

Election of Chief Minister – Council of Ministers Act 1990 s.2

Written Statement

Hon Members

As you are aware I am a committed Manxman who is proud of his homeland with the well being of all the people at heart. I have spent thirty years in public life as an elected representative doing what I can to make a difference, 25 of those years have been as the member of the House of Keys for Castletown. Since first being elected to the House of Keys in 1981 I have committed myself to working to advancing the Island and securing its future.

I am a person who likes to get things done and I am not afraid of making changes and where necessary difficult decisions, so long as I am satisfied that it is the correct thing to do and is in the best interests of the Island.

Like everyone, I do not have all the answers, however, as Chief Minister I will commit myself to do my best for the Island, using my best endeavours for the well being of all, and I will at all times act with integrity.

My record of energetically working for the good of the Island, getting things done, being open and honest, promoting a positive attitude, providing encouragement and confidence is well known. I also expect members and officers to commit themselves to work for the good of our Island. During my time in the Keys I have represented the Island overseas both at Parliamentary and Government level.

I have, like others, been committed to improving the quality of life for all on our Island and I have actively pursued and supported policies that have brought that about. I have supported the need for a diverse economy which I believe is vital to enable us to sustain our internal independence and to secure employment and a good quality of life. It is my intention to continue to support this diversity which will include tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, finance and shipping, to name but a few. A strong economy will allow us to continue to provide care and support for those most in need.

If elected to the post of Chief Minister I intend to provide strong, firm, honest and fair leadership; I will provide effective management of the Executive Government, promoting confidence and encouragement. I propose to appoint a Ministerial team that will energetically and enthusiastically commit themselves, both individually and collectively first and foremost to the well being of the Island and its people, a team who will act cohesively, with integrity and respect. I will require all Ministers to commit themselves totally to actively work in the best interests of our Island, to have a positive attitude and to lead the Island forward with confidence. All Ministers will be expected to accept in total their responsibilities as the political head of their Department, and they will be expected to provide strong political leadership and direction, ensuring their Departments operate effectively and efficiently. They will also be expected to work closely with their Departmental colleagues and other Departments to ensure effective co-operation maximising Government's structures, facilities, investment and expertise for the benefit of Government efficiency. Departments will, where possible, be expected to take a positive attitude to do what they can to assist all members and the public in dealing with issues.

Waste of resources must be combated and maximising the use of available personnel is paramount to ensure we provide an effective and efficient Government machine so as to benefit the public.

I will expect there to be a strong ethos of public service from all Departments. I will expect all Chief Executives to ensure the effective administration of their Departments and they will be held to account for the effectiveness of their staff, especially in relation to service delivery and in dealing with the public.

It is my intention to encourage the involvement of all members of Tynwald within Government so as to maximise the valuable experience, contributions and abilities of members for the benefit of our Island. We are a small Nation in a very competitive world. We cannot afford to be complacent; we have to be imaginative and vigilant. We do not have the luxury of sidelining colleagues just for the sake of political dogma. I fully accept that for any democratic system to work effectively positive criticism and opposition is healthy, and I would do nothing to stifle such contributions. I will, of course, fully respect any members' wish not to serve as a member of the Government, although it is my hope that all will wish to contribute to developing and securing the future well-being of our Island.

It is important that we retain and enhance our successful economy and thereby safeguard and improve the quality of life and provide employment and we have to develop long-term strategies to secure the Island's future. We must ensure that the Island is a good, stable and high-quality place in which to invest and that confidence in the Island is high.

I continue to support the use of the tax system to provide much needed support for the less well off and I would like to see the system developed and expanded to provide greater support.

The provision of adequate housing will continue to be a high priority as will identifying and pursuing appropriate land purchases to enable Government to secure land to meet the long-term housing needs of our community.

Prudent budgeting will be pursued to ensure we are able to live within our means and the waste of valuable financial resources will not be acceptable.

The recent independent report on the Structure and Scope of Government, which recommends a major restructuring, merits careful consideration. However, I do not support the Corporatisation or Privatisation of the bodies as proposed. I intend to undertake early and full consideration of the report and to report back to Tynwald.

I also intend early consideration of the practicalities of setting up, under Statute, a dedicated drug enforcement agency with powers to investigate and combat drug importations and sales within the Island. I also intend early consideration of the implications of implementing effective controls at the main ports of entry into the Island.

Immigration continues to be a matter that needs careful and ongoing monitoring; it is important to keep under review the matter of when it may be necessary to implement the Residency Control Act and, if so, how it will be progressed, making clear to residents the implications of the Act.

Global Warming and Climate Change is affecting us all, it is therefore important that we develop effective strategies to do what is practical to play our part as an Island to help combat this world problem.

I intend to consider how we can further strengthen, protect and promote our Manx identity, our culture, our heritage and history.

The provision and support of leisure facilities throughout the Island is important and Government should continue to support the providers of such facilities where appropriate.

I would endeavour to protect and promote the continuing evolution of our constitutional position with the United Kingdom. The Island should endeavour to strengthen and develop its external relationships and create and develop business opportunities across the world where appropriate.

I will ensure that the Office of Chief Minister is provided with adequate support to enable greater effectiveness and to ensure that the position is properly facilitated.

