Audio file

NI General Assembly - 10 October 2026.mp3

Transcript

Clerk

I call together the House and the General Assembly of Norfolk Island. When you'll be upstanding, we'll read the prayer.

Prayer of the House. Almighty God, we humbly beseech thee to vouchsafe thy blessing upon this house, direct and prosper our deliberations to the advancement of thy glory. and the true welfare of the people of Norfolk Island. Amen.

Condolences. This House passes on condolences since the last sitting of the 22nd of August 2026 General Assembly. The House fondly remembers and pass on their sincerest thoughts to the families of Jan Sowell and Elaine Sanders. The General Assembly asked to stand for a period of silence and reflection. Rest in peace. Please be seated.

Just a little bit of housekeeping before we start our formal part of the notice paper. First of all, we're at South Pacific Resort, which is different from Rawson Hall. To familiarise yourself, we've got exit to your left and exit to your right through that door there, toilets and facilities to the left and out there through those ranch slider doors. And the assembly area is down across the car park here and down next to the, through the entrance to the South Pacific Resort if anything was to happen. The voting process today for the General Assembly is undertaken through direct democracy. Only persons recorded on the electoral roll may participate in formal voting. When voting is called, the returning officer will facilitate the process and determine the outcome which will be recorded by the clerk. Instructions will be provided at the time a vote by the General Assembly is called. A notice convening the House. I read the Gazette notice convening the House of the General Assembly. I hereby table the Gazetted Government of Norfolk Island notice paper dated the 28th of September 2026. Ladies and gentlemen, if you don't mind, I would like to mention some remarkable milestones achieved by remarkable people since the August 2026 General Assembly. Firstly, the House. The House comprises the three Government of Norfolk Island Councillors, plus they are supported by like-minded individuals. The House meets every Monday and the meetings are on an all-day commitment. There are other scheduled meetings throughout the week and on occasions it may be an individual Councillor working his or her government for our island. The general community do not see our councillors in a political sphere, but I can attest to some incredible hard and dedicated work for you, for the people and for our Norfolk Island. Secondly, and this is a significant milestone, the Government of Norfolk Island have achieved charter communications in several ways, none more interactively than the website. The operative word is interactive. The House have been blessed to have an incredible assistance by Mr Peter Lipscomb and Mrs Emma Shorter. We thank them for their technical skills and their amazing teaching ability. To convert what the House and the GNI Charter require into a powerful platform is nothing short of mind-blowing. Yesterday, 84% of the GNI electoral roll received two very professional emails. and this month there will be additional communications going to the electorate. You cannot be more informed and you are certainly inclusive of the GNI deliverables. Your email directed to you and from the GNI website

are matters of significant community interest, charter amendments and update on the House meetings. This is groundbreaking and very powerful with more to come. If you didn't receive the emails, it would have been because we had the wrong addresses or we didn't have your email address. Can I encourage you to drop into the GNI Hub in Norfolk Mall and someone can assist you. Others can visit the website at any time. On behalf of our elected Councillors, I would like to express the importance of being patient, of being understanding and more importantly, that the community must accept that the GNI deliverables are restricted and contained within the charter protocols. Thank you.

Clerk

Moving on to item 2 of the notice paper. Item 2 is about governance charter amendments. Item 2.1, statement of constitutional position recognition of Norfolk Island's land, waters and natural resources. I invite Chief Magistrate Peter Christian Bailey to introduce the community in relation to the motion.

Chief Magistrate

Thank you, Clerk. The purpose of this motion is to seek endorsement of a new statement of constitutional position, which is the recognition of Norfolk Island land, waters and natural resources to be inserted into the Part A of the Charter Constitutional Foundations, immediately following the existing statement of constitutional position concerning the Pitcairn Norfolk Island people and their enduring relationship with their homeland. The proposed statement shows the Government of Norfolk Island's recognition of the enduring relationship of the Pitcairn Norfolk people with Norfolk Island, its surrounding seas and natural resources and preserves the constitutional position of Norfolk Island in relation to decisions affecting those lands, waters and resources. The motion is that the General Assembly endorse the proposed statement of constitutional position, which is a recognition of Norfolk Island's land, waters and natural resources, and it's attached as annexure A, which is to be inserted in part A of the constitutional foundations of the Governance Charter and Operational Framework 2026. As Ted said before, all this can be found online. It's been, so it can be found online. So consideration is clause 7 of the Governance Charter provides that the Charter may be amended by resolution of the House with formal endorsement by the people who required where an amendment affects constitutional authority, sovereignty, institutional structure of rights. The proposed statement concerns matters extending to self-determination, stewardship of land and sea, natural resources and Norfolk Island's position concerning its surrounding maritime area. The House therefore considers it's appropriate that the statement be presented to the General Assembly for formal endorsement before being incorporated into the governance charter. The proposed statement is consistent with the existing statement of constitutional position contained within the charter, including the recognition of the Pitcair and Norfolk people as a continuing constitutional community from whom the authority of government is derived and the recognition of their enduring relationship with their homeland, including the stewardship of the land and the sea. The statement also places on the contemporary constitutional record a position with an established history in Norfolk Island. On the 30th of October 2016, the then Norfolk Island Council of Elders President, Mr Albert F Buffett, formally recorded their position concerning our EEZ or Exclusive Economic Zone surrounding Norfolk Island. and Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the principle that people may freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources. That position was subsequently brought again into public discussion before the General Assembly at our last sitting on the 22nd of August 2026 during consideration of the proposed expansion of the Marine Park. The GNI,

Government of Norfolk Island, the Norfolk Island's 2006 consideration of the Marine Park proposal has similarly recorded that participation by GNI, the General Assembly or members of the Norfolk Island community in Commonwealth consultation is not to be interpreted as acceptance of Commonwealth title, jurisdiction or control or as prejudicing any position concerning Norfolk Island's territorial sea, surrounding maritime area, continental shelf, natural resources, self-determination or constitutional status. The proposed statement brings these principles together within the charter in a form intended to endure beyond the present marine park process. It is proposed statement this has been said before, is proposed that the statement, as I said, be inserted into part A foundations immediately following the existing statement of constitutional position concerning the Norfolk Island people and their enduring relationship with their homeland. This statement, this placement connects the statement directly within the chart as the existing recognition of the constitutional community and its relationship with Norfolk Island as our homeland. The outcome sought is that the General Assembly endorsed the insertion of the statement, of the proposed statement of constitutional position, which is immediately following the statement of constitutional position concerning the Pitcairn and Norfolk people and their enduring relationship with their homeland. Following If it's endorsed by the General Assembly and the required resolutions of the House, the statement will form part of the governance charter, be entered into the official charter amendment record and be incorporated into the next consolidated edition. So the impact assessment, environmental sustainability, the statement recognises responsible stewardship and intergenerational protection of Norfolk Island's land, waters and natural resources. It does not prescribe a particular environmental management regime or determine the outcome of any present or future conservation proposal. Social sustainability. The statement preserves the ability of the Norfolk Island community to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting resources of long-term importance to the island and future generations. Economic sustainability. The statement does not establish or authorise any resource use It preserves consideration of Norfolk Island's present and future economic interest in its land, waters and natural resources. The statement recognises the enduring relationship of the Pitcair and Norfolk Island people with their homeland and surrounding seas and the cultural and intergenerational responsibility associated with stewardship. The statement strengthens the charter's record of Norfolk Island's constitutional position concerning land, water and natural resources and provides guidance for future engagement with external governments and authorities. It preserves Norfolk Island's position with determining competing jurisdictional claims and does not prevent continued peaceful engagement, cooperation or evidence-based environmental management. So the resolution The proposed resolution that the General Assembly endorse the proposed statement of constitutional position, recognition of Norfolk Island Land, Waters and Natural Resources, which is annexure A, which I will read out. Approves its insertion into part A of the charter, acknowledges the formal position recorded by the Council of Elders, namely Mr. Albert F. Buffett back in 2016. acknowledges the formal position. Yeah, sorry, I've just said that. Affirms that the statement records and preserves the constitutional position of the Government of Norfolk Island concerning Norfolk Island land, Norfolk Island's land, surrounding waters and natural resources without purporting to finally determining competing claims of title or jurisdiction, and confirms that participation by the GNI, the General Assembly, or members of the Norfolk Island community in external consultation administrative, regulatory or conservation processes does not itself constitute acceptance of any claim to title, jurisdiction or prejudice Norfolk Island's position and confirms that following the endorsement by the General Assembly and the resolution of the House required under clause 7 of the Governance Charter, the statement will form part A, constitutional foundations and 7 authorises the

amendment to be recorded in the official charter record and incorporate it into the next consolidated edition of the Governance Charter and Operational Manual. I think I'll read out the statement. So I'll now read out the statement, which is the proposed insertion into the charter. The Government of Norfolk Island, this is the statement to go into the charter. The Government of Norfolk Island recognise the enduring relationship with the Pitka and Norfolk Island people with Norfolk Island, its surrounding seas and natural resources as an integral part of their constitutional, cultural and economic continuity. That relationship includes responsibilities of stewardship and the right of the people to participate meaningfully in decisions regarding the conservation, use of and future management of the land, waters and natural resources upon which the community and future generations depend. The government further recognises the long-standing position advanced by representatives and institutions of the Norfolk Island people. The decisions concerning the island surrounding maritime area and natural resources engage questions of self-determination, constitutional status and the right of a people to their own natural wealth and resources. In particular, the government acknowledges the formal position recorded by the Norfolk Island Council of Elders on the 30th of October 2016 concerning the exclusive economic zone surrounding Norfolk Island and Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its subsequent reaffirmation in public discussion before the General Assembly on the 22nd of August 2026, consistent with the principles of the Charter, participation by the GE Government of Norfolk Island the General Assembly or the people of Norfolk Island and in any external administrative, regulatory, conservation or consultation process concerning Norfolk Island's land, territorial seas, maritime, surrounding maritime area, continental shelf or natural resources does not of itself constitute acceptance of any claim to title, jurisdiction or control or prejudice any existing or future positions concerning Norfolk Island's constitutional status self-determination or rights and interests in those areas and resources. The government of Norfolk Island affirms its responsibility to safeguard those interests through peaceful engagement, evidence-based conservation, responsible stewardship and dialogue with Australia and other relevant authorities while preserving the capacity of the Norfolk Island people to determine their position through their own democratic institutions. Nothing in this statement purports to finally determine competing claims concerning maritime title or jurisdiction. Its purpose is to record and preserve the constitutional position of the GNI and to ensure that participation in external processes is not interpreted as acquiescence or in way of matters that remain the subject of constitutional or legal consideration. Thank you.

Clerk

Thank you, Chief Magistrate. I now invite any contributions from the floor if anyone wants to contribute to this discussion about the statement of constitutional position, which is recognition of Norfolk Island's land, waters and natural resources. Any dialogue from the General Assembly.

Councillor Hayes

I do Clerk.

Clerk

Okay, Councillor Hayes.

Councillor Hayes

It has been reported that Norfolk Island's EEZ in the fishing over a twenty-six period year period has a total tax and value of 200 and forty-seven million U.S. dollars. Our surrounding waters. In 1978, the data falls off the charts. And then there's some sPitcairnes in 1990, and in 2006, the fishing flatlines. When compared to our neighbouring island nations, New Caledonia and Vanuatu, their fishing is large and robust and continuous. In Vanuatu, the licensing and the fishing contributes between 1 to 2% of their GDP. New Caledonia has no visibility over those statistics as they don't allow external fishing or fishing entities to fish in their waters. And the other thing I'd like to note is that New Caledonia has a fishing fishing processing facilities and as early as 2019 Vanuatu has entered into an agreement with China to do the same where it's processing of the fish within their island nations, which then gives them added value on the catch. So it's a lot of money that's generated through fishing in all waters of the world. I'd also like to note that Norfolk Island's waters have a health register of 78, which is 6 points above the world's ocean health. All of these things in and around fishing and what that means and data and catch also then speaks to other institutions within the world like human impact, human development, carbon crediting, all sorts of how that data is then spread across. And then the idea is that as the data is placed in holding places like in the UN and all of those departments and associations in and under it, are you talking about then the UN and the money that travels then from that to the nation for research participation grants and things like that. So thank you very much.

Clerk

Thank you very much Councillor Hayes. Any other person who would like to contribute towards this particular Governance Charter Amendment?

Grant Summerscales

Rather than actually selling it to some anywhere like China, there's an old word called Love E on Norfolkwest. You don't need a marine park for love E, you don't just love E Without any of that rubbish, you'd rather than a foreign corporation getting the rights to mine it without a season having to save it. Congratulations, well done, we should get behind it.

