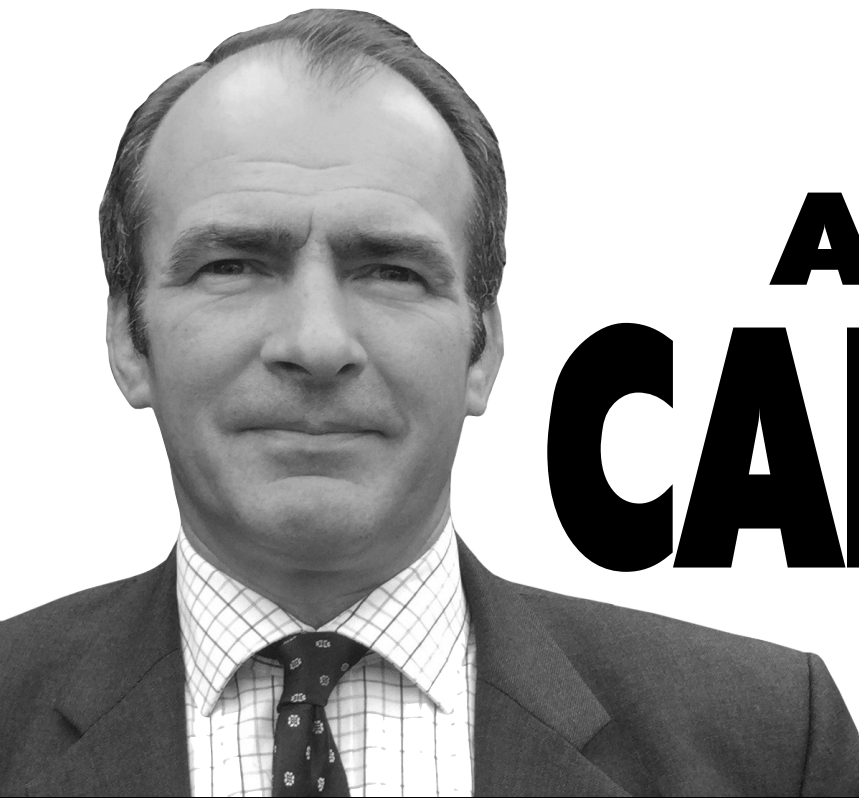


Election of the Chief Minister

**DELIVERING BETTER
GOVERNMENT BEYOND
AN AGENDA FOR CHANGE**



**ALFRED
CANNAN**

Our community faces significant challenges, as it has done for several years, but also there remains unfulfilled potential and opportunity to develop as an Island nation.

The last five years have been dominated by an Agenda for Change that has delivered little in the way of real outcomes for our society. We need to move beyond simply setting the Agenda and this election was a vote for change, not more of the same. Instead we must now work effectively together to deliver better Government and more focused outcomes for our people.

Key to this will be delivering a programme for Government that supports hard working families, delivers our services more effectively and efficiently, provides the platforms for useful economic growth and that creates a society and environment of which we can remain proud.

A new approach to Government

Since I was elected as an MHK in 2011, it has become very clear to me that our system of Government no longer delivers the best outcomes. In fact it restricts full democratic debate and good ideas and proposals can be "lost" in the heat of political argument. We can and must do better in this respect. After all, if Tynwald is not fit for purpose, how can we expect the rest of Government to function effectively?

That is why I welcome the Lisvane report and I promise a full Tynwald debate on this matter in November 2016. However, the public have called for change this election and that is why I intend to set out a clear statement of intent in this respect. Therefore no Members of the Legislative Council will sit in Ministerial positions or in Government Departments as I am clear that they have no mandate to do so. This will not apply to Scrutiny Committees and Statutory Boards.

In addition I intend to relax Collective Responsibility except for matters of national importance which will include the budget and the programme for Government. This should encourage more transparent policy debate and free thinking.

It is my intention to work with the Council of Ministers to deliver a clear and concise Programme for Government in January 2017. In support of that Programme, a Tynwald debate will take place this October and every October during the term of this Parliament, to seek input and facilitate scrutiny and review of Government progress.

We also need to ensure that we have effective review and scrutiny outside of the parliamentary chamber and to this end I encourage more extensive and effective engagement of Tynwald and Keys committees.

Budgeting for Success

We all accept that as an Island nation we should live within our means. We simply do not have the fiscal capacity or the monetary control of larger nations that enables them to run their deficits.

However, public finances need to be spent and stabilised fairly and carefully. That is why as part of the programme for Government I intend to initiate a full spending review with the Council of Ministers, basing our public expenditure assessments not on precedent but on clear and realistic spending requirements.

Our Public Sector Pension Schemes remain a matter for significant concern. I will be asking the Treasury Minister to undertake a full analysis and appraisal of public commitments in this area.

Our taxation policy is clearly a vital element of delivering a brighter economic future. Maintaining a low tax economy is vital but so is a progressive and fair taxation policy that ensures we give all our people the best opportunities to succeed. That is why I will ask the Treasury Minister to look carefully at all aspects of our taxation policy (particularly our current tax allowance thresholds) and the other revenue we raise from the public, to ensure that our economic success is more fairly distributed.

