



Date: 4th July 2018

Budget 2018 – The Hon Steven Linares

Mr Speaker

This is my 19th Budget Speech and my 7th as a Government Minister.

I will begin my speech by giving a synopsis of what has been achieved over the last year in relation to my areas of responsibility.

These are Culture, The Media, Youth and Sport.

Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar Academy of Music and Performing Arts (GAMPA) has had another successful year.

GAMPA is housed at 63 Flat Bastion Road.

I am pleased to report that they have already outgrown those premises due to their huge success.

GAMPA can now boast nearly 400 students.

It is currently outsourcing space in the South Barrack Road Recreation Rooms as well as in the drama studio and in the music room at Bayside Comprehensive School.

Therefore, given its huge success, the Government have decided to allocate more premises to GAMPA.

I am pleased to announce that the Old Sisters Quarters beside St Bernard's Middle School will be made available to GAMPA.

This newly refurbished building is expected to be ready this month.

The premises will provide much needed space as from September.

In our 2011 manifesto, we conceived of a scheme known as “learn an instrument”.

This has taken the form of a campaign which promotes certain instruments which children might not necessarily be aware of.

Ministry of Culture, the Media, Youth and Sport

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This year teachers from the Academy toured all first and middle schools in Gibraltar.

They used what is known as the Charanga Music Scheme which engages, excites, innovates digital music teaching and the learning of it.

They have been able to recruit students to attend the academy on a regular basis.

The Academy has held a great number of performances and other initiatives which have included Drama, Choir singing and Orchestral Music.

In the 3rd term of 2016/2017 from April to June they participated in and organised 12 events.

From Sept to Dec the 1st term of 2017/2018 they were involved in 8 events and in 2018 from Jan to June they have been in 12 more events.

Mr Speaker, a very successful and busy schedule.

GAMPA continue to work very closely with the Parasol Foundation in order to develop “The Parasol Foundation Scholarship Programme”.

This programme has been designed to help the next generation of musicians and actors to develop and have more teaching contact and preparation time.

The Government is pleased that the programme has been renewed for another year.

Six scholarships for “Excellence and Promise” and for beginners who showed potential have been offered.

Further scholarships have been awarded to students who qualified under Financial Hardship rules.

This goes to the heart of our philosophy as a government.

No child should be left behind due to financial constraints.

Ensemble Scholarships have also been awarded in order to develop children’s ensemble skills.

The objective is to have such students eventually as part of a Youth Orchestra.

I would like to take this opportunity to thanks the Parasol Foundation for the partnership they have established with GAMPA.

Another part of GAMPA’s development programme has assisted Bishop Fitzgerald Middle School, Notre Dame First School LSF and St Martin’s Special school.

This is through the provision of 8 hours (once a week) of Dramatherapy with a fully qualified Drama-therapist.

The Academy as well as the Government feel it is our duty to provide performance opportunities and workshops to children from all backgrounds and intellectual abilities.



This programme is working very well.

The Academy is now an official examination centre which can cater for students locally as well as from the surrounding areas.

The Associated Board of the Royal School of Music (ABRSM) exams have been held in Gibraltar for decades under the management of the College of Further Education.

For the last three years conducted at the Academy which at the moment has the best facilities.

It is a great opportunity to offer all our local students the chance to have better examination conditions.

These exams also include Trinity Rock and Pop which have proved to be very successful and Trinity College London Drama Exams.

Mr Speaker, I now move on to Gibraltar Cultural Services.

They organise and supervise many events for and on behalf of the Ministry of Culture.

Some of these events are carried out in conjunction with other Ministries.

This was the case with the first ever and most successful Youth Open Day which took place together with the Gibraltar Youth Service.

The Literary Festival happens in conjunction with the Gibraltar Tourist Board

Also, together with other Government Departments, the Street Art projects has been launched, as part of the Government's urban renewal and regeneration policy.

GCS has this year on behalf of the Ministry of Culture commenced some new initiatives.

They have launched the Youth Arts Jamboree as part of our cultural development programme.

The aim is to create cultural, heritage and youth leaders of the future, by providing a platform dedicated to young people.

The first ever Artisans Christmas Market at Line Wall Road Boulevard has been organised.

They have organised or supported other cultural development programmes including the Fitness Gallery and the History of Art films at the Leisure Cinema amongst other events.