Clerk

Thank you very much. That was Grant, for the Hansard, that was Grant Summerscales, thank you very much. He fully supports the statement today. This motion is hereby announced. The motion before the House is that the General Assembly endorse the proposed statement of constitutional position, which is recognition of Norfolk Island's land, waters and natural resources, which is attached at the Annex A for insertion in Part A Constitutional Foundations of the Governance Charter and Operational Manual 2026. I now ask the General Assembly to vote. Those of the opinion say yes. We'll raise your card. Those in opinion, no. Any abstentions?

Cle

No.

Clerk

One abstention. Noted. Chief Magistrate, I declare that the results of the votes exceed the requirement of majority of yes and declare that the motion is carried. Moving on to Part 2.2, item 2.2, which is Part D, Stewardship Framework 21A, Land and Intergenerational Inheritance. I

invite Councillor Tim Brown to bring to this General Assembly and to provide the General Assembly with a public record of the purpose and effect.

Councillor Brown

Thank you. The purpose is to seek endorsement of a new clause, 21A, land and intergenerational inheritance to be inserted into part D of the stewardship framework of the Governance Charter and Operational Manual 2026, immediately following clause 21 dash intergenerational stewardship. So the motion is that the General Assembly endorse the proposed charter provision, land and intergenerational inheritance, attached as annexure A for incorporation into the governance charter and operational manual. Annexure A reads, land in Norfolk Island carries particular historical, cultural and intergenerational significance to the Pitcairn Norfolk Island people. and the wider Norfolk Island community. Governance affecting land shall recognise its importance to family, home, cultural continuity, community well-being and the ability of future generations to maintain an enduring connection with Norfolk Island. Decisions materially affecting the ownership, stewardship or long-term accessibility of land shall have regard to the finite nature of the island, intergenerational consequence and the preservation of Norfolk Island's cultural and community inheritance. So for consideration, as all would be aware, land has particular significance in Norfolk. It sustained family, home, community and cultural continuity costs. across generations and remains fundamental to the ability of future generations to maintain their connection with the island. Unfortunately, recent developments have again demonstrated the importance of ensuring that decisions materially affecting Norfolk Island land are considered not only for their immediate administrative or economic purpose but also for their longer term social, cultural and intergenerational consequences. This principle is already reflected throughout the Governance Charter. The Charter places land and assets within the scope of government and requires stewardship to protect community wellbeing, cultural continuity and the inheritance of future generations. The proposed amendment makes that responsibility explicit in relation to land. It's proposed that the provision be inserted immediately following clause 21, intergenerational stewardship, as a new clause 21A, land and intergenerational inheritance. This placement connects the provision directly with the charter's existing requirement that public authority be exercised with regard to long-term consequence inheritance and the prudent management of land and assets. The amendment does not prevent the sale, transfer, development or lawful regulation of the land. It establishes A continuing principle that significant decisions affecting land take account of Norfolk's finite land base, its particular history and culture and the interests of generations to come. The outcome sought, the General Assembly endorses the insertion of this clause immediately following clause 21 of the government's charter and operational manual. The resolution sought is that the General Assembly endorses the proposed clause attached as an extra clause 21A, land and intergenerational inheritance. approves its insertion into Part D stewardship framework of the governance charter and operational manual immediately following clause 21 intergenerational stewardship confirms the existing clause 22 and subsequent clauses retain their present numbering and authorises the amendment to be recorded in the official charter amendment record incorporated into the next consolidated edition of the charter following the required resolution of the House.

Clerk

Thank you very much, Councillor Brown. Once again, I invite the General Assembly, if you've got any contributions on the land and intergenerational inheritance matter before the House, at the General Assembly today. Yes.

Grant Summerscales

Basically registering the land in keeping the land on Norfolk Island in the jurisdiction of Norfolk Island. AI the other day told me to get you to do it. My new friend AI, I hated the internet mate.

Clerk

Can you repeat the idea within my firm, please? This is William Quintel. Thank you very much.

William Quintal

I was just I was just wanted to ask if we could remake or if you guys could make a Norfolk Island Land Register or reinstate the one that we used to have before, which is probably still a current working document under the under the crowning right of Norfolk Island so we could register our lands through the government of Norfolk Island in relation to land titles and people possibly being charged land rates on Norfolk.

From the floor

That we shouldn't be paying because this is not Australia.

Councillor Brown

That's something that we can certainly bring back to the House for further discussion. We need to think of things like the administrative burden and that sort of thing that it may or may not entail but it's certainly something that we can spring back for further discussion.

Clerk

Cherri Buffett, thank you.

Cherri Buffett

On behalf of the Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce, we have already written to the government of Norfolk Island about creating a register for lands, deaths, births and marriages. To date, there has been no confirmation as to what is happening about that. So the chamber cannot tell members or anybody else who has asked what has been decided by the government. So it would be appreciated if the government of Norfolk Island could at least respond to those requests for a register of lands. And yes, there has been one already established several years ago, as Mr Quintel has said. So For the benefit of everybody, perhaps the government of Norfolk Garland would like to respond to the chamber. Thank you.

Clerk

Thank you, William Quintal, and thank you, Cherri Buffett. Councillor Brown noted. Any other contributions?

It's Wayne Robinson. I'd just like to make a comment, please. We know we're heading towards a stage where The local council are going to put 25 properties, if they don't reach an arrangement, under the hammer and be auctioned off at the end of January. Where's the steps in all of this to put an end to that sort of thing?

Clerk

That's Wayne Robinson. Thank you. I believe we're actually covering this off in matters of significant community interest under section 5. Later on in this General Assembly.

Wayne Robinson

Happy to wait to leave.

Councillor Hayes

Can I clarify, Wayne, it's 25 individuals.

Speaker 7

It's 25 individual properties. And they all have exceeded five years without paying anything towards rates.

Councillor Hayes

The report in the regional council papers for that particular council meeting referenced in that paper, it was individuals, not that's individuals. It wasn't individual properties. Okay. Thank you for clarifying.

Clerk

Thank you, Wayne. Yes, as I mentioned before, it's under the Section 5, item 5, in the matters of significance to the Norfolk Conte community. This motion is hereby announced. The motion before the House is that the General Assembly endorse the proposed charter provision, land and intergenerational inheritance attached as Annex A for incorporation into the Governor's Charter and Operation Remainer 2026. I now ask the General Assembly to vote. Those of the opinion, raise your card for yes. No. Any abstentions? One abstention. Councillor Brown, I declare that the results of the votes exceeded the requirement of majority of yes, and declared that the motion is carried, one abstention noted. On behalf of the Government of Norfolk Island, this House thanks the General Assembly for their direct democracy. I move on to item 4. These are matters, community consultation reporting matters. And 4.1 is population, immigration and sustainable capacity of Norfolk Island. I invite Chief Magistrate Peter Christian Bailey to respond on a general business matter presented to the General Assembly on the 22nd of August 2026.

Chief Magistrate

Thank you, Clerk. So the purpose of this is to seek General Assembly support for a community-wide assessment of how current immigration, residency and population arrangements are affecting Norfolk Island and to establish an evidence base to inform future decisions concerning Norfolk Island's population and capacity. The motion is that the General Assembly support the Government of Norfolk Island establishing a community mechanism to identify and report on the impacts of current immigration, residency and population arrangements on Norfolk Island, with the findings to be compiled and presented to a future General Assembly to inform consideration of further action. So just a bit of a background. At the last General Assembly on the 22nd of August, a community member called for immediate action in response to concerns about immigration on Norfolk Island. The concern raised extended beyond immigration alone. It included the relationship between population growth and Norfolk Island's finite land and natural resources, housing availability, health, aged care services, water supply electrical generation, food and freight security, waste management, infrastructure capacity, environmental sustainability, culture and identity. The House considered the motion and agrees that these matters want warrant further examination. So subject to the publication of the Norfolk Island of the notice paper on the on our web page. The Government of Norfolk Island has received a paper from the Council of Elders, which I have here today, concerning

population, immigration and sustainability capacity matters. The paper was received approximately only a few days ago, so We haven't had a chance to go right through it, but we absolutely thank the elders for the paper. So unfortunately it was unable to be formally incorporated into the formal business papers for this item, so I'm bringing it up as an addition to the, it doesn't change the purpose of the motion that I'm putting forward, it's just an extra information. The house acknowledges and thanks the elders for its contribution and considers the matters raised to be relevant and the assessment proposed under this item. The paper will be received as a submission to the population, immigration and capacity assessment and considered alongside other submissions, demographic information and other relevant evidence gathered throughout the process. I'd also like to place on record my personal desire to work collaboratively with the Norfolk Island Council of Elders As this work progresses, the knowledge, experience and historical perspective of the elders are recognised as valuable contributions to the examination of these matters and cooperation between the GNI and the elders and the wider community is encouraged to assist the best possible outcomes for Norfolk Island. The purpose of this assessment is to gather evidence, community experience and community views before any conclusions are reached. The receipt of these of Elders paper should not be interpreted as predetermining any future population immigration or residency policy. Any recommendations arising from the assessment will be brought before a future General Assembly for consideration. So currently immigration currently rests with the Australian government. Previous representation seeking the restoration of Norfolk Island control have not altered these arrangements. The House considers that before determining what further action may be warranted, the island requires A clearer and more comprehensive understanding of what is being experienced by the community. The proposed assessment is therefore intended to provide that evidence. The assessment is intended to assist Norfolk Colin in developing an informal understanding of its current and future population needs, pressures and opportunities having regard to environmental, social, economic, cultural and infrastructure. considerations. So the community will be invited to report its experiences of current population, immigration and residency arrangements, including both benefits and pressures. The assessment will consider matters including housing, land and essential services, water, energy, food, freight, based in infrastructure, employment, workforce needs in economic sustainability, environmental and natural resources, health, aged care, education and community wellbeing, population composition and demographic change, cultural continuity, language, identity and community cohesion, and community views about future population, immigration and residency arrangements, including whether locally determined controls form part of Norfolk Island's preferred future governance arrangements. Participation is proposed to be available electronically. As the client mentioned previously, we have some pretty exciting platforms where we can engage with the whole electorate. The process will combine community views and experiences with available demographic and other relevant info. Importantly, the assessment does not begin with a predetermined population number or immigration policy. It's intended to establish what the evidence tells us, where population change is benefiting Norfolk Island, where pressures are being experienced and what the community considers important for the future. The findings will be compiled into a population, immigration and sustainable capacity report and returned to a future General Assembly The report will provide measurable indicators and metrics alongside community experience and available evidence. This will give Norfolk Island a strong basis for future decision-making, policy development and, where appropriate, external engagement and advocacy. It will also enable population questions to be considered in the wider context of Norfolk Island's environmental, social, economic, cultural and governance sustainability under the charter. No later course of action is predetermined. Once the evidence

has been gathered and considered, the General Assembly can determine whether further action is warranted. This may include further research, policy development, engagement with the Australian Government, development of proposals for locally administered immigration and residency arrangements where appropriate, referral of a clearly defined question to Norfolk Island electors. So the resolution is in effect that the General Assembly support the government in undertaking an accessible community assessment of the impacts, benefits and pressures arising from current immigration, residency and population arrangements, supports the assessment drawing together community views and experiences with available demographic wellbeing, population and other relevant evidence. supports the findings being compiled into a population, immigration and sustainable capacity report, including measurable indicators and metrics for presentation to a future General Assembly to inform future decision-making, policy development and, where appropriate, external engagement and advocacy, and notes that the assessment does not predetermine future immigration, residency or population policy and that any further action will follow consideration of the findings of the General Assembly. Thank you.

Clerk

Thank you, Chief Magistrate. Anyone would like to comment on that paper? The paper is Population, Immigration and Sustainable Capacity of Norfolk Island. Any other like to contribute?

Grant Summerscales

I got it.

Rhonda Griffiths

I got it. Thank you. I just.

Clerk

So, this is Rhonda Griffiths, President of the Council. Thanks, Rhonda.

Rhonda Griffiths

Thank you, and I just like Alana, everybody, thank I thank Pete and the Chief as Chief Magistrate for coming again. I was meeting our other night, I will present our language, our population strategy again, the government. Now, everything Pete been taught about is in our strategy. We've been considered environmental sustainability, housing, land, waste management, everything, and ours are very comprehensive. We've been working on there for four years. Now, we're just in the stage of presenting it to the community, and as Peter told, we've not got any numbers in there, but our comprehensive, we don't know if it's right if our government took order. I would rather our continue to work in partnership longer there. Because if you, Gwendo and our path after we've been doing it for four years, you're trying to reinvent the wheel. I would rather our continue in partnership. And as for that strategy, we're in a planning process of presenting it to the public next month. And we just figured out how to do it because there's 60 substantive pages and we had to work out how we can get that cross in a couple of minutes or in a couple of hours. So that side we stand.

Grant Summerscales

Thank you.

