



**PARLIAMENT OF
THE CAYMAN ISLANDS**

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

First Meeting of the 2021/2022 Session
Second Sitting

Thursday
15 July, 2021
(Pages 1-40)

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, MP,
Speaker

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PRESENT WERE:

MINISTERS OF THE CABINET

Hon. G. Wayne Panton, JP, MP	<i>Premier</i> , Minister for Cabinet Office <i>and</i> Sustainability and Climate Resiliency —“MSCR”
Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, MP	<i>Deputy Premier</i> , Minister for Finance and Economic Development <i>and</i> Border Control and Labour — “FEDBCL”
Hon. Juliana Y. O’Connor-Connolly, JP, MP	Minister for Education <i>and</i> District Administration and Lands — “EDAL”
Hon. Bernie A. Bush, MP	Minister for Home Affairs <i>and</i> Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage — “HAYSCH”
Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, MP	Minister for Tourism and Transport — “T and T”
Hon. André M. Ebanks, MP	Minister for Financial Services and Commerce — “FSC” <i>and</i> Investment, Innovation and Social Development — “IISD”
Hon. Sabrina T. Turner, MP	Minister for Health and Wellness — “MOH”
Hon. Johany S. “Jay” Ebanks, MP	Minister for Planning, Agriculture, Housing, and Infrastructure — “PAHI”

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, MBE, Cert Hon, JP	<i>Deputy Governor</i> , ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of the Civil Service
Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, QC, JP	<i>Attorney General</i> , ex officio Member responsible for the Portfolio of Legal Affairs

ELECTED MEMBERS GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHERS

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, MP	<i>Deputy Speaker</i> , Parliamentary Secretary to FSC and EDAL Elected Member for West Bay Central
Ms. Heather D. Bodden, JP, MP	Parliamentary Secretary to T&T and IISD, Elected Member for Savannah
Mr. Isaac D. Rankine, MP	Parliamentary Secretary to HAYSCH and PAHI, Elected Member for East End

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MP	<i>Leader of the Opposition</i> , Elected Member for George Town East
Mr. Joseph X. Hew, MP	<i>Deputy Leader of the Opposition</i> , Elected Member for George Town North
Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MP	Elected Member for Red Bay
Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MP	Elected Member for Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman
Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, JP, MP	Elected Member for George Town South
Mr. David C. Wight, JP, MP	Elected Member for George Town West

INDEPENDENT MEMBER

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, JP, MP	Elected Member for Bodden Town East
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OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
FIRST MEETING 2021/22 SESSION
THURSDAY
15 JULY 2021
10:15 AM
Second Sitting

[Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, Speaker, presiding]

The Speaker: Good morning.

I will call on the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to say prayers this morning.

PRAYERS

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Let us pray:

Almighty God, from whom all wisdom and power are derived: We beseech Thee so to direct and prosper the deliberations of the Parliament now assembled, that all things may be ordered upon the best and surest foundations for the glory of Thy Name and for the safety, honour and welfare of the people of these Islands.

Bless our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth II; Charles, Prince of Wales; and all the Royal Family. Give grace to all who exercise authority in our Commonwealth, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us. Especially we pray for the Governor of our Islands, the Premier; the Speaker of the Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of the Cabinet, Ex-officio Members, Members of the Parliament, the Chief Justice and members of the Judiciary, that we may be enabled faithfully to perform the responsible duties of our high office. All this we ask for Thy great Name's sake.

Let us say The Lord's Prayer together: *Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us and give us peace, now and always. Amen.

The Speaker: Please be seated.

This honourable House is now in session; proceedings are resumed.

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS
OR AFFIRMATIONS**

The Speaker: None.

**READING BY THE HONOURABLE
SPEAKER OF MESSAGES AND
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Speaker: None.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Speaker: None.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS
AND OF REPORTS**

**SISTER ISLANDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION —
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of District Administration and Land.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Minister of Education, and District Administration and Lands: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning.

I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the Sister Islands Affordable Housing Development Corporation Annual Report for the Year ended 31st December, 2020.

The Speaker: So ordered. Does the Honourable Minister wish to speak thereto?

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Only to say that the report is self-explanatory Mr. Speaker, and that it is the Government's intention to continue with it and to ensure that houses are built during this four-year term.

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH, SPORTS,
AGRICULTURE AND LANDS
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of District Administration and Land.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Once again, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the 2020 Annual Report for the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, Agriculture and Lands for the Cayman Islands Government.

The Speaker: Is the Minister speaking?

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Mr. Speaker, in the interest of time I am going to forego the opportunity to speak; there will be things coming up in Finance Committee; if need be, I will make a statement thereafter.

**THE TWENTIETH REPORT OF THE
COMMISSION FOR STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE
FOR THE PERIOD
1 AUGUST 2020 – 31 JANUARY 2021**

The Speaker: The Honourable Deputy Governor.

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament the Twentieth Report of the Commission for Standards in Public Life for the period 1 August 2020 – 31 January 2021.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Deputy Governor speaking?

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Very briefly, Mr. Speaker.

Just to thank all members of the Commission for their excellent work in particular, Mrs. Rosie Myles who has served with us for many, many, years and has now retired from that post. She has done an absolutely amazing job for us and also to remind all Members of this House, including myself that we have an obligation to file our declarations very soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**CAYMAN ISLANDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
— PROMOTING, PROTECTING AND PRESERVING
HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT
1 JANUARY 2018 – 31 MAY 2019**

**CAYMAN ISLANDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
— PROMOTING, PROTECTING AND PRESERVING
HUMAN RIGHTS —**

**REPORT BRIEFING SUMMARY —
1 JUNE 2019 TO 31 DECEMBER 2019
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,
CAYMAN ISLANDS
— ANNUAL REPORT —
2020 REPORTING PERIOD
1 JANUARY 2020 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020**

The Speaker: The Honourable Deputy Governor.

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament the Cayman Islands Human Rights Commission Report — Promoting, Protecting and Preserving Human Rights, 1 January, 2018 – 31 May, 2019; also the Report covering 1 June 2019 to 31 December 2019; and the Reporting Period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Deputy Governor speaking?

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Mr. Speaker, just briefly again to thank all of the members of the Human Rights Commission for their outstanding work; to welcome our new Chairman—Mr. Dale Crowley—and thank him and the Commission for the work they have been doing to ensure that we observe human rights in the Cayman Islands.

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT
PORTFOLIO OF LEGAL AFFAIRS
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT**

The Speaker: The Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I seek the Parliament's leave to lay on the Table the 2020 Annual Report for the Portfolio of Legal Affairs. Thank you, sir.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Member speaking?

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Mr. Speaker, just to say that the report is self-explanatory. It has extremely useful and understandably important information and I would commend it to the Honourable Members of this House and the wider public.

I wish to say thanks to the staff of the Portfolio of Legal Affairs, the Chief Officer and Solicitor General, Ms. Reshma Sharma, the attorneys, the professional staff and all the other Departments under the Portfolio of Legal Affairs—the Law School, Legislative Drafting, Law Reform, the FRA, the Anti-Money Laundering Unit, Law Revision Commission—all very dedicated professional and support staff.

I certainly would like to commend them for the tremendous work during the relevant period and continuing.

Thank you.

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC
PROSECUTIONS
CAYMAN ISLANDS –
ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

The Speaker: The Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I seek the Parliament's leave to lay on the Table the Annual Report for the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for the Year 2020.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Attorney General speaking?

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Mr. Speaker, again the report itself is self-explanatory and I commend it to members of the public and the Honourable Members of this Parliament; and also to express our gratitude to the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Acting Director and all the professional and support staff of that Office for their valuable work.

Thank you, sir.

**OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL
CAYMAN ISLANDS - OWEN ROBERTS
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (ORIA)
TERMINAL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT –
PROGRESS UPDATE AS AT AUGUST 2018
(JANUARY 2019)**

The Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition:

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg on the Table of this honourable Parliament the Report of the Office of the Auditor General Cayman Islands - Owen Roberts International Airport Terminal Redevelopment Project – Progress Update as at August 2018 (January 2019)

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Leader of the Opposition speaking?

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition:
No thank you, sir. I think the report speaks to itself.

**OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL CAYMAN
ISLANDS - FINANCIAL REPORTING OF THE
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT:**

**GENERAL REPORT 31 DECEMBER 2019
(DECEMBER 2020)**

**OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL CAYMAN
ISLANDS - IMPROVING FINANCIAL
ACCOUNTABILITY AND
TRANSPARENCY: BUDGETING
(DECEMBER 2020)**

**REPORT OF THE STANDING PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE ON THE REPORTS OF THE OFFICE
OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON:**

**1. OWEN ROBERTS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
(ORIA) TERMINAL REDEVELOPMENT
PROJECT –PROGRESS UPDATE AS AT
AUGUST 2018 (JANUARY 2019);**

**2. FINANCIAL REPORTING OF THE
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT: GENERAL
REPORT 2019 (DECEMBER 2020); AND**

**3. IMPROVING FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
AND TRANSPARENCY: BUDGETING
(DECEMBER 2020)**

The Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition:

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg on the Table of this honourable Parliament the following reports of the Office of the Auditor General Cayman Islands: Financial Reporting of the Cayman Islands Government: General Report 31 December 2019 (December 2020); Office of the Auditor General Cayman Islands - Improving Financial Accountability and Transparency: Budgeting (December 2020); Report of the Standing Public Accounts Committee on the Reports of the Office of the Auditor General on:

1. Owen Roberts International Airport (ORIA) Terminal Redevelopment Project – Progress Update as at August 2018 (January 2019);
2. Financial Reporting of the Cayman Islands Government: General Report 2019 (December 2020); and
3. Improving Financial Accountability and Transparency: Budgeting (December 2020)

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Leader of the Opposition speaking?

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition:
No, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**CAYMAN ISLANDS NATIONAL MUSEUM –
ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017
CAYMAN ISLANDS NATIONAL MUSEUM –
ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage.

Hon. Bernie A. Bush, Minister of Home Affairs and Youth, Sports, Culture and Heritage: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the Annual Report 2016-2017 from the Cayman Islands National Museum.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Minister speaking thereto?

Hon. Bernie A. Bush: No, thank you, Mr. Speaker.
Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament the 2019 Annual Report from the Cayman Islands National Museum.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Minister speaking thereto?

Hon. Bernie A. Bush: No, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT FOR NATIONAL
ROADS AUTHORITY –
FOR THE 2016/2017 FINANCIAL YEAR
(18 MONTHS)**

**2018 ANNUAL REPORT FOR NATIONAL ROADS
AUTHORITY – FOR THE 2018 FINANCIAL YEAR
(JAN 1, 2018 TO DEC 31, 2018)**

**2019 ANNUAL REPORT FOR NATIONAL ROADS
AUTHORITY – FOR THE 2019 FINANCIAL YEAR
(JAN 1, 2019 TO DEC 31, 2019)**

The Speaker: Honourable Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure: Mr. Speaker, I rise to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the Annual Reports for the National Roads Authority (NRA) for 2016-2017, 2018 and 2019 fiscal years.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Minister speaking thereto?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: While I do not wish to speak specifically to the Authority's Annual Reports that are being tabled at this time, I do want to take the opportunity to thank the NRA Management and staff for their continued hard work and dedication to improving

the road infrastructure and needs across the Cayman Islands.

I am confident that the NRA and its new board members will continue to make progress in their vision to enhance the quality of life, promote economy and prosperity and improve the access to mobility for all the residents and visitors of these Cayman Islands.

I want to thank my colleagues in the Cabinet and the House of Parliament for their support as we move forward.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT –
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, PLANNING AND
INFRASTRUCTURE,
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I stand to lay on the Table of the honourable House, the Annual Report for the Ministry of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure for the 2020 fiscal year.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Minister speaking?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Again, while I do not wish to speak directly to the report, I do want to take the opportunity to thank the Ministry of Finance; the staff, led by the Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Carrol Cooper, for their continued hard work and dedication in improving and ensuring that our Ministry remains compliant by improving transparency and accountability.

I would also like to take this time to congratulate the team for achieving their unqualified audit opinion. The Ministry stands committed to continue with the timely submission of these reports, Mr. Speaker.

[Pause]

**CAYMAN ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT BANK
–ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED
DECEMBER 31, 2019**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance and Economic Development and Border Control and Labour: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the Annual Report of the Cayman Islands Development Bank—which is

commonly referred to as CIDB—for the year ended 31 December 2019.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Minister speaking?

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

[Pause]

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Office of the Auditor General issued an unqualified opinion, with an Emphasis of Matter, on the financial statements of the CIDB for the 2019 year.

The Emphasis of Matter, which does not change the unqualified opinion, is due to:

1. the CIDB being significantly reliant on continued government support from the proceeds of capital injections and services in order to meet its obligations and operational expenditure; and
2. 50 per cent or \$10.7 million of the overall loan portfolio of the CIDB being impaired.

Mr. Speaker, the CIDB approved 88 loans during 2019, with a total value of \$0.8 million. At the end of 2019, the CIDB's loan portfolio totalled \$21.2 million—prior to a loan loss provision of \$1.6 million. The decrease in debt was due primarily to the commencement of semi-annual principal payments on the CI\$15.8 million loan facility with First Caribbean International Bank. Total liabilities equalled \$20.2 million at the end of the 2019 financial year.

Mr. Speaker, CIDB attained a Net Surplus of \$300,000 after earning \$2.1 million in Net Income from operations and incurring \$1.8 million in Administrative Expenses. CIDB therefore ended the 2019 Financial Year with \$7.8 million in cash, which comprised of cash held:

- a. In current and savings accounts;
- b. In fixed deposits; and
- c. On behalf of the Education Council Scholarship Fund.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Education Council Scholarship Fund, CIDB acts as an agent for the government and held \$4.1 million in cash received from the government for scholarship services as outlined in the 2019 Purchase Agreement between CIDB and the Cayman Islands Government. CIDB had no known contingent liabilities as at 31 December 2019.

Mr. Speaker, the Government wishes to express its gratitude to the staff of CIDB and its Board of Directors for their assistance and support during the period under review.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT –
ANNUAL REPORT – 31 DECEMBER 2020**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the Annual Report for the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for its financial Year ended 31st December, 2020.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Minister speaking?

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Briefly, Mr. Speaker; although briefly may be relative.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Office of the Auditor General issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of the Ministry for its Financial Year ended 31 December 2020.

An unqualified opinion signifies that the information contained in the financial statements is accurate and can be relied upon.

As shown on pages 10 and 11 of the Annual Report, during the 12-month period ending 31 December 2020, the Ministry comprised of 155 staff members – of which 137 or 88 per cent were Caymanian; 68 per cent of staff were female and the majority of staff was 41 years and older.

Some of the Ministry's key events and achievements, during the 2020 Financial Year, included:

- The preparation of the COVID-19 Cayman Islands' Economic Assessment and Stimulus Plan;
- Processing of 1,141 requests for the waiver of stamp and import duties at a value \$6.1 million;
- Generating approximately \$8.4 million in incremental revenue from operating investments;
- The arrangement of a CI\$330 million Emergency Line of Credit which is an "insurance" measure for the Government to avoid having to deplete all of its cash reserves, and to assist with meeting its financial obligations depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic recovery proceeds;

Other achievements also include:

- Preparing the Ministry's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan;
- Conducting workshops on procurement principles and ethics, as well as the Cayman

Islands electronic procurement portal—Bonfire;

- Delivering 97.6 per cent letter mail on time; and
- Arranging the Government Guaranteed Loan Scheme for medium and large-sized businesses, which is the loan scheme to assist medium and large-sized businesses in dealing with the financial hardships of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, the Statement of Executive Financial Transactions shows that, on behalf of the Cabinet, the Ministry collected \$44.8 million in executive revenue, which was \$15.6 million below budget. The primary reasons for the under achievement were due to:

1. Cruise Ship Departure Tax being under budget by \$8.7 million due to the Covid-19 pandemic and borders being closed;
2. Environmental Protection Fund Fees being under budget by \$4.4 million due to the Covid-19 pandemic and borders being closed;
3. Debit Transaction Fees being under budget by \$363,000 due to a decline in economic activity as a result of border closures, lockdown and a decline in the population at that time;
4. Other Stamp Duty being under budget by \$165,000 due to a decrease in demand as the supplier of franking machines ceased their support in the Caribbean effective 31 December 2019; and
5. Revenue from Property Insurance Stamp Duty exceeded its budget expectation by \$386,000 due to an active real estate market in 2020.

On behalf of Cabinet, the Ministry incurred \$90.3 million in executive expenses which was \$11.8 million under the revised budget for executive expenses of \$102.1 million.

The Statement of Financial Position shows that the Ministry ended the Financial Year with \$19.2 million in Total Assets. Of this amount, \$9.9 million or 51.6 per cent is comprised of cash and cash equivalents which includes cash on hand, cash in transit and fixed deposit bank accounts with a maturity of no more than three months from the date of placement.

Total Liabilities amounted to \$2.1 million

Mr. Speaker, Net Assets, which are Total Assets less Total Liabilities, amounted to \$17.1 million.

Mr. Speaker, the Statement of Financial Performance shows that the Ministry earned \$14.6 million in Operating Revenue for the year. Almost all of this revenue was earned from the delivery of Outputs to Cabinet.

