



**HOUSE OF KEYS
OFFICIAL REPORT**

**RECORTYS OIKOIL
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**PROCEEDINGS
DAALTYN
(HANSARD)**

Douglas, Tuesday, 24th February 2004

Present:

The Speaker (The Hon. J A Brown)(Castletown); Mr D M Anderson (Glenfaba);
 Hon. A R Bell and Mrs A V Craine (Ramsey); Mr R E Quine OBE (Ayre); Mr J D Q Cannan (Michael);
 Mrs H Hannan (Peel); Hon. S C Rodan (Garff); Mr P Karran, Hon. R K Corkill and Mr A J Earnshaw (Onchan);
 Mr J R Houghton and Mr R W Henderson (Douglas North); Hon. D C Cretney and Mr A C Duggan (Douglas South);
 Hon. R P Braidwood and Mrs B J Cannell (Douglas East); Hon. J P Shimmin (Douglas West);
 Capt. A C Douglas (Malew and Santon); Hon. J Rimington, Mr P A Gawne (Rushen);
 with Mr M Cornwell-Kelly, Clerk of Tynwald.

Business transacted

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Time of adjournment: 10.27 a.m.

House of Keys

The House met at 10.00 a.m.

PRAYERS

The Chaplain of the House of Keys

[MR SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Leave of absence granted

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I have granted leave of absence to the Hon. Member for Douglas West, Mr Downie, Hon. Member for Rushen, Mr Gill, and the Hon. Member for Middle, Mr Quayle.

Questions for Oral Answer

TOURISM AND LEISURE

Public footpaths Maintenance

1. The Hon. Member for Glenfaba (Mr Anderson) to ask the Minister for Tourism and Leisure:

(1) Has your Department liaised with the Department of Transport with regard to the maintenance of the Island's public footpath network, bearing in mind that this year your Department has a designated walking week as a tourist initiative;

(2) if so, is there a network maintenance plan for the walks within the Department's brochure; and

(3) what has the response been to this initiative to date?

The Speaker: Hon. Members, we move to the first item on the Order Paper and it is Questions for Oral Answer and Question 1. I call on the Hon. Member for Glenfaba, Mr Anderson.

Mr Anderson: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg leave to ask the Question standing in my name.

The Speaker: I call on the Hon. Member for Douglas South, Mr Cretney, Minister for Tourism and Leisure.

The Minister for Tourism and Leisure (Mr Cretney): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Isle of Man Walking Festival has been scheduled to take place from 28th June to 3rd July this year and will be the culmination of effort from a number of parties. The event is sponsored by my Department and the walks programme has been put together by festival organiser, Terry Marsh, who is a renowned walking writer and member of the

Writers Guild.

The festival will comprise five walks per day on the Monday to Thursday, with three walks on the Friday, in addition to which there will be social events planned for each evening in the newly refurbished Villa Marina.

There will be an opportunity for local people to join in with the walks and the social events. Each of the walks will be led by a local volunteer, who will be assisted by other locals. We are very grateful to these volunteers for offering their time to help make the festival a success.

My Department has taken the lead in organising the festival, but, as indicated, we have also engaged the services of walking expert, Terry Marsh, who has had experience of organising other walking events. We have also had support and advice from the Department of Transport, Manx National Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Mr Speaker, we are hoping that the walking festival will grow over the next few years and offer a relaxing and enjoyable week of events for those who wish to come to the Island to visit its beautiful countryside, glens and shorelines. (A Member: Hear, hear.)

Turning to the specific questions, I can confirm that my Department has liaised with the Department of Transport, which has been represented on the organising committee, in order to ensure that the walks featured in the festival are in good condition for the event. I would add that the festival also makes use of some open land in the ownership of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Manx National Heritage, as well as some areas which are in private ownership. All the necessary clearances and permissions have been obtained to use the routes planned.

In answer to the second question, there have been a number of initiatives taken to ensure that the footpaths to be used are in good state for the festival. The Department of Transport has a full schedule of all the walks to be used and this schedule has been given to their two dedicated work gangs, who will out and about to ensure the walkways are clear and that the styles and bridges are in good order, over the coming months.

In addition, a local voluntary group has undertaken to walk all of the routes to be used and to report back to the Department of Transport, should there be any problems. Again, we are very grateful for their co-operation and assistance.