Clerk

Any further comments on population, immigration and sustainable capacity of Norfolk Island? Cherri Buffett.

Rhonda Griffiths

Yes, you do.

Cherri Buffett

Thank you, Government of Norfolk Island, on behalf of the Chamber, and personally, as myself, I agree with what Miss Griffith has said, the president of the Council of Elders, that I think it should be left to the Council of Elders at this point in time to prepare whatever they need to prepare in relation to the immigration and all matters mentioned in your report, Chief Magistrate. There's just one other thing. I think you mentioned about external, is that correct, in that motion or what you were reading? I don't know what you mean by external. If you could just clarify that, it would be appreciated. Is it external? You said so. I couldn't click because I'm over there.

Chief Magistrate

No, the assessment does not predetermine future immigration residency or population policy and that any future action will follow considerable. Is that the one? Oh, no, sorry. And where appropriate, External engagement and advocacy.

Cherri Buffett

So, yes, external engagement. I don't understand what you mean by external engagement.

Chief Magistrate

Well, I would imagine it would be, if we have to be in discussions with the Australian government regarding that, we have to be pragmatic about this.

Cherri Buffett

I think from my personal viewpoint, I agree with Miss Griffiths as President of the Chamber, sorry, of Council of Elders that it should at the moment be left to the Council of Elders to present whatever they need to.

Speaker 7

Can I reply that to that?

Councillor Hayes

Can I reply?

Councillor Brown

Yeah, it was in relation to the motion.

Clerk

Who's got the microphone? Wait, can you pass down to Tane Cottle? This is Tane Cottle. Thanks, Tane.

Tane Cottle

Thanks, Tet. Sorry, I'm going to have to read, otherwise I'm going to forget one thing I tell him. Thank you for bringing this up today. Personally, I think it is good for the government to continue on the path that you're doing, but like Rhonda said, they've done for years. A collaborative approach is best, but to sit in a government legislative framework is a must. I had a few points here that I'd been writing down. So a few months ago there was a post on Facebook about families struggling with cost of living and failing to feed their children due to increased costs on island. There has been other talk in the community that children are not having enough to eat at school and just in the last few weeks I've been told about residents who have become homeless. I can't produce the facts on the families doing it tough. Well if I pulled out a paper from 2016 and looked at the cost of rents and compared them to today I probably could have. but I don't think it's actually necessary. I think we all know someone who is struggling. But on the other issues, which is related to this, I said I would give my thoughts about the homeless situation as a Norfolk Islander's cultural view and a single old woman who is the fastest growing homeless population in Australia. And hopefully those comments that I make will be taken on board for a meeting that's happening with Honourable Katie Callagher when she visits the island to discuss the issue very shortly, apparently. She's coming.

Councillor Hayes

She's been and Island.

Tane Cottle

You're kidding. So I was told this after the fact by the sounds. Okay. I'm really just speaking about it with the intention to bring awareness and break down the stigma of what is a growing Australia-wide problem and it is now on our doorstep. So we're really behind the eight ball. It's already happened here. I would like to ask the government of Norfolk Island to please address these issues because I believe it's the imposed Australian legislation that has created these issues for us. red tape associated with importation costs, open immigration policies, etc., and the department purchasing real estate when the takeover occurred in 2015. I think we will need actions that we as a community have never had to publicly deal with before in the immediate and continuing future to support our community members in their time of need. Australian politicians are failing to support their people in basic affordability of a roof over their heads. We have never been those people. Norfolk Islanders culturally have nurtured family values in supporting those in time of need. In Australia, it is the state government's job to support people going through these issues. Norfolk Island does not have a state government. It will no doubt fall to the department to now fill that role and given they are the ones delivering the legislation that's creating the problem, I would be more comforted to know there are local policies that deal with these issues in a culturally appropriate way. historical content, which probably, sorry, my voice is going to go. In 2021, there was no food on Norfolk Island and that made the newspaper in Australia. There was close to a full page editorial in the Sydney Daily Telegraph. In 2022, Foodland shelves were empty due to a lack of freight. and a letter was written by the proprietor of Foodlands to the administrator of the day. In 2022, land capability assessment and draft food security strategy were being carried out to support the island to come up with the solutions for food security. That was four years ago and it's getting worse, not better. In 2023, we had our first homeless person actually arrive on island. They flew in and later he was flown off again by the help of the police. Is that the answer? I surely think it can't be the answer for a long-term resident or a Norfolk Islander of pecan descent to be put on a plane and flown out. So it really does need to be a government policy. Thank you.

Clerk

Thank you, Tane Cottle. Can I just reply to Chief Magistrate?

Chief Magistrate

Thanks very much for making this, bringing it to the attention of the GNI. I'd just like to respond to Rhonda and CV's comment before that This motion was in direct response to an issue that was raised at our last General Assembly and the Government of Norfolk Kolan has an absolute obligation to bring these issues through our own processes which established by the community and I agree 100% that if the bulk of the work is already done I would much rather be doing it in collaboration with the Council of Elders But as I said, we are obligated through our own processes into the things that are brought up. And we've got the vehicle to be able to get wide spread community endorsement of these particular things. But as I said, it's something that I would hope we can be a collaborative effort. Thank you.

Grant Summerscales

Yeah, I'm Grant Oliver, not Summerscales or any of that fiction. Basically, obviously, the Immigration Act in Australia is one, favours Australia, it's not ours. What I understand is a big problem on the island now is these overseas people owning a house here and not even living in it. The community, the people who live here, everyone who lives here is part of the community. People who don't live here and own a house here and we can't even get a house. As Tony pointed out, that's sort of the issue. If you're going to get money and make money, absentee landowners thing that used to be administration's thing, the possibility of it. If you're working in competition, it might be worth looking at those sorts of things. Yeah, not even part of the community. You've got a house here and it's expelling someone who could be living here. That can just be looked at.

Clerk

That's great. Any other contribution? Rhonda Griffiths.

Rhonda Griffiths

Thank you. Thank you very much for considering our work and the continued partnership. We look forward to that. I'm just wondering if you're able to reword your motion. I understand you have to follow your processes and you've had a request. Understandable. I'm just wondering if you're able to reword your final amendment to reflect.

Councillor Hayes

I don't think so, Rhonda. The two other, we haven't had time to actually read your, the papers from the council elders. So to readdress the motion as it's been through the cycle of process, I don't think that's appropriate.

Chief Magistrate

One option is that we can probably adjourn it.

Councillor Hayes

Yes, we can adjourn the motion and then revisit it. At the subsequent. Yeah, the 28th of November General Assembly.

Chief Magistrate

As I said before, the GNI has only been aware, has only come to our attention in the last few days and we absolutely appreciate the work that's Island into it and we would like. I think the best thing is if we can adjourn the motion so that we can.

Rhonda Griffiths

I definitely support an adjournment. Thank you.

Councillor Brown

Like you had mentioned, though, Rhonda, from the brief intro you gave in terms of Councillor's report, you guys haven't got any numbers or metrics positioned in mind, and that was part of what the intent of this was to be able to collect some data to actually use to help sort of.

Rhonda Griffiths

That's what it's about, is collecting the data. All of that's about collecting the data. And it's going to take you a long time to read it because it took us a long time to write it. But hopefully by the 28th of November, we've had a public meeting by then. So then you can ascertain the community emotions from yourself.

Clerk

Harry Pickering. Yeah, just a point.

Harry Pickering

We've just had a census taken on this island and I suppose we're not privy to any of the results. Maybe that could speed things up a little bit if we.

Clerk

Knew numbers and all that sort of thing and all the questions that were asked and the answers. Yeah, just a thought. Hang on, wait.

Wayne Robinson

ABS and. I've been in contact with ABS and the likely, because we very much wanted to use those numbers, but they're not going to be ready for us for two years.

Councillor Hayes

That's normal cycle though, Wayne. Sorry. That's normal cycle in the Australian census.

Wayne Robinson

It is, but I'm talking about this process for population. It's far more important.

Chief Magistrate

We can't wait.

Councillor Hayes

That's exactly why we took George's motion from the floor and Expedite it, because that's the data that we're chasing, and that's the data then that informs the base. designs for the government of Norfolk Island.

Rhonda Griffiths

Can I just tell you about our story in developing the strategy? We started in 2001, we went back to every census that had been done since 2000. When we got to 2016 when they took us over, we'd been doing our own census up until that time. We'd been asking the same questions so you could mark trends. And then when they took over ABS, they changed questions. And so immediately we could stop doing trends. But not only that, in the interest of privacy, they changed small numbers. So that meant that small numbers like in our community weren't reflected. So basically, all those census before, which it just dropped off in 2016, and that's what took us so long, was how to get our head around these numbers that don't really exist. So that was why we made such an effort last census on how many Norfolk Islands were here, and we did so much advocacy on who was the Pitkin Islanders.

Clerk

Thanks, Rhonda Griffiths. Now Cherri Buffett.

Cherri Buffett

Thank you. The Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce has been in touch with the Australian Bureau of Census for several years. In actual fact, we have many FOI documents from them. The last one, and we're still in touch with them at this point in time, about one freedom of information that has been requested by many members of the information that they claim they have previously and in relation to the census that just happened. From the Chamber's point of view, we do not rely on that census because not every household on Norfolk Island for this census received a document to fill in and also the chair of the census himself has provided information that they cannot find any documentation that provides them the authority to even do a census on Norfolk Island.

Clerk

Thank you, Cherri. Chief Magistrate, if I could just mention something. The motion before The Assembly this afternoon is quite a timid motion. It allows this government to collect data. I've reread the part of the item 4.1 that you read where it mentioned appropriate external engagement and I don't see that as pointing any other direction other than anywhere around Norfolk Island. It could be North, east, south or west. It doesn't actually In my opinion, it doesn't mean that it's inferring that we need to talk to, say, Australia. It could be other South Pacific nations, and I think that rather than deferring this motion, I think we can continue with the motion. That's your decision.

Chief Magistrate

I'd personally like to, I think we should, in respect of the council builders and the work that they've done, I think that we should I think we should, I'd be in favour of adjourning the motion until we can talk further with the work that we've done. Personally, that's my preference.

Clerk

Any other comments? Any other comments on this?

Chief Magistrate

So I suppose, as Tim has pointed out, that I would formally move that the motion is adjourned for a subsequent sitting.

Clerk

Those of the opinions of yes, place your cards. Those of no, any abstentions? The matter is so adjourned. Thank you very much, Chief Magistrate. We move on to 4.2, Norfolk Island Community Wellbeing Survey and Monitoring Framework 2026. I invite Councillor Hayes to update the community in relation to the motion, moved and passed at a majority on the 11th of July 2026 General Assembly.

Councillor Hayes

The Community Wellbeing Survey and Monitoring Framework was developed under Clause 20 of the Governance Charter and Operation Manual 2026 to establish a reliable baseline of community wellbeing and provide a consistent means of measuring change over time. The draft survey and framework were introduced as General Assembly on the 11th of July 2026 and subsequently released for community consultation. Feedback was received through written submissions, consultation forms and direct discussion. It addressed the purpose and design of the survey, question clarity and duplication, population change, culture and heritage, employment and the economy. just to name a few, health and social wellbeing, governance and external administration, land and environment, privacy, reporting and the distinction between the Community Wellbeing Survey and the Australian Census. The consultation feedback was reported to the General Assembly on 22 August 2026, when the Assembly supported further refinement of the survey indicators and reporting arrangements before implementation. Since that time, the survey and monitoring framework has underIsland further detailed review. Local feedback has been considered alongside professional input in survey design and community well-being, including expertise provided from Hawaii. The revised framework incorporates that work while retaining its purpose as a practical, repeatable, measurable, designed specifically for Norfolk Island. The framework is organised around the five wellbeing pillars established through the governance charter. The survey implementation is subject to the General Assembly support. The 2026 Community Wellbeing Survey will proceed to a voluntary community survey and the survey will be made available electronically through a dedicated online questionnaire and a direct link will be emailed to persons registered on the GNI electoral roll. This provides GNI with an established means of communicating directly with enrolled members of the community while encouraging participation in the first baseline survey. Participation will not, however, be limited to enrolled electors. For community members who are not yet registered on the electoral roll, access to the survey will also be provided through the GNI website. Public information will be published before and during the survey period explaining its purpose, who may participate, how to access and complete it, and how information will be handled and how the results will be used and reported. Individual responses will not be identified or published. Results will be analysed and reported in aggregate to establish the community well-being baseline. The use of the results in the first survey provides a starting point rather than an end result. The baseline will allow GNI and the community to identify areas of strength emerging pressures and matters requiring further attention. Repeating the indicators over time will allow changes in Norfolk Island's environmental, social, economic, cultural and governance well-being to be measured against the baseline. The results will support future General Assembly deliberations, sustainability assessments community well-being reporting and the development of the state of Norfolk Island report. Importantly, the information will also provide an evidence base drawn directly from the Norfolk Island community when decisions or external administrative arrangements affecting the island are being considered. The outcome that is sought is that the General Assembly supports the Norfolk Island Community Wellbeing Survey

and Monitoring Framework 2026 as refined through consultation and professional review and supports proceedings with the first Community Wellbeing Survey to establish a baseline for ongoing monitoring and public reporting. That the General Assembly notes, the resolution is that the General Assembly notes The consultation and review undertaken since the draft Norfolk Island Community Wellbeing Survey and Monitoring Framework 2026 was first presented to the General Assembly on the 11th of July 2026, supports the revised Norfolk Island Community Wellbeing Survey and Monitoring Framework. It supports implementation of the first voluntary community well-being survey with direct electronic distribution to persons registered on the GNI electoral roll and public access through the GNI website and confirms that survey results are to be reported in aggregate and used to establish the first GNI community well-being baseline and supports publication of appropriate community information concerning the survey and participation arrangements and subsequent reporting of results.