The Ministry incurred \$14.6 million in Operating Expenses during the Financial Year, of

which \$11.8 million or 80.8 per cent comprised personnel costs. Personnel costs include salaries, health insurance and pension costs.

The Ministry ended the 2020 Financial Year with a break-even result, since its actual Surplus attained of \$3,000 is essentially a break-even result.

Mr. Speaker, this Annual Report shows that the Ministry has worked hard to provide effective, efficient and outstanding public services, which represent value for money and which contribute to the prosperity and productivity of the Cayman Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the staff and management of the Ministry for their hard work during the 2020 Financial Year and I look forward to future successes in the years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT UNAUDITED QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT – THREE MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 – CORE GOVERNMENT

The Speaker: Is that item 21 or 22? Did you just do the Cayman Islands. . .

[Crosstalk]

The Speaker: You did the Ministry? And you are doing item 21 at this point?

[Crosstalk]

The Speaker: Item 21, the Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On behalf of the Government, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable House the Unaudited Quarterly Financial Report for the Core Government of the Cayman Islands for the three-month period ended 31 March 2021, hereafter referred to as a period in accordance with section 29 (4) of the Public Management and Finance Act.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Is the Honourable Minister speaking?

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Yes, Mr. Speaker, again briefly.

Mr. Speaker, on 11 May 2021, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development arranged for the Gazettal of the Unaudited Quarterly Financial Report for the Core Government of the Cayman Islands for the period. The Gazettal of the Report on 11 May 2021 is within the six-week period after the end of the first quarter, 31 March 2021 that the Act requires.

Mr. Speaker, the information referred hereto is based on records obtained from the General Ledger of

the Government's Financial Management System. It is also based on the representations and judgments provided by the Chief Financial Officers of Ministries, Portfolios, Offices, and Statutory Authorities and Government Companies (SAGCs).

Mr. Speaker, all of the amounts that I will provide from this point onwards are in Cayman Islands Dollars. The Statement of Financial Position, as at 31 March 2021, on page 7 of the document, shows that the Core Government ended the period with \$2.6 billion in total assets, \$0.9 billion in total liabilities, and therefore with \$1.7 billion in Net Assets or Net Worth.

Mr. Speaker, cash and cash equivalents, including fixed deposits with maturity durations not exceeding 90 days, were \$79.5 million and Marketable Securities which comprised of fixed deposits with maturity durations exceeding 90 days, were \$531.7 million, for a total of \$611.2 million with respect to bank account balances. Due to the significant cash balances on-hand, the Government continues to place funds on long-term fixed deposits. These long-term deposits are reflected as Marketable Securities, on the Statement of Financial Position, and are not included in the definition of 'Cash and Cash Equivalents', which only represent deposits that are 90 days or less, to maturity.

Mr. Speaker, the Public Debt for the Core Government stood at \$243.9 million at 31 March 2021. This was \$35.4 million lower than the debt balance for the previous year, at 31 March 2020. Therefore, Core Government's debt has been reduced by \$35.4 million over a one-year period—again, that is due to debt repayment.

Mr. Speaker, the Statement of Financial Performance for the period, shown at page 10 of the document, indicates that Core Government earned Total Operating Revenue of \$404.2 million and incurred Total Operating Expenditure of \$208.0 million. The resulting Operating Surplus for Core Government was \$196.2 million. The SAGCs contributed an additional \$6.4 million to the Operating Surplus, as a result of their favourable performance. The Entire Public Sector produced an Operating Surplus of \$202.6 million for the quarter (or 27 per cent above budget).

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that a significant portion of fees from the financial services sector are due within the first quarter of each financial year, and are not expected to result in the receipt of significant revenues after 31 March.

Mr. Speaker, revenue recorded for the first three months of 2021 was \$39.6 million above budget expectations. This positive variance was mainly concentrated in the category of Coercive Revenue, which are revenues received by Government by virtue of the coercive powers of certain laws. Coercive Revenue recorded for the period was \$38.9 million more than budgeted expectations and \$53.3 million higher than the prior year-to-date actual results despite the significant decline in tourism related revenues due to the extended closure of the borders.

Mr. Speaker, Coercive Revenue items performing above budget expectations included:

- Private Fund Fees, which was a new revenue stream, which contributed \$44.8 million for the period; and
- Stamp Duty on Land Transfers of \$9.2 million, higher than budgeted for the period.

However, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, there were some Coercive Revenue items performing below budget expectations and those are:

- Tourist Accommodation Tax, \$14.0 million less than budgeted;
- Other Import Duty, \$3.7 million less than budgeted;
- Cruise Ship Departure Charges, \$3.0 million below budget expectations; and
- Work Permit Fees, \$2.7 million less than budgeted.

Sales of Goods and Services of \$9.9 million recorded for the period were \$1.4 million better than budget.

Mr. Speaker, expenses incurred for the period of \$208 million were \$12.1 million more than budgeted. Transfer Payments (TP) during the period were \$22.5 million greater than the level originally budgeted for the period back in 2019, but such a negative variance was partially offset by underspends in Personnel Costs and Supplies and Consumables.

The \$22.5 million negative variance with respect to Transfer Payments is mainly due to the overages in Sports and Cultural Tourism Programmes Assistance (\$13.9 million negative variance) and Support for Business Initiatives (\$4.7 million negative variance). These costs are in relation to financial assistance offered to displaced tourism workers and local businesses to help mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on their lives and their business operations.

Costs relating to personnel for the period amounted to \$90.5 million, which reflects an under spend in Personnel Costs of \$2.9 million (or 3.1 per cent) when compared to a budget of \$93.4 million. This favourable variance is the result of several Ministries and Portfolios having vacant posts which, to 31 March 2021, remained unfilled. Personnel Costs for the 2021 period were \$3 million higher than the same three-month period last year, due to revisions made to remuneration and salary re-grading at the beginning of January, 2021.

Mr. Speaker, supplies and consumables of \$22.1 million were also lower than projected, with an under-spend of \$10.3 million (or 31.9 per cent). The most significant savings continue to be related to the Purchase of Services, which accounts for 55 per cent of the overall variance. Ministries, Portfolios and Offices anticipate that as the year progresses, costs will align closer to initial budgeted projections.

Mr. Speaker, the Statement of Cash Flows, on page 15 of the Tabled document, shows that the net cash inflows from Operating Activities totalled \$196.2 million. The net cash outflows used by Investing and Financing Activities totalled \$259.7 million and \$4.6 million, respectively.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, the overall fiscal performance reported for the period shows an Operating Surplus of \$202.6 million for the Entire Public Sector, which is \$43.1 million better than budget for the period. This result arises due to better performing fees from the financial services sector and land transfers.

The Government's cash position ended at \$611.2 million for the period; \$172.1 million of which were held as Reserve and Restricted deposits, and \$439.1 million as unrestricted Operating Bank Account balances.

The Unaudited Quarterly Financial Report for the Core Government of the Cayman Islands for the Three-Month Period ended 31 March 2021 is available on the Gazette Office's website: www.gazettes.gov.ky – and it was Gazetted on 11 May 2021.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Pause]

**PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONS PLAN,
JUDICIAL PENSION PLAN,
PARLIAMENTARY PENSION
REPORT ON THE ACTUARIAL VALUATION FOR
FUNDING PURPOSES AS AT JANUARY 1, 2020
(SEPTEMBER 2020)**

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government, I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the 1 January 2020 Actuarial Valuation Reports for the Judicial Pension Plan, the Parliamentary Pension Plan and the Public Service Pension Plan.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Is the Honourable Minister speaking?

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders: Briefly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me start by explaining the terms "Pension Plan" and "Pension Fund".

In the Cayman Islands' Public Sector, the term "Pension Plan" refers to the rules that govern the operation of Public Sector pensions, such as eligibility to receive pensions, how pension payments are calculated and the amount of contributions to be made to pensions by Public Servants and their employers, the Cayman Islands Government along with Statutory Authorities and Government-Owned Companies.

The term "Pension Fund", Mr. Speaker, refers to an arrangement that is established to receive pension contributions from employees and employers, to invest those contributions, to make pension

payments to pensioners, to own assets and to acknowledge its liabilities.

In the Cayman Islands, there are three Public Sector Pension Plans and three Public Sector Pension Funds.

Mr. Speaker, under section 10 of the Judges' Emoluments and Allowances Order, 2005; section 10 of the Parliamentary Pensions Act (2016 Revision); and section 12 of the Public Service Pensions Act (2017 Revision), triennial actuarial valuations of Public Sector Pension Funds are required in order to determine:

1. The rate or rates of contribution required for the Funds to meet their liabilities; and
2. Whether the funds are capable of meeting their long-term liabilities at the current rate or rates of contribution.

Mr. Speaker, the actuarial reports reflect a combined CI\$206.8 million deficiency with respect to the three Public Sector Pension Funds.

The next triennial actuarial valuations are to be carried out with an effective date of 1 January 2023.

Mr. Speaker, I need to explain why the deficiency is not a cause for worry. With respect to the reports that have been Tabled, the actuarial deficiency results from a comparison between the value of assets as at 1 January 2020, and the value assessed for liabilities that arise from future benefits due to Public Servants. The value of those future benefits is discounted back to 1 January 2020.

Mr. Speaker, as at 1 January 2020, the three Public Sector Pension Plans had a combined total value of CI\$858.4 million for assets and CI\$1,065.2 billion for liabilities. The difference between the total assets and total liabilities equates to the CI\$206.8 million actuarial deficiency which I stated earlier.

It is important to note that the Government is permitted to address the actuarial deficiency over a 20-year period. The objective is to eliminate such a deficiency by the end of the 20-year period—which is in the future, Mr. Speaker.

This elimination of the deficiency will be achieved by:

1. The Government continuing to make payments to reduce the Past Service liability amount. In the Appropriation Act for the 2020 and 2021 financial years, which is a summary of the detailed 2020 and 2021 Budgets, CI\$15.1 million is included therein with respect to Past Service Liability for 2020 and CI\$15.1 million for 2021. The combined amount of CI\$30.2 million that will be paid towards reducing the Past Service liability for 2020 and 2021 is in addition to monthly pension contributions that are based on percentages of Public Servants' salaries and wages;
2. The Public Service Pensions Board is expected to continue earning robust returns on

the investment of assets of the Public Sector Pension Funds; and

3. Conducting the triennial actuarial valuations to recommend the pension contribution rates required for the assets of the Public Sector Pension Funds in order to keep-up with the value of benefits accruing to Public Servants.

Mr. Speaker, a very brief history of the Public Sector pension arrangements will also help to explain why a pension actuarial deficiency exists at present.

Mr. Speaker, the Public Sector Pension arrangements were initiated in 1963, that is 10 years before I was born. From 1963—the year pension arrangements originated—to the establishment of the Public Service Pensions Fund on 1 January 1990, is approximately 27 years. In essence, Mr. Speaker, when the Public Service Pensions Fund was established on 1 January 1990, it “inherited” approximately 27 years of pension liabilities, but did not have any assets to meet those liabilities; therefore, a deficiency existed on the first day of the Fund’s existence in 1990.

This Fund was established with effect from 1 January 1990, but no benefits could be paid out of the Fund during the 1990s since it was not capable of meeting the projected liabilities after taking into account the contributions and earnings of the Fund. During the 1990s and prior years, pension payments were made directly from Central Government’s General Revenues.

Mr. Speaker, since the year 2000, pension payments have been made from the Public Sector Pension Funds and not from Central Government’s General Revenues. This, in itself, is evidence that although there is an actuarial deficiency, the actuarial deficiency does not pose any immediate financial danger to the continued payment of pensions by Public Sector Pension Funds. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, the Government discloses the value of the actuarial deficiency in its financial statements, demonstrating transparency with respect to the actuarial deficiency.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the existence of an actuarial deficiency is not a reason for immediate worry because the Government does have some time to eliminate the deficiency and is taking actions to do so. In the meantime payments of monthly pensions continue to be made from Public Sector Pension Funds without any difficulty.

Mr. Speaker, the 1 January 2020 actuarial valuation reports contain recommendations for pension contribution rates and Cabinet has accepted those recommended rates, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to recommendations for the Judicial Pension Plan:

1. A total of 30 per cent of pensionable pay has been recommended for the Defined Contribution element of the Plan; and
2. Zero per cent (or nothing) is applicable as a contribution rate for the Defined Benefit part of

the Plan because there aren’t any participants any more to this part of the Plan.

With respect to recommendations for the Parliamentary Pensions Plan:

1. 55.7 per cent of pensionable pay has been recommended for the Defined Benefit part of the Plan; and
2. 12.4 per cent of pensionable pay has been recommended for the Defined Contribution element of the Plan.

With respect to recommendations for the Public Service Pensions Plan:

1. 20.3 per cent of pensionable pay has been recommended for the Defined Benefit part of the Plan; and
2. 12.4 per cent of pensionable pay has been recommended for the Defined Contribution element of the Plan.

Mr. Speaker, for individual Statutory Authorities and Government-Owned Companies, their contribution rates are specified in the 1 January 2020 report under the section containing details for the Public Service Pensions Plan, at page 26 of that section.

In order to catch-up with the increased pension contribution rates, as recommended in the 1 January 2020 reports, the Government will be making an additional payment of CI\$3.0 million to the Public Service Pension Board in each of the 2020, 2021 and 2022 financial years. This additional payment that totals CI\$9.0 million is the extra amount required of the Government to make good or make whole the contribution to the Past Service Liability figure, for the three fiscal years that will end on 31 December 2022. The total extra payments of \$9.0 million for the 3-year period, is extra to the existing \$15.1 million annually that is budgeted with respect to the Past Service Liability payments.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to explain that the pension actuarial valuation reports that have been Tabled are “funding valuations”, meaning these reports recommend the amount of cash contributions that Government should make in order to fund pension benefits. The 1 January 2020 pension “valuation funding” reports differ from pension “accounting valuation” reports, with the latter being used to determine the pension amounts that are reported in the Government’s financial statements, in order to comply with International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

Since the results from “funding valuations” and the “accounting valuations” of pensions differ, mainly because of the need to use a different discount rate in the valuations, Honourable Members and the public should not compare the pension deficiency estimates provided in the “funding valuation” reports Tabled today with the pension liability estimates contained in the

Government's forecast financial statements for 2020 to 2024.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, Government will pass Regulations to give legal effect to the pension contribution rates I have outlined; those Regulations have already been drafted and will be taken to Cabinet shortly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**CAYMAN ISLANDS STOCK EXCHANGE—
REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING
31ST DECEMBER 2020**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Financial Services.

Hon. André M. Ebanks, Minister of Financial Services and Commerce and Investment, Innovation and Social Development: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I beg that the Cayman Islands Stock Exchange Report for the fiscal year ended 31 December 2020 be laid on the Table of this honourable House.

The Speaker: So ordered.

Does the Honourable Minister wish to speak?

Hon. André M. Ebanks: Very briefly, Mr. Speaker.

Just to thank the board and staff of the Cayman Islands Stock Exchange which, I should add, is under the keen management of a former Member of this honourable House and former Minister for Finance, Marco Archer. I don't think it's a stretch to say that the solid performance would be due in no small part to his economic stewardship.

[Desk thumping]

**NATIONAL CONSERVATION COUNCIL—
PROMOTING AND SECURING BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY AND THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF
NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE
CAYMAN ISLANDS—
ANNUAL REPORTS 2018**

**NATIONAL CONSERVATION COUNCIL—
PROMOTING AND SECURING BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY AND THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF
NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE CAYMAN
ISLANDS—ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

The Speaker: The Honourable Premier. Minister of...
The Honourable Premier.

[Laughter]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker—and good morning to everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to seek permission to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the Annual Reports for the National Conservation Council for 2018 and 2019.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Premier speaking?

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

We had a redefinition this morning of what "briefly" means.

[Laughter]

The National Conservation Council

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we outline what the National Conservation Council has been doing in summary form, and I certainly commend the reading of the reports; but, Mr. Speaker, I would like to focus on a number of areas with your indulgence, sir.

Mr. Speaker, the Members may be aware that the National Conservation Council, which I will refer to as the Council or NCC from time-to-time, was established by, and to facilitate the goals of the National Conservation Act, 2013. That is:

- To promote and secure biological diversity and the sustainable use of natural resources in the Cayman Islands;
- To protect and conserve endangered threatened and endemic wildlife and their habitats
- To provide for protected terrestrial wetland and marine areas;
- To give effect to the provisions of certain international conventions, including the protocol concerning specially protected areas and wildlife, to the convention for the protection and development of the marine environment of the wider Caribbean region;
- Also the convention on wetlands of international importance, specifically relating to waterfall habitat;
- The convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals; and
- The global convention on biological diversity and the United Nations framework convention on climate change.

Mr. Speaker, I will start with the first report, in terms of Council activities for the period ended 31 December, 2018. Over the course of 2018, the Council managed and oversaw the following:

1. The issuance of over 200 permits or licenses for activities under the National Conservation Act, as well as over 450 pieces of advices to various entities concerning decisions or

actions which may have had an adverse impact on native species and habitats;

2. Public consultations on a draft species conservation plan for mangroves, as well as publicly nominated protected areas;
3. The Council endorsed feral cat control measures; this was put on hold by a judicial review and it is pending the Ministry of Agriculture's actions to pass and implement prescribed poison regulations, which I believe has actually been completed.
4. There was a requirement to appoint an Animal Welfare Advisory Committee;
5. The Council continues to await resolution on the questions of licenses for spear guns; and
6. Lastly, the Council continues to seek Cabinet direction on the proposed enhanced Marine Park System.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide additional details regarding some of the important undertakings by the Council in 2018.