I am conscious that the cost of living is increasing and that business plans in respect of the provision of Water, Sewerage and Electricity are looking increasingly unsustainable. I will therefore be asking the Council of Ministers to support a price freeze whilst a full review is conducted into how the Manx Utilities Authority's assets, debts and associated matters are handled in the coming decades, as part of a wider review aimed at making money go further in our Island.

Driving the Economy

Our business and employment policies remain key to delivering a more sustainable future for the Island. GDP increased by 5% last year but I am conscious that these figures mask a harsher reality in some sectors of our economy.

I will ask the new DED Minister to identify more precisely the targeted figures for new private sector jobs to be created over the term of the parliament and also that a review is undertaken of our financial support packages for industry.

An increase in jobs is one factor which will determine the size and nature of our population. I believe we need a joined up approach to migration and population and will prepare a policy for wider discussion.

Alongside our drive to grow the economy it will be vital that our telecommunications infrastructure is equipped to deliver faster and more cost effective broadband across the whole island. I will ask for a full appraisal of the situation and an assessment of what role Government can play in meeting this objective.

In considering our investment and growth opportunities, we should look to the whole Island. I will be seeking action plans for the North, South, East and West of the Island, adding a focus on infrastructure improvements as well as economic opportunities to existing regeneration, housing and local Government initiatives. I will in addition seek more innovative mechanisms for private sector led and funded infrastructure and other capital projects.

Improving Service Delivery

The Isle of Man Government delivers a range of vital services and our commitment and focus to these services will be emphasised within our programme for Government.

However it is vital that we fully examine whether our departmental structures deliver the best value for a modern society and I will ask Tynwald to establish a committee to evaluate the Single Legal Entity concept in November 2016.

I am of the opinion that our service delivery and expenditure has too often been exposed as slow, inconsistent and at times wasteful. In order to provide more focus and direction to our delivery, I will be seeking experienced and qualified members of the community to sit on advisory boards for Economic Development, Infrastructure and Healthcare.

In addition I will also create a new "think tank" to provide an environment for free thinking and analysis of Government policy. Any recommendations from this body will be given due consideration.

Healthcare and Education policy remain vital to our success. I accept that an independent Health Regulator is needed in the long term to ensure we improve our care standards and in education I will ask for a full assessment as to whether centralisation of services is in fact beneficial to improving the quality of our schools.

Pensions and Welfare

State and private pension provision remain an area of focus and review. In June 2015 Tynwald supported my call for Pension Freedoms and I intend to ask that the whole matter of private pension provision receives urgent attention.

The open questions regarding state pension reform needs to be answered as swiftly as possible and every member of the public needs to understand how changes in coming years and decades might affect them. I will therefore ask Tynwald to support and form a new Pensions Committee to contribute to the evolution of policy, scrutiny and implementation in this vital policy arena.

International Responsibility and Opportunity

I will continue to promote the Isle of Man internationally, seeking to establish new relationships and cementing our reputation as a stable and well regulated jurisdiction.

However, I now intend to create a new action group comprising of senior professionals from amongst the wider community to provide ideas, support and focus to our decision making process post BREXIT and to identify opportunities in new and emerging markets.

A time to deliver

I present this manifesto with the intention of emphasising some core policy directions that I would like the Council of Ministers and Tynwald to consider. I have also included some real actions that can be undertaken without waiting for Tynwald approval, such as the creation of a post brexit advisory group, in order to demonstrate my commitment to delivering enhanced outcomes for policy direction.

I am also setting out to ensure that the parliamentary environment is one in which democracy flourishes and that debate is meaningful and purposeful. Some will say these proposals are risky. I say they are necessary. Over the past five years, I have served as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Chairman of the Whitley Council, Vice Chairman of the Public Sector Pensions Authority, Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and Chairman of the Manx Utilities Authority. I have sat on the Departments of Health, Education and Economic Development. I have brought forward motions, questions, secondary and primary legislation and I have seen first-hand the flaws in the system that are now so publicly recognisable.

My broader leadership experience is not as limited as some may claim. Not only have I had direct experience of starting and building new companies, over the past two and a half years I have overseen the transition of the Manx Utility Authority from three separate businesses into one, setting the policy and strategic direction of the authority in conjunction with the Board and forming a single entity with a turnover (budget) of £100m and over 300 employees. The MUA is currently some £6m ahead of its projected business plan, has restructured and consolidated its assets, has streamlined its staffing numbers and is £12m ahead of its Capital Budget in respect of the regional sewerage treatment strategy.

But it is of course the overall success of the Isle of Man that is my primary focus. We can and we must do better. As a Manxman I know that we have the resilience and determination to find the solutions to our challenges and the innovations to maximise our opportunities. I offer the leadership, vision and experience to lead Tynwald and the Isle of Man Government forward and to deliver successful policies in the national interest.

This general election was a vote for change, not a vote for more of the same. We must now work effectively together to deliver better Government and more focussed outcomes for our Island.

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