Clerk

Thank you, Councillor Hayes. This matter is before the General Assembly of the Norfolk Island Community Wellbeing Survey and Monitoring Framework for 2026. Anyone like to contribute in any way?

Councillor Hayes

You need data to inform it then. That's what this is about.

Grant Summerscales

I can't hear you guys. We should be looking after our assignment to the best of our ability to smear on our reputation adult people that are basically living with less than they need really. That's sad and quite people are saddened by that information. What are we actually going to do about having these people? We don't need, we need to look after all of them basically.

Councillor Hayes

There's aspects within the wellbeing survey that talk to what you're saying. So we need the information to inform the next parts. So I would encourage everybody to participate.

Clerk

Okay, any other contribution to the Norfolk Island Community Wellbeing Survey Monitoring Framework for 2026? The Norfolk Island Community is hereby updated with many thanks. Moving on to item 5 matters on the notice paper, item 5 matters are matters of significant community interest. The first one, 5.1, is a statement on Norfolk Island's transition assembly announced by Australian Minister Christian McBain MP. I invite Chief Magistrate Peter Christian Bailey to present the Covenant of Norfolk Island's precision concerning the Australian Government's stated transition assembly.

Chief Magistrate

Thank you, Clerk. The purpose of this is to present the Government of Norfolk Island's position concerning the Australian Government's proposed transition assembly and its announced process for determining a future statutory governance framework for Norfolk Island. On the 15th of September last month, I wrote to the Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories formally recording GNI's position. So the statement was, the government of Norfolk Island does not endorse the proposed Norfolk Island Transition Assembly and does not

accept its characterisation by the Australian government as a restoration of local democracy. The Australian Government has announced its intention to establish a five-member transition assembly, which for the following two years is to make recommendations to the Australian Government concerning a future statutory governance framework for Norfolk Island. GNI records this as an announcement of the Australian Government's intended process. It does not constitute acknowledgement by GNI of the legitimacy, adequacy or democratic authority of that process or of any future governance arrangements arising from it. On the functions presently announced, the Transition Assembly will remain advisory. The Australian Government will retain ultimate authority to determine the governance framework it ultimately proposes for Norfolk Island. Election to an advisory body does not restore democratic government. Within the Australian administrative arrangements, Norfolk Island has had no elected governing body since the Regional Council was placed under administration back in 2021. That's over five years. The Norfolk Island Governance Committee subsequently provided elected community participation but remained advisory. The proposed transition assembly continues that pattern while a further governance model is developed. The Australian government has also announced that an eventual statutory assembly is proposed to be established through Commonwealth primary legislation rather than ordinance and that a preamble will be reinstated in the Norfolk Island Act 1979. GNI notes those announced changes. They do not resolve the absence of Norfolk Island consent to the governance model being developed or confer governing authority upon the proposed transition assembly. The Joint Standing Committee's Restoring Democracy Inquiry recommended that the final governance model be put to the Norfolk Island community through a compulsory vote. No determinative community vote on that model has occurred. GNI does not seek to direct the choices of Norfolk Islanders who may decide to stand, vote or to otherwise participate in the process. The important distinction is that participation is not consent. Participation in an election for the transition assembly cannot reasonably be taken as community endorsement of a governance model that has yet been determined. nor has any consent to any change in Norfolk Island's constitutional relationship with Australia. This position was formally conveyed to the Minister before the proposed election process proceeds. The outcome sought is that the General Assembly receive the statement of the Norfolk Island Transition Assembly, which I just read out, and support its release as a public statement of the Government of Norfolk Island. The resolution that the General Assembly receives the statement Norfolk Island Transition Assembly 2 confirms that participation by members of the Norfolk Island community in the proposed Transition Assembly election or associated consultation does not of itself constitute consent to any future governance model, constitutional relationship or broader integration not approved by the Norfolk Island people. And #3 supports publication of the statement as a statement of the government of Norfolk Island. Thank you.

Clerk

Thank you, Chief Magistrate. On the item matters of significant community interest 5.1, statement on Norfolk Island's transition assembly announcement by Australian Minister Christine McBain, MP. Does anyone here have any contributions they'd like to make to this particular item? Cherri Buffett.

Cherri Buffett

Chief Magistrate, I'm a bit confused as to, if I understand you rightly, and please excuse me, you are in a way, the government of Norfolk Island is supporting what the minister said.

Chief Magistrate

Not at all.

Cherri Buffett

But you're referring to it, which is a Commonwealth decision. It's not a Norfolk Island decision. So why is the government of Norfolk Island totally opposing it? Why aren't you opposing the whole concept of another assembly conducted and organised by the Australian government?

Grant Summerscales

We in effect are. Have you ever had a constitutional authority over a Norfolk Island ever? So, therefore, any statutory authority they claim is void of.

Chief Magistrate

Under the under the governance charter under which was adopted by the General Assembly back on the 30th of May, the GNI has made it quite clear that for practical purposes and for continuity of services and continuity of everybody's health and everybody's well-being that we will acknowledge the continuity and the existence of Australian administrative services. So I think, I don't think, I can't read anything into what you're saying that says that we support the transition assembly or the processes and in fact we're saying the very opposite that we don't support the process.

Grant Summerscales

It's an insult to these people's hard work. They're trying to undercut exactly what we're trying to set up here. Australia's trying to undercut it so they do have any type of whatever garbage they claim to have authority or whatever over.

Cherri Buffett

So if I may continue, the chamber has had one meeting with the administrator And in a private capacity, I have had two meetings with her. One of the questions and discussions was around the assembly.

Clerk

Cherri, this is on Hansard. Yep.

So.

Clerk

You've had discussions with the administrator? Correct. Two meetings.

Cherri Buffett

Three meetings total, one for chamber and two in a private capacity. In two of those meetings, the administrator has said that the present two people who are on the governance committee, the two Norfolk Islanders, that group finishes this month and there needs to be a new election. She didn't say when that election would be held, but she said that nothing would happen for at least two years. There's no legislation, there's no funding, there's no budget. And she does not really give any commitment as to what is being progressed. She did mention that the two administrators are there until the 31st of December 2026. Whether they will get extended or not, time will tell. So my concern is that why are we talking about this Commonwealth Assembly

when we have more important things to talk about for our Norfolk Island people and the government of Norfolk Island.

Clerk

Thanks, Cherri. Chief Magistrate, any more comments?

Chief Magistrate

It's purely a statement. It's a statement that's to be We're just making a statement on the transition assembly. I think it's in the interest of accountability and transparency. I think it's very important that we have it in there on the public record. And by your own admission, you've been talking to the Australian government yourself.

Clerk

So thank you very much. This is just a statement basically from the Chief Magistrate on behalf of the Governor of Norfolk Island. I've reread this during this debate that has been going on and I can't see anything in there where it supports the Commonwealth government, particularly the NIGC or the Transition Assembly. As a matter of fact, what you read out before basically says that we're going from one colonial government to another colonial government with no change.

Chief Magistrate

Absolutely.

Clerk

And this government does not support it.

Chief Magistrate

What's that from?

Councillor Hayes

We haven't sent it yet. We're asking the public, the General Assembly.

Chief Magistrate

Yeah, we wrote to them last month. Did you get a reply to that? No, we haven't.

Clerk

So Cherri Buffett asked the Chief Magistrate whether he's had a reply from the Commonwealth Government regarding his letter sent to the Commonwealth Government regarding the Transition Assembly. Chief Magistrate answer in the negative. No, he has not had a reply.

Chief Magistrate

Not that I'm aware of, I don't think so. Not up until yesterday anyway.

Clerk

Thank you very much everyone. The Norfolk Island community is hereby updated with many thanks. Moving on to 5.2. This is a statement on Norfolk Island land, our inheritance. I invite Councillor Brown to present the Government of Norfolk Island precision concerning the Norfolk

Island Regional Council announcement that 25 parcels of land are proposed for sale for defaulting on rates and charges. Councillor Brown.

Councillor Brown

Thank you. This relates back to part of the discussion that began in 2.2 with the governance charter arrangements as well. The purpose is to present a statement by the Government of Norfolk Island concerning the Norfolk Island Regional Council announcement that 25 parcels of land are proposed for sale for unpaid rates and charges and the broader implications for Norfolk Island land community and intergenerational inheritance. So the statement reads, Norfolk Island land, our inheritance. The government of Norfolk Island is deeply concerned by the announcement that 25 parcels of Norfolk Island land are to be offered for sale for unpaid rates and charges. GNI does not seek to enter into the circumstances of individual landowners or their dealings with the Norfolk Island Regional Council. The wider issue is what this development means for Norfolk. Land has a significance in Norfolk Island that exceeds well beyond its monetary value. For the Pitcairn Norfolk people, it is bound to family, home, inheritance and belonging. When the Pitcairn community came to Norfolk in 1856, land was allocated to establish and sustain their new homeland. The historical record surrounding that settlement speaks of the happiness and welfare of the people and their future well-being. Compulsory land rates came to Norfolk Island through the Australian local government arrangements imposed following the removal of self-government. Valuation-based rating commenced in 2018. Eight years later that system has reached the point where 25 portions of this small and finite island are proposed for sale for unpaid rates and charges. This is a significant consequence of a governance model that was not designed by or for the Norfolk Island community. Rates and annual charges represent approximately 8% of NIRC's total income. for 2024-25. The potential consequence of recovering that revenue must now be weighed against something much harder to replace, land held by Norfolk Island families, including homes and inherited land and the connection of future generations to this island. Whether individual debts have arisen through financial hardship, circumstance, or objection to the imposed rating system as a matter for those landowners, GNI's responsibility is to recognise the broader consequence for our entire community. The GNI Governance Charter recognises that Norfolk Island is sustained by the balance between land, sea, culture and economy and that the stewardship of that balance is both an inheritance and a responsibility. It requires consideration of the long-term well-being of our people and the inheritance left to generations yet to be born. The prospect of Norfolk Island families losing land under a compulsory rating system introduced only eight years ago demands more than an administrative response. It demands serious examination of whether the system itself is appropriate for Norfolk Island, its economy, its culture and its people. The outcome sought that the General Assembly receives a statement, Norfolk Island land, our inheritance and support its release as a public statement of the Government of Norfolk Island. The resolution sought is that the General Assembly one receives a statement, Norfolk Island land, our inheritance, and to supports its publication as a statement of the government of Norfolk Island.

Clerk

Thank you, Councillor Brown. On the matter of statement on Norfolk Island land, our inheritance, are there any comments from the General Assembly? Any more comments from the government? Any more statements? thank you very much. The Norfolk Island community is hereby updated with many thanks. Moving on to 5.3, external relations and diplomacy framework 2026 and supporting charter amendments. I invite Chief Magistrate Peter Christian

Bailey to present the External Relations and Diplomacy Framework 2026, adopted by the House on the 14th of September 2026.

