expressions of interest?’ Well, Mr Speaker, we are seeking expressions of interest for the reason  
I read out in my first answer which relates to the fact that this has denuded the Garage of all  
1690 Mr Speaker, that is the position. If he does not like the answer, he should not ask the question.

Let’s be clear: I am not envisaging anything at this stage. I have asked for expressions of  
interest. Once we receive those expressions of interest, we can make an assessment of those  
expressions of interest – and I have already said that we are doing so with the unions. I do not  
understand where it is that he thinks he is going.

1695

**Hon. D A Feetham:** No, Mr Speaker, where I am going is I am trying to understand the  
answers that the hon. Gentleman has provided, and he has said something now in answer to my  
supplementary which I think takes the matter further. I do not know whether it is a slip of the  
tongue or not, but what he has just told me is, because of this Collective Agreement, there was a  
1700 denuding of employees at the Garage – they went into a company; there were employees that  
took up early retirement in accordance with the Collective Agreement – and because of labour  
shortage – this is the implication of what he is saying – really, the job cannot be done properly in  
relation to the servicing of the fleet of cars. And that is the reason, as I understand it, why the  
Government is now effectively looking at expressions of interest in order to do that.

1705

If that is true, then of course we then have a situation – and whether it is not true, we have a  
situation – where those employees in that company that formerly were involved in the servicing  
of these vehicles or working with these vehicles obviously would be, effectively – in inverted  
commas – redundant, because they would not be doing the job that they are doing at present.  
Therefore, my question is, well, what does the Government envisage is going to happen with  
1710 those individuals if this particular initiative reaches fruition and a company is in fact engaged by  
the Government in order to service these particular vehicles?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, everything that he has said I disagree with, even the idea  
that people could, in effect, become redundant because of what the Government is trying to do.  
1715 That is completely contrary to the position the Government expects will be the case. But we are  
waiting to see what the expressions of interest say.

He started his supplementary, Mr Speaker, by saying ‘Now I have taken matters further by  
saying that the numbers have been reduced and the operation has been denuded by the early-  
exit scheme.’ Well, Mr Speaker, I have only taken matters further in that respect if he did not  
1720 hear what I said in respect of my first answer, because what I said was this: ‘As a consequence of  
the Garage and Workshop Section Collective Agreement and Early-Exit Scheme agreed by the  
previous administration, the operation of the Department has become extremely difficult due to  
the drain of skilled staff. As a consequence, we are looking at other models to deliver the  
service.’ So I started with that and that is exactly what I said now. I did not take matters further –  
1725 although, perhaps he might have perked up his ears and started listening late in the day.

Mr Speaker: Next question.

1730

**Q926/2016**  
**‘Project India’ –**  
**Progress**

1735 **Clerk:** Question 926, the Hon. E J Phillips.

**Hon. E J Phillips:** Further to question 199/2016, can the Government confirm what tangible progress is being made to the so-called 'Project India'.

1740 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken in respect of developing the relationship between Gibraltar and India. Specific announcements will be made when appropriate.

1745

**Hon. E J Phillips:** I take it from that response that he means within the term of this Parliament.

1750 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, yes, although it may be that some of these things relate to things that will occur through the term of this Parliament and future Parliaments and I or others may be making announcements about them, but for the good of the future of Gibraltar those announcements, I hope, will be welcomed by Members opposite, whether they are opposite or not.

1755 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Does the Government envisage that it is going to be opening some kind of office in India or in that area in order to service any business emanating from that area?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** If we do, we will make an announcement, Mr Speaker. If we do not, we will not.

1760

**Hon. D A Feetham:** And if he does, Mr Speaker, will he undertake that it will be advertised and he will not shoehorn in any GSLP activists in the same way that he did with the Hong Kong office for £400,000?

1765 **Mr Speaker:** The Chief Minister does not have to answer that question because I am ruling it out of order.

Go on to the next question, please.

1770 **Hon. Chief Minister:** I am grateful to Mr Speaker. If I had had an opportunity to answer, I would have reminded the hon. Gentleman that appointees to represent the Gibraltar Government abroad are always appointed by the Chief Minister. It is not a process of advertisement. I reminded him when he made those points that he likes to make about a man he used to, I think, consider a friend, until he changed parties, Mr Speaker. All ambassadors are appointed not as a result of interview processes, and although we do not have ambassadors, we have commercial representatives, and they are appointed in the way that they were appointed under the GSD now that the GSLP Liberals are in power – except, Mr Speaker, that it seems, when they do something, it is a perfectly proper and appropriate conduct of good Government and, when we do something, we are 'shoehorning people into positions' even though they are extraordinarily capable Gibraltarians who have demonstrated abroad that they are world-class at what they do.

