

HOUSE OF KEYS GENERAL ELECTION

THURSDAY, 23RD NOVEMBER, 2006



DAVID ANDERSON FOR GLENFABA

Dear Elector,

IT HAS BEEN AN HONOUR to represent Glenfaba in the House of Keys over the past five years. It has been a challenging task in a turbulent period. I hope my manifesto will give you an insight into my role as your representative over the past five years and an understanding of what I consider priorities for the next five. We must learn from our mistakes and build on our successes to make sure we protect our economy, our standard of life and protect the vulnerable in our society.

If I have missed you on the doorstep and you still have issues to raise with me please contact me so I can arrange a visit, or please come to one of the public meetings. These dates can be found on the back of this leaflet.

It is always difficult to know how much information to give the electorate in a manifesto. I hope the balance I have struck will give you a better understanding of my position on various key issues and the reasons I am offering myself for re-election.

The Person

I am 52 years old and am married to Jane. We have two grown-up children, Rachel, 22 and Mark, 21. They were fortunate enough to benefit from our Manx education system.

My wife and I were born and brought up on the Island but both benefited from other Celtic blood!

I spent two periods of time off Island, one at agricultural college in Cumbria and 18 months when I worked for the UK Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in Surrey while pursuing my athletic career. However, following the 1978 Commonwealth Games I returned to assist in running the family farm as by then my father was heavily involved in politics as the MHK for Glenfaba!

Before being elected at the 2001 General Election I spent nine years as a member of Patrick Parish Commissioners. This, and involvement with agricultural politics gave me a good understanding of the rural community and Glenfaba in particular.

The Last Five Years

I hope I have been able to demonstrate in the last five years that I am keen to uphold the same values shown by other members of my family who have served the community and why I am not afraid to be a lone voice when necessary.

It is quite easy to grab the headlines. However it is far more effective to work as a team to make an impact. I have thoroughly enjoyed my roles as Member for Health and then Minister of Education and benefited from working with some very dedicated professionals in some quite challenging times. I have also sat on several Committees of the House of Keys and Tynwald, which have played an important role in shaping future legislation and looking in depth at various issues.

It is always difficult to strike a balance in being an effective member of Tynwald between one's responsibility as a member of Parliament, one's duties as Minister and looking after the needs of one's constituents. Fulfilling all three roles is more than a full time job but I have enjoyed the challenge. I have sought to respond to constituents' queries in a timely manner – many of you are happy to call me whenever you need me to give advice or support or let me know of your views, and I am grateful to my wife, Jane, who is often the first point of contact when I am in Douglas. I am always available; constituents are not restricted to seeing me only periodically in political surgeries.

Since being elected my brother, John, has returned to the Island to head up running the family farm. With a dedicated team this has freed me up from day to day responsibility for the farm.

There are many issues that have arisen over the past five years and rather than go into detail now I

would be happy to meet you to cover any particular area of concern you have. Of course these can also be raised at any of the public meetings.

The Economy

Five years ago the Island was struggling to cope with the rate of economic growth. At 5 – 6% growth, the economy has now stabilised and the infrastructure is far better able to cope. This rate of growth is the envy of competing jurisdictions. The dependence on the financial sector has fallen from over 46% to 38%. This is a welcome step in spreading risk.

The Island has stood up well to scrutiny from different international and governmental organisations and has been swift to adapt to meet outside threats. I feel the Island is well placed to fend off those who misunderstand the Island's position and to demonstrate that our jurisdiction is well regulated and offers long term stability. There is a need to educate the international press, as too often the Island's name has been criticised without justification and of course good news – winning international awards as a well regulated financial centre - doesn't get into the headlines.

Our international reputation has been hard earned over the last 25 years. That reputation must not be put at risk. Any new line of business for the Island must take into consideration ethical implications, with appropriate protection for the Island's reputation.

The strength of the economy is demonstrated by the current low unemployment figure at around 2% of the active population. There are more people in employment than ever before and an encouraging rise in the number of employers. Government should continue to encourage new local business set-ups that spread employment throughout the Island. In a recent survey, 90% of Island businesses described themselves as optimistic or very optimistic for the immediate future.

Immigration

The rate of immigration onto the Island has actually slowed in the last couple of years, but those taking up employment here are now coming from further afield. Without these people not only would our economy become stagnant but important services like tourism and nursing homes would be under severe pressure.