Chief Magistrate

Thank you, Clerk. The purpose of this is to present the External Relations and Diplomacy Framework that has been up on our website since I think Wednesday or Thursday, adopted by the House on the 14th of September and to seek General Assembly endorsement of the associated amendments to the Governance Charter and operational manual required to support its operation. The Governance Charter establishes the authority, responsibilities and accountability requirements applying to GNI's external relations, representation, correspondence, consultation, communications and official records. The External Relations and Diplomacy Framework brings those requirements together into a practical system for conducting GNI's external relations. It provides arrangements for governmental and diplomatic engagement, official visits and delegations, representation and mandates, regional and international participation, briefing agreements and commitments, communication, record keeping and follow-up. The framework of itself does not create any constitutional, executive or representative authority. Authority continues to arise from the governance charter, the adopted protocols, decisions of the House and formally and properly authorised appointments or delegations. Where any inconsistency arises, the charter prevails. The House adopted the framework, as I said previously, on the 14th of September. last month and referred it to the elders for comment, recognising the cultural and community dimension of Norfolk Island's external relationships. Following adoption, a review of the charter protocols identified amendments required to provide clearer governing rules for official visits, delegations, mandates, consultation, communication, correspondence, media records and representative authority. The proposed amendment strengthens the charter framework under which the external relations and diplomacy framework operates. They do not transfer authority from the charter to the framework. These amendments are fully set out in attachment B and these protocol amendments support the framework and the relations and diplomacy framework. They provide amendments to Protocol 29 in regard to communication, requirements for communication and associated with official visits and delegations. Protocol 31, consultation. Consultation requirements were external engagement concerns, constitutional status, major community interests, culture or matters requiring high level decisions, authority and record keeping for invitations, credentials and official external correspondence. Protocol 34, external relations, governance of official visits in delegations including authority, coordination, protocol, hospitality and the external engagement register. Protocol 35, media, authority and controls for public communication associated with significant external engagement. Protocol 36, records, arrangement, files, records of discussion, post engagement, reporting and follow up. Protocol 37 representation, written mandates, delegation authority, conflicts of interest and limits upon representation and consequential amendments to Section 9 definitions, Section 13, Chief Magistrate, Section 15, Officers of the House and Section 24 decision categories. The amendment identifies A precise insertion point for each amendment within the charter and provides for consequential numbering, renumbering and cross-referencing. Of particular importance, the amendments preserve the distinction between representation and authority. A representative may engage, discuss and convey established positions with an authorised mandate but may not exceed that mandate or alter GNI's constitutional position or claim an unconfirmed community mandate or bind GNI without pre-approval or required approval. The General Assembly consideration, the framework provides GNI with a practical machinery required to develop external relations in a consistent and accountable manner. It also

recognises that some external matters may require broad General Assembly consideration, community consultation or broad community mandate. The House retains responsibility for predetermining when those requirements are engaged. The proposed charter amendments to the protocols ensure that the authority and safeguards governing that work remain in the charter itself. This is particularly important as GNI develops relationships externally with Pacific and international organisations and other external bodies. External engagement must be capable of continuing between office holders. while preserving Norfolk Island's established positions, institutional records and the authority of the community where a matter requires a mandate, its mandate. So the outcome sought is that the General Assembly notes the adoption by the House last month on the 14th of September of the external relations framework, recognises the framework as the operational system through which GNI will coordinate, authorise, prepare, conduct, record and follow up external, governmental, regional and international engagement subject at all times to the charter, endorses the proposed amendments, which I mentioned earlier, and the specified consequential amendments to the governance charter and confirms that matters requiring general assembly consideration, community consultation or broader community mandate will be bought continue to be brought before the people in accordance with the governance charter. The resolution is that the General Assembly notes the external relations and diplomacy framework adopted by the House, which is this here, endorses, this can be found online on our webpage under the notices, confirms that the matters requiring general, I think I've read this, consent. General Assembly consideration community consultation of broader community mandate will continue to be brought before the people in accordance with the charter. So the resolution is that the General Assembly notes the external relations framework adopted by the House on the 14th of September, endorses the proposed charter and protocol amendments which are needed to facilitate the framework contained in attachment B, refers those amendments to the House for adoption in accordance with clause 7 of the governance charter and operational manual and the applicable decision category, confirms that the framework remains subordinate to the governance charter and does not independently confer executive representative or decision-making authority and authorises following adoption of the charter amendments by the House any strictly consequential updates to the framework and its operational tools required to maintain consistency with the charter, provided those updates do not alter substantive authority. Thank you.

Clerk

Thank you, Chief Magistrate. On the matter of External Relations and Diplomacy Framework 2026 and supporting charter amendments, anyone from the full light to comment on those? Cherri Buffett.

Cherri Buffett

Thank you. In a way, I thank you for bringing that up, Chief Magistrate, and I think it's very important that it happens. I'd like to see exactly what your final documents are. And the reason for that is because, as you and all the rest of the House are aware, you communicated with me privately in relation to representatives from the Vanuatu government to come to Norfolk Island in June-July. That communication happened and it progressed quite well, where two people for the government of Vanuatu were going to come in maybe August. Then you said leave it until later on. The problem with that is that I had already communicated with them as you required, as you asked, as in emails with them. And then I had to turn around and tell these two people in the Vanuatu government that they would be put off until the government of Norfolk Island was

ready. That to me personally was an embarrassment. It was an embarrassment for Norfolk Island, an embarrassment for the government of Norfolk Island as well.

Chief Magistrate

So, Cherri, it makes you very cautious to actually talk about anything in a private capacity, because in no way was our conversation me giving you a blessing to invite them to make any substantive arrangements to come and visit Norfolk Island. It was the way I saw it, and I'm sorry you had to bring this up today, but the way I saw it, It was a friendly, informal communication about options, and I think you're allowed to talk to people without people running off and promising people that they're coming over to visit. I think, of course, anything official or substantive would have to be carried through the house, would have to be, the house would need to be made aware. So I'm really sorry that you had to bring this up and it's come to this, but I in no way did I ask you to make any permanent arrangements or any sort of confirmation to these people that they were to be coming to visit Norfolk Co. With all due respect, Chief Magistrate. It was originally a sounding reconnaissance sort of conversation and I did not in any way sort of want you to go and promise any sort of visit until it went through the House. It was obviously an informal conversation.

Cherri Buffett

With all due respect, Chief Magistrate. I did not promise, and I would recommend you to read your emails and my notes, if you would like, that were taken on the plane when you and I sat beside each other going to Brisbane and you asked me. I'm not wanting to bring this up again. I just said I am pleased to hear that you have put this forward. But from my personal point of view, I was embarrassed.

Chief Magistrate

Well, I'm sorry you weren't making, any sort of commitment to these people of a visit. And as I said to you before, a visit of this nature isn't out of the realms of possibility, but obviously GNI has to, we're in the early stages of establishing our processes, establishing things such as the external engagement framework, and anything of that nature definitely has to come through the House for endorsement. And I don't think you should be making any commitments to anybody. And as I've said, we have actually asked whether it was you or the Chamber of Commerce, I can't remember, for the details of this particular person from the Vanuatu government so that we can do any communication is done in a professional manner, government to government rather than a third person.

Cherri Buffett

I don't want to get into a discussion here, but I would suggest again that you read the communication in the emails.

Chief Magistrate

That's all I've got to say.

Councillor Hayes

I think the point is that if you're going to have any communication with the government in Norfolk Island, you do it through the House.

Grant Summerscales

I don't think Cherri made promises. I think they actually offered as a diplomatic.

Chief Magistrate

So, in that case, then.

Councillor Hayes

At the end of the day, the government of Norfolk Island has an email account, and that's where all information should be going to.

Chief Magistrate

And we're still waiting on the details of this particular person so that we can contact them on a government-to-government basis.

Clerk

Thank you very much everyone. Have we got any more comments from the floor?

William Quintal

Hi, I just have a question really because we're about to be voted, asked to vote on something. Could you summarise, that was an awful lot of words about the framework that I haven't read and I don't know about. Could someone summarise in very plain English what it is?

Chief Magistrate

So the framework, which is what we've developed, is basically it covers, it's on our web page as well, so it covers things such as protocols such as communication, consultation, correspondence, external relations, media records and representation. And it just pretty much sets standards for how and also sort of like a checklist so that One of the things that we're doing this year, everybody's finding their feet about how we engage and it's just putting in a bit of a framework, not for our own purposes, about how just to make sure that when people come there's coordination, we put on a good show for people who come here and also it covers when we're visiting places too, we just generally put on a good show and there's coordination, there's people know their roles, there's procedures in place so that any trip is successful and obviously relations with other people or with external partners or external people are absolutely critical.

William Quintal

Okay, thank you. And I apologise that I haven't read it yet.

Chief Magistrate

Don't apologise. It's actually on the website if you want to dig deeper too.

William Quintal

Yeah, I will. I'll have a look.

Chief Magistrate

I know it's a lot to.

William Quintal

I'm particularly personally interested in Pacific interactions and that we are always culturally appropriate and that our representation is appropriate. And if it's in an indigenous setting, then it's by people. And so I won't be able to, I need to read something before I vote on it. Thank you.

Clerk

Any other comments on the matter of external relations and diplomacy framework 2026 and supporting charter amendments? Karen Gatehouse.

From the floor

Just on the representation with regard to ceremonial and in some particular cases cultural and heritage representation, not political or government ones, but Just not sure if, for ceremonial and cultural purposes, if the government is the right body, purely because I think it should always be from a Norfolk Islander body, so government might not always be fully or. Might not always be Norfolk Islanders, and other bodies might not be. This is, I'm speaking from a personal point of view, and I just feel that Council of Elders always being Norfolk Islanders would be.

Councillor Hayes

There's no, there's no, that's all that's represented in the charter, the Council of Elders, you know, where they In the institutional relationships that we have. Also too, if you don't have a government that is enacting, legislating, upholding culture, what's the point? So what I'm saying is that the Council of Elders is absolutely represented within the charter and also within this diplomacy framework. And it's just mapping out where everybody, when there's somebody coming to Norfolk, who's doing what, who's responsible for what.

From the floor

Well, that was my point. If we don't have a government that embraces all them thing, it would be better to have an islander body I'm not saying as to who comes or whatever, but overseeing the general ceremonial roles, diplomacy and choosing representatives of cultural and heritage and diplomatic importance of our clan. I just feel a wholly Norfolk Islander body would be better for that, just that point in representation.

Councillor Hayes

In the cultural aspect.

From the floor

I only been reading the framework. I haven't. Thanks, Tim.

Chief Magistrate

I was looking for the insertion here. So under #11, diplomatic and ceremonial practice, it says cultural welcome and participation are to be planned with the council of elders or relevant cultural representatives where appropriate to the nature and purpose of their engagement.

From the floor

I know I thought mentioned Councillor Elders in that no, but it's framework that I had off the website.

Councillor Hayes

Yeah, no, it does, absolutely. All right, and it's also throughout the charter.

From the floor

That's just my point. I just think it should be a wholly Norfolk Island body that makes those decisions.

Councillor Hayes

This is just a practical application. You know, it's a practical application of where everybody stands. So for example, if Pocock's coming to Norfolk Island, what's appropriate in that space? How is he welcomed? Is it cultural? Is it political? Is it other things? Who's going to be the bodies that welcome him to Norfolk Island? It's just a practical application. It's nothing more, nothing less.

From the floor

That's exactly right.

Councillor Hayes

Exactly right.

Councillor Brown

We're actually in a grants with you there. We agree wholeheartedly that for something like that where there's a cultural welcome or anything the council of elders need to be involved and that's part of ensuring that's part of what's in the checklist.

Chief Magistrate

So it says the official planning checklist ensures all required visit protocol, cultural logistics, media and record steps are completed. Establishes a ceremonial order to be applied at GNI host of government diplomatic inform. Yeah, that was the most poignant bit there.

Councillor Hayes

Have you read the framework? It's online, so it's on the website. Yeah, it's part of all the papers for the General Assembly.

Clerk

Thank you. Thanks, Karen Gatehouse. Any other comments from the floor? Okay. The Norfolk community is hereby updated with many thanks. Moving on to notice paper item number 5.4, Marine Park proposed expansion, the Government of Norfolk Island submission. I invite Councillor Brown to present the Government of Norfolk Island submission on the proposed expansion of the Norfolk Island Marine Park.

Chief Magistrate

Can we adopt the last proposal?

Councillor Brown

Thank you. So the purpose is to table the government of Norfolk Island submission that closed on the 30th of September on the proposed expansion of the Norfolk Island Marine Park and to make that submission publicly available. So for background, the proposed expansion and rezoning of the Norfolk Marine Park was considered by the General Assembly on the 22nd of August this year. The discussion provided an opportunity for the community to consider the proposal publicly and raise matters relevant to GNI's response, including jurisdiction, fishing and resource interests, the proposed zoning, monitoring and enforcement, Cascade Pier, local governance and the cultural and intergenerational relationship of Norfolk Islanders with the surrounding seas. Following that General Assembly, GNI considered the matters raised by a community together with the Commonwealth consultation material, questions submitted to Parks Australia and the written response that was received. GNI's formal submission was completed and signed by the Chief Magistrate and both Councillors in 22nd September with that call for submissions closing on the 30th. The submission records that GNI supports responsible evidence-based protection of Norfolk Island marine environment, but did not support the proclamation of the proposed expansion of the Norfolk Marine Park in its present form. It identified outstanding matters concerning jurisdiction and existing Norfolk Island legislation, the evidence supporting the proposed scale and zoning, governance and local decision making. sustainable fishing and future economic opportunities, monitoring and enforcement, cascade and other strategic landing locations, and recognition of the cultural, historical and intergenerational relationship with the Pitcairn Norfolk people with surrounding maritime area. The submission also expressly reserved Norfolk Island's position concerning its territorial sea, wider maritime area, continental shelf, natural resources, self-determination and constitutional status. The GNI's participation in the Commonwealth consultation was not to be treated as acceptance or acquiescence in the Commonwealth's jurisdictional position. Submissions tabled this General Assembly so that GNI's response to the Commonwealth consultation and the position taken following the community discussion of 22nd of August are formally available to the community. Motion that the General Assembly receive and note the Government of Norfolk on submission on the proposed expansion of the Norfolk Marine Park dated 22nd of September 2026. and note that the submission is to be published as part of the public record of Government of Norfolk Island.

