

A Workforce Development Strategy for the Falkland Islands: Results from the consultation on the draft Strategy and proposed actions

The Policy & Economic Development Department held a public consultation on the draft Workforce Development Strategy from 20 March to 14 May 2023. The Strategy is intended to set ambitions and direction to support medium term planning over the next five to ten years. It supports the aims in the Islands Plan 2022-26 to promote sustained economic development for the Islands; to continue to develop a lifelong education system; and to develop a workforce strategy to improve labour capacity in the Islands.

The public were invited to review and comment on the proposed vision of the Strategy; the challenges identified across key areas; and the proposed actions for tacking those challenges.

Nineteen responses were received and those findings are summarised here. A written response from the Chamber of Commerce was also received. The majority of individual responses were from Stanley residents (n=17) and more than half of responses were from long-term, permanent residents.

A complementary survey targeted at students and recent school-leavers also ran alongside engagement on the draft Strategy, and the responses received from twelve individuals are also summarised at the end of this report.

Agreement with the proposed Vision of the Strategy and how to achieve it

"A highly capable, motivated and flexible workforce that supports the sustained economic and social development of the Falklands Islands, providing opportunities for residents to develop their skills and careers in the Islands."

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	0	0%
Neutral	4	21%
Agree/strongly agree	15	79%



The Strategy proposes to achieve this vision by:

- Investing in education and skills development;
- Recruiting Falkland Islanders and permanent residents into roles that make best use of and help
 develop their skills, while bringing people to the Islands who have the skills we need and the
 personal qualities to be a good fit for life in the Falkland Islands, helping them to integrate on
 arrival so they can play a full part in Island life;
- Retaining people with the right skills and qualities, encouraging Falkland Islanders and permanent residents to stay (or return from the UK or elsewhere), and international recruits to settle here and become part of our community.

Respondent agreement with how it's proposed to achieve the vision

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	0	0%
Neutral	1	5%
Agree/strongly agree	18	95%

Answered: 19, Skipped: 0

Overall, 16 respondents provided comments relating to the vision and how it's proposed to achieve it. Figure 1 shows the frequency that different themes were mentioned. Table 1 overleaf shows the themes and subthemes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement with the proposed vision.

Figure 1. Themes arising from comments on the vision



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Table 1. Themes and subthemes from respondent comments, by level of agreement with the proposed vision

Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
Neutral	Invest in education and training	Should reference specific sectors
Neutrai	to improve retention	Reward and remuneration vital for retention
	Incompany FICe we amount me and and	Encouraging retention is broader than work satisfaction
	Improve FIGs recruitment and employment processes	Better integration of new employees
	employment processes	Better integration of new employees
	Invest in education and training	FIG pay structure a limiting factor
	to improve retention	Extend education and training opportunities to overseas
		employees
	Leadership on promoting the Islands as an employment destination	FIG needs to lead on implementation
		Digital portal to attract people to the Islands
Agroo/		Effective leadership and management is key for success
Agree/ strongly		Promote a rewarding career and quality of life package
agree	Other	Other
-0		Create opportunities for school-leavers
	Proactively invest in young	Greater links between FIG/College/Students on potential
	people's career development	careers
		Employment/housing package for returning students
		Value experience of local people
	Recognise and value skills and experience	Limited career advancement in FIG
		Limited career advancement in FIG
	Слрененос	Social in addition to economic benefits to valuing local employees



Proposals for Investing in Education and Skills

The key education and skills challenges identified for the Falkland Islands are:

- Although highly skilled, people in the community may not always have formal qualifications and in some cases, particularly in Camp, skills in multiple disciplines are more advantageous than formal qualifications
- Restricted access to education and skills training on the basis of immigration status disadvantages some young people in the community
- A workforce that may require more adaptability to meet the evolving skills needs of the local economy
- Limitations to the current suite of local education and training opportunities available
- The availability of information and support, for people to make informed choices about their education and training