In terms of terrestrial protected areas, Mr. Speaker, public nominations of areas suitable for consideration as protected areas were received in 2018. These nominations were added to the list of areas proposed by the public in previous years and were assessed by the Department of Environment using the conservation scoring matrix agreed previously by the National Conservation Council.

The Council considered all nominations using the scoring system to inform their deliberations. A number of sites were selected by the Council for full public consultation and negotiation with landowners, which included a mix of Crown lands and private property. The results of this public consultation was to be considered by the Council in 2019. In 2018, consultations with owners of land identified as being suitable for protection in 2017 and 2018 were complicated by the Cayman Islands' Government 2018 to 2019 budget not containing any funding from the Environment Protection Fund that was earmarked for the acquisition of protected areas as requested, and as occurred in the 2016 to 2017 budget.

The total value of all of the contracted purchases and associated minor costs in 2017 was CI \$4,879,850 which was expensed against the CI \$6 million budgeted from the Environmental Protection Fund for this purpose. The conclusion of these negotiations in 2019 would depend upon supplemental funds being made available from the Environmental Protection Fund by the Government. The Environmental Protection Fund is well resourced and was created to fund these ongoing purchases of land for conservation purposes.

From 2016 through December 2018, the Cabinet, the Council, the Department of Environment and other government agencies worked hard together to designate 3,477 acres of land on all three Islands as

public protected areas. Another 634 acres on Grand Cayman are designated as "pending" protected areas. In total, 4,111 acres or 6.3 per cent of Cayman's total landmass has now been protected and reserved for future use by residents and visitors to our Islands.

In terms of protected species, Mr. Speaker, a joint Department of Agriculture and Department of Environment cull of feral cats in Little Cayman was initiated with the support of the Council. Mr. Speaker, the cull was in relation to the protection of the Sister Islands' rock iguana population—the excess number of feral cats was having a significant impact on the Rock Iguanas population. This joint departmental operation was based on evidence of the predation by feral cats.

In January of 2018 a judicial review of the cull resulted in the suspension of that project pending:

1. Passage of regulations governing the types of humane euthanasia chemicals that can be used during the cull; and
2. A review of the programme by the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee.

The Animals (Prescribed Poisons) Regulations, 2018 were gazetted in August of that year; however, Mr. Speaker, the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee had not yet been appointed at the time of this 2018 report.

Regarding another essential species, Mr. Speaker, a species conservation plan for mangroves was produced by the Council and underwent public consultation between 30th July to 3rd September, 2018. The report on the consultation awaited a quorate Council meeting in order to review the report and decide on how to proceed with the proposed species conservation plan.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to invasive species, particularly, green iguanas, in November 2018 a large-scale cull of green iguanas in Grand Cayman was initiated, building upon knowledge gained during prior experimental culling exercises.

By the end of 2018, over 294,000 invasive and destructive green iguanas had been culled; also in 2018, green iguana bio-security and control activities continued on Little Cayman, largely through the National Trust's Green Iguana "Be Gonna" community programme, supported by an on Island intern paid by the Department of Environment.

Direct culling on Cayman Brac by the Department of Environment organised teams also continued, and work on both Sister Islands would have to continue to prevent the green iguana population in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman from reaching the endemic proportions of the Grand Cayman population.

In respect of section 41 consultations, Mr. Speaker, as per section 41 of the National Conservation Act, government agencies must consult with the National Conservation Council before granting a permit or license or making some other decision that

would be likely to have an adverse environmental impact. In 2018, 462 environmental reviews were prepared by the Department of Environment under delegated authority from the Council, for entities consulting the Council under section 41.

Section 43 of the Act, Mr. Speaker, allows the Council where necessary, to require the proponents to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). EIAs are only required where the Council is unable to robustly identify and evaluate the potential impact associated with a particular proposal.

Of the 462 environmental reviews prepared by the Department of Environment, only one or 0.2 per cent of the 462 reviews was determined to require an EIA. This proposal was a request by the new Ministry of Infrastructure for advice regarding a road extension, which was identical to a proposal that was submitted by the previous Ministry of Infrastructure and was screened in April 2017 when it was determined that an EIA was, in fact, required. The screening opinion with reset to the then new Ministry of Infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, EIAs remain international best practice. A relatively minor cost of the projects that require them, especially compared to the potential savings they can identify for the project, and are an important tool for providing information to decision makers and assuring the public that environmentally, socially, and economically appropriate decision making, is occurring.

The activation of EIAs in local legislation has gone a long way to raising the profile of the Cayman Islands which, evaluated in February 2013 by the Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development was assessed as “weak”, in each of the four areas of environmental governance:

- Species;
- Sites;
- Development control; and
- People.

Having EIA legislation, Mr. Speaker, also assists the Cayman Islands in achieving commitments made under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention, the Environmental Charter, and the Cayman Islands Constitution—a Constitution, Mr. Speaker, that more than a few in this honourable House fought long and hard to secure for all Caymanians.

Climate Change Committee

Mr. Speaker, throughout 2018, the Department of Environment and the Chair of the Council's Climate Change Committee continued to advise government through the National Energy Policy Implementation Committee, as well as through direct communications with government ministers and MLAs, as they were, particularly in advance of international or local forums where climate change would be a topic of discussion.

The Chair and the Department of Environment participated directly in local and international meetings, and the Department of Environment continues to submit greenhouse gas inventory data for the Cayman Islands to the United Kingdom.

In respect of Council expenses, Mr. Speaker, for the year ended 31 December, 2018, these total \$8,362.02 and consisted of NCC-related meeting expenses and public education outreach, as well as consultations and government fees for protected areas.

In respect to the Environmental Protection Fund Mr. Speaker, section 39 of the Act provides that the Council shall manage and make recommendations on the use of the Environmental Protection Fund, although section 46 and 47 of the Act, which provide in greater detail for the operation, management and reporting on activities funded from the Environmental Protection Fund were not implemented in this reporting period and the Fund continued to be operated under the pre-existing 1997 legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Council makes the following report in completion of its duties under the Act:

In 2018 the following amounts were spent from the Environmental Protection Fund by the Department of Environment on behalf of, or with the approval of the National Conservation Council. There was a total Mr. Speaker of \$1,785,285.25 divided amongst:

Invasive Green iguana control programme	\$1,654,219.53
Grouper Moon Project	\$36,208.56
Reef restoration	\$32,718.10
Turtle-friendly lighting	\$30,726.92
Sister Islands' Rock Iguanas	\$12,878.75
The Parrot Project	\$5,684.00
Specialist legal advice	\$2,849.00

In terms of the 2019 report, Mr. Speaker, during 2019, the Council identified irregular compliance with planning-related development controls as an increasing conservation concern. The issue of illegal clearing—in other words prior to the receipt of Planning permission—had been raised previously by members of the public and covered in the local press. The Department of Environment, on behalf of the Council, investigated those reports and referred them to both the Planning Department and the Central Planning Authority for further action, if applicable.

It should be noted, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Environment Conservation Officers have no authority to enforce legislation other than the National Conservation Act. These persons clearing land without the required Planning permission mean that native vegetation and habitat can be lost before the Council has had an opportunity, under section 41 of the Act, to advise the Central Planning Authority on possible measures which could be employed in order

to preserve some of the native species and habitats while still allowing socially beneficial development to occur.

Mr. Speaker it has also become apparent that, within the Planning approval framework, some work is conducted through “implied consent” whereby, for example, Planning permission to subdivide property is assumed by the permittee to imply that permission has been given to clear and fill the land as well without the entity—in this case the Department of Planning or Central Planning Authority—engaging in the legally required conservation consultation, which would be triggered by an application for permission to clear and fill the land.

Another concern identified in 2019, Mr. Speaker, was the unpermitted construction of 30-foot roadways over private vehicular rights of way where the existence of the right of way is assumed to imply permission to construct the road without further permits or review. The Council sought legal advice on this particular issue, and have been advised that planning permission is in fact required to construct these roads. The Council continued to work with the Department of Planning and the Solicitor General's Office during 2020 to resolve these issues.

At the request of the former Minister of the Environment during 2019, the Council produced recommendations updating the regulation of spear guns in line with government policy as guided by the National Conservation Act. At the end of 2019, implementation of these regulations were still pending completion of the legal drafting process.

Enhanced marine protected areas system

Mr. Speaker, in March 2019, Cabinet granted approval for the National Conservation Council's enhanced marine parks proposal, which would increase the marine protected areas in the Cayman Islands from then current levels to 40-50 per cent of the shelf area in the Cayman Islands. This approval included some amendments made by Cabinet in consultation with the Department of Environment. The approved proposal was then sent to be drafted in regulations by the Legislative Drafting Department or the Attorney General's Chambers, and once a legally formatted draft was completed, it would return to Cabinet for final approval.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to terrestrial protected areas, as mentioned in the NCC's Annual report for 2018 and my remarks in respect of the public nomination of areas suitable for consideration as protected areas were received in 2018. After technical assessment and public consultation, these nominated areas were considered by the Council in February 2019, along with other areas previously nominated, assessed and publicly reviewed.

In March 2019, the Council recommended to the Cabinet the acquisition and designation of

properties on all three Islands—a mixture of Crown lands and private parcels which would have to be purchased at fair market value with the agreement of the landowners.

We must all take note and recognise Mr. Speaker, that the process of identification, negotiation, assessment, and agreement of market value for areas nominated for protection is not a process that involves solely the Department of Environment (DoE) and the Council, but rather involves many other individuals and agencies including the landowners themselves who are a critical and essential part of the negotiating process.

Before any of the nominated parcels were progressed, the landowners were contacted to confirm their interest in the possible sale of their property subject to Cabinet approval. Once the landowners confirmed their interest in selling, the Lands and Survey Department conducted the purchase negotiations on behalf of the Cayman Islands Government and provisionally assessed the value of the lands proposed for purchase.

In July 2019, Caucus reviewed the proposals generally favourably, but no further action had occurred pending refinement of the proposals by the Department and then Ministry of Environment. Given the passage of time, the Council would reinstate these proposals in 2020; obviously, that was implemented earlier this year.

Protected species

Mr. Speaker, the Council was active in 2019 carrying out its mandate in relation to protected species. The Council approved handling guidelines for stingrays and starfish in order to make it clear to the public what is allowed from what is not allowed, when handling these.

Part 1 — Protected Species.

Mr. Speaker the Council also managed the following in 2019:

- Public consultation carried out on draft species conservation plan for Sybil's Crownbeard, which is a plant found only in Cayman Brac;
- The registration of pet Cayman parrots was initiated;
- Members of the public proposed increased protection for local land crabs under Part 2 of the Act.
- The mangrove species conservation plan, which would provide additional protection for mangroves around the country from unpermitted or improper clearing or removal, was submitted to the Ministry of Environment for Cabinet's consideration.
- After public consultation, the Council considered and agreed to a proposal from a group of Caymanian hunters to alter the local gamebird seasons to dates, more in keeping

with the natural cycles of the two game bird species—the Blue-winged Teal and White Winged doves; and

- After reviewing public and stakeholder input, the Council approved the draft species conservation plan for wild green turtles, which was sent to Cabinet by the then Ministry of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, the Council issued an interim directive under section 17(7) of the Act for the immediate protection of *Agalinis Kingsii*, a plant that is endemic—meaning it belongs or is native only—to the Cayman Islands; it is found only on Grand Cayman and is listed in Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Act. This unique species is a habitat specialist with an extremely restricted distribution. Currently it has only been recorded in only two areas of Grand Cayman, which comprise the major population centres for this species globally.

The interim directive shall cease to have effect on the adoption of conservation planned in respect of that plant, or at such earlier time as the Council or the Cabinet may direct. The Department of Environment remained in regular communication with the landowner in whose property the second population of the plant was found and is working towards production of a conservation action acceptable to the landowner for the permanent conservation of this very rare, endemic species.

Mr. Speaker, as I outlined earlier, in November 2018 there was a large-scale cull of green iguanas building upon knowledge gained during prior experimental culling exercises. That cull continued and remained successful through 2019 and by the end of 2019, they had surpassed the initial target of culling over a million invasive green iguanas. I believe that significant milestone deserves recognition, which it has no doubt achieved. Mr. Speaker, the project recorded removal of over a million iguanas—I think it was a 1.123 million at that time—and that project was continuing into 2020.

The Council also recognised the need for invasive species regulations and submitted a proposal to the then Ministry of Environment. When submitting this request to the Ministry in 2019, the Council indicated that those invasive species regulations were urgently needed in order to prevent persons from farming green iguanas for the bounty and provide tools to better protect and regulate the potential introduction of invasive species into the Cayman Islands and to bolster the rules already in place under the National Conservation Act and the Animals and Plants Act.

Section 41 consultations

Mr. Speaker, in 2019 there were 546 environmental reviews—obviously a significant

increase from 2018. These were prepared by the Department of Environment under delegated authority from the Council for entities consulting the Council under section 41. Of the 546 environmental reviews prepared by the Department of Environment in 2019, none were determined to require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Climate change

Mr. Speaker, in respect of the work around climate change, throughout 2019 the Council, including members of the Department of Environment, continued to engage with local and international partners to better understand the potential impacts and responses to climate change, as well as to promote the need for a robust national level local response to the reality of climate change for our small, low-lying country.

In exercising its delegated authority from the Council, the Department of Environment—with input from the Council's Climate Change Committee—ensured that all of its section 41 environmental reviews recommended measures to reduce physical vulnerability to climate change impacts and enhanced resiliency in efficient ways that address the consequences of and responses to changing climatic conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that in relation to this period, the DoE and the Council did a tremendous job. We must recognise the important role that the public plays in supporting the work that has been done.

Mr. Speaker, it was 50 years ago when the legendary children's writer, Dr. Seuss mentioned in his book, *The Lorax*, its whimsical, yet powerful message regarding the importance of conserving our earth's finite resources. The words of the Lorax still resonate today, **“unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.”**

Much has been achieved, Mr. Speaker—I'm sure Members agree that a lot was done during that period, and so I wanted to take the time to address those two reports, even though they certainly relate to periods outside this Government's time.

I want to congratulate the National Conservation Council and the Department of Environment for the really good work they have been doing, and thank the members of the National Conservation Council over that period for the excellent work they carried out and their service to the country, sir.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Honourable Premier, for my own knowledge did you mention a “*Rock Iguana*”?

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Yes, sir, the Sister Islands' Rock Iguana.

The Speaker: Okay, so there's a difference between the Green Iguana and the Blue Iguana. Am I right?

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: We have one invasive species, which is the green iguana. We have two endemic species—the Blue one, which is a Grand Cayman iguana, it is the only place in the world; and then we have the Sister Islands Rock Iguana, which exists on both Sister Islands—Little Cayman and Cayman Brac.

The Speaker: Thank you very much for that.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: You're welcome, sir.

The Speaker: I wasn't aware of the Rock Iguana. I know about the green one, because it is eating everything still.

I will suspend proceedings for fifteen minutes 15 minutes.

Proceedings suspended at 11:38am

Proceedings resumed at 12:05pm

The Speaker: Proceedings are resumed. Please be seated.

**AUDITORS OVERSIGHT AUTHORITY
CAYMAN ISLANDS — ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister for Financial Services and Commerce.

Hon. André M. Ebanks: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

I beg to lay on the Table of this Honourable House the Auditors Oversight Authority Cayman Islands Annual Report for the year ended 31 December, 2020.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Minister speaking?

Hon. André M. Ebanks: No, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT —
2020 PORTFOLIO OF THE CIVIL SERVICE
ANNUAL REPORT— APRIL 2021**

The Speaker: The Honourable Deputy Governor.

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson, Deputy Governor: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the Portfolio of the Civil Service Annual Report 2020.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Deputy Governor speaking?

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, Deputy Governor: Yes, sir.

Mr. Speaker, 2020 was no ordinary year. While the civil service was faced with a huge challenge in the form of dealing with the COVID-19, that challenge provided numerous opportunities for civil servants to be nimble, innovative and resilient.

As the Cayman Islands prepared for the inevitable arrival of the disease, the government's focus rightly pivoted to safeguarding the people of these Islands from the deadly pandemic. Though the worsening global situation and rapid shifting of plans and priorities had the potential to thwart employee engagement and effectiveness, 2020 actually showcased some of the most rapid, inventive and collaborative work ever delivered by the civil service.

Teams across government had to quickly assemble when the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) was activated in March and from that point forward, had to establish protocols for managing all aspects of the country's COVID-19 response.

The Portfolio of the Civil Service (POCS) played an integral role in the response—from providing leadership in NEOC, to lending expertise and resources to help facilitate the establishment of the award-winning emergency field hospital, POCS staff who ordinarily carried out administrative or HR tasks found themselves managing all aspects of government-run isolation facilities, while others spearheaded "Operation Bring Them Home", the repatriation programme enacted to safely return Caymanians and residents to our shores.

Other notable POCS accomplishments were the swift deployment of a staff redeployment system used to match available staff across core government, statutory authorities and government-owned companies (SAGCs) with jobs experiencing increased demand and the development and dissemination of 13 COVID19-specific policies used to guide and direct key staff activities and decisions. In addition to these 13 policies, POCS delivered an additional eight policies including the all-important anti-bullying harassment and discrimination policy which further supports our Government structure and sets a very clear and important tone at the top.