1780

But, you know, Mr Speaker, that sort of hypocrisy is what delivers the sort of low morale that he now sees amongst his supporters. That is why he has to create a runway in the centre of the Charles Hunt Room to pretend that it is packed and that is why there are more doctors at the GHA than there were people in the Charles Hunt Room for your last General Meeting.

1785

1790

**Q927/2016**  
**Government consultants –**  
**Accuracy of published list**

**Clerk:** Question 927, the Hon D. A Feetham.

1795

**Hon. D A Feetham:** His fall will be sharp and speedy indeed when it comes, I have to tell him that.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** I hope so!

1800

**Hon. D A Feetham:** It will.

Is the Government satisfied that the list of consultants retained by Government and published on the Government website is accurate?

1805

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Well, Mr Speaker, when my fall comes, it probably means that I will go and become one of his partners because I think his is going to come before mine – but never mind.

1810

Mr Speaker, yes, sir, if there is any reason why we should not be, perhaps he could share that with us.

1815

**Q928/2016**  
**Gibraltar Consultative Committee –**  
**Appointment of ad hoc members**

**Clerk:** Question 928, the Hon. D A Feetham.

1820

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please state whether the ad hoc members of the Gibraltar Consultative Council have been appointed?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1825

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, an announcement will be made when the ad hoc members of the Gibraltar Consultative Council are appointed.

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**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, does he intend to Gazette, for example, the appointment of the members of the Consultative Council?

1835

Hon. Chief Minister: Mr Speaker, I do not know whether there is an obligation to Gazette or not Gazette in the legislation. We recently passed it, but I do not have that level of detail. Gazetting is something that is usually done as a requirement, but otherwise this is something that can be done by way of public statement.

I have no view whether something should be just a Gazette statement or a public statement. It is important that the people who form part of this very important consultative body should be known to the general public so that they realise just how eminent the people that I hope will be a part of it are – and I have no views one way or the other.

1840

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Has the Hon. the Chief Minister approached anybody in relation to potentially being an ad hoc member of the Gibraltar Consultative Council, or is that something that he has not got to that stage and therefore is something that he is going to be doing early next year or next year?

1845

**Hon. Chief Minister:** I have, Mr Speaker.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** So I take it from that answer that he has identified the people that he wants as ad hoc members of the Gibraltar Consultative Council?

1850

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I have identified them. I have not spoken to all of those who I have identified.

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Sorry, Mr Speaker, if I may just ask the Chief Minister perhaps two supplementaries. One just to confirm that the Consultative Council, even though it does not have the ad hoc members yet, has not met? If it has met, when did it meet?

1855

Secondly, the ad hoc members: would the Chief Minister confirm that he will be writing formal letters of appointment and not just a phone call?

**Mr Speaker:** The Chief Minister does not have to answer. My common sense tells me that you do not have to answer the first question. If the ad hoc members have not been appointed – (Interjection) I have not understood it? Well, please repeat it then.

1860

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Yes, you have not understood it because the point is that you do not need to have the ad hoc members in order for the Consultative Council to meet.

1865

**Mr Speaker:** The answer is that, since I am an ex officio member, I can answer the question myself and therefore we can carry on with some other business. Can we?

I am an ad hoc member. I have not been called to any meeting. I have not attended and therefore the answer is that it has not met.

1870

Can we get on with the second part of your question?

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, with respect, you are not an ad hoc member; you are actually a standing member.

1875

**Mr Speaker:** I am an ex officio member –

**Hon. R M Clinton:** But not ad hoc.

**Mr Speaker:** – given the position I have occupied in the past.

1880

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Yes, exactly, but that is not an ad hoc member.

**Mr Speaker:** The hon. Member is wasting the time with what I regard as a nonsensical question. Can we please get on with some common sense?

1885

**Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I would like to consider myself as a person with some common sense, but my question was asking has the Consultative Council met without the ad hoc members? It is as simple as that. You may be there in your own capacity, but my question is directed at the Government.

1890

1895 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, you are absolutely right, in particular now that the question has been clarified: if the Council had met without the ad hoc members, you would have been the first to know because you are a post-holder member and therefore you have clarified to the Opposition that there has not been a meeting of this Council.

Mr Speaker, I am happy to deal with the second limb of what the hon. Gentleman said before. The whole thing will start with a phone call and it will end with a letter.

1900

**Q929/2016**  
**Income Tax –**  
**Notices to non-compliant taxpayers**

1905 **Clerk:** Question 929, the Hon. D A Feetham.