Clerk

Thank you, Councillor Brown. On the matter of Norfolk Island Marine Park proposal expansion, the Government of Norfolk Island submission, are there any comments from the General Assembly? Okay, so this motion is hereby announced. The motion before the House is that the General Assembly, one, receive and note the Government of Norfolk Island submission on the proposed expansion of the Norfolk Island Marine Park dated 23 September 2026, and two, note that the submission to be published as part of the public record of the Government of Norfolk Island. Those in favour of that motion, raise your hand with yes. No. Any abstentions? Okay, Councillor Brown, I declare that results of the votes exceed the requirement of majority of yes and declare that the motion is carried. Abstentions was nil. We had one no. And on behalf of the Government of Norfolk Island, this House thanks the General Assembly for their direct democracy. Thank you. Moving on to item 5.5. Don't forget 5.5. Any matters in the item 5 is about matters of significant community interest. And 5.5 is modernisation of the 1838 Constitution. This is an update. I invite Chief Magistrate Peter Christian Bailey to update the General Assembly on the constitutional modernisation process.

Chief Magistrate

Thank you, Clerk. So the purpose of this is to update the General Assembly on the work undertaken by the Constitutional Committee formally received. Excuse me. formally receive the committee's final report and recommendations and establish the next stage of constitutional modernisation through community consultation, proposal refinement, public education and constitutional development. The purpose of this paper is to not seek approval of the committee's recommendations as constitutional amendments, rather it is to ensure that the recommendations are made available for public consideration and consultation before any constitutional amendments are developed or progressed through the constitutional process. The committee's recommendations are proposals for consideration and form part of the broader constitutional modernisation programme established by the General Assembly. Background is that on the 30th of May, the General Assembly established the Constitutional Modernisation Committee and adopted terms of reference for a community-based process of constitutional review. consultation and development of recommendations concerning Norfolk Island's future constitutional and governance arrangements. The purpose of constitutional modernisation is not to replace the constitutional foundation but to consider how the 1838 constitution may continue to serve future generations while preserving constitutional continuity, direct democracy and meaningful community participation. The community was tasked with reviewing constitutional arrangements considering areas requiring clarification or modernising engagement or modernisation, engaging with community views and developing recommendations for consideration by government and the General Assembly. So there's been a bit of a change to the notice paper. So following publication of the notice paper for the General Assembly on the 10th of October, which was a week ago, the final report of the Constitutional Committee was received by government on Thursday, I think it was actually Thursday, the 8th of October, I think not Friday at the same time at this. At the time, the notice paper was prepared and published. The committee's final report had not been received and was therefore unavailable for consideration in preparing the original General Assembly item. As A consequence, the notice paper contemplated a general update on constitutional modernisation rather than consideration of the committee's completed recommendations. The late receipt of the committee's final report has necessitated a revision of the item before the General Assembly. The purpose of the revised item is to formally receive and note the committee's recommendations, acknowledge the work undertaken by the committee and establish the next stage of the modernisation process. Given the timing of receipt, the government does not consider it appropriate to seek immediate endorsement, adoption or implementation of any of the committee's recommendations. Rather, the recommendations should first be released for community consultation, considered alongside community feedback and subject to further review, refinement and public education before any proposed future constitutional amendments are developed or progressed. Accordingly, the item before the General Assembly has been amended from a constitutional modernisation update to a report receivable consultation and process paper reflecting the committee's final report received in the last couple of days ago. I don't think that was, I think it was the 8th, not the 9th, that's a typo. The committee commenced its work during July 2026 following the invitation for expressions of interest from the community. The government acknowledged the substantial voluntary contribution made by the committee members and thanked them for their time, effort and commitment invested in considering the future constitutional arrangements for Norfolk Island. The committee has now submitted their recommendations dealing with the specific matters and I can read them out later. The committee's final report is attached to this paper as Annexia A. The recommendations contained in Annexia A are presented in the form submitted by the committee and are provided to assist community consideration and consultation. Attachment

of the report to this paper does not constitute endorsement, adoption or approval of any recommendations by the government or the General Assembly. The recommendations remain proposals for consideration as part of the broader constitutional modernisation process. The government notes that the committee's recommendations are recommendations only and do not themselves amend the constitution. Constitutional change cannot occur merely through the preparation of submissions or recommendations. Given the timing of receipt, the government has not sought to place the recommendations directly before the General Assembly for approval or endorsement. Instead, the purpose of the paper is to enable the recommendations to be formally received and to establish a structured process for community consultation, refinement and public education before any constitutional amendments are considered. The government considers it important that members of the General Assembly and the wider community have access to the committee's recommendations in their original form. I've got an annexure here, which is the recommendations, is therefore attached here for information and consultation purposes. The attachment of Annex A enables the recommendations to be considered directly by the community while preserving the distinction between committee recommendations and any future constitutional proposals that may emerge following consultation, review and constitution development. The government notes that while the committee has completed an important stage of the process through the preparation of recommendations, of this particular stage. The broader modernisation established by the General Assembly remains ongoing. The terms of reference contemplate not only the preparation of recommendations but also community consultation, consideration of feedback, refinement of proposals, public review and development of constitutional reforms during the process. Accordingly, the submission of recommendations should be viewed as an important milestone rather than completion of any constitutional modernisation. The government considers that the immediate next stage should be community consultation on the recommendations contained in NHA. The purpose of the consultation is not to explain the recommendations, it is to provide members of the General Assembly and the wider Norfolk Island community with a meaningful opportunity to support, oppose, modify or suggest alternatives before any amendments are drafted. So I suppose the next step is... So the general outcome, I'm not sure if Joel wants to read them out or are you happy for me to read the recommendations? Just read the report for the recommendations. Okay, so I'll read the I'll read the report.

Councillor Hayes

Has the motion changed?

Chief Magistrate

No, it hasn't changed. We're only receiving it. It's only an update. There's no vote. It's just putting the recommendations before the General Assembly as part of the update, following the receipt of the report. So this is part of the report from the committee. The select committee, this is what was sent to me. This is the final report from the modernisation committee of this particular stage, I believe. The select committee, upon forming...

Clerk

Just so clarity there, Chief Magistrate, does the report read the final report?

Chief Magistrate

It's got the recommendations which I want to, I've just added.

Clerk

Just need to clarify that you mentioned there that there's a need to go to the community for consultation. Absolutely. But if you're reading out a report that reads the final report from the select committee, we need clarity around that.

Chief Magistrate

Well, it was put forward as the final report.

Councillor Hayes

I understand that, but we've had a house meeting and there's been some time between that and today's meeting and there's now been another report that's come in. So I'm just, I would like to note that.

Clerk

Chief Magistrate, just a matter of clarity. In terms of processes through the charter, matters of importance, significant community interest, it is my view as a clerk that any matter of significant community interest should be based around reaching the terms of the reference for the select committee. If the select committee hasn't reached those terms of reference, then It's probably not a matter to come before this General Assembly.

Chief Magistrate

So this was just considered as a broad update and the report received the final report. So it's as a general update and it's not seeking, I don't think it changes the particular outcome sort. It's just updating the community the way I see it. But happy for other thoughts.

Clerk

I'm giving you my thought, Chief Magistrate. I believe that those recommendations haven't been to the community for consultation. I don't believe it should be mentioned at this General Assembly.

Chief Magistrate

So I think I've sort of outlined in here that it does need to go back to the community for consultation. Obviously, that's mentioned within my update.

Clerk

Councillor Brown, your thoughts on that?

Councillor Brown

Yeah, all throughout I've been an advocate of the community having being aware of what's being proposed and having the opportunity to contribute to it.

Chief Magistrate

Sorry, I thought you meant to tell something.

Councillor Hayes

You've given your final report. I'm quite happy. I am quite happy for Chief Magistrate to read out the recommendations from your report. But I also want to note that the process has not finished. And can I please finish, Dole? That the process has not finished and that the consultation and the modernisation of the Constitution of 1838 will be long, detailed and robust. Thank you. We haven't finished yet. Go ahead.

Chief Magistrate

So I think it is quite, it is mentioned that this isn't the final report and it is to go back to community consultation. And along with that, there needs to be a modernization plan as well.

Clerk

Sorry, Chief Magistrate, I'm sorry about your intervening, but I haven't seen it.

Chief Magistrate

Seen what?

Clerk

That report. Yeah, let it be read there that they acknowledge that it's not the final report.

Chief Magistrate

Well, I think it is. I think it was put forward as the final report. It's a bit ambiguous, to be honest.

Councillor Hayes

Is it the final report or not?

Grant Summerscales

Final recommendation might be better word.

Councillor Hayes

No, if it's the final recommendations, that is classified as a final report from the Select Committee.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Hang on a minute. All right. So the report that you've got there is a report. It's an ongoing report. There are recommendations there. The idea is the community then comments on those recommendations and they put.

Councillor Hayes

Their, they put their. You have misunderstood the terms of reference.

Grant Summerscales

Those recommendations go back to your committee and then they sort of, I mean, when they give you.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

A final report, I would agree.

Clerk

So I'm very particular about this, that the word final report does not indicate to the House or the General Assembly that there's any other consultation to be done by the select committee. It's very important that the terms of reference...

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

It doesn't say it's a final report.

Clerk

The select committee was given a terms of reference where categorically reads in there that you need to consult the community.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

That's what this is about.

Clerk

No, you don't do it through the General Assembly. You do it through your consultation process. As it reads in the terms of reference.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Well, it's the General Assembly the ones that asked us to do it.

Clerk

Not the General Assembly, no.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

By the government, the government of Norfolk Island.

Clerk

But the terms of reference ask you to consult with the community. Everyone else out there in Norfolk Island.

Chief Magistrate

This the recommend there is there is a bit at the back. If any enrolled member of the General Assembly would like to comment, give advice, criticism or make recommendations, there's an email, it puts the email address there. All comments and emails will be taken in confidence and taken into consideration by the committee.

Clerk

I just need to clarify this. is very important. This is matters of significant community interest. The select committee was given succinct terms of reference and it's very, very comprehensive terms of reference. And I don't expect any final report to be coming back to this environment here within the General Assembly, where the community of Norfolk Island has not been consulted. To read something out now from your report would mean that as a final report We're not make we're not making a decision today, but you're tarnishing any decision that might be made.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Does it hang hang on a minute just doesn't doesn't the doesn't the charter require an update? Doesn't the charter require an update?

Clerk

Within 30 days it did.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

But from 30 days from when?

Chief Magistrate

The terms of reference that is.

Clerk

So, but not as a fine, you've written this a final report.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Sorry.

Clerk

You wrote on that document the final report.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Is there a final report on that document, Peter?

Chief Magistrate

I don't think there is no. I think it might have been on the email header maybe, but it's not on this particular section. But if we can get some clarity whether it's final or not.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

So the reason we've put this to you, the reason we've put this is because you've asked, you've asked for a report, right? And now We discussed this. Is the GNOI have a way to get to the voting community through their emailing and that sort of thing to get feedback? Because I mean, I'm not going to beat down 800 doors and ask them what they think.

Councillor Hayes

That's terms of reference of the select committee and it is your responsibility.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Thanks for clearing that up.

Councillor Hayes

As I said, it's in the terms of reference.

Cherri Buffett

If I may, I declare that I am on that committee privately. And with all due respect to the government, I never received a final copy of the terms of reference. I received a draft with red ink

all over it and crosses and amendments. Never have I received the final copy of the terms of reference for the committee. Not only that.

Councillor Hayes

You should have taken that up with the minister responsible who is... Excuse me. No, excuse me. You should have taken that up with the minister responsible who is Park. He's the chief magistrate and he was responsible for the constitutional modernisation.

Cherri Buffett

Excuse me, if I may. I refer you again to some of my private emails to the Government of Norfolk Island in relation to that. Not only that, as the Chair and Joel has done an amazing job chairing this committee in the time that we were given. In your Hansard of the 30th of May 2026, you refer to 12 months. That is the 30th of May 2027. So what is your timeline to change the constitution in relation to allowing other people, except for three people, to stand for the government of Norfolk Island, including people who are not directly native born and descendants of the Pitcairn people? I have not finished, if you may.

