

Political Questions – Peter Hill (2011)

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

I want to be part of a team that will achieve an open, transparent and an accountable form of government to embrace the Manx Nation as a whole through positive reforms.

How well does the candidate think that the present?

With regards to the VAT situation, I believe that it was quite obvious that the Isle of Man was doing overly well out of the sharing arrangement and as such they should in the first instance, have made provision for the UK reducing the amounts involved and secondly, it seems that the Government relied on UK figures rather than their own. The handling of the Reciprocal Health agreement was a fiasco, where the negotiators completely surrendered to the UK and the decision was only overturned after outside assistance. Whilst the matter of the all island sewage scheme was in existence prior to the previous administration, many of present Ministers were in Office during those negotiations. Therefore they must have been aware of the advice given in relation to the viability of this system but they still proceeded with it. It is now recognised that regional

sewage treatment works are required, which was the original advice. The present administration turned its back on the Scope and Structure of the IOM Government Report 2006 initiative that identified the need for significant reduction in the costs of our government. This was ignored by the last administration and in view of recent developments valuable time has been lost towards making the government more cost effective.

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

To ensure that there is effective dialogue between residents and the service Providers, to address and deal with on-going matters that effect the daily quality of life. For example, poor housing, roads and pavements, parking of commercial vehicles in residential areas and the provision of bus services that meet the needs of the users. Maintaining constant contact with my constituents would be key to achieving the above objectives.

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

I want to see the necessary reforms to the current Ministerial system such that the nation can move forward

together, to ensure that everyone genuinely is allowed to participate in freedom to flourish. The Nation needs to be more inclusive. There is an urgent need for a viable Freedom of Information Act to enable such inclusion. A truly independent ombudsman to oversee good governance. There is an absolute need to stop the unnecessary waste of public funds on capital projects that simply are not required, such as the Richmond Hill Road improvement. Hone down government to create an establishment that makes the Nation a cost efficient operation, to achieve resource allocation in key areas such as employment, health and education. To protect the environment and preserve our quality of life.

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

Economy, good governance, housing and pensions.

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

1. Economy - Whilst I am not a banker, accountant or financier the Liberal Vannin Party as a team has an

Social Issues question?

excellent skill set in those vital fields. However, I have considerable experience in budgeting and ensuring that the provision of services in a Local Authority runs effectively without reduction in service provision or excessive and unnecessary spending. As previously stated I would re visit the Scope and Structure of Government Report 2006 to examine those recommendations to slim down and make government more efficient and responsive.

2. Good Governance - This is essential for us all to flourish as it brings about the environment for a safe prosperous and caring society. A Freedom of Information Act would be an important step in this direction.

3. Housing - There needs to be a rethink on our housing strategy, based on the government making the agenda around the needs of our people. We need to preserve the first time buyer housing stock and not permit buyers to extend these properties out of the first time buyers budget. Equally these properties should be owner occupied and not bought to let; it cannot be a second home and the owners must be resident on the Isle of Man. This

way we will ensure that this housing stock will be used for the purpose it was intended for. The matter of land banking by major property developers forces the price of land up and consequently the cost of housing. 4. Pensions – The current public sector pension scheme is presently unaffordable with life expectancy increasing and contributions and investment income not meeting the demand. Without prejudice to the people already contributing a review needs to be undertaken to ensure that everyone has a viable pension to look forward to.

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

The OECD and other international organisations have recognised the Island and its good financial governance. The creation of the Isle of Man Shipping and Aircraft Registers. A recognition by the residents of the need for open and transparent government system to see the way forward.

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

Cost of transport off island and the associated increase in living costs. The salaries and pensions have not

examples?

kept pace with the true cost of living. The constant risk of increased annual unemployment in view of the current general economic situation facing the Isle of Man and other Nations.

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

Yes – whilst they provide good employment opportunities they are international companies and therefore their presence is determined by external matters. We have seen large scale redundancies in the banking sector throughout the world which has reflected somewhat in the Isle of Man.

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 have an excellent manufacturing skill base in the Isle of Man producing many sophisticated products and reducing the cost of transport and accessibility to the island must be a priority to make this a very viable location to operate from. We have a valuable asset in the beautiful and unspoilt countryside and coast and a wealth of heritage that should be exploited to the full through tourism.

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

Only after a referendum on the question, and then only if all the possible ramifications and

consequences had been examined. For example, we would need to look at our representation in Europe and the rest of the International Community, the immigration status that may change and the continuation and maintenance of vital services, such as health care. The timetable towards independence would also be governed by the necessary improvements in the quality of governance of the Isle of Man and the willingness of the Crown to retain its prerogative, rather than delegate it to the British Government.

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

No

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

The long term viability of using onshore wind farms for the

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

production of energy to supplement the existing power source, needs to be thoroughly looked into. Alternative sources of green energy, such as tidal generators as can be seen at Strangford Lough, should be examined further. The importance of preserving our landscape for environmental and tourist purposes must be taken into account when considering on shore wind farms.

Most benefits are currently means tested in some way or another and the shortage of social housing is a matter that needs to be reviewed.