1910 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, since the hon. Gentlemen opposite have been in Government, how many taxpayers have been sent notices in writing of the Commissioner of Income Tax's intention to publish details of their failure to comply with their legal obligations to pay tax?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1915 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, from December 2011 to date 169 taxpayers have been sent notices in writing in relation to the Commissioner of Income Tax's intention to publish details of their failure to comply with their legal obligations to pay tax.

1920 **Hon D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, I take it from the fact that there has not – to my knowledge, any way – been any publication of details, that the fact that this notice has been sent has had the desired effect in all 169 cases?

1925 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, I understand that 45 of these letters have gone sometime this month as part of the routine the that Tax Office has got into since we were elected. The time for settlement of outstanding liabilities is Friday, 13th January 2017 for those 45. The hon. Gentleman therefore cannot make that assumption about those 45, but I think he can safely make it about the balance.

1930

**Q940/2015**  
**Prison Service –**  
**New recruits**

1935 **Clerk:** Question 930, the Hon. D A Feetham.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please state whether there have been any new recruits within the Prison Service this year?

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1940

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, yes, sir.

1945 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Thank you very much for the answer. Can the Hon. the Chief Minister state how many recruits there have been within the Prison Service this year?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, two, sir.

1950 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, have they been recruited from the wait-listed individuals that were wait-listed for six months prior to March of this year? Then I think that the then Minister for Justice wrote to me and said that the wait-listing had been extended for another three months. I may have it wrong whether it is three months or another six months, but can he answer whether they have been recruited from those people that have been wait-listed as opposed to outside that list?

1955 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, that is not a supplementary that arises from this question. If the hon. Gentleman wants that answer, he can ask me and I will get the information.

1960 **Q931-932/2016**  
**Public Service vacancies –**  
**Number and details**

1965 **Clerk:** Question 931, the Hon. D A Feetham.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, how many vacancies were there across the Public Service, inclusive of Government-owned companies or public authorities, as at the end of November 2016?

1970 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I will answer with Question 932.

1975 **Clerk:** Question 932, the Hon. D A Feetham.

**Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, can the Government please state, as at the end of November 2016, how many employees in the public sector, Government-owned companies, authorities and/or agencies were currently temporarily promoted, detailing acting posts, date temporarily promoted and the Department?

1980 **Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

1985 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have again reviewed the answers provided by the Human Resources Department and I am still not confident with the answers provided. Nevertheless, I am willing to give the hon. Gentleman a copy behind the Speaker's chair of the information as it has been provided to me. I will ensure that there is a satisfactory answer available for the next sitting, because I think it is important that we get to the bottom of what is wrong with this, and if he agrees I will provide him, on an off-the-record, without prejudice basis, the information that I have been provided and I will explain to him why it is that I am not satisfied with the answer.

1990 **Hon. D A Feetham:** Mr Speaker, nothing that I will say will move the Chief Minister to provide me the information in any event, so I am left with no alternative but to accept the offer that he has made. Obviously, Mr Speaker, I will ask your indulgence when it comes to next time round,

1995 to ask exactly the same question, so that the answer is provided if it has not been provided in writing beforehand.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I accept that the hon. Gentleman should be able to answer that question even though it is going to be within the six-month period because I am saying it will be available in that time.

2000 The hon. Gentleman says he is 'not going to move me' and that he 'has no choice but to accept', but remember that the choice I am giving him, Mr Speaker, is that I am going to give him the information as it has been given to me, in confidence and on what he and I would understand is a without prejudice basis.

2005

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, it will become public at the next meeting.

**Hon. Chief Minister:** But in any event, I am now very confident that it will be something that we can publish at the next meeting, because I expect to be able to get to the bottom of the issue.

2010

#### Q933/2016

#### 2015 Gibraltar Private Sector Workers and Pensioners Association – Proposals for Government assistance

**Clerk:** Question 933, the Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon.

2020 **Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon:** With reference to the public announcement made by the Gibraltar Private Sector Workers and Pensioners Association in the Gibraltar Chronicle on 13th December, whereby they claim that Government has failed on its manifesto commitments both in 2011 and 2015 leaving them in 'hardship and misery', what does Government propose to do to assist this Association and earn its trust once again?

2025

**Clerk:** Answer, the Hon. the Chief Minister.

**Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, we will comply with our manifesto commitment of 2015.

2030

**Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon:** Mr Speaker, I appreciate that. According to them, the Government has already not complied with their manifesto commitment of 2011 and, furthermore, they have not complied as per this communiqué that the Government sent on 1st April 2016, on the morning before their AGM, promising universal credit and an update to be issued by no later than Friday, 29th April – which is about eight months ago – and they still have not heard.