GCS has and is in the process of organising a number of Retrospective Exhibitions.

They organised one depicting Gibraltar's Fashion scene through the decades.

This was a huge success and featured many local designers, such as the late Johnny Pearce and the late Eduardo Viotto, amongst many other individuals in the local fashion scene.



They further organised Gibraltar's Presentation at the Island Games 2017 in Gotland.

The presentation was held to promote the Island Games that will be hosted in Gibraltar in 2019.

They are currently working to launch, in January 2019, an exhibition that will celebrate the life, works and legacy of Gibraltarian Elio Cruz.

Works have also started for a July 2019 Island Games exhibition that will celebrate Gibraltar's participation at the Island Games from 1987 to date. This will be organised in conjunction with the Gibraltar Chronicle.

All these exhibitions are part of our Government's ongoing cultural development initiatives.

GCS has been instrumental in promoting what is this Government's policy of exporting our culture to the rest of the world.

We have now established a number of annual events which help local artist exhibit their works abroad.

Such is the case with one of our artist participating annually in competitions at the Royal Academy Summer exhibition.

The Gibraltar-Berlin Art Residency project will take place for the third year this month.

This will see a Gibraltar artist taking up an art residency in Berlin, and a Berlin artist doing a residency in Gibraltar.

This will lead to a book and an exhibition that will be launched in October at the John Mackintosh Hall.

We have also supported 4 local artists to exhibit at the Bermondsey Exhibition which was organised in London in October last year.

Our latest endeavour is supporting and promoting a cultural Exchange between the Government of Gibraltar and the Diputacion de Cadiz.

This will see 18 Gibraltarian artists exhibit at the Diputacion and works from the Diputacion coming to Gibraltar's Gustavo Bacarisa Art Gallery in Feb/March 2019.

GCS is also charged on behalf of the Ministry with organising a number of annual festivals and events.

- This includes Gib-talks which has proved to be extremely popular.
- The Spring Festival featured the Young Shakespeare Company who were especially flown over from the UK.
- The ever popular Calentita.
- The list of events includes the Autumn Programme, Summer Nights, Gibraltar Fair and National Day Celebrations; New Year's Celebrations; International Art competitions;



Literary and Poetry competitions; May Day, Drama Festival, Christmas Festival of Lights, Classical Concerts amongst others.

GCS has also been working on updating the Cultural Register in line with current Child Protection policy as directed by the Child Protection Committee.

The Government, through GCS, has been able to acquire 30 new artworks for the Government's Art Collection.

Most of these works are Gustavo Bacarisa originals and others were produced by many local artists.

GCS does not only organise events but is also charged with maintaining and looking after cultural premises.

On this front we can see how all the assets that they manage have been transformed.

This includes the John Mackintosh Hall and the Library.

The Ince's Hall has seen new lighting installed and all the façade has had structural works and a general facelift.

The Central Hall, the Gustavo Bacarisa Art Gallery, the Fine Arts Gallery at Casemates, the GEMA at Montague Bastion and the Mario Finlayson National Art Gallery have all been improved.

The Government remains firmly committed to the development of Culture locally and to exporting our arts to an international level.

Therefore, as the Minister for Culture, I am delighted to confirm that Gibraltar Cultural Services, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, will establish a Cultural Development Unit during this financial year.

The Unit will introduce training programs for cultural officials, groups, coaches, performers, administrators and persons involved with our Culture generally.

It will support cultural organisations, develop generic cultural educational programs and most importantly, organise training in cultural leadership.

Mr Speaker, it is imperative that we produce programmes that sow the seeds for the creation of cultural leaders of the future, in the same way we do in sports.

Apart from GCS, the Ministry itself has organised many events during the past year. These include events like the Jazz Festival and the Darts tournament.

Mr Speaker, I will be tackling Mr Clinton's contribution in relation to the Gibraltar Calling but before I will tackle the contribution from Mr Llamas.

Frankly it doesn't make sense.

I don't think they (Mr Clinton and Mr Llamas) speak to each other. On the one hand Mr Llamas accuses me of not giving him enough information, then he says that we have spent £5.6m on the



MTV Gibraltar Calling. Has he read the estimates book? That is not the figure in the book at all. So where is he getting this figure from? Then he says that it was last year we had the downfall on ticket sales. So where did you get that information from? I would like to think that you are not getting into the GSD habit of saying porky pies lies.