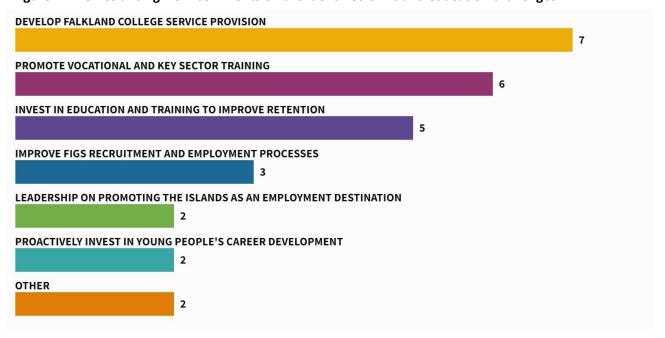
Respondent agreement that the key education and skills challenges are identified:

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	2	11%
Neutral	4	21%
Agree/strongly agree	13	68%

Answered: 19, Skipped: 0

Overall, 14 respondents provided comments relating to the challenges identified in relation to investing in skills and education. Figure 2 shows the frequency that different themes were mentioned. Table 2 overleaf shows the themes and subthemes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement with the identified challenges.

Figure 2. Themes arising from comments on the identified skills and education challenges





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Table 2. Themes and subthemes from respondent comments, by level of agreement with the identified skills and education challenges

	U		
	Develop Falkland College service provision	Improve capacity for online learning at Falkland College	
Neutral		Increase vocational training provision	
	provision	Increase local provision of training at Falkland College	
	Leadership on promoting the Islands as an employment destination	Make the Falklands an attractive place for learning	
	Proactively invest in young people's	Support students in alternative learning centres	
	career development	Ensure career path for returning students	
	Promote vocational and key sector	Encourage skills and training in science and the environment	
	training	Provide training linked to skill shortages	
	Develop Falkland College service	Increase local provision of A levels at Falkland College	
	provision	Improve capacity for online learning at Falkland College	
	Improve FIGs recruitment and	FIG HR job evaluation system needs to improve	
	employment processes	Incentivise roles for local employees	
Agree/	Invest in education and training to improve retention	Retain the labour force by investing in their skills and training	
strongly agree		Better education and training opportunities will retain more families	
		Need continuity and certainty with GCSE subjects offered	
		Improve teacher retention	
		Funding to A level for all	
	Other	Other	
	Promote vocational and key sector	Apprenticeship scheme works to meet skills shortages	
	training	Encourage uptake of formal qualifications in Camp	
	Develop Falkland College service provision	Increase local provision of training at Falkland College	
Disagree/	Improve FIGs recruitment and employment processes	FIG HR to change how skills and experience are considered	
strongly disagree	Leadership on promoting the Islands as an employment destination	Need to improve access to and information on skills and training	
	Promote vocational and key sector	Trade professions should be valued more	
	training	Encourage careers in agriculture	



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The proposed actions identified in the Strategy for investing in education and skills, and tackling the identified challenges, are:

Develop and publish a long-term vision and plan for lifelong learning, which will include:

- Planning how the Falkland College offer will develop and extend over time;
- Scoping and costing a commitment to enable everyone who is resident in the Falkland Islands, and likely to remain part of our workforce in the long term, to achieve the level of qualification needed to demonstrate competence in their field, trade or profession;
- Removing, or substantially raising, the upper age limit for Further Education funding (currently 20)
 for anyone who has not already benefitted from such funding;
- Continuing to extend and develop the offer on basic skills (Maths, English, and English for speakers of other languages);
- Continuing to improve the facilities for Shield, building on the recently-added workshop and garden spaces.

