

Daphne Caine – Garff

Political Questions (2016)

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

To make a positive contribution to securing the Island's future success, maintaining our community, ensuring open government and fairness to residents in terms of access to services, pensions, rates and taxes.

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

Growing the economy and meeting the pensions shortfall. Championing the Isle of Man in post-Brexit negotiations with the UK Government; joining forces with the Channel Islands to achieve the best outcome for ensuring a positive deal for IoM trade in manufactured and agricultural products. Removing stealth taxes; local authority and rates reform; improved efficiency and openness in government. Also, secure funding for education and policing.

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

Regional sewage treatment and the end of raw sewage being pumped out to sea; a flood strategy including river pumping where appropriate, devolving power to local authorities along with funding to take on maintenance of more roads, verges, gullies, parks and glens (Laxey Glen, Dhoon Glen) and footpaths.

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

Allan Bell and Eddie Teare should be applauded for steering the island through some of the toughest economic conditions we have faced in 20 years. Mr Bell has also been a great ambassador and statesman on the world stage for the island. However they have been less successful domestically; the removal of preschool education was particularly shortsighted, it and prison education need more funding along with the introduction of means testing for benefits/local authority housing. And the issue of local authority reform has been ignored for too long.

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

Balancing the books; growing the economy. Negotiating the island's future trading agreement with Europe, the UK and the rest of the world. Ensuring fairness in taxation, rates and access to benefits. Deciding the future shape of the health service, funding for education, the future population growth and ultimate rate of increase in population for the Isle of Man.

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

The Chief Minister could appoint a minister for foreign affairs; currently the additional minister is for change and

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

reform - the new Minister should ensure the IoM takes its place in all post-Brexit negotiations. The Chief Minister could then focus on IoM matters. As well as concentrating on economic growth, local authority reform should be top of the agenda along with harmonising rates and introducing means testing for council houses/local authority housing.

The answer is that we have to meet the shortfall so we need to grow the economy. The problem is that the Treasury Minister's projected increase will be wiped out by the anticipated shortfall in the public pensions of £63million per year by 2021. Much has already changed in public sector pensions, with those now paying in, paying more and receiving less, while the recently retired have gold plated pensions. It is unlikely that a clawback would be successful against any legal challenge nor can more be easily paid by current contributors. So we have a massive growth target and need to ensure that light regulation of business enables our existing businesses to expand and thrive; tourism is a particular target for growth. Government needs to listen to business more in terms of how it can encourage and support growth; then are there possibilities in clean tech and the

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

possibility of agri-renewable strategies should be examined to assist farmers to diversify.

struggling with this! The quality of life is generally good but costs have increased and most have less money in their pocket. Crime has reduced (but it was always pretty low). The Isle of Man is a great place to live with fantastic advantages including a good work/life balance. But we need to attract more graduates to work here and continue to diversify the economy.

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

less disposable income; a reduction in preschool education that is extremely detrimental to some children's life attainment; more stealth taxes, charges, student fees, car taxes, probate hike, fuel poverty and an increase in those accessing the food bank. Plus the lack of progress with an approved rebuilding scheme makes Douglas Promenade a national embarrassment.

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

No. The Isle of Man has one of the most diversified economies for any similar sized jurisdiction.

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

Although I don't feel it is...I would focus on developing established industries, such as tourism and reinvigorate the film industry, plus consider investing in clean tech/ agri-renewable energies. We need to establish the target for where we want the Isle of Man to be in 5 years and then draw the route map to achieve that against set deadlines.

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

No. We are a small island and benefit from working with our biggest neighbour to achieve trade and tourism with access to that huge market

If you are, in which areas?

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

Yes. I made a submission to the boundary review committee in favour of same size constituencies. Having 12 two-seat constituencies is a major improvement for fairness. The issue of Legislative Council needs further attention but I don't feel an elected body or more elected representatives is the answer.

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

Who should have the responsibility of electing the Chief Minister?

The House of Keys. Until we have a much higher ratio of party members as MHKs, election of a party leader for Chief Minister won't work. Nor will a public ballot on Chief Minister before that person is elected. It has to remain with the elected MHKs.

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

no

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

Yes

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?

Council/commissioners housing with commercial rents for those on high or multiple incomes leading to more investment in building local authority housing.