The existing work permit legislation which prevents employers abusing the system by trying to pay a lower wage for a non Manx worker, should be strengthened. I am confident that the work permit system, properly enforced, will give the Island residents protection – there is no incentive to come here unless you have a job. We are in a common travel area with the UK and Ireland but most of the

advantages of the benefit system are not available to those not qualified to work here. The Residency Act should only be used where it can be clearly demonstrated that the work permit legislation has ceased to be effective. Island residents have always had opportunities to work in many other countries and I would not like to see us doing anything that might restrict possibilities for our young people working in other countries.

Where we do face a challenge is receiving children for whom English is not their first language in some of our schools but once they come up to a good level of English they have a positive effect and adapt very well. This is an area that we could benefit from information on future likely employment opportunities.

I believe that those who do come here to live and work should fully integrate in our society.

Agriculture

Glenfaba, as the most rural of constituencies, has agriculture at its heart and the agricultural barometer continues to look for an upturn in fortune. Those fortunes are sometimes out of the control of those at the production end but not since the last war has there been a greater need for the marketing associations. I feel sure the agricultural community will play its part in positioning itself to take advantage of the opportunities.

The Creamery has led the way in this respect and I am glad to see the FMA making meaningful moves to secure a long term future especially in the wake of potentially losing the red meat derogation in 2010. The committee formed by the Minister to take the industry forward must seek to take as many players on board as possible. This industry is key to protecting the Island's unique rural landscape valued by locals and visitors alike. Government recognises this too, but it will need to show a level of commitment that is more than just fine words and provide the bridge to new pastures, with the Department of Agriculture developing appropriate support schemes.

Keeping the various elements of the industry in balance is vital to keep a viable Creamery and Meat Plant operational. To do this the cereal sector also has to be nurtured and kept in equilibrium. To do all this, future support will need to have 'balance' as its watchword.

There is a rightful concern about the age profile of those engaged at the front lines in agriculture. The only way to retain and attract young farmers is to show them that there is a secure long term future. There are those who are prepared to make that commitment and Government must demonstrate it will match that commitment.

Any change from production support to land management support should be implemented

gradually to try and keep as many engaged for the long-term.

Having been involved in agriculture for most of my life and having my family working at the sharp end I know the long hours worked for little financial reward. It has been heartening to see other sectors recognising the importance of the industry. The recent Freedom to Flourish survey showed that residents and visitors highly value the Manx countryside and recognised that key to this is the farming community, along with the high standard of education, safe environment to bring up a family here. These were the three main factors that contribute to our high quality of life.

Government Structure

Public service expenditure needs balancing against the increasing long term liability for providing public sector pensions. To carry on growing the public sector is mortgaging our future. We must not have an unsustainable burden of debt to pass on to future generations.

The Scope and Structure of Government Report gives some useful pointers about what could be done and although not agreeing with everything I think its broad thinking is to be welcomed.

We must look at what services can be delivered by others without compromising the standards the public expects. There will be many services that Government must continue to deliver but it is clear the percentage of government workforce of the economy's active population must be reduced. If there is a need to increase delivery in a certain area, there will have to be a corresponding reduction or delivery through another agent in another area. Our competition (e.g. Jersey and Guernsey) have had to grasp the nettle already. We must continue to be competitive without compromising the quality of our services.

I favour giving more responsibility to local authorities and devolving budgets to meet responsibilities. I value those who give of their time freely for the community and support the right for them to play a bigger part in shaping their communities.

Education

Over the past 2½ years I have had the privilege of serving as Minister of Education.

The standard of education of our Island students is reflected in the high success rates that continue to be achieved at GCSE and at AS and A2 levels. Our Island young people continue to outperform those in the UK but our aim is to continue to 'raise the bar' and raise those standards even higher. A recent universities exhibition that had over 70 universities represented from the UK and abroad, consistently praised the standard of the Island students and it is gratifying that there are so many more opportunities

for them to come back home to the Island after graduating. Others are returning after gaining further job experience off Island and all contribute to the Island's ongoing success.

The Isle of Man Government supports our students to a far greater level than their UK counterparts and enables them to start their working life without a mountain of debt.

I am delighted that the Isle of Man College has developed a really good working relationship that enables many secondary school students wishing to do vocational training to do "tasters" in apprenticeship courses before doing their exams and leaving school and I look forward to further upgrading of the college facilities in future years to meet this extra demand.

The new curriculum entitled "Freedom to Flourish" gives more opportunities to develop a curriculum that builds on each school's strengths and opportunities but maintains the core requirements.

The Island is leading the UK in abandoning SATS tests at Key Stages 2 and 3 and moving to continuous assessment that gives a more accurate description of children's attainment and takes away the pressure from children and parents alike.

We have continued to invest in upgrading our schools and substantial extensions are currently under way at Peel Clothworkers and QE II, costing in excess of £5 million.