• Continue to develop and promote the Apprenticeships scheme, including:

- Extending eligibility for Apprenticeships, to include PRP holders and long-term work permit holders (and, particularly, young people whose parents are PRP or long-term work permit holders), subject to constraints on funding and available opportunities;
- Promoting agricultural apprenticeships to help develop the skills needed by Camp businesses;
- Promoting Apprenticeships more actively to Falkland Islands' businesses and within government to meet critical workforce needs including nurses, teachers, social workers and tradespeople.
- Promote and improve engagement between FI employers and young people studying abroad, to promote local career opportunities and encourage people to return after their studies, including through:
 - Making sure all students abroad are offered at least an annual review with the College careers team, whether remotely or in person, focused on their career aspirations and the opportunities available to them in the Falkland Islands;
 - Encouraging employers to build links with student, through employment and/or work experience during vacations, mentoring or other links.

Continue to encourage a culture of succession planning across all employers, by:

- Providing career development pathways (building on and extending the best current practice);
- Ensuring skills transfer from skilled contractors to help prepare residents to take on those roles.

Respondent agreement that these actions will tackle the identified education and skills challenges:

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	1	5%
Neutral	3	16%
Agree/strongly agree	15	79%



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Overall, 12 respondents provided comments relating to the proposed actions for tackling the skills and education challenges. Figure 3 shows the frequency that different themes were mentioned. Table 3 shows the themes and subthemes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement with the proposed actions.

Figure 3. Themes arising from comments on the proposed actions to tackle skills and education challenges

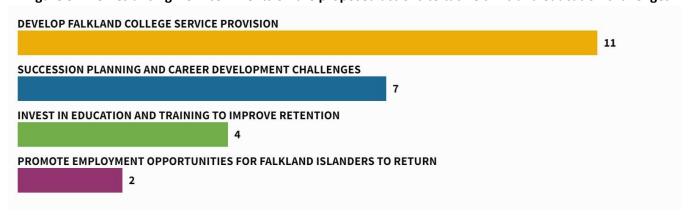


Table 3. Themes and subthemes from respondent comments, by level of agreement with the proposed actions to tackle skills and education challenges

A	kle skills and education challenges	
Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
	Develop Falkland College service provision	Apprenticeships in science and the environment
	Invest in education and training	Enable flexible working conditions and training opportunities
Neutral	to improve retention	Fund higher level education opportunities in relevant fields
	Promote employment opportunities for Falkland Islanders to return	Focus annual review for overseas students on employment options and career pathways
		Providing qualifications in trades and technical skills is critical
		Overseas education and training has benefits other than qualifications
	Develop Falkland College service provision	Provide free English classes
		Provide clearer information on differences between CDS and FE
		Maintain realistic objectives for Falkland College provision
		Increase vocational training provision
		Prioritise career development pathways for all new employees
Agree/		Expansion of Apprenticeship Scheme essential
strongly		Wider education and training opportunities will encourage retention
agree	Invest in education and training to improve retention	Commit to lifelong learning and remove age limits for FE
	Promote employment opportunities for Falkland Islanders to return	Supporting learners will encourage return to the Islands
		Make skills transfer mandatory
	Succession planning and career	Promote local talent
	development challenges	Retention is key before skills transfer
		Commitment from management needed for succession planning



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Table 3 continued

Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
Develop Falkland College service provision		Review purpose and function of Falkland College
Disagree/ Invest in education and training to improve retention	Determine if lack of skills training limits retention	
disagree	<i>3</i> ,	Overhaul FIG HR job evaluation system
		Ensure a career path for programmes e.g. Management Trainee
development challenges		Adequately resource FIG Departments to enable succession planning

The top three actions identified by respondents were (in order of preference):

- 1. Removing, or substantially raising, the upper age limit for Further Education funding (currently 20) for anyone who has not already benefitted from such funding
- 2. Extending eligibility for Apprenticeships, to include PRP holders and long-term work permit holders (and, particularly, young people whose parents are PRP or long-term work permit holders), subject to constraints on funding and available opportunities
- 3. Promote and improve engagement between FI employers and young people studying abroad, to promote local career opportunities and encourage people to return after their studies making sure all students abroad are offered at least an annual review with the College careers team, whether remotely or in person, focused on their career aspirations and the opportunities available to them in the Falkland Islands



Proposals for Recruitment and Integration

The key recruitment and integration challenges identified for the Falkland Islands are:

- Providing Falkland Islanders and Permanent Residents with employment opportunities where they
 can develop and progress their careers
- Encouraging Falkland Islanders working or studying abroad to return to employment in the Islands
- The way we market the opportunities for working and living in the Falkland Islands
- Balancing the need for a streamlined immigration regime while maintaining the necessary safeguards
- Working to reduce employee turnover by ensuring that new arrivals are welcomed and helped to integrate

Respondent agreement that we have identified the key recruitment and integration challenges:

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	1	5%
Neutral	1	5%
Agree/strongly agree	17	89%

Answered: 19, Skipped: 0

Overall, 13 respondents provided comments relating to the challenges identified in relation to investing in skills and education. Figure 4 shows the frequency that different themes were mentioned. Table 4 overleaf shows the themes and subthemes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement with the identified challenges.

Figure 4. Themes arising from comments on the identified recruitment and integration challenges





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Table 4. Themes and subthemes from respondent comments, by level of agreement with the identified recruitment and integration challenges

Neutral Integration processes and challenges Turnover impacts on sustainable management of the environment of the environment of the environment environment environment environment mentors are processed in the environment environment environment	Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
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			Open up Apprenticeship Scheme to all
			Need to market job opportunities better



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The proposed actions identified in the Strategy for tackling recruitment and integration challenges, are:

- Continue to promote local recruitment, and encourage Falkland Islanders who have moved abroad, to work or study, to return to live and work in the Islands
 - Work led by FIGO in engaging with Falkland Islanders living abroad, includes a strand about encouraging those individuals to consider opportunities to return.
- Recognise that applicants may have the necessary skills and experience to do a job even if they lack formal qualifications
 - While there are some jobs that will require specific qualifications (e.g., doctors), recruitment processes should where possible take into account both qualifications and equivalent experience.
- Work with the Chamber and other stakeholders on an attraction plan for international recruitment, centred around an on-line portal
 - This is likely to have most impact if designed and delivered as a single point of entry for information about living and working in the Islands and was operated outside of FIG.
- Scope and cost development of a 'settlement service'
 - Draw on successful models elsewhere in the world that provide newcomers with a range of help including information on everyday living, referrals to services, and English classes. A settlement service could support what employers already do to welcome new arrivals, and could be run by community organisation(s), funded by government subvention.
- Continue to review how the work permit immigration system operates to streamline processes, improve customer experience and eliminate unnecessary delays. This will include:
 - Developing an on-line application process; planned to be launched during 2023;
 - Reviewing the range of performance indicators, including the time cases take to reach completion, to seek to reflect the overall experience of individuals and businesses;
 - Considering extending the short medical form to other countries with advanced health services;
 - Improving the information available on how the overall 'journey' through work permits, PRP and Falkland Islands Status works;
 - Improving the information available on how assessments of medical, dental and educational fitness are undertaken and what criteria are taken into account.
- Work with FIDC and the Chamber to identify any measures which could be introduced to help small employers with the costs and risks involved in international recruitment.
 - One option might be small low-interest or interest-free FIDC loans, with repayment not starting until the recruitment process has been completed.

Agreement that these actions will tackle the identified challenges

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	1	5%
Neutral	1	5%
Agree/strongly agree	17	89%



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Overall, 12 respondents provided comments relating to the proposed actions for tackling recruitment and integration challenges. Figure 5 shows the frequency that different themes were mentioned. Table 5 overleaf shows the themes and subthemes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement with the identified challenges.