Regarding the third part of the question, the bookings have, so far, been relatively slow, but I am afraid this is a normal pattern for holiday and events bookings in today's market. We have recently done more intensive marketing of the festival, placing advertisements in the *Ramblers Yearbook*, *Walk Magazine* and *Country Walking Man*, which will be supplemented by an editorial piece in *Quicksilver* magazine, a publication aimed at the over 50s. Furthermore, we have sent e-mails to 1,500 people on our tourism database, who have expressed an interest in walking and we have also established a website to publicise and inform the public on the event. This website can be viewed at www.isleofmanwalking.com

In short, Mr Speaker, we are hopeful that this event will be well supported, although we are only aiming for relatively small numbers in the first year, so that it can grow for the future. However, I hope that the 2004 festival will act as a springboard for future events, when we can show off our friendly welcome and beautiful countryside.

I would, finally, like to take the opportunity provided by

this question to make a plea, once again, to those persons who exercise dogs, who currently act in an irresponsible way, and to those who despoil the countryside with litter. Please think about others who want to enjoy our lovely Island and pick up after your dog and take home your litter. I would also like to take the opportunity to ask local authorities to take the initiative, supply more bins, and to organise clean-ups in *your* area.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Glenfaba.

Mr Anderson: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I would like to thank the Minister for his comprehensive reply and it is good to hear that he is working with other Government Departments on this, but can the Minister confirm that he has actually inspected the walks in the brochure recently and that he is presently satisfied with their condition?

The Speaker: Minister for Tourism and Leisure to reply.

The Minister: I have not inspected all myself recently. I have inspected some of them recently and that is why the piece at the end of the question was mentioned, inasmuch as, unfortunately, there are some problems which come about because of irresponsible dog-owners, but that is only a minor matter.

I know there are other issues that the Hon. Member is interested in and I think the dedicated work gangs, which the Department of Transport have in this regard, will pick up any issues, together with the local volunteers, who I am very grateful for, who are going to walk the routes in advance.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Douglas North, Mr Houghton.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

May I ask if the Hon. Minister would circulate those walking brochures amongst Members for their interest?

The Speaker: Minister for Tourism and Leisure to reply.

The Minister: Mr Speaker, I am very happy to do that and if any Hon. Members wish to be involved, as I know the Hon. Member for Douglas East, Mr Braidwood, is already, in terms of guiding certain walks, if any Hon. Members wish to become involved, this is an opportunity to show the Isle of Man at its very best and I think we should all work for this.

Mr Houghton: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Rushen, Mr Gawne.

Mr Gawne: Gura mie eu, Loayreyder.

Is the Hon. Member aware of the excellent work that the DoT has been doing in my constituency, particularly around Spanish Head and Cregneash, in maintaining the footpaths, but would he agree also that there are a considerable number of footpaths that do need better maintenance, that are either blocked, or that, certainly, require upgrading and that, perhaps, the Minister for Transport should be encouraged to consider that footpath maintenance is a lot cheaper than

slapping tarmac all over the Island?

The Speaker: Minister for Tourism and Leisure to reply.

The Minister: I am sure, Mr Speaker, that the Hon. Member for West Douglas, Mr Shimmin, will have heard the comments of the Hon. Member for Rushen, Mr Gawne.

Yes, I am aware of the good work that the footpath dedicated team do. They could always do more, but they have to prioritise, as we have to do in everything we do in this hon. place.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Gura mie eu, Vainstyr Loayreyder.

Would the Hon. Minister consider, in promoting this festival in his advertising, to advertise in the RSPB magazine, *Birds*, which reaches a readership of several million members, and also the Wildlife Trust magazine, *Natural World*, which reaches a readership of several million people, who all enjoy walking, but, more importantly, enjoy our wildlife in the Manx hills, which would help promote his event even further?

And a second supplementary, Vainstyr Loayreyder, would the Hon. Minister make a commitment to work with the Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, which owns much of the land the footpaths go through, in order to ensure that irresponsible motor vehicle users, either two-wheeled or four-wheeled, have not churned the footpaths up which the festival is aimed at.

The Speaker: Minister for Tourism and Leisure to reply.

