



News Release

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 12 NOON, 19TH DECEMBER 2001

TEMPORARY HOME FOR THE LEGISLATURE SECURED

Pending the planned refurbishment of the Old Government Offices known as the “Wedding Cake” and the adjacent Old General Registry, temporary premises for the House of Keys, the Legislative Council and Tynwald are to be taken by the Department of Local Government and the Environment, acting on behalf of the Legislature, on part of the ground floor at St George’s Court in Myrtle Street, Douglas.

The premises, which adjoin two floors already let to the Department of Education, will be available until the end of 2004 and will involve the House of Keys sharing the use of the main debating chamber with Tynwald Court, while the Legislative Council will continue to have a separate meeting chamber.

The Speaker of the House of Keys, the Hon Tony Brown commented:

“I am very pleased that, after extensive examination of the possible venues available, we have secured premises which will be as easily accessible to the public as our present Chambers are, and will ensure that the vital work of the Legislature in representing the people of the Isle of Man can continue uninterrupted. The part of the ground floor at St George’s Court we will be taking strikes the right balance between the need for economy and the need for a setting for the Island’s parliament which is consistent with the Isle of Man’s international status.

I look forward to the refurbishment scheme being started with completion of the works scheduled for 2004. The scheme will mean that Members of Tynwald will have fully modernised facilities to represent and look after their constituents and also to scrutinise the action of Government.”

[END]

Editor - additional notes:

1. The temporary accommodation is located within two minutes walk of the existing Chambers and is therefore close to Central Government Office and the Offices of the Legislature. This will mean that the movement of Members and of staff between Government Offices will be kept to a minimum.
2. The cost of the rental for the area (ie per square metre) to be used is the same as recently agreed for the area being utilised by the Department of Education.

3. A special lease has been negotiated to enable Government to terminate the lease in the event that Tynwald does not approve the Legislative Chamber Refurbishment Scheme at the June 2002 sitting.
4. The lease is for a period of 21 years commencing on 1st January 2002, however, there is provision to terminate the lease by 31st December 2004 when it is anticipated that the accommodation will be no longer be required by the Legislature.
5. The scheme to refurbish the Old Government Office is part of an overall plan, initiated in 1997 (and capital funds for the project were in fact shown in the budget for 2001/2002 as needed for future years), to provide accommodation for the Chief Minister's Office and Chief Secretary's Office and when the phase for the Legislature is completed it will allow for the relocation of the Attorney General's Chambers back into Government Office and thereby reduce the need to continue to rent accommodation in the private sector where the Attorney General's Chambers are presently located ie Victory House, Prospect Hill, Douglas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tony Brown SHK - 824393