Mr Speaker, before I close on the purely cultural parts of my address, I must also reply to the Honourable Mr Clinton following his comments on the MTV Gibraltar Calling Music Festival.

It is clear that Mr Clinton does not like the music festival and has never liked it.

Unlike the thousands upon thousands of Gibraltarians who turn out to have a good time, Mr Clinton probably prefers a good book and some classical music.

That is his choice.

I like a good book and classical music too.

However, I do not let that colour my judgement.

The Honourable Member has complained about the cost of the event.

I would like to take a few moments to explain the value of the event as opposed to the cost.

First and foremost, the expenditure includes £400,000 of monies that has been spent for the MTV Gibraltar Calling 2018 ie the deduction in the estimates book from £2.5m to £2.1m this year.

The following are reports from MTV that monitor the reach all of their programmes, through adverts, marketing, social media outlets, etc.

These also have a value in monetary terms.

1. Social media value by artist using their Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat accounts is estimated to be £306,000;
2. Commercial Value monitored by exposure per minute of the Gibraltar Calling brand on CH5, 10pack and Comedy Central is £142,157;
3. MTV has made a comparison with other of its programmes e.g.
 - a) MTV Ibiza got 4,512,003 views with a value of £383,520
 - b) MTV Presents V festival got 6,100,330 views with a value of £518,528
 - c) MTV Varne Beach got 3,502,458 views with a value of £297,709
 - d) MTV Gibraltar Calling got 6,980,060 views with a value of £593,305
4. And on the general UK programming on other platforms with a value of £255,464.

Therefore, a total value of £1,296,926.

That is why though the expenditure this year has been higher it has been worth every single penny spent.

I urge Mr Clinton to go for a boogie this year.



Mr Speaker,

I now turn to my responsibilities regarding the media.

This is likely to be one of the most significant years ever for our national broadcaster, GBC.

It is expected that late next year they will move into brand new premises in South Jumpers Bastion.

Radio Gibraltar celebrated its 60th anniversary in February this year.

GBC TV marks its 55th year in 2018.

Despite their consistent service to our community, GBC has never been able to operate from adequate facilities.

But, it's 'time for change' Mr Speaker, and going forward our national broadcaster will operate from a state of the art facility.

GBC's management team is fully focused on the relocation project.

Design work is now at a very advanced stage, with the start of construction imminent.

New Broadcasting House will include two television studios and four radio studios, as well as two video-editing suites and two voice-over booths, together with studio and transmission control rooms, technical areas and functional office accommodation.

Estimated completion of the project is towards the end of 2019 or early 2020.

Mr Speaker, this financial year much of GBC's investment in technology will be linked to the relocation project.

Although ongoing equipment replacement continues, this necessarily impacts on the new systems being installed at the new Broadcasting House.

The Corporation's engineers and specialist consultants from UK are devising a plan of action to ensure that the existing facilities are able to continue broadcasting, with a seamless transition to the new building.

Gibraltar Freeview Ltd, which also falls under my responsibilities, and which operates the digital TV and radio transmitters, is also planning its own relocation of their systems from South Barrack Road to the new Rosia Road location.

In a project of this magnitude, I am ensuring that all interested parties work together to arrive at the ultimate goal of having the best broadcasting facilities possible for GBC's employees and the community as whole.

Notwithstanding the relocation project, GBC continues to inform and entertain local audiences.

GBC maximises its budget to provide consistent programming for viewers and listeners.



In addition to this, GBC News, GBC Sport, GBC Television and Radio Gibraltar are very active on social media platforms and via their website and apps.

Mr Speaker, TV Programmes that can be highlighted from the past twelve months are

- the Gibraltar-related travel show 'Inspired by Madeira',
- the local history programme 'In Their Footsteps',
- the local natural history series 'Rock Explorers',
- the 'Viewpoint' series and notably its public debates,
- the City Pulse community show,
- the live FIFA World Cup Gibraltar Qualifiers,
- and numerous Christmas, New Year and Easter specials.

There have also been an array of major outside broadcasts.

These have covered events such as National Day, New Year Eve and the Three Kings' Cavalcade amongst many others.

Radio Gibraltar has not stood still either.

It has refreshed its sound coinciding with its diamond jubilee, and ensured it is present at a variety of public events through its community roadshows.