In spite of the unprecedented challenges faced by the civil service in 2020, our employee engagement survey yielded the highest response and engagement rates to date, achieving 83 per cent and 72 per cent respectively. Moreover 89 per cent of respondents reported that they are proud to be civil servants, which represents a 4 per cent increase over 2019.

As an individual entity, core POCS achieved praise-worthy double-digit increases in 8 out of 10 survey categories, with the top three increases being:

- A 31 per cent increase in leadership and managing change;
- A 30 per cent increase in my team; and
- A 28 per cent increase in my manager.

These three increases resulted in overall scores of 79 per cent, 84 per cent and 76 per cent in the respective categories. These are truly remarkable results Mr. Speaker, especially amidst the backdrop of local and global uncertainty that we as a government and country faced.

Even though the pandemic diverted resources for a large part of the year, POCS Departments and sections still got on with business as usual in many areas. Work in the area of compensation continued with the commencement of our review of our pay strategy and assessments of our readiness to recognise performance through pay and initiatives. The procurement process for our Integrated Enterprise-Wide Human Resource Management System, which will support the streamlining of processes and improve capability to support a modern HR function was also completed, and the system is due to come online in 2021.

Despite the disruptions caused by COVID-19, the Civil Service College was able to deliver 1,520 hours of tutor-led events and programmes, representing an investment of over 18,554 hours in learning for civil servants. Additionally, 38,094 hours of online learning was logged by civil servants through the Civil Service College online learning portal, including for mandatory programmes such as anti-fraud, cyber security and anti-bullying harassment and discrimination training.

On the 30 October 2020, the Parliament Management Act was passed in the Parliament. This paved the way for the Parliament to become an autonomous entity, and resulted in the historic renaming of the iconic building in central George Town.

In my own Office, my capable team led the development of a framework of enhancing child safeguarding policies and operations across the British Overseas Territories working collaboratively with colleagues from across the territories and the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.

In addition to improved customer service experience, a new online application process—the British Overseas Territories Citizens and Naturalization Registration—was launched.

As 2020 proved, Mr. Speaker, we can do exceptional things on behalf of the government and the community that we serve; from exceptional moments in times of crisis to business as usual, the civil service consistently and completely delivered. If in 2021 we commit to building on the lessons learned in 2020—caring for each other, breaking down silos, increasing collaboration, and embracing innovation, we will undoubtedly continue to progress our collective vision of being a world-class civil service.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to record my thanks to Chief Officer McField-Nixon and her entire team in the Portfolio of the Civil Service for their amazing performance during 2020. Our CFO, Ms. Nadisha Walters and her finance team for delivering another

unqualified opinion, and the team in my Office, for all the work they do to make people's lives better.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker

**2020 ANNUAL REPORT — CAYMAN ISLANDS
EXPUNGEMENT BOARD — OFFICE OF THE
DEPUTY GOVERNOR
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT**

The Speaker: The Honourable Deputy Governor.

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament, the Annual Report for the Expungement Board for the 2020 calendar year.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Honourable Deputy Governor speaking?

The Deputy Governor, Hon. Franz I. Manderson: Yes, Mr. Speaker

Mr. Speaker, by way of introduction, I shall first provide some background information and a brief explanation of the components of the 2020 Annual Report for the Expungement Board, and then speak to some summary highlights from these reports.

Background

Mr. Speaker, the Criminal Records (Spent Convictions) Act (2018 Revision) repealed and replaced the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1998 Revision), and established the Expungement Board for the purpose of expunging criminal records.

Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that the primary object of the Criminal Records (Spent Conviction) Act is to implement a scheme to limit the effects of a person's conviction for a range of offences if the person, having served their sentence, subsequently completes a period of crime-free behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, the Act provides that on completion of that period, the conviction shall be regarded as spent and, subject to some exceptions, a person is eligible to apply for the expungement of that criminal record. By Act, applicants are limited to two expungements. Sections 5(1) and (6)1 of the Act establishes an Expungement Board with Authority to approve, disapprove, or revoke expungements. By Act, Criminal records for certain convictions and offences can never be expunged including, for example, treason, murder and child pornography. Schedule 2 in Section 12 of the Act provides the full list of offences and convictions for which criminal records cannot be expunged.

Mr. Speaker, where the criminal record of a person has been expunged, the Act establishes that the person will be treated for all purposes, in Act, as a person who has not committed the offence, been charged with the offence, been prosecuted for the offence, been convicted of the offence, been sentenced for the offence.

Mr. Speaker, in Schedule 4, (to be verified) the Act specifies certain professions and offices of employment where persons must disclose expunged criminal records.

Section 44 of the Criminal Records (Spent Conviction) Act states that the Board shall submit to the Governor, a report for that year, containing the number of applications for expungement of criminal records made in respect of the offences referred to in Schedule 2 of the Act; the number of expungements of criminal records that the Board approved or disapproved categorised by the offence to which they relate; and, if applicable, the district of residence of the applicant and any other any other information required by the Governor.

Mr. Speaker, in fulfilment of these requirements, the Annual Report just Tabled contains information regarding the number of applications for expungement of criminal records received and disposed of by the Expungement Board in 2020. The annual report for the expungement board consists of the following sections:

- A Chairman's Report
- Tables of expungement statistics for the period
- A discussion of the statistics; and
- Some background information about the Board and its members.

Summary highlights of the report

Mr. Speaker, I will now share some summary highlights of the Annual Report of the Expungement Board.

Since the last annual report of the board the number of applications submitted and the number of applications approved by the expungement board has decreased and we believe that is in relation to the pandemic. The Expungement Board Annual Report for 2019 indicates that 52 applicants were submitted to the board; of these, 29 applications were deemed eligible and approved by the Board.

In contrast, Mr. Speaker, the Annual Report for 2020 indicates that 23 applications were submitted to the Board; of these, applicants 21 were deemed eligible and approved by the Board.

Mr. Speaker, the 2020 Annual Report indicates that the most common reason for applications not being approved was that applicants did not meet the eligibility requirements set out in the Act to be considered and were deemed ineligible by the Board.

Conclusion

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Chairman of the Expungement Board, Mrs. Marilyn Brandt summarised well the importance of the work of the Expungement Board, when she writes in her Chairman's Report for the 2020 Annual Report the following words:

"A benefit derived from the Criminal Record Spent Convictions Act 2020 (Revision) is the elimination of discrimination against those who have been deemed to be rehabilitated. Expungement is an enormously valuable remedy because it ensures that individuals are not wrongfully denied opportunities because of mistakes made in the past.

While it is accepted that expungement does not address all the challenges faced by those who have been criminally convicted, it is an essential mechanism because of the life-changing benefits that it can offer."
Unverified quote

Mr. Speaker, the members of Expungement Board are volunteers appointed by the Governor; in addition to Miss Brandt, the membership of the Expungement Board includes the following members of our community:

- Mr. Hugh Lockwood;
- Mrs Kayleigh Wright; and
- Pastor Allison Ebanks.

My Office, the Office of the Deputy Governor, provides secretarial support to the Board and a Member of my team serves as Secretary to the Board.

In closing Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation for the small number of volunteers who make up the Board. They are providing a very important service to our community. Another 21 expungements means that 21 citizens—21 citizens of our beloved Islands—now have an opportunity for a fresh start in life, having remained crime-free for the period required by the Act.

I would like to offer the Chair and members of the expungement a board, the grateful thanks of our Cayman Islands community as we look forward to their continued service in support of second chances and new opportunities for our citizens.

I would like to thank the staff in my Office who provided secretarial services to the Expungement Board to support its effective functioning; this includes administrative manager Miss Judith Whittaker, my Chief Advisor Ms. Mary Rodrigues, and Administrative Officer Ms. Jordana McLaughlin.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RCIPS ADULT AND JUVENILE CAUTION REPORT DATED 13th JULY 2021

The Speaker: The Honourable Attorney General.

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I seek the leave of Parliament to lay on the Table the report under the Caution Adult Law 2017, as it relates to a number of cautions administered during the period 1st July 2020 to 23rd June, 2021.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Attorney General speaking thereto?

The Attorney General, Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin: Mr. Speaker, just to make a brief observation with your leave.

First of all, I somewhat apologise for the format of the report, Mr. Speaker; we have not quite yet worked out a format where we can probably do a bound document with the usual presentation for presentation purposes, but most importantly Mr. Speaker, the document contains the relevant information for the period which shows that between the dates of 1st July, 2020 to 23rd June, 2021, 43 adult cautions were administered.

There are additional documents appended to the report for completeness which covers the period during which the Act is in operation, Mr. Speaker. So for the entire duration of the Act, which is since 2017, some 135 cautions have been administered and there is a breakdown in the report, sir, which shows the following:

In respect of job offences	61 cautions
Common Assault	15 cautions
Theft	13 cautions
Use of an ICT service to defraud	4 cautions
Harassment, Alarm or Distress	3 cautions
Offence of navigating a vessel to cause damage	1 caution
Disorderly conduct	8 cautions
Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm	12 cautions
Offence of damage to property	11 cautions
Cruelty to child	2 cautions
Threatened to kill	2 cautions
Drunk and disorderly	1 caution

Causing fear or provocation	1 caution
Failing to keep dogs under proper control	1 caution; and 1 pending

Mr. Speaker, the report also details the fact that 76 of these cautions were administered by the RCIPS; Customs and Border Control/WORC administered 9 of those cautions; the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) ruled that 35 cautions should be applied and there were 14 cautions after charge, and this is where the charge was initially registered but a decision was later taken by the ODPP to proceed by way of caution and of course, the report also mentioned that there's one caution pending.

Mr. Speaker for completeness, it also speaks to and quite helpfully—while it is in that part of the reporting period under the Adult Caution Law—sets out the number of cautions that were administered to juveniles and that is a separate piece of legislative framework, but it shows that there are some 30 cautions that have been administered to juveniles.

Mr. Speaker, the significance of this is that the Honourable Deputy Governor just spoke about the opportunity, if you will, created or occasioned by the expungement initiative and some 21 citizens now have an opportunity for a fresh start in life, having been given a second chance.

In the same vein, these 130-odd cautions also afford persons who were involved, an opportunity to continue living their life in a way that otherwise would have been the subject of a criminal conviction had they been prosecuted, Mr. Speaker. We recall that the language in the legislation provides that where a person behave in a manner that amounts to an offence and that person admits to so behaving, that person may be cautioned, instead of being charged or prosecuted with an offence. Mr. Speaker, these are persons who have transgressed, have admitted to their transgressions and have been given a caution instead of being charged and end up with a first time conviction and of course the attendant consequences of having a conviction record.

So Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely good initiative and it affords, especially to many of our young people, a second opportunity to sort of reflect and continue living a crime-free life, so as to avoid the unfortunate blemish—if I might call it that—of a conviction for some minor offences.

I commend the report to Honourable Members of this House and indeed to the wider public, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

**CAYMAN PORT
COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2019**

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Transport.

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, Minister of Tourism and Transport: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wish to lay on the Table of this honourable House, the Cayman Port Comprehensive Annual Report for the year ended December 31st, 2019.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Minister speaking?

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan: Yes, Mr. Speaker, very briefly—

[Laughter]

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan: —in its actual definition.

In accordance with section 52(8) of the Public Management and Finance Law, 2020 Revision, I am pleased today to place before this honourable House, the Audited Financial Statements for the Port Authority of the Cayman Islands for the 2019 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, the Port Authority of the Cayman Islands is the statutory body established on September 15th, 1976 under the Port Authority Law. The Authority is principally engaged in the enforcement of the Port Authority Law and Regulations, as well as the general management and control of all seaports within the Cayman Islands, as set out in the aforementioned law.

Mr. Speaker, Members of this honourable House are aware that the Authority currently operates two ports—one in Grand Cayman and one in Cayman Brac. The operations of the Authority are regulated by the government of the Cayman Islands. The 2019 audited financial statements show that the total income for the year ended 31st December, 2019 was \$26,569,405, while total operating expenditure was \$19,590,477.

The annual expense for the defined benefit liability together with the depreciation and net gain associated with the re-evaluation of investment property and the actuarial of the re-measurement of the defined benefit liability at December 31st, 2019 totalled \$10,365,635. This resulted in a net loss of \$3,386,707. The Authority had current assets of \$15,335,968 and non-current assets of \$69,655,448. Total assets amounts of \$89,991,416 as of 31st December, 2019.

The current liabilities were \$2,104,556 and the non-current liabilities which represents the Authorities defined benefit health care liabilities and lease liabilities was \$41,729,960 as of the 31st December, 2019. Total liabilities amounted to \$43,834,525 for the same date. Total equity being contributed, capital, retained earnings and revaluation reserves amounted to \$41,156,891; total liabilities and equity amounts to

\$84,991,416 for the year ended the 31st December, 2019.

Mr. Speaker, the Audited Financial Statements of the Authority included the Auditor General's opinion; the financial statements have been audited by the Auditor General and I am delighted to report that an unqualified audit opinion has been issued on the 31st December, 2019 financials. The Auditor General states that the financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the Port Authority of the Cayman Islands as of the 31st December 2019 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with international financial reporting standards.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank the Board and the management of the Port Authority, those included in Cayman Brac for their hard work in producing these audited financial statements.

I invite the Members of this honourable House and the public, to review the report in detail.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: I call on the Honourable Premier for suspension of Standing Orders to allow questions to be asked after the hour of 11am.

Suspension of Standing Order 23 (7) and (8)

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, I rise in accordance with Standing Order 86 to move a Motion to suspend Standing Orders 23(7) and (8) to allow questions to be asked and answered after 11am.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Orders be suspended for questions to be asked after the hour of 11am.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing Orders 23(7) and (8) suspended.

**QUESTIONS TO HONOURABLE
MINISTERS AND MEMBERS
OF THE CABINET**

The Speaker: The Elected Member for George Town South.

**QUESTION NO. 1
HOW WILL THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SUPPORT SCHOOLS TO ENSURE
THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND
SUPPORT GREAT TEACHING?**

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, Elected Member for George Town South: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask question No. 1 on the Order Paper standing in my name: Can the Honourable Minister state how the Ministry of Education will be supporting schools to ensure that they monitor and enhance the use of technology, to support great teaching in real world classroom situations?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Minister of Education: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer:

- A plethora of software to support the curriculum is available for teachers and students to use in instructional provision;
- Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) established by the Ministry and Department of Education Services will be analysed monthly, which will monitor the utilisation for teaching and learning of the said devices provided by the students and teachers. This analysis will form the basis of discussion with school leaders;
- ICT Administrators are assigned to each government school to provide technical support during the school day and a Helpdesk System will be in place to provide support after school hours for the 2021-2022 school year; Software has been purchased to support enhanced cyber security in addition to security measures currently in place to prevent any misuse by accessing unauthorised sites; and
- Anti-theft software is installed on each device which will ensure the successful recovery of devices in case of theft.

SUPPLEMENTARY

The Speaker: The Member for George Town South—supplementary?

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; yes, I have a supplementary.

Can the Minister say how she proposes to bridge the digital divide between students and ensure that all students have the same access to online learning resources?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker the devices are being used to access relevant resources to support teaching and learning including software and websites.

They are also being used to research information and produce work across all subject areas

and year levels. The digital software that we are utilising are GradeMaker, Get set 4 P.E., Phonics online and Twinkl.

The agreed KPIs will be captured in Power BI—a statistical tool that collates information for analysis—and accessed and analysed by the Senior School Improvement Officers (SSIOs). Based on their analysis, further discussions with schools will ensure regarding relevant strategies to improve engagement, increased technology integration, improved teacher and student competences, and technological use and any other areas of deficiency that have been identified with analysis. Two ICTI staff have been assigned to John Gray High School, two to Clifton Hunter, one to Lehman Scott and Little Cayman Education Services, one to CIFEC and five rotating across all primary schools.

There is currently an online helpdesk platform that is manned during the school hours by the assigned ICT staff in the Ministry, currently discussion is taking place to provide helpdesk support after school from four to ten. There's also software that's been purchased to support enhanced cyber security, DNS content filtering and Next Generation Endpoint Protection, remote monitoring and management platform for anti-theft software.

Mr. Speaker, once we have been advised that a device has been stolen a police report will have to be made; once we have a case number we can then request the anti-theft service to track the device and alert the relevant authorities as necessary and we are also able to remotely disable the device.

Mr. Speaker, you will notice that I gave supplementary information that I thought was necessary and the specific response to the supplementary is the format of another substantial question—Number 2— which I will answer at that time.

QUESTION NO. 2 UPDATE ON THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S OVERALL DIGITAL STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

The Speaker: The Elected Member for George Town South.

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker I rise to ask question number 2 on the Order Paper, standing in my name: Can the Honourable Minister provide an update on the Ministry of Education's overall digital strategy to facilitate distance learning for students and can the Honourable Minister commit to a timeline for its implementation?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you Mr. Speaker and thanks to the honourable Member.

The answer: Distance learning is implemented in instances where there is a disruption to the person's educational instruction. This may be due to natural disasters, hurricanes, earthquakes, pandemics or other emergencies, for example fire or flooding, or personal circumstances of staff or students which make in person instruction impossible, for example, illness or quarantine.