2035

Furthermore, Michael Crome promised that whatever figure was agreed as extra financial assistance would be implemented in this financial year, so we have two commitments that have still not materialised. What would the Chief Minister have to say about that?

2040

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Well, Mr Speaker, first of all, I would counsel her not to mention the name of civil servants in the context that she has today – or not civil servants but public servants. I understand that she has not been long in this House. The appropriate way to deal with it is to say, 'a member of his staff' rather than mention the name, but I entirely accept that is not something that she has done intentionally.

2045

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I think it is not true to say – and I am not suggesting that it is her that is in any way incurring an untruthfulness – that they have not heard back. In fact, we have had meetings with them since, as I understand it, although we have not, perhaps, written – but then again my mind may be playing tricks because a lot has happened since April 2016.

2050 The manifesto commitment, Mr Speaker, does not just depend on the Government, and this is perhaps an opportunity to highlight the independence of Community Care. Community Care is a part of what the Government is trying to structure in respect of this, but Community Care is independent and has its own views and needs its views taken into consideration and accepted.

2055 Finally, Mr Speaker, what I would say is that this is a collective of people that has the Government's sympathy and it retains the Government's sympathy, despite the fact it has issued an advert against the Government, but we have great sympathy for their plight. We are the only Government that has ever picked this issue up.

2060 It is true that we have taken longer than we anticipated to deal with some of the concerns that they have but we continue to be the only Government in the history of Gibraltar that is prepared to deal with the matter of how individuals in the private sector find themselves – if not destitute then certainly without a generous pension provision in old age. That is why we will continue not just to deal with the problem that they have but also with the problem in the future for those who are employed in the private sector today, to deal with the issue of compulsory pensions in the private sector – again, something that is only in our manifesto.

2065 I sincerely expect, Mr Speaker, that before the next General Election this collective will not just by then have been happy to see how the Government has dealt with this matter, but long before then, and they will be very happy in fact with the way that we approach resolution, to such an extent that I hope to be able to persuade them to place an advertisement in the Gibraltar Chronicle and any other newspaper that will carry it congratulating the Government for having been the only political Government in the history of Gibraltar to address these issues.

2070 If I may say to the hon. Lady, with the very greatest of respect, I think this is the most political question asked today and I am surprised that she is the only one on the Opposition benches to have picked it up. When I hear people say that she is our cheerleader, I worry that they do not realise that this is not cheerleading politics; this is very embarrassing politics indeed. The Government considers that this is an issue that must be dealt with and it will be dealt with.

**Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

I was having visions of myself with a pair of pom-poms, so thank you for redeeming me from that visual.

2080 I still ask the Chief Minister, once again: the Association has implored on me to bring this up because they claim that they have not heard anything since Friday, 29th April, which was the promise. I ask the Chief Minister, perhaps, if he could contact them or make a commitment in this House to get in touch with them. Does he not consider it a very sad state of events that this Association has had to resort to a public announcement, talking about 'facing another Christmas of hardship and misery' and also asking about the fact that, because of the lack of communication from Government, a lot of them have actually had to resort to taking funds out of their debentures? They term the effect of having to take out their funds from the debentures as 'crucifying the savers' because of the penalties that they have had to withstand.

2090 Can the Chief Minister give some kind of definite, timely commitment to speak to these people and give them some trust that they will actually abide by their promises?

**Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, I am going to forgive her for confusing crucifixion and Christmas, but they are completely different holidays.

2095 Mr Speaker, the first thing is that I do not recognise that there is anyone in Gibraltar in this collective that is suffering 'hardship and misery' by the measure that anyone else in Europe would understand that. There are some people in Gibraltar who are not going to have as abundant a Christmas as others and there are some people in Gibraltar who are in hardship and



2100 in misery. I do not think that this collective genuinely, when it considers the position it is in, can say that they are in hardship and misery, although I do not say that there are some who might not be. Certainly those who have briefed her, in my view, need to take the view that, if what you are talking about is debentures, there are not many people in hardship and misery that have debentures.

2105 What the Government wants to do is put in place a system so that people do not have to dip into their savings, so that they are able to have – as I think we have set out – an income which is dignified in their old age.

2110 She needs to know that when we started the discussions, what we were being asked for was that people who did not have a private pension scheme should by the Government be given the equivalent of Government occupational pension schemes – of the sort of final salary schemes that the hon. Lady and I have had cause to debate across the floor of this House – even though they had not been employees of the Government.

We have moved on a lot since then. That is why Community Care has come into the equation. I can tell the hon. Lady that I know that we had a communication with this collective on

30th September of this year, so I do not accept the date of April as the date of final communication.