Foxdale and St. Johns Schools and the Bunschoill all have excellent reputations and the standard of education achieved in all three is very high. We are fortunate to have such dedicated staff who go over and above the call of duty for the benefit of our children.

Our young people are our greatest resource.

Electoral Reform

Although Glenfaba is one of the biggest constituencies in area it has the smallest population and this was the main reason for the Boundary Commission (which sits to review constituencies) recommending the addition of a large part from the outskirts of Peel. Glenfaba only has 1730 on the electoral roll and Peel over 3,300 – quite an imbalance. I favoured this recommendation over the option of amalgamating Peel and Glenfaba into a two seat constituency. However, agreement was not reached and for this election the status quo remains.

It is clear that this will be unsustainable in the future and it is important that Glenfaba has adequate representation whatever recommendations come forward.

Of greater concern to me is the fact that a voter in Glenfaba only has one vote whereas a voter in Rushen or Onchan has three votes. I believe that whatever changes are made each constituency

should be equal, whether that be 24 single seats or 12 two seats.

Constitution

I have been a supporter of the retention of the Legislative Council and the role it plays in scrutinising legislation and looking at issues from a broader Island-wide perspective. I would support a directly elected Legislative Council but not the proposal to elect all Tynwald members at once and then divide into two chambers.

Early in the life of the last Tynwald I put forward the suggestion that there should be a deputy Chief Minister. This however, was overwhelmingly rejected at the time. Recent events show that this would have helped in the smooth transition to a new administration. The Island was fortunate to have Donald Gelling still in Tynwald who was willing to step back into the role at short notice. However, a prolonged election process could lead to a vacuum and a perceived lack of stability from the outside. I intend to bring back this proposal if re-elected.

The Environment – Locally

Glenfaba has some of the most spectacular coastal and upland scenery on the Island and the protection of that is at the top of my agenda.

I congratulate ASAP on their tireless efforts in opposing the deposit of bottom ash and potentially hazardous waste in Archallagan plantation. It has been my privilege to work with this group not just to oppose this ill considered location but to put forward credible alternatives. We have lost a couple of battles but we have not lost the war and will continue to highlight the financial and environmental mistake it would be to use this site

Likewise the ongoing concerns for those in the Lhergydhoo area who are having to resist a barrage of planning applications, waste operations licence and now a certificate of lawfulness on the site of the redundant sand pit, when they all believed the site would, as originally approved, be reinstated to agricultural use. This is not just a blot on the landscape but is seriously affecting the quality of life for those living nearby. There are alternative locations that would be significantly less harmful to countryside and community.

I will continue to support those trying to protect our environment and quality of life.

The Environment – the bigger picture

I have supported the work of the recently established One World Centre, originally based at St. Johns Mill and now in Castletown in helping everyone realise we all have a role in working towards a sustainable environment and fairer society. I welcome the increases in the overseas aid

budget in recent years and support government funding reaching internationally recognised targets.

On behalf of Tynwald I had the privilege of presenting an endorsement of the Tynwald motion supporting the Make Poverty History Campaign, at the march in Edinburgh in July 2005, prior to the meeting of the G8 countries in Gleneagles.

I am delighted with the projects that have been run in our schools with the help of the One World Centre. Young people are becoming much more aware of their responsibilities and how we, as individuals, can each make a difference.

I support better opportunities for recycling throughout the community.

Housing

Government has invested over £100 million in affordable housing for first time buyers and public sector housing in the past five years, yet despite this amazing effort it is still difficult to get on the housing ladder.

It is good to see the first time buyers scheme at work in Glenfaba with eight houses nearing completion at Creggan Aashen in Glen Maye and plans for a further 15 about to be submitted for Foxdale.

St. Johns is limited by a lack of zoned land. However I believe there is a willingness for the re-zoning of the area above the Saw Mill at St. Johns that could provide much needed local first time buyers houses and give the opportunity to repeat the success of Magher Vay, allowing the release of family accommodation not only in the public sector but also for those who could afford to downsize.

I welcome the DOLGE policy change that means large new developments have to provide a 25% allocation of affordable houses.

It is important to try and provide accommodation for people close to where they have community links and I support developing more flexibility in the planning system to allow the restoration and conversion of unused buildings in the countryside to allow many more young people to live in the rural area in which they have grown up.

Health Care

I was pleased to be Member for Health in the DHSS for the first couple of years in government and I am delighted that we have a hospital to be proud of. We do rely heavily on UK expertise in certain areas since our population cannot justify every specialisation.