Digital Strategy

The Ministry of Education's Digital Strategy is multi-faceted and includes the following Mr. Speaker: Policy strategy and guidance documents, the distance learning policy ICT and computing strategy, as well as the acceptable use policy have all been drafted and are going through consultation with the various stakeholders.

Further guidance will be provided to parents through a document titled "Device for students guide", which will be reviewed for approval by July 30, 2021. All documents are expected to be finalised and fully implemented in the upcoming school year. Many areas of good practice have already been implemented throughout the current school year however, Mr. Speaker, the policy and strategy documents combine these practices into a cohesive guidance for use in our schools.

Resources

Computing devices, including laptops and iPads for students, have been imaged and distributed throughout government schools for the one-to-one student laptop initiative that I have introduced. This will ensure that every student has access to digital service and that these are utilised for learning at school and at home. Laptops for teachers have also been provided.

There's smart technology in classrooms and there has been network infrastructure upgrades in every single government school.

Internet provision

All schools have internet provision and the Ministry of Education and Department of Education have been working diligently with internet providers to find ways to get internet access to all of our students at home. Having the computing device is but one critical step, however, we need private sector industry partnerships to have internet access available to our students at home.

ICT integration

Our schools have been working with the Ministry and indeed, the Department of Education personnel, on the integration of ICT and a range of subject areas. Technology is fluid and students and teachers are utilising technology for learning in various lessons. This is critical for our students Mr. Speaker, as

they apply these skills to continue working when they are at home.

Discreet ICT and computing skills

There is a need to upskill students in the use of the various computing devices—hardware and software. Discreet ICT and computing skills are taught at the primary and secondary levels to help our students successfully navigate the technology for learning. Many students are apt at using a smartphone, but still require support when utilising a laptop or iPad. Additionally, Mr. Speaker, we have seen an increase in the uptake of ICT subject areas at the secondary school level.

Professional development for our educators

Just as additional support was provided to our students to support their successful use of technology, the same was also carried out for our educators. Professional development has been provided to our staff individually, as well as systemic to enhance skills and to gain proficiency with a range of the device's hardware and software. The integration of technology Mr. Speaker was a broad outcome for the Cayman Islands Government and the 2020 Strategic Policy Statement and provided continued focus by the Ministry of Education and the integration of technology in government schools.

The recent COVID-19 pandemic indeed highlighted the extent of the digital divide in the Cayman Islands and indeed, worldwide, which coincided with the work being undertaken by the Ministry and Department of Education Services to advance this important area.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

The Speaker: The Member for George Town South.

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few Supplementaries.

Can the Minister state how she will judge the success of the plans she has outlined? Would she commit to regular reporting of progress towards the goal she has set?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Government is indeed more than happy to be reporting the legitimate anticipation of the success that we hope to achieve for our students and teachers alike in our public schools and private schools. We hope to monitor that just as it has been done traditionally, through our SSIOs.

Indeed, as I've always said, Mr. Speaker, education has to be a tri-partnership; it has to be the Ministry, the school, and the parents, and the

community on the whole. By that I would merely say that because like Mandela said, if we think that education is expensive as has been expressed in some quarters, try ignorance and because we're not in the business of trying ignorance, I would ask all hands be on deck to ensure that as we nation-build and move towards a first-class education in a first-class jurisdiction, the monitoring is not specified to the Minister alone but everybody, monitors enhance not just from a critical perspective, but from a position of interest to propel our students on a positive upward trajectory.

The Speaker: The Member for George Town South.

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister state how much has been allocated or will be allocated in future budgets to ensure the successful implementation of the plans the Minister has outlined; will levels of investment be maintained so that technology and digital resources can be kept up to date, given the rapid pace of change?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Education.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thanks to the honourable Member.

Mr. Speaker, based on the rules of anticipation, I am not in a position to say what future budgets will do but what I can say is that based on the SPS that was presented yesterday it's a good indication that an increased amount has been dedicated to education. I have a legitimate expectation because apparently education is now on the front burner of all and sundry in the House—and out of the House—that there will not be a no vote when it comes to asking for education appropriations in the future.

[Desk thumping]

The Speaker: The Member for George Town South.

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister work in partnership with local Caymanian technology companies to ensure that use of technology best prepares students for future work?

The Speaker: The Minister of Education.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister as an individual will not work as a silo, but by extension through the provisions of section 5 of the Constitution, those responsible for administration will certainly work from the operational level. In fact, I have already started to work with Flow and Digicel. We actually hired Mr. Lance Barnes who is now in charge of ICT, but the Minister will work with the Government and all those who are

interested to contribute in a positive fashion to create the policies to ensure that education does not become a political football, but that education becomes the golden star on the agenda of whichever Government that is put in place.

The Speaker: The Elected Member for George Town South.

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker—this is my last supplementary.

The Minister will be aware of the advantages that technology brings, in terms of opportunities for creative learning; however, concerns have been expressed in the United States—including by The New York Times—that the reliance on technology is crowding out tuition in basic skills like language. What steps are the Minister taking to ensure that in Cayman we maximise the benefits of technology, but still maintain our focus on basic skills?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry is not in a deficit cognisance as it relates to the utilisation of technology; in fact Mr. Speaker, when we embarked on the British curriculum it was for that reason. Where there is a consummation of the traditional way of learning but that it is not left behind and as a result, we have injected the utilisation of technology within our schools hence the reason of moving to the one to one laptop and giving them to our students so that they could take them home and that invoked an unusual amount of expression of confidence in our students but we have to start somewhere, Mr. Speaker.

Our teachers have been trained, because education is a continuum, it's a journey. There will continue to be teacher training days as well as student training days, where they will understand that we cannot leave the traditional English and Math. You will see, when you take a closer scrutiny of our curriculum that those core subjects, English, Math, Science and IT have been even placed in the front part of the day, to ensure that we got the students when they are fresh at home; and now that we are introducing the breakfast and lunch we are giving them every single opportunity to be first class-students.

We have also ensured that the teachers take time to decorate their classrooms, not just with something that is ordered on Amazon, but with the actual work from the children and of course that's not just printed outputs from the computer, that's hand writing, that's the STEM subjects, that's photographs rewarding students who have done well.

So Mr. Speaker, I believe that all bodes well for the future of education. It's not a utopia; as soon as we think that we've reached excellence we will see that the

parameters have changed but certainly what I as Minister, and as part of this honourable House, wish to leave the stage of education is that we have made every single effort to invest into the resources— both HR as well as the capital acquisition—so that no child will be left behind.

Mr. Speaker, because we are approaching it from a holistic perspective, we have taken into consideration that all things Caymanian include good hand writing; the difference is that they will be able to leave Cayman, and go to Hong Kong, New York or London and they will not have to wonder what a computer is.

The Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister identified in her response that there is an issue with getting internet access into all the homes of our students. I wonder if the Minister can give us some indication as to how big the issue is, in terms of possible numbers of homes that are without it and what are some of the things that they are considering as ways in which to be able to get this technology and get the internet access to our homes?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister.

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thanks to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, just to give by way of background, we have replaced all network switches; we replaced all wireless access points; we have increased the bandwidth in all of our schools to 300MB (megabytes) to provide faster internet speed and, as a result, greater accessibility for our teachers and students.

While we cannot say definitively that all students have internet access, currently we have not had any additional requests for internet access support from our students and indeed if they come in, we give the commitment to do as we have done with those that hitherto before coming, provide the requisite internet access.

However, if students are in need of internet access and by way of listening to this forum or by the representatives that are here, there's a procedure in place where the request should go to the school's principal, who would pass that request on to the business services and the STEM specialist. The Department of Educational Services (DES) has procured a 145 LTE modems and a 170 internet subscriptions and these devices and services remain available to assist the students in need.

Finally, I wish to add that this STEM specialist and the head of professional development have been working with a programme which includes a Teacher Technology Competencies Survey and that is

important, so that we can show the level of utilisation, both by our students and our teachers, and we would hope that that continues in an upward trajectory. I can say that I recently visited the schools, Mr. Speaker, and I was absolutely delighted, in particular when I visited the district of East End, to see the Y4 and Y5 students with their laptops on their desks; with the teacher using a smart board with now higher speed internet that they were not having to be delayed in their studies.

They were all so excited to have that in the classroom and I can say that the Ministry and DES have been in talks with Flow and Digicel with this network; and if there are any other ICTA partners out there, if you want to positively contribute to the community in Cayman as we strive together to nation-build, and like Obama, I believe that 'yes, we can' and together we get more. I would ask them to contact the Department of Educational Services so that we can have a very productive service to our students.

I believe, Mr. Speaker that Cayman has been good, having had a background working for Flow many years ago as a young student, it is time that these ICT providers can contribute back to the Cayman Islands and I'm sure that they will as they have been attempting to do, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Transport.

POINT OF ELUCIDATION

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

I am actually rising on a point of clarity from a procedural matter. I saw that my good colleague for George Town South asked a question recently that to my understanding is contrary to the Standing Orders section 22(1) (b) in respect to asking questions related to newspaper articles. I just ask that the Member be mindful as to the Standing Orders in the scope of questioning and how the questions are asked.

The Speaker: The House will understand that when any Member asks or does anything here and I have a capable Minister coming behind, the Speaker will remain silent so that that Minister can show the world that he or she is knowledgeable. You are right; first of all, they should provide a copy to the Speaker if they are going to talk about an article.

Are you questioning a matter, Member for George Town North?

[Inaudible interjection]

QUESTION NO. 3 UPDATE ON THE DORCY DRIVE UPGRADES

The Speaker: The Elected Member for George Town North.

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask question No. 3 standing in my name to the Honourable Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure. Can the Honourable Minister provide an update on the Dorcy Drive upgrades?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Infrastructure.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, Minister of Planning: The answer, Mr. Speaker:

I am reliably informed that the Water Authority has nearly finished its pipeline replacement along Dorcy Drive between the Portland Road intersection and the Brand Source store. Once completed, the National Roads Authority (NRA) expects to carry out its full pavement rehabilitation of Dorcy Drive—North Sound intersection to Dorcy Drive and Owen Roberts' Drive roundabout—within the next three to four weeks.

SUPPLEMENTARY

The Speaker: The Elected Member for George Town North.

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the Honourable Minister for the answer and look forward to it as I think many people do. Would the Honourable Minister know whether or not there will be any upgrades to the drainage system in that area as historically, Dorcy Drive has been known as a very low lying area?

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes, there will be some upgrades to the drainage in that area, sir.

The Speaker: Thank you, Minister.

QUESTION NO. 4 UPDATE ON THE GODFREY NIXON WAY EXTENSION?

The Speaker: The Elected Member for George Town North.

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask question No. 4 standing in my name to the Honourable Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure. Can the Honourable Minister provide an update on the Godfrey Nixon Way extension?

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Planning and Infrastructure.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: The answer, Mr. Speaker:

I have been reliably informed that the NRA installed the base fill between North Church Street and Diaz Lane and carried out some works exclusive to the base fill and drains on the large tract of land owned by the Crown. However, Mr. Speaker there are seven parcels of land along the planned route for which land claims have not yet been settled. The NRA is unable to commence further construction until vacant positions can be obtained from the route entirely.

The Speaker: The Elected Member for George Town North.

SUPPLEMENTARY

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the Honourable Minister for the response. I would also like to acknowledge and thank him for meeting with me and having a look at the project. I identified and pointed out to him a few of the properties that require some special attention. I remain committed to assisting the Minister in that area should he need it.

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks: Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the Honourable Member for George Town North for that. I look forward to working with him on that future road, sir.

STATEMENTS FROM MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Speaker: None.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

The Speaker: None.

OBITUARY AND OTHER CEREMONIAL SPEECHES

The Speaker: None.

RISING OF MATTERS OF PRIVILEGES

The Speaker: None.

We will take the luncheon break at this point and resume at 2:30. The House will resume at 2:30pm.

Proceedings suspended at 1:07pm

Proceedings resumed at 3:34pm

The Speaker: Proceedings are resumed. Please be seated.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

MOTIONS

**GOVERNMENT MOTION NO. 4/2021-2022
THE STRATEGIC POLICY STATEMENT
FOR THE 2022-2024 FINANCIAL YEARS
(Continuation of debate thereon)**

The Speaker: The Honourable Premier.

[Pause]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, as a young man, there was a popular TV show that had an intro that always caught my imagination. The intro was this: *"There is a fifth dimension, beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination, Mr. Speaker. It is an area we call The Twilight Zone."*

Mr. Speaker yesterday, as I sat here listening to my good friend the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I felt like I was, at times, living in the Twilight Zone; in his view, everything wrong with Cayman has happened since this PACT Government took office less than three months ago, and everything right with Cayman happened under the watch of the last two governments—although I have to say Mr. Speaker, I do not have any quarrel with the assertion of the first of those two.

[Laughter]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, the longer I sat here, it dawned on me that I was not in the Twilight Zone, but instead I was hearing the voice of Jacob and feeling the hands of Esau.

Mr. Speaker, let me make one thing clear to the Opposition: The elections are over, the people have spoken; the Independent candidates carried the day.

I fully understand the role of the Opposition—they are to hold the Government accountable and I expect them to do their job, but there is no reason for an attitude of arrogance to continue. You cannot hide

arrogance under a thin veil of friendship. You cannot hide entitlement and insult under the guise of "we're trying to be helpful". It's a thin veneer that all can see through.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say though, that I know the Leader of the Opposition. I believe I know his heart; I believe he is a good man, but I don't believe that what I hear often is a true reflection of the man that I believe I know; sometimes I feel that it is too much of a reflection of others and there is a risk that one can sometimes become a mouthpiece for others.

I grew weary yesterday, Mr. Speaker, of the many inferences that the PACT Government has finally made its position known on varying issues. The reality is that, as the Leader of the Opposition has categorically said, the most important priority for the country is the reopening. We have already had massive public engagement on the vaccine drive, two press conferences; a detailed public announcement at the Chamber of Commerce on that subject and the reopening, the delivery of this SPS—all within three months. Perhaps he missed some of this because he has been reclining in his easy chair. I don't see how anyone can believe a suggestion that this Government has been quiet or missing in action in any way.

The Opposition continues to call for a 1st September date to open our borders. Within a few weeks of coming into Office we had to put the same team of public servants that had previously advised the then government, the current Opposition, on the whole lockdown process and the unlocking process in phases, we had to put that same team to work for weeks to address a reopening plan and obviously we have thanked them in the past and I will take the opportunity to thank them again for their incredible efforts, the time they had to give up from family and friends over multiple weekends, including some of the holiday weekends.

Mr. Speaker, from the reports that I have received, none of the recommendations of the committees of the former government have been adopted and as I have already told the country, there were no plans—not even in the preliminary work done—for a safe reopening strategy.

Mr. Speaker, we have accepted many of the recommendations from the Programme Board as this group of public servants are known—the Board that gives the advice; in some cases with minor modifications, which attempt to deal with the hardest challenge of all brought on by this pandemic and that is the safe reopening. It is an accepted reality that locking down was the easy part Mr. Speaker, and now, with the assistance of the same public service advisors comprising this Programme Board, we have a plan to safely reopen in stages.

The former government's position is that our plan is unacceptable and unworkable. Mr. Speaker, the central aim of all of the advice given to both the former government and my Government is protecting the

health and well-being of the people of the country. Now we seem to be being told by the former government, the current Opposition, that we should reject that advice and that core principle. Are they really suggesting that we should now put the health and lives of our people at undue risk?

Mr. Speaker, my good friend the Honourable Leader of the Opposition reminded us that all the Government Ministers from the previous government were re-elected. Patently true; but what is also true, is that seven people getting re-elected does not make a majority. They needed nine other persons to be elected with him to get to 10 and have a majority.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the night of April 14th quite clearly. Social media was awash with a lot of popping of champagne corks and patting each other on the back, while toasting an assumed success going down Crewe Road, sir—

The Speaker: Where?

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Crew Road; but you know what else was going on, Mr. Speaker? The people on this side of the aisle were hard at work. Just as we were hard working then, we are hard working today, and Mr. Speaker, I am happy and proud to be leading a team of young, energetic, and hardworking individuals.

Mr. Speaker, just last week the Honourable Minister of Finance—my Deputy Premier—celebrated his 22nd wedding anniversary by attending a Saturday meeting at the Government Administration Building from early in the morning, until 2am Sunday. That's dedication. That's hard work, sir. I raise that to highlight to the public that there are no divisions in the PACT Government. There are just hard working people. There may be occasional differences of opinions; but that is as it should be.

Mr. Speaker, there are no extension cords over here. There is no one that is just going to “follow the leader; leader, leader, follow the leader.”

[Laughter]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Being a leader is a role that you earn, Mr. Speaker; one at which you have to work to maintain.

I want to assure the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues, and the people of this country, that the PACT is intact.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, I was a part of the Progressives Government that had members split away from its leadership. No group of individuals whatever you call it, coalition, party, none are immune from fundamental disagreements at times; disagreements that lead to people departing, but Mr.

Speaker while we have had some discussions with a little bit of temperature, I remember certain discussions in the PPM in which the temperature was a lot higher. I only say that, Mr. Speaker, to reassure the Opposition and the people of the country, that this group is committed to our ideals and committed to each other.