Figure 5. Themes arising from comments on the proposed actions to tackle recruitment and integration challenges

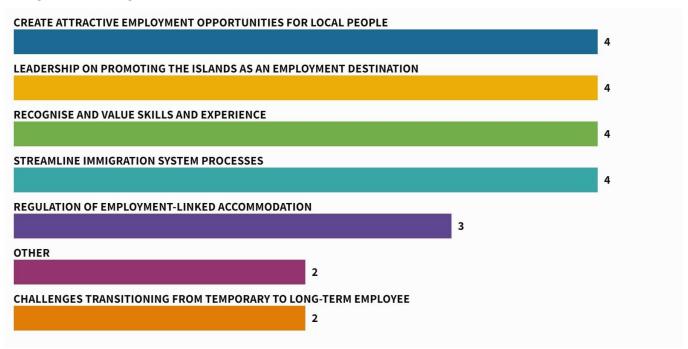


Table 5. Themes and subthemes from respondent comments, by level of agreement with the proposed actions to tackle recruitment and integration challenges

Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
	Challenges transitioning	Need to improve processes for contract extensions
	from temporary to long- term employee	Better information on how to stay longer-term needed
	Create attractive	Make it more attractive to return to the Islands following education/training
	employment opportunities for local people	Need to train existing local employees and enable career development
Agree/	ongly the Islands as an	Remuneration package for overseas employees needs to be competitive to attract the right people
strongly		Encourage retention by marketing employment opportunities better
agree		Recruitment process need to be streamlined and more complete information provided
		FIDC and the Chamber assistance with international recruitment should focus on small businesses
		Other
	Recognise and value skills and experience	Falkland College should help people to align their past experience with potential employment opportunities
		Vital that skills and experience and not just qualifications are recognised



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Table 5 continued

Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
	0 1 (FIG needs to assess accommodation provided by employers linked to Work Permits
	Regulation of employment-linked	FIG needs to establish a mechanism for workers and tenants to enforce their rights and resolve disputes
	accommodation	FIG needs to ensure sufficient and appropriate housing is available if the aim is to increase the overseas workforce
Streamline immigratio system processes	Streamline immigration	Better communication between Immigration and Departments is welcomed
		Need to modernise immigration system while protecting security and Falklands way of life
	system processes	Improve the immigration system and make it easier to extend work permits
		Need to streamline process for work permit applications
Disagree/ strongly disagree	Create attractive employment opportunities for local people	Comparable remuneration package for local and overseas employees
		Incentivise local people to return to employment in the Islands rather than settle overseas
	Leadership on promoting the Islands as an employment destination	Need to have a single FIG portal
	Recognise and value skills and experience	Need to acknowledge experience of local people and not just qualifications

The top three actions identified by respondents were (in order of preference):

- Continue to promote local recruitment, and encourage Falkland Islanders who have moved abroad, to work or study, to return to live and work in the Islands - work led by FIGO in engaging with Falkland Islanders living abroad, includes a strand about encouraging those individuals to consider opportunities to return.
- 2. Recognise that applicants may have the necessary skills and experience to do a job even if they lack formal qualifications while there are some jobs that will require specific qualifications (e.g., doctors), recruitment processes should where possible take into account both qualifications and equivalent experience.
- 3. Improving the information available on how the overall 'journey' through work permits, PRP and Falkland Islands Status works



Proposals for Retention

The key retention challenges identified for the Falkland Islands are:

- A strong economy and a tight labour market, which create the need for overseas recruitment
- Encouraging more people to stay long-term and/or settle permanently in order to reduce high levels
 of staff turnover, for both local and overseas employees

Agreement that we have identified the key retention challenges for the Falkland Islands

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	1	5%
Neutral	6	32%
Agree/strongly agree	12	63%

Answered: 19, Skipped: 0

Overall, 14 respondents provided comments relating to the challenges identified in relation to retention. Figure 6 shows the frequency that different themes were mentioned. Table 6 overleaf shows the themes and subthemes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement with the identified challenges.

