

Martyn Perkins – Garff

Political Questions (2016)

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

I have reached the time in life and my business career where I have experienced a great deal. I love being a Garff resident and cherish the unique way of life we have here on the Isle of Man. I wish to hand on a secure, safe and prosperous island to our children and grandchildren. I relish the opportunity to bring a sense of business acumen, focus and teamwork to the Government and also to continue the good representation of the people of Garff.

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

The economy is all important without that we are unable to pay for Health Service, Police, Schools etc. Without a strong economy we will not be able to retain our independence and control over our own destiny. The Government must put in place the right parameters but I would try and make people understand that **everybody on the Island** needs to take responsibility for this not just government. If elected I would wish to be the agent of teamwork and change not a yes man or a side line moaner. I passionately believe it is essential for the future of the island, to develop a contribution culture ..a can do, will do, rather than a blame

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

allocation culture.

My priorities for the Onchan residents would be to alleviate concern about local representation, working closely with the other elected MHK I would re-establish communication and make sure their voice was heard. I'd address the delay in the Promenade reconstruction by keeping a reduced Horse Tram service (now voted in) and go for Promenade lite option. TV licence for over 75's single pensioners not on income support and who pay no tax (caught in the middle) should be free. Burglaries security. Passengers should produce photographic I/D before they get on the boat. The bus route around Onchan should include the King Edward Rd side and we need a proper bus interchange facility in Douglas. Parking at the corner above Port Jack is now becoming a safety issue.

Garff residents are very concerned about flooding plan of action which is underway and must be followed through as a matter of urgency. Mobile phone reception in Dreemskerry needs addressing by the telecom companies. Speed limits and traffic. The length of time to complete Laxey Bridge which is running to the contract but must not slip.

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

Guard against possible future Fire brigade cuts. Future of Lonan church, no government money put in but support a Laxey Institute type regeneration.

What are the main political and social issues facing the Isle of Man in the next five years?

They have only partially grasped the nettle and not sorted out the promenade or public sector pensions but some good work has been going on behind the scenes. I am glad that they have agreed to contain future liabilities. They have got a good interactive website that works well. Introduction of legislation on designer drugs / plant food.

Politically it is vital that we retain our level of independence. The Brexit will mean that France and Germany will be gunning for the UK and the Isle of Man. Social issues, the "have and the have nots" gap is widening. The cost of living rising faster than in the last five years. Cost of the health service. Rehabilitation of prisoners and restorative justice.

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

Strengthen our links with Westminster (Sir Oliver Heald + others) to get intelligence on what the UK is planning to do. We must protect the most vulnerable in our

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

society and ensure welfare is targeted and gets to the right people. Educate for healthy living ..prevention is better than cure. Telemedicine.

Some work has been done on this by the PSPA. Final salary schemes were done away with 15 years ago in industry...is retiring at 55 is realistic compared to the general public (particularly women now in their mid to late 50's) at 65 – 67?. The IOM GUS report should be reviewed and acted on as a matter of utmost urgency. We must all take the nasty medicine together and share the pain. I understand the future liabilities have been agreed with the unions and contained which is a step in the right direction.

What has changed in the past five years for Isle of Man residents for the better? (Please give examples)

Opportunities for young people IOM University College. The AMTC gives excellent apprentice training a real success story. Some hospital waiting lists have come down. A start has been made on addressing adult mental health with the new Mannan Court unit. The Breast Cancer unit. Eye center of excellence. Despite cuts in funding, crime levels are at an all time low. (The surface of the Sloch !!)

**What has changed in the past five years for Isle of Man residents for the worse?
(Please give examples)**

Air routes reduced and particularly the reliability of service. The public view the Manx political scene as a bear pit of one upmanship and back biting while perusing personal agendas. The abuse of alcohol and drugs. "Legal High" drugs have now been banned. I feel we should impose fixed penalties and obligatory attendance at counseling for first time possession of small amounts of cannabis to avoid costly use of the courts and police time.

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

It is quite clear that Finance and Internet gaming whilst currently providing us with very good revenue streams could disappear very quickly as other jurisdictions change their laws. We need to pre-empt and change our regulations to help retain our current businesses. We must work hard on a plan B to attract different business sectors.

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

Call on our worldwide network of contacts Hong Kong, South Africa, USA and encourage small to medium size enterprises. Be dynamic, Bold, encourage ideas and take calculated risks. Look at a variety of new industries and create clusters. Bio medical, robotics, software, Artificial Intelligence.

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

Encourage ideas from everyone, provided they are supported with sound finance sources. Government should have a single point of contact (Phone number) for new ideas. Fully investigate new sciences. Revitalise the film industry.

If you are, in which areas?

Not at present. We should resist outside political interference at all costs. It is probable that Brexit fallout will put increased pressure on the Island. Keep close to Whitehall for the intelligence on their next moves and try to be proactive seeking out worldwide opportunities and collaboration.

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

I feel the VAT arrangement should be left as it is at this point in time. We do not want to introduce customs barriers. On the other hand we have no control if the UK lowers VAT to stimulate their growth it would hit the islands coffers hard. I would be in favour of employing international specialist advisors on this as it is very important for the island and a very complex subject.

Lord Lisvane's report suggests that there should be some reform and I agree.

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

Keep LegCo but reduce their role , keep them as a revising chamber. The current method of the election of members is flawed and considered a shambles by the public. Lord Lisvane's report is comprehensive and contains a number of recommendations that we should carefully consider.

Who should have the responsibility of electing the Chief Minister?

Tynwald should elect the new chief minister after the candidates clearly set out and publish their particular priorities (5 year plan) for the next administration. I am not in favour of a publically elected Chief Minister (which would be a Presidential system) meaning he / she would be at loggerheads with Tynwald on many issues.

Are you in favour of the nationalisation of air and/or sea services to and from the Isle of Man?

Not nationalisation but the government need to play a more active role in encouraging services. Our current Air services leave a lot to be desired. The public deserve better and the impression this gives to business people coming to the Island is not at all good. I feel a Heathrow air link desirable but out of the question at the moment. If the third runway is approved the situation may change, but that is way in the future. . Any sea service provider needs commitment and visibility for the future. It

Are you in favour of renewable energy projects in Manx territorial waters?

is essential that they are able to make a profit to invest in new vessels. As we are allowing them the route and the captive market of the Island I feel that they could pay a rebate or sliding scale licence fee based on profits over and above an agreed level. It is vitally important we get a reliable all year round service. I am in favour of the Government purchasing the Liverpool docking facility which must be used as a shop front for the Island, but needs to have a wow factor not a shed.

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

I am certainly in favour of tidal generation which should be encouraged. Wind farms inside our territorial 12 mile limit could be licenced but it is essential we get a good return for the blot on the landscape and the hazard and extra mileage they present to shipping. Landowners who have streams on their land should be encouraged to put in mini Hydro generators which would have the additional benefit of helping with flooding control.

No as it would need a raft of civil servants to control. The current system seems adequate.

If you are, in which areas?