The GBC Sports Awards were deservedly expanded this year, with this having become a much looked-forward to event by the local sports fraternity.

As Minister for Sport, I am delighted that GBC should recognise the achievements of our outstanding sports men and women, and I take this opportunity to congratulate all of this year's winners.

Mr Speaker, another highlight of the past twelve months was the GBC Open Day.

It raised a massive 127 thousand pounds – a true testament to the generosity of Gibraltar's businesses and general public.

The community rallies around GBC every Christmas, practically as one large family, to raise funds for deserving local charitable projects.

GBC's employees deserve a big thank you for leading on this and making it such a success.

Mr Speaker, we are proud of our television and radio station, which consistently deliver.

And, so, I have no hesitation in paying tribute to its management and staff for their passion, dedication and high editorial standards.

It is not easy, given how expensive the media business is, while having to compete with much larger foreign channels available locally.

GBC's Chief Executive assures me that work is already underway on programming for the next twelve months and beyond.



There are several series in pre-production, and the broadcast rights having been acquired for the live coverage of Gibraltar's games in the new UEFA Nations League in September and October this year, and the Euro 2020 Qualifiers next year.

Plans are also in hand for comprehensive coverage of our Gibraltar 2019 Island Games.

One innovation that will happen shortly is the introduction of Closed Captioning of TV programmes on air.

For some time now, GBC has provided subtitles for the hearing-impaired via its website, with this now being extended to programmes aired on television.

Improved technology has meant that with a reasonable investment, systems are being upgraded both at Broadcasting House and GFL's digital multiplex for most local programmes on their repeat showing to include Closed Captioning.

Although this will still be bound by the 24 to 48 hour delay in the production of subtitling from the initial broadcast, the move will soon provide Gibraltar's hearing impaired community with a much enhanced opportunity to follow many of GBC's local programmes via the TV service.

I am confident that with the resources made available to GBC, and as the Corporation works towards moving to their new premises, that Gibraltar will continue to benefit from and enjoy their own local TV channel and radio station.

Youth

I now move on to my responsibilities as Minister for Youth.

In the past year the Gibraltar Youth Service has continued to reach out to our community.

The service has increased its face to face work and has reached out to other Government departments, agencies and NGOs in order for them to work together to improve services for young people in our community.

The Youth Service is committed to personal professional development and constantly continues to update the skills of all its employees by offering them training.

One of the courses the staff experienced was a very successful and inspiring day of Personal Professional development training that focus on personal wellbeing at work.

Safeguarding Children and Young People is paramount and the youth service is part of the Child Protection Committee.

The Youth Service has increased its commitment to support Child Protection in Gibraltar.

Mr Speaker, the Youth Service will continue to work towards the Sign of Safety Model by being committed to taking a multi- agency approach in managing safeguarding issues and placing the welfare of young people at the heart of everything they do.



One of the Senior Youth Workers is a member of Safeguarding Children sub-group and a trainer for the Multi-Agency team.

We can now say that all those working with children and young people go through a stringent process of vetting and training.

The Youth Service has continued to provide projects to all clients that attend the Clubs.

Projects that develop young people's artistic, photographic, filming skills as well as cooking.

Programmes which involve residential camps.

These camps develop a great number of life skills and enable young people to disconnect from technology driven modern day society.

To this end the youth service have organised a great number of camps in the hinterland where they have enjoyed outdoor education with a 'back to nature' theme exploring and learning about the wilderness, bush craft, nature and survival.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Luce Foundation for helping in the funding these trips.

On their return, the young people who attend give a presentation to the trustees of the Luce Foundation highlighting the impact and the benefits of the trip to them.

The youth service is also involved with the community, by participating in our annual cavalcade and producing floats

By getting involved in the clean up the world campaign, and by helping on flag days raise funds for charities.

The Youth Advisory Council has been expanded to include the RGP, the Education Department, the GHA, the Care Agency and the Drugs Coordinator.

This aim to develop a more coordinated approach between Government Departments and agencies when dealing with young people's issues.

The first ever Youth Day was celebrated in March this year.

This new initiative was jointly organised between the Youth Service and Gibraltar Cultural Services as part of their 'Youth Arts Jamboree' month.

It was a day to celebrate young people's achievements and for them to see what is on offer to develop themselves as individuals.