The appointment of the third consultant in orthopaedics reducing waiting lists in that area is to be welcomed, as is the recent announcement of a breast screening call and recall system.

It is good that provision of extra nursing and residential care along with respite facilities is now

high on the agenda, with DHSS talking with the Corrin Home Trustees as they look at the possibility of meeting future needs. The planned development of a 60 bed private residential/nursing home will be a big piece in the jigsaw.

There will need to be a range of facilities to meet the different ranges in dependency and I welcome Social Services policy of engaging in dialogue in identifying the best way Government can support local initiatives.

I very much support the growth of the 'Live at Home Scheme' in the West, helping people to live in their own homes longer with the help of dedicated volunteers

Traffic Management and Public Transport

Speed of traffic continues to give cause for concern throughout our villages and I continue to encourage a proactive stance from our police.

It is important that speed limits are enforced and the monitoring of speed is not just something that takes place in the middle of the day, but at each end of the day and at weekends.

I welcome the reduction to the speed limit for The Hope area from 40 to 30 and the implementation of a 40 mph speed limit for the Curragh Road. This area is being assessed with regard to a School Crossing Officer as the number of children crossing the busy main road morning and afternoon is considerable.

Foxdale children's safety in catching the QE II bus has been improved with the bus stopping further up Mines Road but a bus shelter on the south of the road would also be helpful – land ownership, as ever, is an issue here.

DTL has now agreed to erect a new bus shelter at Magher Vay and I hope improvement in visibility to the Greeba bus shelter on the south of the road can be progressed, also the provision of a shelter on the north of the main road.

We must continue to make public transport more user-friendly and I would certainly support the extension to public service provision that is justified by the demand. I believe the restriction on taxi licence plates should be withdrawn to allow a more competitive climate for the customer. I would also support a pilot scheme of free or reduced cost bus travel for all at certain hours to encourage people to leave their cars and reduce congestion in Douglas.

Capital Expenditure

One of my principal concerns for some time has been the scale of some of the schemes we have embarked upon in the past.. Of course many were agreed and under way before I was elected. However I welcome the reappraisal of the IRIS project. I could never see the financial logic in pumping sewage round the Island to one site and I

would wholeheartedly support stand alone treatment plants for the North and West.

I was one of the few to oppose the Prison location for Jurby as I still believe such a facility needed to be near the centre of population.

Capital schemes must be clearly scrutinised to make sure the correct options are being accepted. I welcome the Treasury Capital Projects Division input in this area.

The investment in the water retention scheme in Peel shows how a capital project can breath new life into an area and I am convinced that a non-tidal marina would be a great asset to the Island and should be a priority in the future capital programme.

Tourism

The changing demand from those who seek recreation of mind and body through a different type of holiday than the traditional model continues and the conversion of redundant buildings in the countryside brings new life into the rural communities as well as diversification for the farming sector. I welcome government support and feel the recent promotion of walking holidays needs accelerating. We have in past years had too many eggs in one basket with the TT and motor sport generally. The film industry has brought many benefits.

The Next Five Years

As long as I can remember before a General Election, the phrase "the next five year term is going to be critical for the Island," has been quoted. What is clear is that we must learn from the errors of the past and build on our successes. The Island has a lot to be proud of and thankful for. If elected I will continue to strive to protect our unique culture and high standard of living and to protect the vulnerable in our society.

To do this, difficult decisions may have to be made for the long term good of our Island. Short term opportunism could sacrifice our hard won reputation and our economic strength.

I cannot make promises. When elected a member is only one of 24 in the House of Keys. However, if elected I will continue to work for the good of our community and to serve without fear or favour, as I have done for the past five years.

I remain your local candidate, promoting common sense policies for the common good. I hope you will give me the opportunity to serve you for a further five years.

Please make the effort and vote on Thursday, 23rd November. Your vote could be crucial.

If you are not well enough to get to the Polling Station or you are not able to vote on the day it is still not too late to obtain an application form to be treated as an absent voter or to nominate someone to vote on your behalf.

If you need a lift to the Polling Station or if you would like a car sticker to show your support please ring or fax on 842393 or e-mail:
davidmanderson@manx.net.

Public Meetings

All at 7.30 pm

Monday 13th November
St. James Church Hall, Dalby
Chairman – Michael Killey

Wednesday, 15th November
Patrick Community Centre
Chairman – Pat Costain, JP

Thursday, 16th November
Cronk y Voddy Young Men's Club
Chairman – Dennis Quirk

Friday, 17th November
Foxdale School
Chairman – Walter Gilbey

Monday, 20th November
Requisition Meeting
St Johns Methodist Hall

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