The Minister: With regard to the second part, I can confirm that I have, for some time, together with the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, been looking to make sure that green lanes and the hillside and other areas are not abused by unthoughtful persons in motorised vehicles.

In relation to the first part, yes, I can confirm that, as the Hon. Member is aware, as he has made representation about this matter before, I think it is a very obvious choice that people who are interested in wildlife, and, in particular, birds, et cetera, for which we are so fortunate to have a number of a particular special species which the Hon. Member, I am grateful, again, for again bringing this to my attention. I think it is quite legitimate that we should seek to advertise in the magazines which he has mentioned. I will ask my officers if that can be carried out.

Mr Henderson: Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Glenfaba, Mr Anderson.

Mr Anderson: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

In congratulating the Department on the production of the brochure, would the Minister look, in future, at the possibility of grading the walks, as is done in other popular walking locations?

The Speaker: Minister for Tourism and Leisure to reply.

The Minister: I hope that this year is going to be a success and I think we will be able to learn things from this year and take things in the future, and, if grading walks is an example of being more helpful to those who are participating, I will happily do that. Each walk is described in the brochure, length and a little bit of a description about it, as the Hon. Member will be aware, and, obviously, I will circulate this brochure to Hon. Members later, but, if there is anything we can learn for the future from this year's exercise, then, clearly, I would want to do that.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

First-time buyers' homes

Johnny Watterson's Lane and Linden Grove, Douglas

2. The Hon. Member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask a Member for Local Government and the Environment:

What is the present position with regard to the homes for first-time buyers promised by your Department for Johnny Watterson's Lane and Linden Grove, Douglas and when will they respectively be available for occupation?

The Speaker: Question 2. Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Vainstyr Loayreyder, I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

The Speaker: I call on the Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine, Member for the Department of Local Government and the Environment to reply.

A Member for the Department of Local Government and the Environment (Mrs Craine): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, the Department has obtained planning permission for the construction of 40 first-time buyer homes at Linden Grove in Douglas. The scheme will contain 16 two-bedroomed houses, 20 two-bedroomed apartments and 4 one-bedroom apartments. These homes will be sold to first-time buyers who have applied to be included on the register which is maintained by the Department.

The development has been tendered and the Department and the Attorney General's Chambers are in the final stages of completing the legal agreements that will allow the successful developer to start on site. It is anticipated that demolition of existing buildings will commence in March 2004 and that the first sales will be completed in July 2005.

Allocation of the properties will be made towards the end of this year. Mr Speaker, the Hon. Member for Onchan will be aware that the Department has been progressing developments at Ballanard Road and Watterson's Lane in Douglas. These two sites are important, because they will ultimately produce approximately 200 affordable homes for first-time buyers and a small number of homes for public sector rental. The sites are important, because, if they do obtain planning approval, they will help to meet the high demand for properties in the eastern part of the Island.

The current first-time buyers register stands at almost 800 applicants and over 500 potential first-time buyers have indicated their first choice preference for location as being

in Douglas, Braddan or Onchan. Experience would suggest that these numbers are likely to increase. The designs for both sites have been completed for some time. In addition, detailed site surveys, inquiries, traffic and environmental assessments and independent planning assessments have also been completed.

Unfortunately, the Water Authority did indicate that it was likely to object to planning applications on these two sites and other housing development sites in the eastern part of the Island, because it could not guarantee a potable water supply. However, the Department is hopeful that discussions over the last few days and a planned meeting on Thursday this week might result in a means to resolve matters.

The Department of Local Government and the Environment has decided it should not delay the submission of the planning application any longer and we shall, therefore, be submitting the applications within the next few days. I hope the Hon. Member for Onchan and the other Members will accept that the Department has had no option but to delay the submission of the planning applications, whilst trying to attempt to resolve problems over water supply issues.

Even if the applications are successful, I will not be able to give a date for occupation, until the Water Authority confirms a date when it will be able to install a potable water supply.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Rushen, Mr Gawne.

Mr Gawne: Gura mie eu, Loayreyder.

Would the Member for DoLGE just explain what is the actual definition of a first-time buyer that her Department uses, and can she confirm that the 40 first-time buyers at Linden Grove that she has identified will actually be sold to those first-time buyers, and what restrictions are there to ensure that they will be purely for first-time buyers?