Councillor Hayes

Those are the issues and those are the complexities that we were relying on the select committee to help us navigate through another election on the 1st of January 2027.

Cherri Buffett

But at this point in time for the election of 1 January 2027, you are discriminating towards other people who can stand, because at the moment only three people will be elected. Correct.

Councillor Hayes

Because if you don't change the Constitution, if you don't change the Constitution, the 1838 Constitution stands until it's modernised. Now, when you modernise and go through a process of constitutional change, It is a long, lengthy, you have to inform your community. It is not just a one or two step or A2 adjustment within the Constitution to allow an election on the 1st of January 2027. You are bound by integrity, constitutional mandates the whole shebang, and if the Constitution hasn't changed from now until the 1st of January, 2027, well, only three people then can stand, because the Constitution has not changed.

Cherri Buffett

With all due respect, hang on.

Councillor Hayes

I mean, three more .. another three can stand.

Cherri Buffett

With all due respect, we did not receive that information till July? June? July. That is six months after the 1st of January. So you are asking the committee and putting the responsibility back on the chair mainly of that committee to try and get all this done. There is only one more General Assembly meeting. So has the proposal been from day one not to change the Constitution for January 2027 because your Hansard 30th of May indicates 30th of May 2027.

Clerk

Ladies and gentlemen, it's quite clear to me as a clerk of the House that there's some very, very clear terms of reference that have not been met. and I read the original report that we went and saw you as a house for a meeting with the select committee and that document I read, it read that it was a final report. We cannot have a final report put into the government of Norfolk Island if the terms of reference have not been met. If you need, sorry Joel, if you need assistance on how to go and talk to the community.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Well, that's what we were doing.

Clerk

We were hoping that you would go and put notices in the paper, do consultation, do forums, meet people, put a table in Foodland, wherever you want to go to talk to people. That is consultation with the community. This is not the forum to consult with the community.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Our consultation was with the voting populace.

Clerk

No, it's the whole of Norfolk Island. This is an inclusive direct democracy. It's for the people, for Norfolk Island. We need you to go talk to the whole community of Norfolk Island.

Councillor Brown

The only ones who will be able to vote on it will be those who enrolled though, Joel, you are correct.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Well, okay, so yeah, all right, so we got to do this without any assistance from you lot.

Clerk

We're always here to help Joel.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Well then let's call, well then let's call this, let's call this an update, some recommendations we've thrown out to the community and move forward.

Chief Magistrate

So in, as I said before, that there is an email for people to give advice or make comment on what the recommendations have been put forward. And I think that obviously that I personally would be willing to help the committee to to reach the community. I'm not sure whether it's appropriate to be in what a point to put the recommendations, if it prejudices the prejudices the consultation, if there's the recommendations put forward, or I'm not too sure.

Cherri Buffett

If I may, I would like to have it recorded and on in the Hansard for definitely. that I never received a final copy of the terms of reference. I received a draft. There was no final terms of reference sent to me.

Chief Magistrate

Was that just you or the whole committee?

Cherri Buffett

I don't know. You have to ask them, but I told you, I told the GNI in an email.

Councillor Hayes

For Hansard purposes, We're at a, for one better of a word, we're at a position where the House understands that the Constitution needs to be modernised and the time until the next election is not plausible. It's just not plausible.

Chief Magistrate

So another way of putting it, I suppose, if the process is corrupted or not, I shouldn't say corrupted, if it's prejudiced or if it's expedited for the purpose of meeting a January deadline, I don't think that should occur. I think the more important issue is that the process is allowed to carry out and if it means that missing the 1st of January deadline and we go to the polls with the existing constitution, then so be it. I think the more important thing is making sure that the process is seen out properly.

Councillor Hayes

And I will not agree. I will not agree to making adjustments or anything or a lack of consultation with the community to modernise the constitution in a very short time framework.

Grant Summerscales

It's never been made part of the consultation, whether the community wants it done before January thing and actually it's.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Hang on a minute, hang on a minute.

Councillor Hayes

I don't think the government of Norfolk Islandhas that capacity to drive what we've already got on the plate and harness community support. for changing of the constitution in such a short time frame.

Chief Magistrate

It's also the deadlines within putting a referendum too. There's so many days notice that has to be given and there needs to be a yes and a no case presented.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Then fine, read the report and don't read the recommendation. Call it an update and let's move on and then we don't worry about going for the 1st of January. What's the problem?

Chief Magistrate

So what do you think about reading out the recommendation?

Clerk

Joel, can I say this for the very last time, if you don't mind? And I've been very, very respectful here to everyone. We can't change it. You've written down that it's the final report. Now, does that have final report? You need to consult with the community. If you need help, I went on to Microsoft Forms and I created a survey. Pretty simple. You can do things like that. You can easily do that. You can do it through our electoral rolls email address.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Can I can you can Peter answer the question please? Yeah. Does anywhere on that there say it's a final report?

Chief Magistrate

I think it was the previous one when we sent it back had final report.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Exactly. Does that one say it's a final report?

Chief Magistrate

I think it might have said it on the email header, but I can't confirm that. I don't know. I can't say that it is. I thought it had, but it might have been on the email footer where I read it, but on the email. But in the actual document, it doesn't say final report.

Grant Summerscales

I'm just.

Clerk

Okay, so Joel, once again, with all respect, if you've got a report there, call it interim report or progress report, take it to the responsible councillor and then bring it to the house. But don't bring it to the General Assembly. it's this is not where we listen to what's been recommended.

Chief Magistrate

No, he didn't. We received the report on Thursday and it was on, it's in the contact email.

Councillor Hayes

Thursday of this week. Well, I'm sorry, but there is not enough time to digest, accept the select committee's report when the meeting for the General Assembly is on a Saturday. If the information is received on a Thursday, it may be likely, but highly unlikely, that the three of us have time to sit down and go through the information. And I have not seen this. I'm relying on, I have I commend the Select Committee for the work that they've done so far, but there are processes, there really are, and it has to go to the House. It's in the protocols. It has to go to the House before it comes to the General Assembly. The House have the availability to send you back the report or ask for more information in the rounds of the Select Committee. It's not just a

straight Select Committee General Assembly. The House is there to ask questions, however they choose to participate.

Chief Magistrate

But I.

Councillor Hayes

Don't think that we are going to get to the 1st of January of a constitutional change.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

That's fine.

Chief Magistrate

Can I just add in here that it is clear in here that it's not these are purely recommendations and we're not actually voting on any particular motion or any sort of acceptance or any agreement. It's just we are basically noting the recommendations and I'm reading out what the recommendations are. But one practical thing is if you're happy, perhaps something is we can do, we can perhaps say that the report has been received, has been noted.

Cherri Buffett

I would like to say something, if I may, in relation to your comments that the document wasn't received in time. I would like to point out to the government of Norfolk Island that your papers on your website were not put there on.

Chief Magistrate

Time.

Cherri Buffett

Secondly, not allowing this to go through in relation to the recommendations and to go to the people who are on the roll, not the community, that restricts other people who want to stand for the government of Norfolk Island and they are not able to, they were not able to, one January 2026. And I think that is rather upsetting and very, very sad for our people.

Councillor Hayes

I agree, Cherie, but at the same time, you cannot fault the three of us and our team, the amount of gargantuan work that we have achieved in 10 months, to then expect a representative body to change a constitution because it's expedient and opens the pathways, which I have no problem with opening pathways, but to do it in a very short amount of time I will not agree, and that is my position.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Hang, hang, hang on a sec.

Cherri Buffett

On the 1st of January, and part of the Vision Assembly's main aim was the constitutional change. One January to July, you had six months to get a select committee together and start.

Councillor Hayes

It was enacted on the 30th of May.

Cherri Buffett

I know when it was acted, it's in the Hansard.

Councillor Hayes

Yes, correct.

Cherri Buffett

But you knew before that, was one of the main aims that people wanted to happen, and that never happened until July. And now you're blaming the Select Committee for the consequences... I beg your pardon?

Clerk

I'm sorry. I have a right... No, no, I need to say something here. 30th of May was the first General Assembly meeting. What happened in the first five months of the year? One January to 30th of May? These 3 people not only sat for weeks on end, hours on hours on days, to create the charter. They cannot progress with anything else without the charter. It took five months to get the charter. That is the Bible for the government of Norfolk Island. Hang on, hang on. Listen. So on the 30th of May, we could not have created terms of reference on the 2nd of January, for instance. to go and recreate, modernise the Constitution. It had to, we had to have the charter first. It's a chicken and egg story. Since then, you know, the House meets on a Monday. They meet on a Monday. All day. They meet all day on a Monday. And I mean sometimes Tuesday. And to drop off your, what I thought was a final report on the Thursday, two days before the General Assembly. It's not enough for the GNI to read it.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Was, I don't know why you're treating it like a final report. There's no, they're not asking anybody to vote. We're not, hang on, hang on a minute, you've had to, the Assembly's not asking anybody to vote. It's merely an update with recommendations for the community to comment on. Now, at the end of this Assembly, at the end of this Assembly, you'll go and email all the all of everything that's going on here to the voting population, along with this, there's an email address there that they can comment on. They can say, yes, that's a great idea, no, that's a terrible idea, whatever. And you're reaching 800 people that are voting in the General Assembly.

Clerk

Yeah, I understand that, Joel, but look, it's not all about using the electoral roll to go to the people. It's about putting opportunities for people every, as you said, we want everyone to have the opportunity that's eligible in aspect with what you're talking about to them. Well, you need to go to the... you haven't. If I was to ask the question whether you've done a public forum or a community consultation yet, the select committee has not done it.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

No, they haven't.

Clerk

No.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

We've thought about getting five people together at all once a week.

Clerk

Yes, well, the terms of reference ask you to go talk to the community. It hasn't been done. The report is... Sorry.

Grant Summerscales

I would just like to hear the recommendation.

Chief Magistrate

My view is we're not actually voting. Nothing that I'm going to... Nothing that is in the report... Nothing that I'm going to...

Grant Summerscales

The public is basically Bible as to how you can act.

Clerk

Sorry, Sue. Sorry, Grant, but Sue, Hannah.

William Quintal

So, firstly, I acknowledge the massive amount of work that you, and I also acknowledge the amount of work that you guys have done, and thank you. And I understand whether whatever name is put on this document, it is the document, is the recommendations that the committee has come up with, and now everybody agrees that it's to go public consultation. No, I thought that's what you just explained.

Councillor Hayes

Yes, the whole modernisation of the Constitution needs to go through a public process. As far as this report and the recommendations, the House meets every Monday. It has got to go through the House before it comes to the General Assembly. That has not happened. Whether we, and I, sorry. No, we don't. We don't. Thank you. No, we don't. We don't ever get to alter anything like that. What happens is that we can then send it back for further information, further recommendations. Have you considered this? And it goes back to the house and it can do that numerous times. But it always has to then come back to the General Assembly. To the House and then to the General Assembly.

William Quintal

You've just been asking, has it gone to the public yet? And as if there's an expectation that they have consulted the public. And my question is, we here are the public. And can this be, we are all here this afternoon, could this be one part or step one of public consultation where we can just hear the recommendations and think about them since we're all here?

Councillor Hayes

Yes, of course.

Chief Magistrate

So obviously.

Councillor Hayes

But what I'm saying is that I have not seen it.

William Quintal

That's all right. It's for. Yeah.

From the floor

We all are a peanut gallery.

Chief Magistrate

Okay, so I'll finish reading the report.

William Quintal

Okay.

