

Political Questions – Quintin Gill (2011)

Why this candidate wishes to be a member of the House of Keys?

I want to use my decade of experience as a full-time MHK to work as part of a parliamentary team to fully consider and address the pressing challenges the next administration will inherit.

How well does the candidate think that the present?

Overall I believe this has been a disappointing administration. The next Chief Minister will need to change the pervading culture of secrecy which has characterised this Government. He/she will need to engage the responsible members of Tynwald and the Manx public more fully and honestly if there is to be any political consensus for the important work facing the new Government. The VAT sharing negotiations and the debacle over the Reciprocal Health Agreement are bitter experiences, a failure to meaningfully consult has led to flawed legislation being progressed through the Keys- but one of the most worrying legacies of the Government is the state of our relationship with the UK Government. I believe this is at the lowest point in the past 25 years. In my 2006 Manifesto I wrote; Our principal

relationship is with the United Kingdom and it is crucial that we maintain this in the most positive manner possible. This remains as true as ever and the next administration needs to address this matter fully and consistently.

If the candidate were elected, what would their priorities be at a constituency level?

Since becoming an MHK in 2001 I have worked with my Rushen colleagues wherever possible. If re-elected I will continue to act in this manner. The faltering Regeneration Schemes for Port Erin and Port St Mary must be utilised more effectively to enhance the commercial viability of both Ports.

If the candidate were elected, what would their priorities be at a national level?

As a responsible Independent backbench MHK I have held Government to account when appropriate. We need a Government which can Govern and I will fully engage in a debate, consideration of options and implementation of appropriate outcomes which are necessary to address the pressing challenges facing the next administration.

What does the candidate view as the

The economic challenges flowing

main political and social issues facing the Isle of Man in the next 5 years?

from the re-negotiated VAT Sharing Agreement will characterise the scope and role of Government. We must be mindful of the social consequences of the decision which will follow the overdue debate prompted by the financial remodelling which the next Government will need to address.

How would the candidate deal with the challenges/issues over the next five years - as stated in the Main Social Issues question?

The next Chief Minister must re-engage with the responsible backbench MHKs in order to affect political consensus for the issues which they must address in a most timely manner. I will be a team player in this process.

What does the candidate feel has changed for the better, for Isle of Man residents, in the past five years - giving examples?

I believe we are fortunate to live in the Isle of Man which is characterised by small safe communities. Our sense of social cohesion is positive and overall our economy has grown and diversified.

What does the candidate feel has changed for the worse for Isle of Man residents, in the past 5 years - give examples?

There is a worrying trend towards a polarity of 'haves' and 'have nots' in our society. Government needs to accept this reality and promote policies which address this worrying trend. For example The proposal by

Does the candidate feel that the Isle of man has been too reliant upon the financial services industry?

certain Ministers to introduce a two-tier planning system favouring the 'high net worth' applicants is fundamentally wrong and reflects a judgement against universal treatment; this is a very worrying policy and suggests a line of thinking which reflects a fundamentally flawed premise. Public sector pay has largely been held at zero growth while costs continue to rise; in real terms balancing the daily budgets for many people across the Isle of Man is increasingly challenging, the next Government must accept this and ensure appropriate policies to protect the vulnerable in society are protected from such threats.

Our economy is currently worth over £3.3 billion annually and it is still growing and diversifying. Our financial foundations including our international AAA credit rating reflect this. The finance sector is a key player in this economic model and will remain so. However, the diversification of the economy, particularly into niche markets such as the highly successful Ship and Aircraft Registries, together will the

If The candidate feels there is too much Financial Services reliance, how does the candidate feel that they would further diversify the Manx economy?

attendant economic benefits they generate, are examples of opportunities which we can emulate.

Please see Q7. The basis of further diversifying the economy from the Government's perspective is developing further policies and working practices which will facilitate inward investment. Government is good at finding reasons why a particular proposal is flawed in some way, this administrative inertia must be challenged and cultural change across the attitudes of Government is a must. One simple example is the interpretation of Public Hygiene legislation which differs from the UK. There, various hospitality related businesses benefit hugely from allowing responsibly managed pet dogs into pubs/ cafes etc. Here the attitude of Government and their officialdom is restrictive. The adverse effect of this is on our visiting trade. I believe this represents an attitude issue which we simply cannot afford to go unchallenged. In short Government must be more focussed on saying 'Yes' to reasonable opportunities to enhance our

Is the candidate in favour of independence from the United Kingdom?

competitiveness.

Please see A2 In my experience maintaining and enhancing our working relationship with the UK whilst also working hard to maintain our autonomy. These two views are complementary.

Is the candidate in favour of -and if a standing member, did they vote for- a popularly elected Legislative Council?

Yes, in theory but the practical solution has so far proved elusive.

Is the candidate in favour of -and if a standing member, did they vote for- a popularly elected Chief Minister?

No, the election of a Chief Minister who has the confidence of the majority of Tynwald Members and thus a fighting chance of gaining the necessary political consensus and support for the important work facing us.

Is the candidate in favour of nationalisation of air and or sea services to and from the Isle of Man?

The Review of the Scope and Structure of The Isle of Man Government is an important document which considers the advantages and benefits of a variety of comprehensive changes. By refusing to even consider the merits or otherwise of this document this Government has wilfully missed an

Is the candidate in favour of onshore wind farms in the Isle of Man?

important opportunity. This overdue debate must take place within the first months of the new administration.

Is the candidate in favour of Means testing for "universal" benefits and social housing?

I remain totally committed to the further utilisation of proven renewable technologies which are economically viable.

Please see A9d.