Figure 6. Themes arising from comments on the proposed actions to tackle retention challenges





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Table 6. Themes and subthemes from respondent comments, by level of agreement with the identified retention challenges

Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
Neutral	Challenges transitioning from temporary to long-term employee	Create job opportunities for overseas employees beyond time-limited projects
		Loss of overseas contract package and length of time for Status means little incentive to get PRP
	Infrastructure challenges for retention	Internet provision a major limiting factor
		Limited availability of housing a major issue
	Leadership on promoting the Islands as an employment destination	Need to ensure FI is a destination of choice
	Promote employment opportunities for Falkland Islanders to return	Incentivise local people to return to employment in the Islands rather than settle overseas
		Provide housing for young people returning to employment
		Proactive early engagement with employers and students on opportunities available
Agree/	Challenges transitioning from	Improve the process of contract renewals and extensions
strongly	temporary to long-term	Improve the process of contract renewals and extensions
agree	employee	Better information needs to be provide to potential employees
		FIG needs to proactively encourage people to stay long-term
	Encourage retention via attractive and fair working	Attractive employment packages will encourage retention
		Provide opportunities for all - don't discriminate
	conditions	Better integration of new arrivals
	Infrastructure challenges for retention	Limited availability of housing impacts on conversions from Work Permits to PRP
	Leadership on promoting the	Need to improve our online presence
	Islands as an employment destination	Need to ensure we attract the right people
	Other	Recognising experience is important, but requiring specific qualifications is also vital
		Target workers for specific economic sectors
		Encouraging people to stay is cost-effective in the long term
	Streamline immigration system processes	Applying for PRP needs to be more affordable i.e. medicals
		Reducing time to PRP and Status will encourage retention
Disagree/ strongly disagree	Encourage retention via	Fair pay and working conditions
	attractive and fair working conditions	Consistent application of FIG policies
	Infrastructure challenges for retention	Greater availability of housing will encourage retention
	Streamline immigration system processes	Make PRP and Status applications more affordable



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The proposed actions identified in the Strategy for tackling recruitment and integration challenges, are:

- Continue to review how the immigration system operates for PRP and Falkland Islands Status to streamline processes, improve customer experience and eliminate unnecessary delays, including:
 - Reviewing all fees and charges incurred by individuals and families in applying for PRP, British
 Overseas Territory citizenship, and FI status, to ensure that cost is not a barrier;
 - Assessing the impact of the September 2021 package of immigration reforms after two years of operation, to assess the impact on workforce development.
- Make simple, clear guidance available about the pathway to PRP and FI Status under the reformed PRP system
 - Making sure this is available to work permit holders in the Islands and their employers, and also to
 potential overseas recruits from the outset. Designed encourage temporary workers to consider
 settling in the Falkland Islands, outlining the benefits, and giving practical advice on applying for
 PRP, British OT citizenship and FI Status.
 - FIG HR has produced new guidance to encourage managers to have earlier conversations with contract staff about their long term aspirations and the potential benefits of staying on the Islands longer term. HR will support peer networks for staff interesting in settling long term.
- Continue to promote a culture of succession planning and career development, within businesses and FIG to help prepare permanent and long-term residents to develop their skills and careers.
 - For instance, secondments and shadowing work experience could provide an opportunity to gain skills and experience.
 - Within FIG, a mentoring scheme provides an opportunity for staff to seek advice about their career development and the performance appraisal system allows staff to communicate their ambitions to their manager.
 - Within FIG, continued work on rewards and recognition is planned to improve employee satisfaction and retention.
- Continue work related to infrastructure developments that may have impacts on the retention of workers within the Islands
 - Such as housing, technological advancement, provision of health and education services and improved travel links.
- Recognise that some amount of 'churn' will be inevitable and implement processes to minimise the impacts.
 - Robust documentation, knowledge transfer and related activities will help to preserve institutional knowledge and reduce the impact of churn on operations.

Agreement that these actions will tackle the identified challenges

	n	%
Strongly disagree/disagree	1	5%
Neutral	3	16%
Agree/strongly agree	15	79%



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Overall, 13 respondents provided comments relating to the proposed actions for tackling the identified retention challenges. Figure 7 shows the frequency that different themes were mentioned. Table 7 overleaf shows the themes and subthemes that emerged, broken down by respondents' level of agreement with the identified challenges.