Chief Magistrate

So the committee recognises that Do you want me to read the whole thing from the beginning of the first page? Okay. The Select Committee, I think I started reading it before. The Select Committee, upon forming, recognised the need to modernise the 1838 Constitution to suit the current and future needs of the people of Norfolk Island. To put into context, the 1838 Constitution was written for an isolated community of 99 souls, the overwhelming majority being native to Pitcairn with an intent to follow the community to make laws for themselves, govern themselves and protect themselves if need be from outside influence. To update or modernise this constitution, consideration and acknowledgement must be given to 188 years of history and the adoption of this constitution from Pitt Kent to Norfolk. A permanent population increased from 99 to over 1,000 in this time. These people of Norfolk Island come from many different backgrounds and have a diverse ethnicity. However, they choose to live in this place and recognise the need for direct democracy and the connection of the Pitcairn settlers hold. This committee works on the basis for shaping its recommendations for community input and scrutiny. There is a need for room to grow and expand. However, there needs to be relevant restrictions and barriers to safeguard and protect for future generations of all Norfolk Islanders. The committee recognises the need for Norfolk Islanders to develop and control its own immigration. The committee recognises the evolution of the people of Pitcairn and the journey of all 194 to Norfolk Island in 1956 at the undisputed invitation of Queen Victoria. The committee recognises that in making the journey from Pitcairn the settlers brought with them the Constitution as their laws and customs to form the basis of the future generations of Norfolk Island as governing body. The committee recognises the future generations of the Pitcairn settlers of 1856 hold the connection to this constitution and the importance of the cultural, spiritual, and all that direct democracy offers to sustain and grow this community. The committee recognises the existence of people who have chosen to make Norfolk Olen their home while they have not been of Pitcairn settlers lineage. They are no less a Norfolk Islander because of this. The committee recognises that years of living on Norfolk is the most practical way to give a person seeking office the necessary experience to guide the community as an elected GNI member. The committee recognises a reference to the Chief Magistrate position

needing to be an elder and native born. The committee also recognises this would need to be adjusted to provide more representation over a growing community. With a larger community, the GNI would need to be increased from three to five members and a need for an extra year of office would give a modern GNI the ability to govern more effectively. There are many more modernisation issues that will need to be addressed in time. However, this committee have put together some recommendations to consider or make comment with the blessing of our voters. We may go to ballot on the 1st of January with a stronger grip on our future. So here are the recommendations that have come from the committee. As I said, we're not here to vote on them. It's just purely for community information and obviously if it's not the final report, it needs to go back to community consultation and obviously it's got to go through the referendum processes and as I said, if the process means that we are unable to have change by the 1st of January, then say the most important thing is making sure it's a proper, transparent process. So recommendation one is that the General Assembly and the House recognise native and native born to mean descendants of the 194 settlers who arrived on Norfolk Island on the 8th of June 1856. to be referred to as the Pitcairn descendants. Recommendation 2, the number of members be increased from three to five members. All 5 positions be determined by the votes of the Assembly. Recommendation 3, the election to be held on the 1st of January every other year. This would mean an election every two years. Recommendation 4. Eligibility to stand for Chief Magistrate. Candidates must be native or native born, have been resident on the Norfolk Island for 15 years with 10 consecutive years living on island prior to election, more than 240 days per year. Must have obtained 40 years of age. Eligibility for four positions. Candidates must have been a resident for 10 years living on island and more than 240 days per year and be 18 years of age. Recommendation 5, eligibility to vote. Obtained 18 years of age, have held residence on Norfolk Island for five years. Once on the electoral roll, one can only remove themselves. If any enrolled members of the General Assembly would like to comment, give advice, criticism or make recommendations, please email constitution1838ni at gmail.com. All comments and emails would be taken in confidence and taken into consideration by the General Committee. We will be reviewing in the coming weeks and it might possibly go in the paper. I'm not sure. It could possibly be put on social media, but it could, I don't know. But anyway, that's the report.

Councillor Hayes

Thank you for your report. I think my frustrations are coming through because I haven't, wasn't aware of this and I like to be informed before a General Assembly especially.

Cherri Buffett

Can I make a suggestion?

From the floor

Then that your members actually put it through the House before they bring it to the Assembly.

William Quintal

Because you shouldn't have just attacked the committee.

Councillor Hayes

You should have spoken to the Chief Magistrate then and they said can we just leave? At the end of the day, I think that there are some other factors going on, Gaylene, where the terms of

reference haven't been enacted out for the select committee. So I didn't attack the chairman. I just made it, I made my point to say that those things have not been done. I did say that the minister responsible is Park, but at the same time, I think that those recommendations, they're fine. I have no after hearing them, but at the same time, I don't think that it's good business to not be aware. That's all. It's just processes. Yes, that's exactly right. And forgive me if I, I'm trying to seek processes.

Chief Magistrate

Anyway, so everybody's now heard the report. That's it. This is the basis. This is the committee's recommendations. And obviously it will go back to the community for consultation, refinement, and then The recommendations will come back to the House and then it will go to the General Assembly and hopefully we can enact some sort of modernisation process. But anyway, I'd just like to move a motion that the report be noted pending further consultation with the community. the report's not final is because it needs to be.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Can I just, hang on, hang on a sec, Grant? Hang on a sec, Grant. Can I just say, and thank you, thank you, Councillor Hayes. I understand your frustrations. We all have the same frustrations. We're all here to get to the same place. We all have the same goals. All right. We might be taking different paths, however. Thank you, Job. What I will say is the reason why we've generated that email account is so that we can get feedback. Now, you said it yourself, Tet, go to the people. This is how this is how I want to go to the people. I want to get feedback from the voting population. And through putting it in the paper, whatever, the rest of the community has the opportunity to comment. Right? But, and I understand your frustrations, but like you, I'm on a tight time frame and I've got responsibilities and things that I have to attribute to outside of this. I'm dedicating what I can to it. The same as I know you guys are, and I know I'm acutely aware of what you guys are putting into everything and I appreciate it from the full of you, know, your whole, all the three of you and, you know, and Ted as the clerk. I appreciate that, you know, you're doing, I know doing that. But can I just say that, and this was written with never any intention of being a final report as an update and as using the General Assembly as a tool to get more feedback and input into where we want to be. All right, that's I haven't I haven't I haven't called for meetings and I haven't sat down in Rawson Hall and said come and give me your in things because just at the moment I'm very I'm stretched for time. But we've also got 800 odd people and you've got it in your database. How many email addresses that are our voting populace, the ones that above all the rest of the community are the most important because they're the ones that have said, yes, we support you. Yes, we're here to hear. So why shouldn't we be targeting them first? That's my question. And when I say target, I mean getting their feedback, giving them the opportunity to come back to us with their thoughts and recommendations. And as I said in the report, if people think it's a terrible idea, email me, tell me, email us, tell us. I'm happy to take that into consideration. And when we do do a final report with final recommendations, it'll take all that into consideration.

Cherri Buffett

If I may, I'd like to just thank Joel as the chair of this committee. He's worked damn hard and he has kept us all on track into the real reason why we need this change. And he has looked after the committee. He has done a damn good job. And any criticism should not be on Joel, it should be on the committee.

Chief Magistrate

Yeah, it's here. Constitution 1838 NI at gmail.com. Yeah, we might, obviously we can, we can possibly put it on our website and through our distribution channels too, we can help to get the, make it, gets to the broad. broad cross-section of the electorate as we can. So that at the end of the day, it's got to pass the test of 800, 700 or 800 odd people. I mean, if you put recommendations they're not going to vote for, then you're wasting your time. So you've got to, as I said before, what's more important is making sure the process is correct and transparent rather than meeting the 1st of January deadline. And if it means we go to the polls on the 1st of January with no change, so be it. It's just That's just how it is. You can't expect a constitution to be changed in a year. Well, five months, actually, if you're taking into account that half the time you've spent actually building the machinery of government, which didn't exist.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Which was one of my concerns. Yeah.

Councillor Hayes

It's all of our concern, Joel. Yeah, of course.

Chief Magistrate

Yeah. So I think we've sort of said it, as I said, it's more important to get the process right than meeting the 1st of January deadline, because it's got to pass the test of the people at the end of the day.

Cherri Buffett

I'd like to have it on hand start, but for the record that having only three people.

Councillor Brown

There's nothing stopping them standing if they are eligible. If they're eligible, they can stand. The eligibility is the issue, not the number of people.

Chief Magistrate

But some of these recommendations make it harder.

William Quintal

How?

Chief Magistrate

Anyway, that's beside the point. At the end of the day, that's what that's what the community will, it all comes down to the feedback from the community. Yeah, whether I mean you might be right, you might be wrong, I don't know, the community will decide what the recommendations.

Councillor Hayes

To be fair, if we're going to, if we are going to follow process, it's got to come to the house on Monday, the report.

Speaker 7

How long after that would it be?

Councillor Hayes

Available on the website? We don't know. I'm a bit...

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

For example, sorry, for example, if you decide for whatever reason you don't want to put those on there because you're worried people will think they're final recommendations and they're not, they're just recommendations for public consultation as I've said in my report, or we've said in our report. can you please put the email address up there so we can start getting some feedback?

Councillor Hayes

Of course, Joel. I mean, there are some mechanics and things like that, and there's some, a management plan and those things that are in the terms of reference that can help this process that you're talking about. And I think that, you know, we're all, we're all, we get fired up because about this, that, and the others because we care and we're passionate about it. But I think that, it's got to come to the house on Monday, and we'll endeavour to, get some answers to it.

Tane Cottle

Can I just add, I think, like you'll have started in a really good place, and I'm wondering, because Cherri's really good on social media, maybe if you I don't know if this is the right approach or not, but just putting those recommendations out there, asking people for comments and to get in touch with you, and also maybe a poster in Foodies and opening it up, making sure that absolutely everyone who is on Norfolk Island feels like they are being included.

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Yeah, Tony, we're happy to do that, like I said, but part of our thinking was was let's take it to the General Assembly, let's take it to the voting populace, because they're the ones, you know, by natural way, it'll get to the rest of the community, I'm sure. But, you know, like I said, we put a, we don't, I wouldn't say we put a more of, but, you know, we understand the importance of what the voting populace think, because they are the voting populace. They're the ones that have, they're the ones that are voting.

Grant Summerscales

Can we expand that to the?

Joel Reeves - GNI SC

Absolutely. I'm not. Absolutely. I'm not saying that. I'm just all I'm saying is we bring it to the General Assembly to let them know first.

Clerk

Okay, thank you very much everyone. I think it's been robust but it's been well communicated. I made my views pretty clear. I qualify to be Chief Magistrate candidate because I'm over 40 years of age and I've lived there for the last 10 out of 15 years. And I probably live on Norfolk Island for 240 days out of the year. But if we try to get people inclusive in Norfolk Island to accept nomination, and we put this up on the website, I'm not quite sure that's going to work favourably

for what we try to achieve. But that's my comments. That's why I didn't want to put it on Hansard. Okay, so the Norfolk Island community is hereby updated with many thanks about the modernisation of the 1838 Constitution update. Any matters for general business? Councillors.

Councillor Brown

I'm hoping everyone's talked out to be honest.

Chief Magistrate

Yeah, me too.

Clerk

Anyone from the floor get any matters of general business? Deliberately so.

Councillor Brown

Deliberately so.

Cherri Buffett

She actually said, and I wasn't in this meeting alone, that they, as an Australian government, do not recognise the government of Norfolk Island.

Chief Magistrate

I don't think that should come as a surprise to anyone, really.

Cherri Buffett

No, I agree. But she said that quite clearly. that they will not recognise the government of Norfolk Island.

Grant Summerscales

That's easy. We don't recognise them. They got a different constitution.

Clerk

That's thanks. Thanks, Leone. Any other general business that'd like to be brought up? Everyone.

Councillor Hayes

Lucky the GNI recognise the joke.

Clerk

So, ladies and gentlemen, gentlemen of Assembly, can I just thank the South Pacific Resort for accepting us here at short notice. We didn't realise by changing it from the 3rd of October to the 10th of October that on Saturday the 10th of October is 2 days before the show day. And so the South Pacific Resort has accepted us at very short notice. They've also allowed us to book the 28th of November if we'd like to have it as well here. Someone has asked me to get a comment about the date, sorry, the day and the time for their meetings. Currently, we're Saturday at 1 o'clock, and I'd like to report back to them about whether there's another thought about another day and time. Any comments on that? Okay. No comment.

William Quintal

Yeah, 28 today your numbers are dropping.

From the floor

The first General Assembly, they keep coming down.

William Quintal

I don't know if it's time or if it's...

Clerk

Saturday, 1 o'clock.

William Quintal

I think it might be worth trying another time.

Clerk

Wednesday afternoon.

William Quintal

Or maybe more evening. I don't know. I just think people are too busy doing the things they have to do during the day.

Councillor Hayes

Maybe we could survey it. A quick little survey.

Clerk

We might do that on the website, send a survey out asking people for their thoughts. Because we're just still doing general business here. When we look around the room, we're not getting those people that we want really come to the meeting, the younger generation. So they're obviously really busy. Any other general business?

William Quintal

I think a lot of the younger people are playing sports for their kids are playing sports.

Chief Magistrate

Exactly. Yeah.

Clerk

It's only hearsay.

Grant Summerscales

But there was 7 Muslims here being shown property by the real estate.

William Quintal

So anyway, I'll just leave it at that.

Clerk

OK, if there's no more general business, then I ask the Chief Magistrate to adjourn the meeting.

Chief Magistrate

I hereby adjourn the General Assembly until the 28th of November 2026. Thank you.

Clerk

I put the motion that the next meeting be on the 28th of November. Those of the opinion say OK, carried. Sorry, we'll sing the anthem. Sorry. Before you go, Wayne.