There is one thing that pleased me yesterday Mr. Speaker, and that was that it was good to see my good friend being supported, at least at the end of the day, by all the other Members of the Opposition. I was worried for a bit when we first started, because he seemed alone in the House—that is not a position, Mr. Speaker that any leader really wants to be in. However, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I were a bit disappointed at the time, that none of the other Members chose to speak; something the Leader promised us they would do, to offer us advice on how to run the country. I say again, Jacob's voice and Esau's hands.

Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the Honourable Leader yesterday, he made reference to all the experience they had when they first formed the government back in 2013. I know of what he spoke, because I was there myself as a brand new Minister; but Mr. Speaker, you know who else was there with us? Five other new members. Of the 13 members that made up that government, seven were brand new members. The last time I checked, Mr. Speaker, seven is more than half of 13. Is he implying that the Government elected in 2013 was inexperienced? I don't really think so, but that is what it seems like he might have been implying.

Mr. Speaker, I want the record to show that of the 12 Members of this PACT Team, seven are NOT first time Members; more than half of this team certainly has experience. Inexperience is an old excuse, especially one that young Caymanians leaving high school or returning from university hear constantly—that they shouldn't be hired because they have no experience.

Is the Honourable Leader of the Opposition implying that some Members of Cabinet shouldn't be there because they have no experience? Does he truly believe that former Minister Archer, former Minister Rivers or I shouldn't have been Ministers back in 2013, because we had no experience? Yet, I think he can rightfully talk about the achievements of that government despite having all those Members with no experience.

Mr. Speaker that is a mind-set that too many people have in our community and it is one of the reasons education is really important, which is why this Government has made education a top priority.

Mr. Speaker, I recognise the number of broad outcomes, as well as the initiatives in the SPS, may be a lot for the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues to digest. As such, I will go through them a bit more in detail, again, for his edification and understanding. I will add a bit more meat to that bone

he was talking about. I hope he did not have too big a lunch and is still hungry, because here we go.

Strategic Broad Outcome 1 - To improve education; to promote life-long learning and greater economic mobility.

Mr. Speaker, this broad policy centres on the cornerstone of every upwardly mobile society—education. We have allowed a myth to take over our public education system:

- That our children coming through the public-school system have been poorly educated;
- That they are not fit for the job market;
- That being Caymanian and being educated with one of the best-funded education systems per capita in the region, somehow makes them “less than” those individuals educated elsewhere.

That is a lie, Mr. Speaker, which we have allowed to take root in the hearts and minds of our students—and our people. I have seen a lot of it impact their self-esteem and self-confidence. It is a lie that we have allowed to chip away at our sense of pride in who we are; but our external exam results, our curriculum, the performance of our students, the dedication of our teachers and administrators, prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that that is a big lie. It is just that: a fallacy. A myth. A construction of falsehood.

Yes, there are areas in our public education system that need correction, and with the strong education standards structure we now have in place, they are being addressed and will continue to be addressed. Ongoing improvements will be made to ensure that every Caymanian child receives a quality education that opens their horizons rather than limits their viewpoint.

To meet our first broad outcome we are building a stronger integrated education foundation by firstly providing free meals in public schools as stated previously.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: There is an old proverb that says, *Hungry bellies have no ears.*

Mr. Speaker, it is a fact that the true situation of hunger in Cayman has only really come to light during the COVID-19 lockdown when those children on the NAU and charity lists had no access to school meals. This must change; we cannot have our children trying to learn on empty stomachs. We must look at our students, our children, as whole beings—they don't exist only while at school.

We will introduce programmes to enhance their emotional well-being and mental health. We are concerned with their physical health too, and will ensure that each public school has its own resident

nurse. We also cannot expect working parents to assist in their children's education without providing the real-world resources and tools they need. Toward this end, we will fund homework centres at public schools, ensure early-morning supervision of students at all schools, and increase funding and support for robust after-school programmes.

From the start of our children's education journey, we will strengthen every education programme and ensure that all schools have adequate reception classes. Within the classroom, we will ensure that there is a teacher's assistant in every class up to Year Nine. And we will improve the provision of learning support services to ensure there is a learning support centre in each public school to support students with special needs.

With regard to students' social development, we will integrate Caymanians and non-Caymanians within the public school system and end the practice of social promotion. To meet our goal of life-long learning, we will increase capacity in public schools to allow the reintroduction of A-Levels as mentioned previously and strengthen and enhance the transition year programme between high school and college.

With regard to tertiary education, we will provide free tuition to Caymanians at the University College of the Cayman Islands and the International College of the Cayman Islands and expand the scholarship-age limit for post-graduate degree programmes. The Honourable Minister of Education has already announced expansions to the current scholarship criteria for under-graduate degree programmes.

In general, we will incentivise Caymanians for upskilling themselves through a reward system and develop more Caymanian teachers by offering a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education at UCCI, linked to an accredited UK university. We will also provide educational opportunities for our senior citizens by using public school facilities after school hours.

To tie-in with our goal of developing new industries within our Islands, we will invest in tomorrow's economy through STEAM courses (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics); and increase investment in technical and vocational training programmes, beginning with a centralised Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) curriculum at the Primary School level. Outside of schools, we will promote more private sector internship and apprenticeship opportunities.

To support all of these goals, Mr. Speaker, we will improve the technology infrastructure in schools to allow for increased usage. We will also ensure that students are well-equipped, regardless of their circumstances at home, to access technology, which we will do through the provision of free devices. To ensure students can get Internet access at home, we will be partnering with local telecom providers.

Mr. Speaker, our efforts in education could well be in vain if we are not accountable on our actions and progress. We will implement a governance model to enhance accountability in education, including legislation to create a framework to increase accountability for schools and teachers; create an education board to oversee and run schools; and introduce programmes to incentivise parents to get involved in school improvement. We will do all of this by increasing the allocation to the Ministry of Education's budget each year.

To address the Leader of the Opposition's concern about education, we have no intention of halting the good work being done by the Honourable Minister of Education; she is indeed a beacon of competence and reassurance, and we are grateful she agreed to join the Government so she could continue her good works.

Strategic Broad Outcome 2 — Ensure an equitable, sustainable and successful healthcare system.

Mr. Speaker, the PACT Government believes that healthcare is a human right. At present, Caymanians' access to healthcare is often limited by employment status, position on the socio-economic ladder, and age. None of this should be so, sir. To fully achieve this aim, we will promote Caymanians in the healthcare industry by highlighting local career and employment opportunities and programmes and incentivise Caymanian medical professionals to return home to work.

We will promote healthier living and provide wellness education through better marketing of public health services; encouraging more wellness checks; and strengthening youth mental health support, in particular, with the assistance from the relevant NGOs.

We will modernise the healthcare legal framework and expand public healthcare services throughout our communities by enhancing medical services in public schools; offering more public health services and improved facilities in district clinics and implementing a district clinic shuttle system.

Mr. Speaker, since the majority of our population regularly receives medical care at the publicly-funded Cayman Islands Health Services Authority (HSA), we will enhance its building and services, providing more efficient service and less waiting time. We will initiate an overhaul of hospital rooms, waiting areas and the ER area, and we will ensure quality control at the hospital through frequent inspections.

We will expand services through the provision of a specialised youth mental health facility, and offer more comfort for patients' family members, including proper sleeping facilities for family members staying with patients overnight and increased amenities on site such as a 24-hour snack shop. In addition to these direct and specific actions, our aim is to enhance the

overall standard of healthcare services in the Cayman Islands that we provide through the HSA.

One area in which we are currently lacking is assisted living care for our seniors. We have an aging population, Mr. Speaker, and it is not right that many of our elders do not receive proper care. A Joint-Ministerial Council to establish additional assisted living homes and retirement facilities through public/private partnerships will fill this gap.

Regarding the overall standard of healthcare in the Cayman Islands, we will implement public education programmes on the negative impacts of over-utilisation of healthcare services—on both the quality of service and its affordability; and finally, we will take action to specifically and fully recognise healthcare as a basic human right in the Cayman Islands. None of our citizens should go without necessary medical care because they cannot afford it. We will revamp and expand CINICO services to extend access to healthcare to more Caymanians, provide free healthcare for children and the elderly, and reform existing criteria to access free healthcare. We will also promote better mental health and special needs insurance coverage.

The PACT Government is keenly aware, Mr. Speaker, that any society is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable people. It is beyond time that we address the health and needs of ALL of our people. Just as with education and other vital human services, there should be no one falling through the cracks in our healthcare system in a society as relatively affluent as ours.

We can assure the Leader of the Opposition that work on the Long Term Residential Mental Health Facility in East End is ongoing.

Strategic Broad Outcome 3 — allows for providing solutions to improve the well-being of our people so they can achieve their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, this broad outcome is centred on social development and the provision of human services, focusing on families and family life—housing, employment, and safety. All these areas of life are central to our well-being and our growth in society.

This outcome goes across Ministries and addresses people as whole human beings. The first aim of the PACT Government is to be people-driven. By and large, people think in terms of what they need to be productive members of society, and how to do good for themselves, their family and their community, taking into account their abilities, resources and environment; and this is the approach we are taking with regard to social development, Mr. Speaker. Nothing exists in isolation. Every person, process, community and country is the sum of all its parts and a product of the surrounding environment. We are aiming for an environment of growth and fulfilment for all citizens who make up our society.

First, we will look at ways in which we as a Government could provide support to the family system and our communities. We thought collectively about what our individual constituents told us along the campaign trail—of their hopes, dreams and also their challenges and setbacks. We thought about what would most help people and families striving to do better, and to be better.

A lot of what we heard centred on how to keep families together and functioning well, while also being a part of the economy and labour market. We will address those needs with financial assistance to help working families offset the costs of day-care services. For public servants, we are also considering a day-care pilot programme at the Government Administration Building (if we can find the space in there). We realise that sometimes you have to try different things to make a positive change.

Achieving a work/life balance and finding quality family time are also goals of our constituents, Mr. Speaker, so we will increase the number of parks, civic centres and multi-purpose halls within our communities and promote activities that encourage family participation and, of course, high on the list for all families and communities is safety.

Many concerned voices have been raised in the past few weeks regarding the unsettling increase in gun violence in our Islands. While shootings historically were largely limited to specifically targeted individuals—no more acceptable—the violence has become more reckless with innocent bystanders being harmed. This brings a climate of fear to the forefront, Mr. Speaker, and we cannot have our people living in fear for their safety and that of their loved ones.

We have made it a clear objective of the PACT Government to create safer communities through direct and indirect interventions and approaches. We support neighbourhood watch programmes and encourage a culture of openness by urging communities to cooperate with the police.

We will provide more cultural sensitivity training and support to all front-line police officers, including community safety officers; and provide funding for necessary equipment and facilities to improve responsiveness and increase law-enforcement visibility and crime deterrence in vulnerable communities.

In terms of crime prevention, we will address the root causes of criminality in our communities to develop and implement effective anti-gang strategies to reduce crime and to support vulnerable young people.

Mr. Speaker, rehabilitation and the reduction of recidivism will be accomplished through the expansion of the Second Chance programme, which matches ex-offenders with suitable employment opportunities. We will also fund programmes to rehabilitate and assist young offenders before they become long-term criminals.

At the national level, we will focus on interdiction by improving border security through the continued development and integration of Customs and Border Control and Coast Guard services. From a governance perspective, we will continue work with the National Security Council to enhance oversight and accountability of the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service to improve the force's relationship with the communities it serves.

Looking to the future, we will provide improved infrastructure through two key projects:

- A modernised Courts building and infrastructure to relieve current backlogs and meet future requirements; and
- A new fit-for-purpose prison for the Cayman Islands to fully address all security concerns and avoid over-crowding.

Improving public safety is not a one-dimensional process; it requires a layered and integrated approach that includes elements of prevention, deterrence, accountability, and rehabilitation; by addressing all of these areas simultaneously, we aim to help fix what is broken in our society and ultimately make our communities safer.

While we usually think in terms of infrastructure to mean physical systems such as roads, networks, cables, et cetera, each society also needs to be underpinned and shaped by a social framework or infrastructure, which guides how we live and work together, how we grow as people, form and solidify communities, and develop overall as a society.

To help our citizens to find pathways to growth, we believe that it is a vital, it is an imperative, to create new industries and expand those that already exist. We have key opportunities in the areas of film and agriculture right now; we must grab them with both hands to develop the full potential of these industries on our Islands.

The COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Speaker, and its impact on our tourism industry has provided a very clear lesson: we cannot depend on a couple of industries to keep us afloat indefinitely. We must diversify. We must be resilient. The pandemic has also shown us that we have to be more creative and innovative in our approach to old and new challenges. Access to capital for business opportunities and building can be a real challenge for entrepreneurs and prospective homeowners, so we will create new opportunities to access capital for both of these groups.

Another must for a modern society is to revamp the way we deliver government services, and we are already on our way with that. We will modernise Financial Assistance legislation and institute a joint approach between the Needs Assessment Unit and Workforce Opportunities and Residency Cayman (WORC) to create a user-friendly system to access government services.

To make daily life easier, and give people some breathing space and protection in the consumer market, we will reduce duty on essential items and implement and enforce a consumer protection law.

We also think that an improved public transport system will help and is necessary to reduce the stress and strain caused by Cayman's current traffic woes.

By addressing these aspects of daily life in a targeted way, we believe it will all add up to make a real difference; but what is absolutely fundamental to improving the well-being of our people and ensuring that every Caymanian can achieve his or her full potential, is to have pride in who they are.

Given the years of being unfairly viewed as "less than" with regard to education and ability in the job market and in other areas of society, we must promote pride in our national identity. This can be done through existing and new honours and awards systems, through cultural programmes, and the celebration of local talent in the arts, sports, and all other areas of endeavour and achievement. Mr. Speaker, if not the reality, certainly the perception that Caymanian marginalisation exists, must be over.

A key aspect of human welfare is the need for shelter, and in the case of Caymanians, their desire and need to literally own a piece of Cayman is basically a dream that has slipped away because of Cayman's rising property costs. Many are asking how, in just a few generations, property costs have so far outpaced the middle-income Caymanian's earnings. When you feel like you're not a part of your country's success, like you've been excluded from owning a piece of the pie, how are you going to feel invested in its growth and success? Too often, our own people, are feeling as if they have been left out and left behind.

Home ownership, Mr. Speaker, is an intrinsic goal for many people around the world. That is no different here in Cayman. The PACT Government does not think it acceptable for our people to be kicked off the property ladder, or even prevented from getting a foot on the first rung. Consequently, a necessary component of providing effective social infrastructure is to provide adequate and affordable housing in our communities. To do this, we will provide more Government-guaranteed home-assisted mortgages and lower the cost of borrowing through the Cayman Islands Development Bank and certain programmes.

To assist young Caymanians to buy land, and own a piece of our Islands' future, the PACT Government has committed to reduce stamp duty on land acquisitions for Caymanians. We hope that this step will put more young Caymanians on the road to home and property ownership. We need our citizens to feel like they are a part of our Islands' economic success.

We do recognise that economic success is by no means the only indicator of a successful and growing society. We also need to have a healthy and balanced society; a society in which mental health and

state of happiness that is sufficient and acceptable and reflects what they would expect.

Since being elected in April, this Government has exhaustively examined ways to improve the mental, physical, and social health of the Caymanian people. We fully realise that we need to do all in our power to create healthy communities throughout the cycle of people's lives. A significant segment of our society that is under-served in the area of health and wellness is our senior citizens. Income, and correspondingly, the quality of life and access to health care, can drop dramatically after retirement. What an indictment—typically on Western society—that those people who have spent their younger years building our communities, building our society, raising and educating our children, building and maintaining our infrastructure, have to struggle in their supposedly golden years. It is unconscionable.

We will improve the lives of Caymanian seniors by enacting legislation to reform the current pensions system to provide greater pension protections. We will provide social and personal development programmes and activities for seniors and establish additional assisted living homes and retirement facilities through public/private partnership.

Since an improved environment also improves people's mental health, we will increase the number of recreational green spaces and ensure cleaner communities through recycling and proper waste management. Being a productive member of society, earning your own money, and feeling a sense of achievement in yourself and your abilities, are invaluable aspects of being employed, Mr. Speaker.

Even better is being employed in a field and a job that you enjoy. This fulfilment should never be out of the reach for our people. The PACT Government is dedicated to creating greater employment opportunities for Caymanians. We will remove barriers to employment and create new pathways to employment.

We are committed to:

- Ending the dependency on cheap labour;
- Increasing training and development opportunities;
- Reforming work permit fees; and
- Increasing enforcement of our labour laws.

In this effort, we will use educational facilities after hours to provide life-long education opportunities for all ages and we will partner with the private sector to offer on-the-job training programmes.

All people deserve to make a living wage in return for their labour. A key component of ensuring a fair society is also to increase the minimum wage, which has been stagnant for far too long. While we look at eradicating the concept of the working poor, we must also reduce the number of our people who could be unfairly classed as "unemployable."

We must remove barriers and obstacles to employment—especially entry level employment. An immediate step is to reduce discrimination against young people in education and employment through the decriminalisation of marijuana.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Far too many of our young people suffer unduly harsh punishments, and have their futures permanently blighted by what are minimal misdemeanours. In far too many cases, the punishment far outweighs the crime. As has been shown to good effect in Canada, the United Kingdom and a number of States in the USA, decriminalisation is an effective tool and has not proven to increase criminal activity.