The focus for next year's event will centre on forming a working group comprised of young people to make all the decisions and event planning for their day.

Meeting with young people and talking to them is vital.



We now have a Youth Forum. Renamed by them to the Voice of Young People. They are currently working on a directory for young people for them to know where they can source different services.

This Voice for Young People Forum does two things.

Firstly, as the name now suggests it gives the young people a voice. A voice in which they can say and bring up whatever subject or concerns they may have.

Secondly, it gives me and others present in the meetings an opportunity to understand their concerns. The Government can then solve the problems that they are encountering or implement their suggestions which in most cases are sensible and more importantly feasible.

Mr Speaker, ever since the Youth Service and the Royal Gibraltar Police signed a Memorandum of Understanding, both organizations have built and established a professional relationship of trust.

They have made significant progress in many areas that have improved our services to young people and the Community.

As an example, a significant number of young people have benefited from the RGP's joint funding through their Charity's Committee of a residential weekend away.

This will be held in October and it will allow young people to build positive relationships with their neighbourhood police officers and with the youth workers.

Youth and Community Workers have also supported the RGP new recruits by providing training regarding working with young people in our community.

I am happy to say that the Girl Guides Hut in the Nature Reserve is nearing completion. This hut or centre will be a great asset for the Girl Guides who do an extremely invaluable work with young girls.

This project had been in the pipeline for nearly 15 years which had been presented to the previous administration and they did not think it think of it as worthwhile project.

We will continue supporting groups that work with young people as do the Duke of Edinburgh, Scouts and now we have added the St John's Ambulance. The support is in the form of annual grants given to them for the excellent work they do.

Mr Speaker, I now move on to my responsibilities as Minister for Sport.

As the House knows, the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority (GSLA) is tasked with the running of all sport related matters.

This includes the management of the Bayside Sports Complex, the Swimming Pool, playgrounds and parks.

Part of the Bayside Sports Complex has been sold to the GFA in order for them to develop the National Stadium.



The GSLA will retain the Hockey Pitch, the Tercentenary Hall, and all of the pitches and grounds west of the complex which include the boathouse, Padel Tennis Courts, Tennis Courts, jet ski enclosure, the climbing wall and the Stay and Play Centre.

A programme of upgrading and refurbishment has been taking place.

In the hockey pitch, for example, the watering system had been malfunctioning for an extended period of time and this resulted in increased water consumption.

So, investigations and upgrades were approved.

This included the reconfiguration of the systems overflow and return valves to increase the recycling capability of the tanks.

It also included the installation of new dosing pumps to sterilise the water recovered from the pitches themselves.

These works were completed in August 2017 and it has resulted in a total saving of £30,010.46 (up to and including 31st March, 2018).

Aside from the obvious monetary savings the system now recycles approximately 65% of the water and is in line with HMGOG "Green" policies.

Mr Speaker, all three Padel courts have undergone a substantial upgrade.

All three received new artificial turf, a much better lighting system and the installation of competition grade perimeter fencing.

The advice and suggestions of regular users was taken on board.

This is one of the GSLA's most popular facilities and it has now increased in popularity further still as a result of the investment undertaken.

The Boathouse which now houses the Island Games 2019 office was given a much-needed facelift.

It is now used regularly by many associations and has become the hub for the organisation of the Island Games.

The current "red" metal girders and fencing at the front of the TSH spectator stands renders the first four/five rows unusable or at best offers extremely restricted viewing.

These will be replaced by appropriate glass panelling ensuring that spectators will have a full unrestricted view in future.

At the Swimming Pool all works at the Plant Room are now complete and the modernisation of the system has meant that there is no longer a need for a weekly outsourcing of backwashes, chemical level controls and other related tasks.

The existing maintenance agreement was therefore no longer required resulting in a saving of £65,000 per annum.



In addition, extra savings have been experienced through the reduction in:

- 1) Chemical consumption (approx. 50%)
- 2) Water consumption (approx. 40%)

In effect this means that the capital expenditure required for the upgrades has been addressed.

As with every financial year the parks and playgrounds under the GSLA's remit have continued to receive relevant repairs and upgrades.

The playgrounds at Chilton Court Housing Estate and Catalan Bay received major upgrades.

The GSLA team are also constantly fixing and maintaining all the park equipment on a rolling basis.

