

Scoring a hat-trick and feeling smug!

Written by PAG

Wednesday, 04 December 2013 22:03 - Last Updated Thursday, 05 December 2013 22:57



As 2013 draws to an end PAG can be forgiven for feeling jubilant as elements of the PAG Charter show signs of being realised.

1. Equality of representation in each constituency

This will be delivered by way of Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill 2013, which has just had a 1st reading in Keys.

The Bill reduces the number of constituencies, from 15 to 12, each with two MHKs. The measure will be in place for the General Election in 2016.

2. The number of Ministries to be reduced.

The recent publication of a CoMin Report on Modernising Ministerial Government entitled 'IOM Government An Agenda for Change' recommends a reduction in the number of Departments from 9 to 7. The change is proposed to take place in April 2014.

3. Webcasting of Parliamentary proceedings.

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Although not in our Charter this is something we pushed for 6 years ago. We made a submission to the Tynwald Management Committee for video webcasting to be introduced.

This week both Keys and LegCo unanimously agreed to introduce audio webcasting of all proceedings, including various Committee sessions, as from 28th January 2014. The initial cost is not great at about £3500 to set up and £600 per annum to administer.

Spurred on by these breaks-through PAG will continue to strive for the a Freedom of Information Act, the introduction of which has again been delayed.

There is nevertheless some encouragement to be gleaned in the Agenda for Change Report which recommends the establishment of a Cabinet Office and a Minister of Policy Reform to drive change. One of the roles of this post will be responsibility for taking a political lead on FOI.

We continue to live in hope and remain positive!