I have just covered a lot of ground Mr. Speaker; and of course, many of the strategies and tactics I have outlined cover more than one Ministry. As I said in my remarks yesterday, this PACT Government does not work in silos. We are, as all Cabinets, bound by collective responsibility and we pledge to work in collaboration with our fellow Members to get the things that our people need done, and delivered.

Strategic Broad Outcome 4 — Strengthening good governance for more effective government

Mr. Speaker, I previously highlighted a host of Government services and initiatives aimed at making people's lives better.

Our Strategic Broad Outcome 4 is aimed at making Government better and more accountable to the public. We hope to enhance participatory democracy through fully functioning constituency offices and district councils and to promote accountability within Parliament—and the Executive—through:

- Proper compliance with publication of Annual Reports;
- Development and implementation of a transparent Concessions Policy;
- Timely responses to the Auditor General's reports and recommendations;
- Appointment of a Compliance Officer for each Ministry in Government;
- Implementing a Code of Conduct for both Parliament and Cabinet—both of which are under way;
- Updating the Parliament Standing Orders; and
- Better vetting and background checks of board appointees.

We will expect and encourage the people to also hold us accountable, sir. Overall governance in the Cayman Islands has suffered at times due to a lack of

enforcement merely of existing legislation. We will promote stronger enforcement of current legislation and also enact “Sunshine laws” to provide greater transparency. Consequently, we will also increase accountability to the public for private sector and civil organisations.

As part of this Government's commitment to accountability and transparency, we will increase public communications and access to information through frequent press briefings and publication of Cabinet decisions in summary form. We are determined, Mr. Speaker, to provide transparency in all Government activities (when able) and to encourage greater public participation in decision making.

We have already set a policy to promote inclusion and diversity in Government appointments to all boards and commissions, as well as changed the membership of the Central Planning Authority to provide a greater representation of varying viewpoints.

I recall my friend, the Leader of the Opposition, saying yesterday that it was laudable and suggesting that it was the implementation that would be difficult. I can't say that I followed that suggestion or assertion, Mr. Speaker. If we are trying to get a change in the way that we comprise members of boards based on a variety of factors; that is a reflection of finding people who are willing to work, who reflect those various factors, sir. I do not see that as being that difficult, and the appointments that we have made certainly reflect that already.

As we have seen for ourselves, there must be more sharing of information as well across Government departments to reduce silos. Ministries, departments and sections of Government must communicate and work in tandem to achieve the outcomes that this Government has identified. There is a spirit of collaboration amongst Cabinet colleagues, and we aim to promote the same ethos of collaboration and cohesion throughout our teams in our various Ministries.

Strategic Broad Outcome 5 — Supporting climate change resilience and sustainable development.

Mr. Speaker, the PACT Government is committed to seeing the Cayman Islands thrive, both now and in the months and years ahead—and long into the future. We must abandon the short-sighted kind of approach that has for far too long, been the norm in some areas of Government policy, Mr. Speaker.

This is especially so, when we speak of environmental protection and overall sustainability. For far too long, Cayman has been the proverbial ostrich with its head in the shifting Seven Mile Beach sand on issues that are climate change-related and in relation to ideas of reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. We turned a blind eye to over-development, over-fishing, over-population and kept aiming for more, more, more—more people, more buildings, more cars; eventually Mr. Speaker, a runaway train will eventually

crash. The PACT Government is taking an entirely new approach to sustainability.

For the first time in our history we have a Ministry focused on sustainability and recognising the reality and impacts of climate change on our Islands. Now we must create a culture of change and provide support and funding for renewable energies. This includes funding for solar and other renewable energies, incorporating the provision of micro loans to assist with conversion to renewable energy as well.

To ensure that both funding and policy are aligned with our sustainability objectives, we will change the current planning fee structure to encourage smaller and energy-efficient homes and create a Climate Change Trust to fund climate change policy.

A primary contributor to pollution is dependence on fossil fuels, and it is a large carbon footprint in the area of transport generally. To change this, we must promote the electrification of transport by reducing the number of second-hand cars being imported from Japan; by increasing the number of electric charging stations; and promoting the use of electric vehicles in the public transport system.

Let me stop here, Mr. Speaker, just to address one of the concerns that the Leader of the Opposition had yesterday. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that he falsely said that this Government cancelled the free George Town shuttle bus programme. The answer is no, we didn't. The former administration had only funded the programme by reallocating funds from other outputs sufficiently to allow it to end on 28th May.

When I was advised of this, Mr. Speaker, it was already too late to seek additional funding, and it would have required a lengthy procurement process; however, Mr. Speaker, the rationale and effect of the programme were on opposite ends of the spectrum as well. Regular buses were still running those routes along with the free bus service so in fact, rather than being an environmentally sound proposal as has been suggested, it was in fact contributing to our net Co2 emissions. And I have a hard time believing that the projections of numbers of people in the seats of those buses was accurate either, because every time I saw the buses or received reports from others—including those who observed and those who travelled on the buses—the buses were basically empty and often-times held just the driver.

The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that I am not here to criticise what may have otherwise been well-intended; but we did not cancel the programme. They did not fund the programme and it was not environmentally sound. Also presented to them was the option of acquiring electric buses—which is what we need to do, eventually—but my understanding is that that was not considered or accepted.

While keeping on the environment, a long overdue imperative is to secure our natural environment. So much of what Cayman has to offer in terms of quality of life and attractions for visitors is

based on our natural environment, Mr. Speaker. In general, successive governments have taken this for granted and have been poor guardians of the natural wonders we are so lucky to possess.

We will enact stiffer fines and penalties for environmental violations and limit the sale of Crown lands. We will also re-plant buffer zones that have been damaged and ensure the protection of existing mangroves, which act as natural carbon sinks—and some of the most important carbon sinks in the world, Mr. Speaker. Carbon sinks meaning they absorb carbon dioxide that mankind is emitting far too much of, and which is leading to climate change.

To protect against future environmental destruction, we will continue the purchase of lands, especially beach lands, for public usage and the benefit of generations of Caymanians to come. For all residents, including this and future generations of Caymanians, to understand the importance of sustainability, we will build awareness and an understanding of climate change through increased environmental education in schools and integrated public education campaigns on the effects of climate change.

Mr. Speaker, I note that it is 4:30.

Suspension of Standing Orders 10(2)

The Speaker: The Honourable Premier, if he intends to complete the speech, suspend Standing Orders in order for that to happen.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, I think I got a little ways to go, so I will move the suspension of Standing Order 10(2) to allow us to continue the business of the House beyond the hour of interruption.

The Speaker: The question is that Standing Order 10 (2) be suspended in order for the House to conduct business after the hour of 4:30.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Standing order 10(2) suspended.

The Speaker: Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The ultimate environmental goal of the PACT Government is to build a legacy of sustainability in the Cayman Islands.

We will achieve this through policy change, community action and the provision of sustainable infrastructure. In the realm of policy, we will:

- Update and adopt the current climate change policy, which dates back to 2011;
- Ensure climate change policies are included in development laws;
- Fully implement the National Energy Policy;
- Raise duty on items that are not environmentally friendly;
- Establish a sustainability and climate change task force; and
- Change existing laws to regulate construction in the dynamic beach zone.

Through community initiatives we will:

- Offer incentive programmes to encourage recycling and reduce waste; and
- Bolster food security efforts.

To provide sustainable infrastructure development we will:

- Review and revise the national development plan;
- Increase the number of solar farms through public/private partnership; and
- Upgrade the Cayman Islands Government facilities to better utilise renewable energy.

Mr. Speaker, we have put a lot of thought into shaping a sustainable future for the Cayman Islands and consequently for the Caymanian people; and as the Minister with direct responsibility for this area, sir, I am looking forward to guiding our Islands through this “sea change” if you will, in our approach to sustainability, with the valued support of my Ministerial colleagues.

The Leader of the Opposition yesterday perhaps attempted to give me a bit of a lecture that there was not a binary choice between development and protection of the environment—at least that is what I understood him to be saying.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have always maintained that we support sustainable development and that must mean, at its core, that you find the right balance in how you develop and even where you develop. The irony, Mr. Speaker, is that the perception of his Government is that their approach was supporting development at any cost; the cruise port being one such example.

Strategic Broad Outcome 6 — Increase social justice in the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, as we are looking at a sustainable future, let's harken back to what I said earlier about the big lie about our public education system. There were

more myths, and stereotypes, built on top of that one; we know them too often:

- Caymanians are lazy;
- Caymanians don't want to work;
- Caymanians don't want the jobs that we have to offer;
- Caymanians have no real-world training;
- Caymanians don't want technical and vocational jobs;
- Caymanians don't want to work in hospitality, and so on and so forth.

It is to the point that Caymanian discrimination is rampant in our labour market. Do not tell us it doesn't exist; each and every Caymanian in this Chamber has experienced, either directly or indirectly, some form of this discrimination during his or her career. This Government will not tolerate it; we will not further it. We are going to smash each and every one of those stereotypes and provide the opportunities that our people deserve in their own land, sir.

We must and will maximise Caymanian employment. We will enforce the laws and regulations surrounding work permits. We will, as the sixth broad outcome on our list says, increase social justice in the workplace. This does not mean we will deny necessary work permits; only that the law must be complied with. Businesses should only apply for a work permit when a suitable Caymanian cannot be found to do the job.

First, we will enhance job opportunities for Caymanians through a data-driven and robust compliance approach. Where necessary, we will enact changes to existing labour laws and regulations. This will include development of a comprehensive skills database, which will allow WORC to match work permit applications to unemployed Caymanians with the relevant skills and experience, and also match available jobs to new graduates.

Of course, our approach is not solely a stick or a punitive one. We recognise and appreciate that there are some, and perhaps probably many, great employers out there. We will not have the good suffer for the bad; we will implement an accreditation system that rewards employers for hiring, training, and advancing Caymanians.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: On the flip side, we will increase work permit fees in areas where Caymanian labour is readily available, and increase administrative fines for illegal employment practices.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: We will also name and shame companies that consistently engage in poor labour practices.

Beyond immigration-related issues, we will create and regulate a fair and safe workplace environment. We will enact family leave policies, and ensure maternity, paternity, and vacation leave policies are in line with international standards. We will promote diversity in the workplace and introduce a national wellness programme that incentivises employers and encourages employees to strike a better work/life balance.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, to ensure equity and remove discrimination, we will implement national anti-bullying and sexual harassment policies and enact stronger laws to protect the disabled, elderly and other vulnerable groups.

Employees deserve to have choices as well as parity in their benefits, and toward this goal, we will spread health insurance risk by introducing a CINICO healthcare plan that is affordable and covers pre-existing conditions. To ensure that workers have access to information and know their rights as well as their responsibilities, we will establish a centre that offers free labour advice and as has been mentioned previously under Strategic Broad Outcome 3, we will—and must—increase the minimum wage.

Every person living in the Cayman Islands must be able to survive, sir. With our Islands being listed several times as one of the world's most expensive places to live, we are clearly seeing that people's earnings are being outpaced by the cost of living. This may not be popular among some elements of the business community, Mr. Speaker, but it must be done.

[Inaudible interjection]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: If we do not have a society that can live, succeed and feed itself, we will not have an environment in which businesses can operate safely and productively.

One of the main barriers to full employment of Caymanians, especially younger Caymanians, has been the complaint that potential employees do not have enough experience to fill an advertised position—we discussed this previously. To surmount this barrier and help in providing equal opportunities for young Caymanians in the labour market, we plan to increase work experience opportunities, as previously said, through public/private sector partnerships.

We have seen through the recent partnerships between WORC and Cayman Islands Tourism Association (CITA)—specific to the tourism industry—that such partnerships are both possible and beneficial to both those being employed, and the businesses themselves.

Finally, as part of our remit to achieve social justice and equity in the labour market, we will review

the Permanent Residency point system to ensure greater protection for Caymanians.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: We have seen the effects of the point system on the property market, and also the preference it gives to certain demographics, which has unalterably skewed the composition of our local population.

We have also seen how grants of new Permanent Residents have been used at times to block employment and advancement of similarly qualified Caymanians. This was never the intended goal, and necessitates a review of the approach to ensure that we are not putting Caymanians at a disadvantage when we grant Permanent Residency status.

Under this umbrella, we will both reform the rollover policy and provide initiatives to address under-employment of Caymanians. We are not being vague about our goals and policies in the area of Caymanian employment and advancement, sir. It is one of Caymanians first. End of story.

Strategic Broad Outcome 7 — Utilise sports to enhance the lives of our people.

Mr. Speaker, as we move from the discussion on the advancement of Caymanians in the labour force, we land on an area of opportunity that has long been under-developed in Cayman.

Throughout the world, sports has long been an arena that offers educational and employment opportunities to many, otherwise disadvantaged, communities. We have the opportunity to turn sports into another area of economic benefit for the Cayman Islands, in addition to promoting sporting activities as an avenue of personal development for our young people.

We will promote the benefits of sports by encouraging a culture of fitness in communities through public education campaigns—this means, Mr. Speaker, you and I are going to do a lot of walking.

[Laughter and inaudible interjection]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: This will include the promotion of academic opportunities through sports, and the development and enhancement of sports tourism opportunities.

Governance structure and improved standards in sports will be done by an established National Sports Council. At a community level, we will facilitate healthy competition to improve performance through:

- Supporting more competition in schools and inter-island;
- Promoting gender equality in sports;
- Encouraging Caymanian and non-Caymanian integration;

- Increasing regional competitive engagements; and
- Establishing district level sports programmes for our seniors.

We will also support growth through funding; specifically, we will:

- Provide funding for sports development; and
- Provide funding to augment sports scholarships.

At a policy level, we will mandate that all sporting organisations seeking funds from Government have vibrant and established youth programmes.

Infrastructure development is an integral aspect of elevating sports at a national level and fully harnessing sports tourism opportunities. Our plan is to enhance facilities for optimum results.

At the national level, we will establish public/private partnerships to increase the number of sporting facilities and develop national sports academies; however, sporting activities usually begin and develop at the community level, so our goal here is to increase access to more localised facilities within communities. As part of this effort, we will:

- Develop existing sporting facilities to include general exercise areas;
- Provide greater access to facilities for persons with disabilities;
- Ensure there is proper lighting and security at all public sports facilities; and
- Increase the number of swimming pools available for public use.

Once we develop sports as an integral aspect of our people's daily lives, not only can we achieve our goal of a healthy population, but we can also position sports as a springboard to other opportunities beyond physical fitness. With focus, and attention paid to further development, sports can now open new pathways for Caymanians to educational and professional opportunities and ultimately fulfilling their own potential in areas they may otherwise never have considered.

Mr. Speaker, led by the very able, capable, and passionate Minister, the Member for West Bay North, this Government looks forward to guiding our Islands and people through a new era in sports development at every level including community, national and international. Let me lay to rest another concern the Leader of the Opposition raised yesterday: we do have every intention of completing the work done on the sports complex in Cayman Brac.

[Desk thumping]

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: The Opposition Leader is certainly entitled to his opinions—not his own facts.

Strategic Broad Outcome 8 — Building a modern infrastructure to ensure a successful future for our Islands.

Until now we have largely been discussing human services that have a direct impact on people's lives. We don't often think of infrastructure development as being a direct human service, however, think about the time you spend in traffic—especially if you live in the Eastern Districts—and you will understand how roads and transport infrastructure affect not only your daily life, but also your mood and stress levels. Or think about how important it is for you to stay in touch with businesses, friends, and family overseas, especially during these times when we cannot travel or it is ill-advised. It is usually only when things go wrong that we appreciate the importance of a strong and resilient telecommunications infrastructure, but in reality it affects our lives, and our emotions, every single day. So many aspects of a positive future for the people of the Cayman Islands rest upon the existence of a modern infrastructure.

Central to the success of this broad policy outcome is that we plan tomorrow's infrastructure today. Vital to this process is that we provide for public education and consultation on national infrastructure development as we do the necessary work to update and revise the National Development Plan.

Since the way our Islands develop will impact not only each and every one of us living here today, but will also affect our children, grandchildren, and countless generations to come, it is necessary Mr. Speaker, that we get things right. We are already seeing the effects of unplanned and unsustainable development. Part of our efforts in updating the National Development Plan and doing better planning for our Islands' future growth, include developing a national road transportation plan and creating a national infrastructure fund.

Before I continue, Mr. Speaker, I must address another fallacy made by the Leader of Opposition yesterday concerning roadworks. Mr. Speaker, you would have heard the answers provided to questions earlier today, that his inaccurate and completely unfounded allegations—referred to and were responded to—were clarified. There was a suggestion that various road projects were being stopped, and certain roads had been cancelled. None of this was true, and that was clearly, clearly dealt with, Mr. Speaker, by the answers provided earlier.

Continuing on Mr. Speaker, we are experiencing the results of not developing a national road transportation plan taking into account population growth—via immigration and otherwise—in tandem with development patterns, and local population movement from one constituency to another. There are many factors that both impact development, and are impacted by development. Everything is

interconnected, and we cannot even hope to maximise our Islands' potential or improve Caymanians' quality of life by continuing in the ad hoc manner of previous decades.

A key aspect of future infrastructure development that has long been neglected, is that of our agricultural industry. The COVID-19 pandemic put a spotlight on our vulnerability due to having the majority of our food imported; we must develop this area for food security, for freshness—all of those reasons, Mr. Speaker—both in anticipation of another potential disaster, as well as an area of opportunity for economic diversification. Toward these objectives, we will provide further funding for land acquisition for agricultural purposes.