Given the recent sale of the Victoria Stadium and in particular the Victoria Stadium Sports Hall there is a need to provide a second covered area in the Bayside Sports Complex to meet regulations in order to host International Netball events.

The provision of a cover over the Multi -use Games Area (MUGA) will not only address this issue but will provide an extra indoor area for all users during the normally wet autumn/winter months.

Works have already started on providing the Gibraltar Cricket Association with outdoor cricket nets.

These will be retractable in nature and will make use of an area that was currently used for storage.

This facility will replace the old permanent nets which now lie within the footprint sold to the Gibraltar Football Association (GFA).

The fact that the nets are retractable will mean that the GSLA gains an extra facility to use for schools, associations or other community use activities.

GSLA Management raised very serious concerns regarding the staffing levels at the GSLA Swimming Pool Complex.

After an extensive review at the GSLA Swimming Pool Complex, it was decided to move to a three-shift system.

Therefore, the GSLA opened two vacancies at Grade 5 (Pool Manager) initially.

These vacancies were advertised internally with two Sports and Leisure Officers as the successful applicants. Five other vacancies for Pool Operatives/Lifeguards (Grade 13) were also advertised as per standard protocols regarding recruitment from within HMGOG Agencies, Authorities and Supply Workers.

The result of the recruitment is that the facility has moved to a 7-day week offering an extended service to the general public.

HMGOG via the GSLA have been involved with all the events held at the Complex both at a logistical as well as at financial level.



These have included:

- UEFA Futsal International Matches
- Gibraltar World Pool Masters 2018
- World Snooker Gibraltar Open 2018
- Euro-Hockey Club Challenge II Men

to name but a few.

In addition, the GSLA offers logistical support and facilities for local sports associations to complete their league and development programmes.

This support is offered throughout the year.

They also assist schools in fulfilling their P.E curriculum's both at the Bayside Sports Complex and at the GSLA Swimming Pool complex.

The Summer Sports & Leisure Programme 2017 once again improved on its previous year's attendance.

527 children were registered with the main arm of the programme namely the Sports Train and Stay Play programme.

The Sports Train offered sporting and leadership activities every weekday morning for 7 to 14 year olds.

The Children's Corner offered appropriate sport and recreational activities three days per week for 5 and 6 year olds.

The Family Evening Sessions noticed a marked improvement in attendance with sessions attracting groups totalling 80+ on occasions.

The Stay and Play programme offered sport, physical, arts and leisure activities for children with disabilities five days per week.

This element in particular needed to review its scheduling given the significantly higher attendances and with this in mind the temporary staff complement has been increased for the upcoming programme.

In addition, the Care Agency was actively involved in the induction training programme for 2017 adding to the quality of delivery whilst safeguarding the interests of leaders and users alike.

The GSLA also worked in partnership with Sports Associations (27 in total) to provide a wide range of sports coaching courses and tasters sessions for children and young people.

Other positive leisure providers also contributed to the programme these being:

- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Heritage
- Ministry of Environment



- Gibraltar Health Authority
- King's Bastion Leisure Centre
- Childline Gibraltar
- St John Ambulance
- Gibraltar Kennel Club.

Such is the success of the programme that the sponsorship arrangement with Natwest has been extended.

Mr Speaker, I am therefore glad to report that Natwest will once again be supporting the programme during 2018.

The programme for 2018 was launched only last week.

The Government is grateful to Natwest for their continued support.

Once again HM Government has supported local sports associations/athletes when travelling abroad to participate in Official International competitions.

This has been done via the Gibraltar Sports Advisory Council.

In addition, Sports Development initiatives were also supported.

More so than other years and given the uncertainty that Brexit conveys special consideration was given to attendances at Congresses or Annual General Meetings.

Active involvement in the dealings of International Governing bodies has and will continue to be one of the most important aspects of international membership.

As per the previous financial year individuals who presented cases for financial support under the "Elite Athlete" category have been supported after applications were considered on a case by case basis.

KBLC

As Minister for Leisure, another of my responsibilities is that of Kings Bastion Leisure Centre.

I am happy that after nearly 3 years being run by Leisure Management Services the centre has gone through great improvements.

They have managed to maintain the revenue for 2017 very much the same as 2016 with significant increases at the Fitness Gym.