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine, to reply.

Mrs Craine: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The second part of that question, really, lies in the answer to the first.

Under the first-time buyer house purchase scheme, the applicant, or their partner, must have lived on the Island continuously for five years up to the date of application, or periods totalling at least 15 years up to that date.

Single applicants or joint applicants, with a maximum approved income of £30,000 per annum for an approved dwelling, or £24,000 for any other dwelling, may apply, and, to be a first-time buyer, you must not have owned a property before, unless there are particular circumstances, such as the breakdown of a marriage, or financial problems, that forced a sale and which the Department will take into consideration. The houses at Linden Grove are to be allocated to first-time buyers under this scheme.

Mr Houghton: Hear, hear.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Earnshaw.

Mr Earnshaw: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I just wanted to ask the Hon. Member for Ramsey, what is the zoning status at the moment of the land at Johnny Watterson's Lane?

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine, to reply.

Mrs Craine: My understanding, Mr Speaker, is that this is unzoned land at this present time.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Vainstyr Loayreyder, can the Member give us a breakdown of the number of houses that were promised and in what timescale they were promised not so long ago by her Minister, as far as the first-time buyers are concerned.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine, to reply.

Mrs Craine: I can give the Hon. Member answers with regard to numbers, Mr Speaker, and I will be happy to circulate those to Members.

With regard to the proposed planning dates, or the proposed completion dates, I am afraid I am unable to give those, because they are subject to planning application, so it would be doing a bit of crystal ball gazing, I am afraid, with regard to that. But, if the Court will bear with me, I will be happy to tell you where the proposed sites are and what numbers we have proposed for those sites.

At Ballanard Road, Douglas, we have proposed 80; Johnny Watterson's Lane, 116; Pulrose Farm, Douglas, 35; Cooil, Spring Valley, 15; Ramsey, Poyll Dooley, 21; Andreas, 2; Ballasalla at Crossag Farm, phase 1, 40; Port Erin, 14; Bride, 16; Crosby, 9; Harcroft Meadows, Douglas, 3; Laxey Glen Road, 3; Ramsey, Queen's Hotel site, 27; Colby, Ballacubbon, 8.

The Speaker: Hon. Members, before I ask the next Hon. Member to ask their Question, I would just remind Hon. Members that this Question is quite specific. It is about two specific areas (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) and it is not appropriate to broaden it out to an all-Island Question Time. If Members wanted that, the Question should have said that.

Hon. Member for Ayre, Mr Quine.

Mr Quine: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Can the Hon. Member tell me, are the problems which she has referred to in regard to Johnny Watterson's Lane and Linden Grove, common to other parts of the Island? I have noted, of course, the reference to Bride and, in that case, it is now over three years since the last obstacle was removed from the development of that site, so are there other problems of which we are not aware?

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine, to reply.

Mrs Craine: No, sir, the problems that we have referred to, with regard to the Water Authority, do not apply to other areas in the Island.

These schemes are being progressed within the Department and are, really, to do with scale of work and development proposals and tendering process, all of which I am sure that the Hon. Member is more familiar with than I am. But those things are going through their process and I look forward to the advancement of those proposals in other areas.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Vainstyr Loayreyder, would the Member tell this Hon. House what was promised in *Hansard*, as far as first-time buyers' houses were concerned, as far as Watterson's Lane and Linden Grove, in particular, are concerned –

A Member : She told you.

Mr Karran: What was promised in *Hansard*, where the dates were and the breakdown of what was promised in this Hon. House, or in another place, and what we have actually got, and would the Member also inform this Hon. House that the issue of the Water Authority is an issue of her own Department's making in the first place.

The Speaker: I would just say, if I may, what was promised in *Hansard* is a very broad question. A date might be helpful for the Hon. Member to reply. Anyway, Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine.

Mrs Craine: Thank you, Mr Speaker. No, I am afraid I cannot quote what was in *Hansard*, I do not have an encyclopaedic memory –

A Member: Hear, hear.

Mr Karran: You should stick with what you promised the people of the Isle of Man.

Mrs Craine: – but I will be happy if the Department –

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Karran!

Mrs Craine: The Department will gladly look out those references, Mr Speaker, and be happy to furnish the Hon. Member with them.