Clearly, in such a document as this, I am unable to cover in detail all aspects of policies, but I have endeavoured to give general pointers as to what I hope and expect.

Whilst Government is an extremely diverse organisation and there will be much to do, there is however a number of important matters that I intend to give immediate attention to, these matters are set out below:

1. As a matter of urgency I intend to have introduced a Bill to amend the Civil Service Act to provide that the Chief Minister is designated the political head of the Civil Service with the power to delegate to members of Tynwald the role of Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Civil Service Commission. It is also my wish to increase the lay membership of the Commission.
2. I am concerned that in many areas the present bureaucracy is unnecessarily hampering the effectiveness of Government to deliver services efficiently resulting in additional staffing requirements. I intend there to be an urgent examination of procedures and I will set up a Working Group with a remit to investigate how we can reduce such bureaucracy and thus become more effective in delivering a service to the public.
3. I will also set up a Working Group to urgently investigate the present planning application system to consider whether there is a need to introduce new procedures to provide for greater political and lay input and public access to the system.
4. The development of the Strategic and Local Plans will be given high priority status in an endeavour to bring them to a final conclusion at an early date.
5. I intend to set up a Working Group to urgently examine how to secure the future viability and improve the environs of our towns and villages, especially in relation to developing business and employment opportunities regionally.

All the Working Groups above will involve ministers and members of Tynwald with such reporting to the Council of Ministers at an early date.

The Policy Objectives will be:

- to maintain and develop a high quality of life for our community
- to raise the standard of living of the people of the Island and to provide the resources to sustain and develop public services
- to support the delivery of effective and efficient services to meet the needs of our community
- to enable people individually and collectively to live healthily and fulfil their potential within a secure environment
- to ensure that the Government complies with the principles of Corporate Governance, is responsive, accessible and focuses on equality of opportunity
- to achieve international recognition and acceptance of the Island's unique constitutional, cultural, commercial and social identity
- to ensure that the Manx environment continues to be a valuable asset for future generations

Some other important issues that would be considered and progressed are:

- Independent Auditor General legislation
- Freedom of Information legislation
- Planning legislation
- Manx Museum and National Trust legislation
- Right to Roam legislation
- Consideration of a new scheme leasehold scheme to assist first-time buyers
- Consideration of the present Public Sector housing application criteria
- Local Government Reform
- Strategic Land purchase for residential purposes

In any term of Government there will inevitably be many difficult and varied decisions to be made and in making such decisions it will be important that all options are fully considered and the fullest possible information made available. During this next five years we have the opportunity to continue to build on what has been achieved over the past couple of decades. However, we always have to be conscious of external influences that may affect us and we will, if necessary, have to take actions to protect our position. Most importantly we must continue to provide the right climate for business opportunities and to provide a good and secure future enabling us to care for our people.

I will endeavour to provide the leadership to take us forward with confidence and to robustly defend our position as a Nation.

James Anthony Brown SHK
Member for Castletown

7th December 2006

TONY BROWN SHK, [The Hon James Anthony], Member for Castletown
(Independent)

Personal details:

- **Born:** 5 January 1950; **married:** 1979 Rachel (Smith); 1 daughter 1 son (both adults).
- **Residence:** 20 Kissack Road, Castletown (Tel 01624 824393) (Fax 01624 823828)
- **Proprietor:** 'Tony Brown Electrics' Castletown (Tel 01624 822148)
- **E-mail:** tonybrown1@manx.net or tonybrown@gov.im

Education:

Victoria Road Primary School Castletown & Castle Rushen High School Castletown

Profession:

1965 – Employed by the Isle of Man Electricity Board as an apprentice electrician – qualified – left employment 1980.

1980 – Self-employed electrician; **1981** – Opened retail business 'Tony Brown Electrics' Castletown

Political Career:

1976 - 1981 Member of Castletown Town Commissioners;

1977 and **1978** Vice-Chairman; **1980/1981** Chairmen of the Commissioners

1981 to-date Member of House of Keys for Castletown

Present Senior Parliamentary posts held:

2001 to-date: Speaker of the House of Keys

2001 - 2006: Chairman, Standing Orders of Tynwald Committee

2001 - 2006: Chairman House of Keys Standing Orders Committee

2001 - 2006: Member Manx Museum and National Trust

2002 -2006: Deputy President of Tynwald

2002 to-date: Chairman Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons' Committee

2002 to-date: Chairman Manx Heritage Foundation

2003 - 2006: Chairman Tynwald Standards and Members' Interests Committee

2003 - 2006: Chairman House of Keys Management and Members' Standards Committee

2005 to-date: Tynwald Representative to the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body

Previous Senior Posts (Government and Parliamentary) held:

1983-86 Chairman Government Property Trustees

1986-89 Minister for Health & Social Security

1989-94 Minister for Local Government & Environment

1994-96 Minister for Tourism and Leisure

1996- 2001 Minister for Transport

1991-96 Member of House of Keys Standing Orders Committee

2000-01 Deputy Speaker of the House of Keys

1981 to 1986: served as a member of the Local Government Board, the Planning Committee, the Assessment Board, the Highway Board, the Tourist Board and numerous Select Committees of both Tynwald and the Keys

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

2001 to-date Joint President

Interests

Motorcycle racing, heritage, history and photography.