This is due to the fact that it is well maintained and well run on a commercial basis.

The Fitness Gym and Recreation Rooms have had ceiling panels installed, as the paint used to flake off due to the dampness.



The revenues are same despite the fact that membership fees are well below the market price.

The Games Arcades has seen during these 3 years a vast improvement in both sales and the quality of the equipment.

Several new arcade machines were installed including a Virtual Reality Extreme Rides Simulator.

A very large LED Panel Screen, 15m (L) x 2.8m (H), has been installed at the back of the bowling lanes to enhance the area and also to generate additional revenue from advertising for 2018.

By having a full-time maintenance team many improvements to the Centre can be achieved.

They have had to do a considerable amount of painting and repainting because of the historical nature of the building.

Mr Speaker, when the centre was built under the previous administration there were hardly any environmental considerations to the manner and form of the construction.

This means that the electricity costs are exorbitant.

To this end glass panels on the roof were fitted with sun reflector screens to help keep the temperature lower, particularly during the Summers months, and also to save on air conditioning electricity costs.

Other parts of the roof have been replaced due to the poor original design which had been giving the centre problems for many years.

An automatic glass door was fitted at the entrance tunnel.

New LED lighting was installed on some of the Arcade vaults as well as an LED strip in the passage leading to Commonwealth Park to make that entrance more appealing.

In 2018 the centre's main project will be the replacement of all our bowling equipment, including pin setters, ball returns, lanes and scoring system with brand new equipment ahead of next year's Island Games.

All the costs are factored in to the legacy of the Island Games project.

We will also be installing a cashless card system whereby visitors to the Centre will be able to use a card which they can credit at one of the on-site kiosks.

They will then be able to pay for all the services that we offer with the same card.

This includes the arcade machines and the counters in the Bowling, Fitness Gym and Ice Rink.

All be fitted with readers.

Mr Speaker, all other entities at the centre are doing well.



Boyd's is now a great place for functions, Just 4 Kidz is becoming ever more popular and the Leisure Cinemas are not only bringing the latest of films to its screen but it is also having live performances from the heart of London's Theatres.

We are therefore hopeful that in the next 2 to 3 years the upward trend will continue.

For this I would like to thank the management of LMS and all its workforce who have really made the difference.

They have contributed to its success.

Thank you too to the entities that are part of the centre for being able to work together for the good of the centre as a whole.

Island Games

Mr Speaker, I propose to start with a summary of all that has and is being done in preparation for the 2019 Island Games.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome to Gibraltar the International Island Games Association Committee and all the delegates from all the 24 Islands that will be with us for the next 4 days for their Annual General Meeting.

Projects

When I first thought of presenting to cabinet the prospect of hosting the Island Games the operative word that came to my mind was legacy.

This is how the London Games were sold to the citizens there.

I am obviously very grateful to all my government colleagues who have embraced the concept and are actively working to be able to fulfil this goal.

This is a collective goal and never in the history of Gibraltar has a government invested so much time and effort in sporting projects than our GSLP/Liberal Government.

This is going to be transformational.

I also ask people to be patient in the final year before the games.

Yes, there will be disruptions due to construction and preparation for the games and even during the actual games but in the long run this will be for the good of Gibraltar.

I can inform this house that all the sporting projects are on budget and on time.



At Lathbury, we will have a Football/Rugby Pitch, an Athletics 8 lane track and field facilities, a 52m Olympics size swimming pool, and parking spaces and stores underneath the whole of the complex.

At Europa Point we will have a multi-purpose hall as big as the Tercenterary Hall at the Bayside Complex.

We will also have Squash Courts, a Darts Arena, Indoor Cricket Nets as well as dormitories for visiting teams.

There will be treatment, changing and conference rooms as well as bar/cafeteria facilities.

This will be the home of Rugby, Squash, Cricket, and Darts.

It will be used by all indoor sports, such as Netball, Basketball, Futsal, Badminton Table-tennis, etc.

The Special Olympics Complex is one which is dear to my heart.

This complex will be transformational for many reasons.

We are look at facilities which will be fully inclusive in every way.

The aim is also to provide sheltered employment there.

And the complex will have state of the art facilities for all.

The Shooting Range at North Mole together with office, car parking storage space is progressing well.

These will also be state of the art facilities which will be ready for our Island Games but which will continue to be used for many years into the future.