With regard to the situation that the Hon. Member for Onchan referred to, with regard to the Water Authority, I think that it should be made clear that the Water Authority application went to an independent planning inspector and it was not for the Minister to overturn the situation dictated to by law, of going along with the decision of that planning inspector, unless there were substantial reasons with which she could overturn it. And, yes, if the Hon. Member wishes to choose to ignore that, then I leave it with him.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Michael, Mr Cannan.

Mr Cannan: Bearing in mind the delays occurring in Douglas, in those areas which are part of the central water filtration plant, will the Minister now give a guarantee she will expedite those areas where there are no problems, instead of hankering and waiting for the water problem to be resolved in the east and south, and pursue with vigour areas such as Jurby, which are crying out for plots for sale for development.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine, to reply.

Mrs Craine: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Yes, indeed, I am quite happy to try and focus on other areas and the Hon. Member will be very pleased to know

that I had a meeting last Friday, at which we did indeed focus our attentions on how we could best speed up the progress of development in Jurby.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Vainstyr Loayreyder, would the Hon. Member not agree, in response to the Hon. Member for Ayre's supplementary question to this Hon. House, that there has been a clear ability for the last three years in his area to develop first-time buyers' houses, that this is just a smokescreen, from the fact that her Department has not been allowing the developers to make the agenda, as far as first-time buyers' houses? And would she also not agree that it seems quite strange with something as fundamental as a water filtration plant, that we have a situation with a problem with planning, when eight flats being constructed on a Pulrose church site could be overturned by an independent inspector, and does this show the inconsistency, as far as her Government is concerned?

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Ramsey, Mrs Craine, to reply.

Mrs Craine: I thank the Hon. Member for making me a Member of the Ministerial Government.

I would just say that I do not agree that the developers make the agenda with regard to the progress of first-time buyers' houses. The Department and housing directorate are working very hard to progress the development of both public sector housing and first-time buyers as quickly as they can and I would just point out to the Hon. Member, that, whilst a great deal of criticism is laid at the door of developers coming in to the Isle of Man, unless matters are progressed, when we turn round and want these developers, they would have moved on elsewhere, and that is something that we have to be very careful about if we wish to fulfil our programme as it stands.

I do not think I have any further comments I wish to make about the water filtration plant, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. Members, that concludes Questions for Oral Answer. We have a Question for Written Answer which has been circulated to Hon. Members.

Question for Written Answer

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

SIP (Computerised) Project Purpose, costs and abandonment

1. The Hon. Member for Douglas North (Mr Houghton) to ask a Member for Health and Social Security:

In respect of your Department's SIP (Computerised) Project:

- (1) *what was its purpose, when was it launched and on the advice of whom;*
- (2) *how long was the system in operation;*

- (3) *what was the cost of the system in respect of -*
 - (a) *training;*
 - (b) *software etc; and*
 - (4) *why was the system abandoned?*

Answer: (1) The Strategic Information Project (SIP) was established to provide support to the DHSS 'whole person' concept, which was aimed at ensuring joined up DHSS information and, in particular, the sharing of electronic information between healthcare providers.

In 1999, following on from agreement to an outline health services I.T. strategy by Health Services Policy Group, a presentation was given to the former Chief Executive Officer by Dr MacLean, Director, Public Health/Chief Administrative Medical Officer and a budget of £1 million, evenly spread over a three year period (2000-01 to 2002-03) was allocated within DHSS, with the Director, Public Health/CAMO as project sponsor.

Dr MacLean, as the project sponsor, initiated the project and a Mr A W Thomas carried out the initial scoping work. Dr MacLean, who had previously worked with Mr Thomas on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) projects in Scotland, recommended Mr Thomas to the Department.

The initial stages of the project were commenced in January 2000, when a number of companies were invited by Mr Thomas to submit expressions of interest, and a preferred supplier was subsequently recommended by Mr Thomas to complete a controlling specification for the project.

In December 2000 a contract for the supply of Phase 1 of the Strategic Information Project was signed by the then Chief Executive Officer and by the then Manager, Information Systems Division, Treasury, with development work commencing in January 2001.

(2) The formal contract relating to the project was concluded on 15 December 2003.

(3) The formal contract relating to the project was concluded on 15 December 2003.