Mr. Speaker, again I pause to speak to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's concerns raised yesterday about the Farmers' Assistance programme. He suggested that we should have fixed the problems instead of cancelling it. Mr. Speaker, the Minister had two meetings with commercial farmers who expressed concerns about developing abuse within the system. That led to a decision to suspend it temporarily, while the Ministry looked at establishing checks and balances to address those concerns, sir—it was not to “do away” with the support or the system.

As in all areas of government and governance, the public sector does not exist in isolation. Much of the information we need in order to plan effectively is held with the private sector and vice versa, so we recognise the need to foster healthy partnerships with private sector stakeholders.

In order that our people and industries develop to their full potential, it is also vital that we have and build a modern infrastructure. As noted previously, the PACT Government will provide funding for an additional subsea fibre optic cable. Once again, the time is now. We are at the stage where our underwater communications cables are at their end-of-life phase, and there are no back-up systems in place. Connectivity is vital to Cayman's financial services industry, which has kept these Islands afloat over the past year.

We have a similar situation evolving with the lack of a national sewage and wastewater system, in that we are in danger of contaminating our freshwater lenses. It is imperative that we act before disaster strikes, while also thinking ahead to provide the necessary services for the future.

It is also well past time to address existing issues and problem areas. Mr. Speaker, it is now incumbent upon this Government to develop and implement a national storm water management plan, including remediation of chronic flooding areas.

To ensure that residents are not impacted by similar problems in the future with regard to flooding and other mishaps, we will enact legislation and regulations to ensure property developments have the proper infrastructure in place, such as drainage, street-

lighting, speed bumps, et cetera. Prevention in this respect, is surely better than the cure.

The PACT Government will also address the water delivery system in our Sister Islands. That means continuing to address those needs in the Brac and Little Cayman. And to ensure that our Islands' physical infrastructure is indeed making people's lives better, providing a better standard of life overall, we will ensure compliance with existing legislation regarding physical access for persons with disabilities and increase the number of cemeteries across our Islands.

Perhaps this is an appropriate place to conclude my comments in respect of infrastructure development. I hope it underscores the fact that infrastructure development affects all of our lives in every aspect—even after we are gone, Mr. Speaker.

We cannot continue with a business-as-usual approach. We cannot wait and see. We are seeing today the effects of yesterday's lack of foresight and planning. If this Government's plan seems very bold, aggressive and ambitious, it is because it is; but realistically, it is our short-term survival and future well-being that we are talking about today. The events of the past year and a half have clearly shown us that we cannot afford to be complacent any longer.

Strategic Broad Outcome 9 — Improving our financial services as an industry, product, and economic driver for our Islands.

Mr. Speaker, much has been said, and deservedly so, of the financial services industry carrying our Islands through the COVID-19 pandemic and it's absolutely true. The industry, and consequently Government revenues, performed far better than anticipated. Compared with the shutdown of our tourism industry, the outlook for the financial services industry is rosy; however, we must be realistic and never smugly secure in our own success.

This is an area in which, like in many areas of life, there is one constant, and that is change; and the financial services industry is also one that evolves rapidly and is affected by global shifts. It is vulnerable to external threats and also to increase an aggressive competition. In summary, in financial services, we always need to be playing at the top of our game. This Government knows that we must maintain our best-in-class reputation as a financial services jurisdiction.

This will require, Mr. Speaker, a multi-pronged effort based strongly on our robust regulatory structure. A key goal in this effort is removal from the Financial Action Task Force's grey list, and any other consequential high-risk lists.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the Cayman Islands has joined with 130 other countries and jurisdictions, considered by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to represent more than 90 per cent of global GDP in the OECD's consensus for framework to reform international tax

rules. As indicated by the Ministry of Financial Services press statement issued on 7 June this year, the two-pillar plan is directed at international corporate taxation rules to ensure that large multi-national enterprises pay their share of taxes wherever they operate, and this aligns with the Cayman Islands' long-standing stated position that taxes should be paid where ever they are rightfully owed.

To achieve it, and to keep the Cayman Islands off any international high-risk list, we must ensure that our existing laws are being enforced. We will also need to pass legislation that makes Cayman a proactive jurisdiction and continue to keep our financial services products cutting edge. To do this Mr. Speaker, we will have to implement more IT tools to enhance our regulatory framework and ensure that the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority (CIMA) has sufficient resources. At the foundation level, we must pay special attention to clarifying laws and regulations on the opening of bank accounts. This slate of actions, if taken swiftly, will strengthen our reputation and position us well to fight current and impending external threats.

Overall, the Government, as an industry stakeholder, needs to pro-actively engage the international and local communities as a primary objective.

Internationally, we will:

- Centralise the voice of all industry stakeholders;
- Promote the Cayman Islands' strong legal, regulatory and compliance framework and infrastructure;
- Network with key European Union, United Kingdom and United States stakeholders;
- Engage proactively with international political and regulatory organisations;
- Promote initiatives to de-bunk tax haven myths about Cayman; and
- Ultimately re-define how we position the Cayman Islands as a tax-neutral jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, on the local front, we have to educate the local populace on the positive economic impact of the financial services industry and increase funding to Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) that promote Cayman's financial services industry here and abroad.

Taking all of these actions as a concerted and coordinated effort, will allow us to effectively ring-fence and protect our financial services industry from both known and unanticipated external threats, while also strengthening the industry locally through increased Caymanian participation in and understanding of the industry, and its benefits to the Cayman Islands' economy and society as a whole.

As a Government, we must understand that we must continually evaluate, re-evaluate and act to strengthen and improve the financial services industry

both today, and for years to come, if we are going to be able to rely on it as a key pillar of our economy.

Strategic Broad Outcome 10 — Improve our tourism industry as a product, and economic driver.

Mr. Speaker, as we discuss economic pillars, we move to an industry that has been extremely shaken by the events of the past 16 months.

Let me say right here and now that we will absolutely ensure that every displaced Caymanian tourism worker will either gain long-term and steady employment within our re-opened tourism sector or will receive assistance to get back on their feet until they do.

Our aim with the current COVID-19 tourism worker stipend is to continue to provide assistance until it is no longer needed and our intention is that the tourism industry will be back up and running again in time for our traditional high season in November, which is when we plan to taper the stipends payments with the idea being, that displaced Caymanians will be back at work at that time, doing what they love, and taking advantage of those opportunities.

We are certainly making a concerted effort to get Caymanians back to work in tourism, through the data gathered in the ongoing tourism worker survey combined with a comprehensive training, retraining and upskilling partnership between WORC and CITA; and then matching out-of-work Caymanians in the hospitality sector with new jobs coming on stream as our Islands reopen to visitors.

There is nothing ad hoc about our plan to repopulate the tourism industry with Caymanian faces; nor is there anything lukewarm about our dedication to supporting Caymanians who are in need of assistance and have suffered as a result of the pandemic. And should circumstances conspire against us in respect of our plans, Mr. Speaker, and we don't have as many Caymanians back to work in November as we would have hoped, through our data-driven approach to reopening the industry and through the tourism worker survey and other means of analysis, we will know how many people still need our help—and we will help them.

There are no griches on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker. There will be no nightmare scenario for our people in November, and we urge them not to listen to any scare tactics. The first letter in the name of the PACT Government stands for "people-driven", and we will not turn our backs on our people.

Now that I have cleared up any fears about what may happen in November, let me explain how this Government plans to re-shape and improve the tourism industry to benefit Caymanians, and the Cayman Islands economy, for the future.

We are looking at long term growth, not just short-term gain. You could compare our approach to focusing on having money in the bank, not just change

in your pocket. We want our Caymanians in tourism to sit at the table, not simply be grateful for the scraps. How do we get there? Well, high on our agenda is a sustainable National Tourism Plan which will make better use of data by policy creators to ensure a sustainable approach—much as we have already started with the ongoing survey.

Vital to having a sustainable approach to Cayman's tourism industry is to expand and diversify our domestic tourism product. We all know that if you do what you always did, you'll get what you always got. We take that to mean that you have to change, and make changes, in order to grow. This is especially true after the extended closure of our borders due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cayman's reliance on a certain demographic and our famous legions of repeat visitors will not work if they decided to go somewhere else. We can and must diversify by looking to new markets. Toward this goal, we will promote and grow sports and event tourism; diversify the tourism product with a greater eco-tourism focus; and expand into emerging and secondary tourism markets.

We will continue to market to high-net worth visitors, but Mr. Speaker, we will also make the efforts to re-imagine cruise tourism. We will expand Cayman Airways routes; promote Cayman Brac and Little Cayman; and increase and improve tourism infrastructure in the Eastern districts of Grand Cayman. The modernisation of our travel and transport infrastructure will be vital to our tourism industry's survival.

To achieve this, we will establish a public/private partnership to construct a new general aviation terminal; improve public transport through legislative and infrastructure reforms; and improve ports of entry to enhance the visitor experience.

Finally, we get to what I see as our key goal in tourism, which is to transform the faces in our tourism industry and Caymanianise tourism in the Cayman Islands. To do this, we must do all that we can to encourage stronger Caymanian participation in the industry. We have heard many times, and through countless surveys, that our visitors want to meet the people of our country; they want to meet Caymanians and they want to learn and understand something of the Caymanian culture.

This wish has been stated from the horse's mouth, so to speak; our tourists are telling us that local participation in our tourism industry is lacking. We have known this to be true for a long time and now is the time for us to take real steps to get Caymanians more involved and invested in our tourism product, and industry.

As a part of this effort, we will expand and enhance the current national tourism education strategy and promote greater Caymanian ownership of tourism-related businesses. Part of our industry transformation initiative will be to enhance quality and

service delivery standards, initially by enacting the public transport code of conduct and creating and executing a national beautification plan.

Out of the adversity of a global pandemic, we have a huge opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to make a tourism product that was already great, an example of excellence. Our efforts have already begun, through a concerted training and development programme featuring extensive cooperation with the private sector and between several government agencies. We are ideally positioned internationally as a safe destination and have the time and opportunity to build on this and our other strengths.

Despite the recent setbacks of the pandemic, the PACT Government is certain that the best is yet to come for tourism in the Cayman Islands, and we will do everything in our power to make this a reality, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I reflected last night on the contributions of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I realised that he missed one key point, and that is that the purpose of elections are to determine the will of the people; and the collective will of the people was that they did not want a Progressives-led government. Mr. Speaker, while I recognise that the tone of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's speech was somewhat adversarial, I admit I was quite surprised.

When we started this process, we in the PACT Government decided that we wanted a different tone of politics in Cayman. To that end, we agreed that we would reach out to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to get his input on items the Opposition would like to see addressed in the Strategic Policy Statement. On this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, we do recognise that the Members of the Opposition are also duly elected representatives of the Caymanian people—our own people—and we are their Government too.

Mr. Speaker, I will also admit that prior to finalising the SPS, we went down the list of everything the Honourable Leader of the Opposition asked to be included, to ensure that they were addressed in the SPS. I will now read the list of items that he wanted to be included in the SPS and you, and the Caymanian public, can decide for yourselves if it has been included.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the letter was from the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, on his letterhead, addressed to Mr. Kenneth Jefferson, the Financial Secretary and Chief Officer of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and Labour.

Mr. Speaker, just to be clear and so that other Members are aware, I have already provided you with a copy of this letter, which you have given me approval to read, sir.

**"Items from Opposition to include
in Strategic Policy Statement"**

“Thank you for your letter of May 7th 2021, regarding the above matter. On behalf of the Opposition, I thank the Minister of Finance for his offer to the Opposition to submit items that we would like to see addressed in the Strategic Policy Statement for the 2022 and 2023 fiscal years that will shortly be presented to Parliament. We welcome the opportunity.

“Set out below are several Policy recommendations, in no particular order, that the Opposition supports for consideration by the Minister. We recognize that the current economic situation has impacted, and continues to impact Government revenues, and while we believe that the Cayman Islands remain in a strong financial position, prioritizing of projects may be necessary given the reduced financial resources available.

- Establish a credible and realistic Plan to restore the Cayman Islands compliance with the Framework for Fiscal Responsibility as set out in the Public Management and Finance Act;
- Complete Cayman’s National Community COVID-19 vaccination programme;
- Invest in and establish an international blue-green investment fund that will invest several million dollars into sustainable development projects across the Cayman Islands;
- Complete key capital projects such as the John Gray High School Campus, a new health facility for Bodden Town, the Integrated Solid Waste Management System, the Long Term Residential Mental Health Facility, the extension of the East-West Arterial Road to Frank Sound, and other ongoing major road improvements;
- Update and implement the 500K tourism recovery plan that includes a clear and phased re-opening plan;
- Restore full Caymanian employment and, in the interim, continue to assist displaced tourism businesses and workers;
- Develop and implement a new skills strategy for the Cayman Islands to support the economic strategy and match future skills to future jobs;
- Continue the strategy and aspirations to have every child to be taught in a public school that is ‘really good’ or ‘better’ against the education inspection framework;
- Overhaul social welfare legislation to bring into force a single framework with a common set of criteria;
- Implement a Community Development Office whose focus will be to improve the

quality of life for citizens in designated low-income areas through planning and implementation of development projects, and social infrastructure including housing, community and sports facilities, education, transport etc. and the delivery of quality services to citizens;

- Accelerate and complete the establishment of new offices in Brussels, Washington and Hong Kong to promote the interests of the Cayman Islands and defend our financial services industry;
- Appoint a Parliamentary Secretary to ensure a sustained focus on new and innovative affordable housing initiatives and to promote the available programmes;
- Look at more affordable public options for health insurance, home insurance, and pension plans that can exist alongside those offered by the private sector;
- Complete the Public Transport Study to help inform the best solution for a viable public transport system for Grand Cayman;
- Complete the legislative amendments and implement the recommendations of the Traffic Advisory Committee.”

It went on to say, Mr. Speaker,

“I trust that the Minister will find these policy recommendations useful in the preparation of the Strategic Policy Statement. I will be pleased to provide further information or clarification on any of the recommendations, if needed.”

Mr. Speaker, the items listed in that letter are all broadly reflected in the SPS, and the approach that we have taken. As you would have heard, Mr. Speaker, some of the things we have added included or go beyond that; but we still have a sort of adversarial approach, despite trying to take a politics’ unusual approach. Again, maybe it is Jacob’s voice and Esau’s hands.

Mr. Speaker, I recognise that losing is not easy—I know, I lost an election before—but Mr. Speaker, the Caymanian spirit knows that we can face defeat without being defeated.

I am proud of the team that I am honoured and privileged to lead. Many of them also know defeat, but they were never defeated. They are hardworking; they are energetic; they are passionate; they care and they are competent.

Mr. Speaker, all is said and done now, the elections are over. It is time to do the people’s business, and I therefore ask everyone to join us in building a better Cayman, one that will make the quality of life better for every single Caymanian.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I commend the Motion to this honourable Parliament.

[Desk thumping]
[Pause]

The Speaker: The question is: BE IT NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Parliament approves the policy priorities, aggregate financial targets and financial allocations set out in the 2022-2024 Strategic Policy Statement as indicative parameters on which the 2022 and 2023 Budgets will be formulated.

All those in favour, please say Aye; those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

Agreed: Government Motion No.4/2021-2022 passed.

The Speaker: Honourable Members, we have an addendum to our Order Paper.

I call the Clerk to move to the next item.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND OF REPORTS

CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT— REQUEST TO FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR APPROPRIATION CHANGES SOUGHT UNDER SECTION 12 OF THE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE ACT (2020 REVISION) FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2021

The Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Deputy Premier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 67(1) I beg to lay on the Table of this honourable Parliament a paper that sets out a request to Finance Committee for appropriation changes sought under Section 12 of the Public Management and Finance Act (2020 Revision) for the Government Financial Year ended 31st December 2021.

The Speaker: So ordered. Is the Minister speaking thereto?

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Deputy Premier: Very briefly Mr. Speaker, and I do mean briefly this time.

[Laughter]

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Deputy Premier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
[Inaudible interjection]

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Deputy Premier: Well, listen, I didn't ask for the lectern, so that is a good sign.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In accordance with Standing Order 67(1), which uses the term "paper", the paper that has just been laid on the Table with respect to requests for appropriation changes to the Appropriation Act for Government 2021 Financial Year, stands referred to Finance Committee.

As requests will be considered in Finance Committee, I will only make a brief remark to the effect that Government is seeking Finance Committee's approval for very useful requests. The most significant requests in absolute terms of dollars is \$27.5 million additional funds sought for the continuation of the stipend to be paid to persons connected with the tourism industry that have been displaced from their jobs due to the closure of the Island's borders. I intend to conduct Finance Committee proceedings at 9am on Monday, 19th July.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ADJOURNMENT

The Speaker: The Honourable Premier.

The Premier, Hon. G. Wayne Panton: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

I rise to move a motion that this honourable House do now adjourn until the conclusion of Finance Committee.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The question is that this honourable House stands adjourn until the conclusion of Finance Committee.

All those in favour, please say Aye. Those against, No.

AYES.

The Speaker: The Ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until Finance Committee has completed its business and reports to the honourable House.

At 5:36pm the House stood adjourned until Monday, 19 July 2021, at 9am.