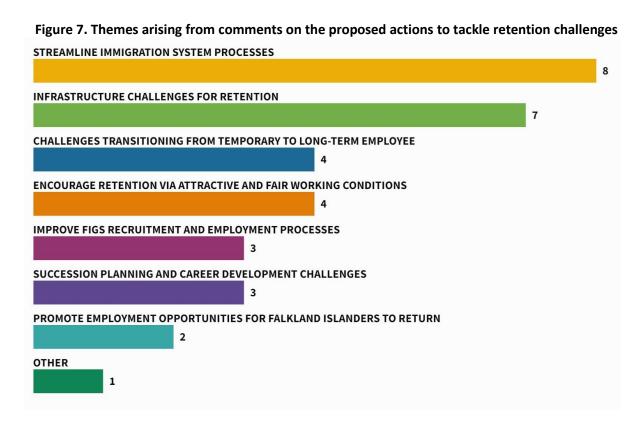


Table 7. Themes and subthemes from respondent comments, by level of agreement with the proposed actions to tackle retention challenges

Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
Neutral	Improve FIGs recruitment and employment processes	Dedicated time for knowledge transfer at the end of contracts needed
	Promote employment opportunities for Falkland Islanders to return	Provide housing for young people returning from education/training
	Streamline immigration system processes	Streamlined processes for conversion from Work Permits and ability to own land will make the Islands a more competitive destination
Agree/ strongly agree	Challenges transitioning from temporary to long-term employee	Home-stays could encourage better integration new arrivals
		Loss of overseas contract package a disincentive for staying
		Loss of overseas contract package and length of time for Status means little incentive to get PRP
	Encourage retention via attractive and fair working conditions	Improve pay conditions for lower FIG grades
		Improve the process of contract renewals and extensions
		Review of FIG salaries a priority
		Overseas employees should have access to CPD funding
	Improve FIGs recruitment and employment processes	Dedicated time for knowledge transfer at the end of contracts needed
		Better transfer of corporate knowledge and handover needed



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Table 7 continued

Agreement	Theme	Subtheme
	Infrastructure challenges for	Explore subsidising homeowners to upgrade properties and take in
	retention	overseas employees
		Ensure that contractor housing is up to standard
		Internet provision a major limiting factor
		Families without access to funded Post-16 education are unlikely to stay
		Internet provision a major limiting factor
		Quality and consistency of education provided causes families to leave
	Other	Other
	Promote employment opportunities for Falkland Islanders to return	Need to make the Islands an attractive place to live and work
	Streamline immigration system processes	Faster immigration reforms
		Make PRP and Status applications more affordable
		Overhaul of immigration system needed
		Make PRP and Status applications more affordable
	Succession planning and	Expand the mentoring programme to the private sector
	career development	Commit to resourcing succession planning
	challenges	Little career advancement opportunities in FIG limits effectiveness of succession planning
Disagree/ strongly disagree	Challenges transitioning from temporary to long-term employee	Cliff-edge of losing overseas contract package discourages staying long-term
	Infrastructure challenges for retention	Limited ability to build or buy housing impacts staying long-term
	Streamline immigration system processes	Clearer guidance on FI Status regulations needed
		FI Status legislation needs to be more flexible
		Uncertainty around dual-nationality and ability to gain Status and voting rights will affect retention

The top three actions identified by respondents were (in order of preference):

- 1. Make simple, clear guidance available about the pathway to PRP and FI Status under the reformed PRP system making sure this is available to work permit holders in the Islands and their employers, and also to potential overseas recruits from the outset. Designed encourage temporary workers to consider settling in the Falkland Islands, outlining the benefits, and giving practical advice on applying for PRP, British OT citizenship and FI Status.
- 2. Continue work related to infrastructure developments that may have impacts on the retention of workers within the Islands, such as housing, technological advancement, provision of health and education services and improved travel links.
- 3. Recognise that some amount of 'churn' will be inevitable and implement processes to minimise the impacts. For example, robust documentation, knowledge transfer and related activities will help to preserve institutional knowledge and reduce the impact of churn on operations.