2115 I can also tell the hon. Lady that I know and have a very high regard for the people in the committee that I am referring to, and that I meet them on occasions in other guises, and have discussed these issues. Therefore, she has the Government's commitment that we will comply with our manifesto obligations.

2120 This is not an issue where the Government is trying in any way to avoid providing the additional income that we are committed to providing, but there are reasons why we cannot do it from the Government because we do not think that is prudent. I ask her to refer in her mind to the reasons why Community Care was created and she may then understand why Community Care may be relevant and why there is now a third party in the equation that has to get comfortable with what the Government might propose. Therefore, I am going to crave her indulgence in respect of this matter, but this is very much an issue on our agenda and one that will be dealt with.

2125 If I can just end, Mr Speaker, by saying that I do not think that it is appropriate to look at her as a cheerleader in any way, but there are some who might be best described as cheerleaders for Gibraltar's failure and they do not look very good in pom-poms either.

2130 **Hon. Ms M D Hassan Nahon:** Mr Speaker, one final supplementary, if I may? Thank you for that information, Chief Minister. Can I just then have a confirmation or not, that as per this Government official what I have been told by the Association, is the Government willing to confirm that extra financial assistance for low income pensioners will be implemented in this financial year, as told by this official?

2135 In case it is my last time to speak today, I want to take this opportunity to wish all the Members of the House a very merry Christmas.

Thank you.

2140 **Hon Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, there are still motions to go. I look forward to hearing her views in respect of the motions, and the Government has every intention of dealing with those before the end of the calendar year, so I am sure that we will still have an opportunity to hear her, although, of course, I reciprocate on behalf of this side of the House.

2145 Mr Speaker, 'in this financial year' seems to be the sort of target that we should be aiming for and she has my undertaking – something I am not usually willing to give, she knows – that we shall certainly be doing our very best to ensure that we do comply with that commitment, because this is a collective that continues to have the Government's sympathy.

I still think it is appropriate to highlight that we are the only Government that has cared. We are the only party that has carried a commitment, and I might have said it is a bit unfair

2150 therefore that we should be hauled over the coals, but when people are, if not in hardship and misery, certainly in need, then I am quite happy to be hauled over the coals and reminded that I have a commitment to do something because I am committed to delivering on this.

2155 **Hon. R M Clinton:** Mr Speaker, I have listened to the exchanges with great interest and the contribution by the Chief Minister on this subject. I had, by pure coincidence, a meeting with such an individual who is affected by the scenario of being close to retirement but not having a pension as they would have had in the public sector if they had been employed by the public sector. My question is this: to somebody in that scenario who may be one year away from retirement, am I correct in understanding from what the Chief Minister has just said, that people  
2160 in those circumstances, where they will not benefit from a private sector pension that a 20-year-old might enter into tomorrow ...? Is my understanding correct or is the Chief Minister saying that the alternative means in which to assist these members will be some kind of arrangement with Community Care, but that it would be inappropriate, as he has said, for the Government itself to stick its hand in its pocket?

2165 **Hon. Chief Minister:** Mr Speaker, various things arise from that remark from the hon. Gentleman. The first is that I assume he is such a person, as I do not understand that he has ever worked in the public sector – so he is such a person. And he does not seem to me to be either in hardship or misery or penury, and therefore he should not be, I hope, asking out of a vested  
2170 interest that there may be some extra pennies coming his way.

What we are proposing – and it was set out in our manifesto – is that in partnership with Community Care, a new additional financial support measure for pensioners will be brought in. Mr Speaker, the target is the pensioner who needs that additional financial support, and I thought we were quite explicit and had answered the question that he poses simply by referring  
2175 to the manifesto – that one would have thought he would have read during the context of the last General Election contest. I am surprised he seems not to have read that. It is true to say, Mr Speaker, that there is likely to be that provision in the context of the time that I have indicated to the hon. Lady, we are looking at.

2180 Their pamphlet at the last General Election did not contain provision in that respect and therefore he might want to tell the gentleman or lady that he met that the Government will be providing that additional financial support measure for pensioners in those circumstances that he described, but not in his circumstances. I hope that I have made clear our continued commitment to comply with that obligation.

2185

## Questions for Written Answer

**Mr Speaker:** May I invite the Chief Minister to table the answers to Written Questions.

2190 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, yes, sir, I have the honour to table the answers to Written Questions numbers W66 to W72/2016, inclusive.

### ADJOURNMENT

2195 **Chief Minister (Hon. F R Picardo):** Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the House should now adjourn until tomorrow at 4 p.m.

**Mr Speaker:** The House will now adjourn until tomorrow at four in the afternoon.

*The House Adjourned at 4.58 p.m.*

2200