(a) No specific training budget was identified; any training costs were included in the development costs of the system.

TABLE 1A

2000-01£	
Taskcare Ltd (Contract - Phase 1)	292,550.00*
SIFO Ltd (Alan Thomas):	27,340.00
ISD hardware, software, support etc:	51,500.00
2001-02	
Taskcare Ltd (Contract HU104 -Change Requests):.....	43,815.00
SIFO Ltd (Alan Thomas):	6,423.00
ISD hardware, software, support etc:	33,866.00
2002-03	
Taskcare Ltd [Contract HU104 -Change Requests]:	234,641.00
SIFO Ltd (Alan Thomas):	4,252.00
Hospital Pathology System [Upgrades]:	24,906.00
ISD hardware, software, support etc:	6,041.00
2003-04	
Taskcare Ltd (Contract HU104 -Change Requests):.....	112,736.00
Taskcare Ltd (Phase 2 - Definition of Requirements):	36,452.00
ISD hardware, software, support etc:	15,136.00
Taskcare Ltd (Programme closure):	20,000.00
Total Programme Expenditure:.....	909,658.00

* NB: Monies committed on signing contract paid in instalments in financial years 2000-01 to 2003-04.

(4) In September 2003 the DHSS's newly appointed Director of Information Systems Development reviewed

the project, in consultation with senior colleagues of the UK NHS Information Authority (NHSIA). The result of the review was that, whilst the 'concept' was appropriate, it was noted that the UK were trying to address similar issues, but were encountering problems similar to those faced by the IOM DHSS. In addition, there were a number of technical issues that required consideration and which were of concern to both the IOM DHSS and Information Systems Division, Treasury.

It was noted that many of the issues the IOM DHSS was considering as future developments via SIP (eg Radiology Results) were now being addressed nationally by the UK NHS (eg Digital Imaging Messaging Project) as part of a major information technology investment programme. Elements of the SIP project were not complementary to the approach being adopted by the UK and it was viewed that this could mean certain aspects enjoyed by UK clinicians, could not be replicated on the IOM.

Other issues included the fact that, if the DHSS committed to further development with the SIP supplier, it would be difficult to break the relationship at a later date, without seriously disrupting or damaging the provision of business services (eg GP links); and it might not be possible to successfully implement NHSIA initiatives without involving the supplier at a considerable cost, as it was the aim to ensure that, as appropriate, primary care contractors had access to similar services as their UK counterparts. This added uncertainty to the SIP process.

In the absence of administrative resources within DHSS to support increasing volumes of data matching and support work in-house, there was concern over an unsustainable level of expenditure having to be paid to the supplier for professional services to maintain a database that was sparsely populated. In addition to this was the level of the development costs identified in the supplier 'Phase 2 Definition of Requirements' documents relating to the delivery of a limited range of Laboratory Results (only Haematology & Biochemistry) to GP Practice systems.

It was also noted that an IOM DHSS Health Service proposal that GP computing should be centralised to realise economies in providing support et cetera would impact on the proposed Phase 2 work, resulting in further expenditure at a later date.

A GP Practice messaging changeover project instigated by NHSIA (now complete) would also have impacted on

the developments proposed by the supplier, resulting in further expenditure, as would the IOM Government move to Windows XP.

It was for the aforementioned reasons that the supplier was given notice that the Department did not wish to commit to Phase 2 of the project and the project was formally closed on 15th December 2003. The decision was taken with full consultation and concurrence from Internal Audit and Information Systems Division, Treasury.

Orders of the Day

Bill for First Reading

The European Union (Accessions) Bill

The Speaker: I now call on the Secretary to the House in relation to Item 3. Bills for First Reading.

The Secretary: Mr Speaker, we have the First Reading of the European Union (Accessions) Bill produced by the Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Corkill.

The Speaker: Now, Hon. Members, just before I conclude the sitting, can I just remind Hon. Members, I look forward to their co-operation to ensure that mobile phones are switched off (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) before Members enter the House.

Hon. Members, the House will now stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on 2nd March in our own Chamber. Thank you, Hon. Members.

The House adjourned at 10.27 a.m.

Corrigendum

On the title page of the Proceedings for Tuesday, 10th February, for Volume 121, No.5, read Volume 121 No.8.