The student accommodation at Europa Point which I am leading on is also on track.

Again, this will not only be used for the Games but it will be used in the future for students at the university which is virtually next door.

Mr Speaker, the Government has a duty to be positive and to invest in the wellbeing of our community.

This is what we are doing by hosting the Island Games in Gibraltar next year.

The benefits are huge.

From the outset we focused on delivering the best Island Games ever.

When I have travelled to other such games over the years, I have been stopped and praised by people who remember the Sunshine Games that Gibraltar hosted in 1995.

Hosting an Island Games is a great honour and I can say now that the response I have had to date from everyone in our community has been truly exceptional.



The members of the Gibraltar Island Games Association Committee are giving of their time and expertise to organise the best games ever.

They are using the model of the Jersey games.

Therefore, the first thing we did was to form a company which would be managed and run by the GIGA.

The company now has 3 full-time employees.

Chief Executive Officer, Games Director and Logistics and Planning Director.

Further we have a number of sub-committees who are dealing with all aspects of the organisation.

These include:

- Finance
- Legal
- Accommodation
- Transport
- Volunteers
- Commercial Operations
- Security.
- Games Operation
- Ceremonies
- Media

Each Sub-committee has a team that work on their own remit.

They report on a regular basis to the company.

We also have regular meetings with all collectively to coordinate with each other.

I would like at this point to highlight that all the members of the sub-committees are doing all this work on a purely voluntary basis.

On behalf of the Government and of Gibraltar I thank them all.

The Island Games offices at the Bayside Complex Boathouse is the heart of all the organisation of the Games.

Things are moving very well and at a fast pace.

I am extremely happy at how everything is coming together on the organisational aspect.

I have thanked everyone for the work that they are doing.

However, I must single out one person for a special thank you and that person is Linda Alvarez.

She has put her organisational skills and her expertise to very good use.



I would also like to tell all our citizens that soon we will be launching a number of initiatives in relation to the Games.

The Games belong to all of us.

We must all take on ownership of the Island Games.

We will be asking for all in Gibraltar to show what they are really made of as a community and to engage in whichever form they feel they can contribute.

The Games should bring us all closer together.

The benefit of the games goes even further.

It will showcase Gibraltar as a forward-looking society and will expose the beauty of our country.

It will also benefit our economy due to the fact that we will have 2500 athletes, coaches and officials in our shores for at least 8 days.

All our business and commercial entities will benefit.

Many of us will enjoy the sporting programme that we intend to put on during the Games.

All the work we are doing to create this legacy will not only be the bricks and mortar in the form of the facilities.

The legacy will also take on the form of an industry.

This sporting industry can be developed further after the Games once the facilities are in place.

We are already working at using these wonderful facilities to attract sporting teams to come to Gibraltar.

We want them here to not only compete against us in tournaments but also to take time training and preparing themselves for the professional arena.

Gibraltar will be well placed to attract this sort of market.

This will then be a win-win situation since we will not only host them to spend time and money here, but we can also learn from them as to training schedules, nutritional aspects and the lifestyle of a professional sportsperson.

So, I will end by saying to everyone in Gibraltar let's get involved in the Games and be a part of it.

Mr Speaker I want to close my address this year by saying thank you.

I would like to thank all member of the Youth Advisory Council, The Youth Forum, the Gibraltar Sports Advisory Council, all the cultural groups from the arts, drama, photographic and dance fraternity.



Thank you also to all the members of the Governing Bodies of those sports who are involved in delivering state of the art facilities which will leave a lasting Legacy well after the Island Games has passed.

I am grateful to the Organising Committee of the Island Games who do this without any financial interest.

The team at AKS and at Orfila's, that are producing all the architectural and technical designs for all the sporting and cultural projects, with which I am involved.

Thanks to those at Technical Services who help me steer these projects.

Thanks also goes to the staff, at Gibraltar Cultural Services, at the Gibraltar Academy of Music and Performing Arts, at Leisure Management Services from Kings' Bastion Leisure Centre, at the Gibraltar Sports and Leisure Authority, at GBC, at the Youth Service.

Mr Speaker, thanks to you and your staff at Parliament and last but definitely not least my staff at the Ministry of Culture without whom I would not be able to implement all the positive policies and manifesto commitments which I am involved.

Thank you all.

