

John McDonough – Ramsey

Political Questions (2016)

Why do you want to be a member of the House of Keys?

To improve the relationship between the electorate and politicians, and try and build a greater sense of community.

If you were elected, what would your priorities be on a national level?

To help middle earners who are bearing the brunt of our financial hardship. Revisit the tax cap, and ensure no further stealth taxes are introduced.

If you were elected, what would your priorities be on a constituency level?

Bring more businesses to Ramsey and the North and encourage shoppers to use Ramsey, as there is a variety of small businesses here.

How well do you think the present administration has handled the major challenges of the past five years?

The present administration has continued to keep the Island afloat during major economic crisis. However, I believe if action is not taken at the beginning of the next administration the Island will falter and what little growth has been seen would be stifled. Rebalancing the budget has led to a status quo, with a severe dip in our reserves. Now is the time to encourage international business back here.

What are the main political and social

The impact of Brexit, when it is known will

issues facing the Isle of Man in the next five years?

be a challenge, alongside this the Island will need to renegotiate Protocol 3. Funding for health and social services.

How would you deal with the challenges referred to in the previous answer?

Build of the current transparency to dispel the myth that the Isle of Man's still a tax haven. Encourage health education from day one, with the use of cross departmental partnerships. Look at prescription charges.

How would you deal with the issue of public sector pension reform and the public sector pension deficit?

As a current civil servant, I am dismayed at the length of time and the amount of changes that have already happened with little effect. This has to be a priority, otherwise there will be a further burden to the taxpayer. I would like to see the current scheme closed off to new entrants, I would look at getting some sort of savings scheme in place to fund the difference for current civil servants. There are so many schemes that cannot be subject to reform (on the Island), however it is not fair that civil servants have to bear the sole hardship. Politicians should lead by example, get the point across that we're all in this together.

What has changed in the past five years for Isle of Man residents for the better?

Regeneration schemes, whilst I'm aware that not everyone agrees with what has

(Please give examples)

been done, I believe that investment in the areas was needed and proves we live on a beautiful island. Transfer of responsibilities to local authorities is a positive step.

What has changed in the past five years for Isle of Man residents for the worse?

(Please give examples)

As already mentioned, middle income earners have been constantly hit. Lack of progress on Douglas Promenade regeneration, money that has been spent on schemes that have not been approved, whilst the prom continues to deteriorate. Factors outside our control, the global economic slump which has affected the Island's income.

Is the Isle of Man too reliant on any one sector of its economy?

Yes, the finance sector, which is why when the global markets slumped, it hit us so hard.

If you feel it is, how would you further diversify the Manx economy?

Push local products more e.g. Manx cheese, meat, flour and wool. Have a marketing team to carry this out and promote the shipping and aircraft registries, rather than senior politicians.

Are you in favour of increased independence from the United Kingdom?

No, we need the UK for defence, border control and certain health treatments.

If you are, in which areas?

Are you in favour of parliamentary reform in the Isle of Man? Yes

If you are, which aspects of the parliamentary system would you change?

Lord Lisvane's report was enlightening. I agree that sitting MHKs should not be elevated to the upper house. I believe there should be an upper house for scrutiny purposes, however, the Lord Bishop should not have a seat in either LegCo or Tynwald. Also, reduce the number of MLCs to five. The A.G. sits in LegCo for scrutiny purpose only, and should not sit in Tynwald, he is paid for by the taxpayer and rarely contributes.

Who should have the responsibility of electing the Chief Minister? MHKs

Are you in favour of the nationalisation of air and/or sea services to and from the Isle of Man? No. In order to have fair competition we couldn't justify subsidising one airline over another. But, as it has been shown, we only have enough business for one ferry service, I am in favour of working with a shipping company to ensure a year round service at affordable prices.

Are you in favour of renewable energy Definitely, we should look at tidal power.

projects in Manx territorial waters?

The pros and cons of wind turbines has to be balanced against their effect on our fishing industry and their visual impact.

Are you in favour of an increase in means testing for financial support and/or services provided by Government?

Yes

If you are, in which areas?

I think the majority of benefits should be means tested. If free TV licenses for the over 75s continue, they should also be means tested, prescription charges. Conversely, I believe pre-school education should be free to all, to encourage/enable people to seek employment.