

## Political Questions – Brian Stowell (2011)

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

The Island is in desperate need of leadership with experience of business and common sense. If we continue to elect MHK's because they are "nice" people then the future is very black indeed! The Island needs committed National Politicians who can demonstrate a successful and efficient track record. It is essential that we also elect people with the knowledge and experience to question the consultants and experts that have cost us so much in recent decades.

**How well does the candidate think that the present?**

For many years Government has demonstrated: - Slow reaction, Failure to truly budget, and a total failure to set aside reserves whilst squandering resources. Many projects have been ill conceived and implemented without proper consideration and after the event no one accepts responsibility!

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

To work with the Local Authority and to assist them with their aspirations. The Commissioners perform a very vital role in our community. They are democratically elected and work for

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

almost nothing. The MHK's should respect their wishes and policies and help them implement them wherever and whenever possible.

**What does the candidate view as the main political and social issues facing the Isle of Man in the next 5 years?**

To bring a more private sector approach to Government. We need to set out a policy that will bring us back to a balanced and realistic budget so that business can have the confidence to remain here! We must set policies to keep people employed and avoid sending Government money off Island.

**How would the candidate deal with the challenges/issues over the next**

This Island has a variety of issues surrounding a buoyant economy that we have become dependant on. The health service will not be able to survive medium term without vast additional funding. Social services are overstretched beyond belief and the pension "Black Hole" is well known. If in the future these services are to be continued and improved then efficiencies must be made to the whole of Government spending. The days of silly spending are now over.

Dramatic efficiency measures to reduce waste and unnecessary

**five years - as stated in the Main Social Issues question?**

administration. Total elimination of unnecessary and ill conceived capital projects and most of all introduce accountability. How often have schemes gone wrong and nobody will hold their hands up and say they were part of the problem.

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

Very Little has truly improved because the outward improvements are underpinned with inefficient and over costly expenditure that will ultimately cause problems in the future.

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

Through our own inactivity we have seen our Common Purse agreement come into the spotlight that might ultimately lead us down the path of abrogation. Our main links to the rest of the world have been asset stripped under the eyes of Government to the point that their future is in question. Some of the Island's leading hotels are facing uncertainty. Our financial service industry is facing a range of measures that will have to be addressed if they are to flourish.

**Does the candidate feel that the Isle**

The Island should be proud to take

**of man has been too reliant upon the financial services industry?**

income from wherever it can. Without the financial services industry we would have a poor standard of living indeed. It is difficult to see any new core business that will bring sufficient income to remove our reliance on the FSI. We should always enthusiastically embrace new and lucrative economic opportunities but be very aware on what we are dependent.

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

We need to recognise that we can produce high quality products that are sold at a premium and develop a proper strategy to that end. Agriculture has declined to an all time low without any meaningful plan to keep it operating. We must strive to be regarded as a centre of excellence because it is in quality that you can find security.

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

Not at this time but we be prepared in case it is forced upon us! It is a dynamic subject and it requires us to keep matters under constant review. It is not a realistic option in the short term but in the near future things will change and we must be prepared for that.

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

The current system is flawed and should be reviewed but careful consideration must be given before any dramatic change particularly at this time. Heads of Government Departments have to be able to carry out the function efficiently and properly but sadly after the election we will once again have knowledge shortfall in the Keys.

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

On the surface it seems a good idea but there are potential pit falls. Eg. What if the public elect someone without any proper knowledge or experience in Government? Then he would be reliant upon the Civil Servants advising him. That sounds like another episode of "Yes Minister" but no one would be laughing!

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

Sorry we don't have the money for that. Government has watched from the sidelines as we lost our flag carrier airline and as our main goods carrier was asset stripped. Sadly I would have to be convinced that it could be run as a proper business before I would vote any cash into it. In the real world of business profit is made

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

from cutting costs ahead of pushing up prices.

Again this would have to be proven beyond question before another folly is embarked upon. New technology and innovations are around the corner yet we are quick to be the guinea pig. Let us see proven systems that have the design faults ironed out before we scar our Island with obsolete or unworkable schemes.

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

Sadly the current system is outdated. We must provide homes for the needy and the unfortunate. Not the Greedy and the Seedy!