

## James Hampton – Rushen

### Political Questions (2016)

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

In order to try and improve the prospects for my children on the IOM

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

Political system reform and an island wide debate on our overall political direction (these are not separable). The public are not able to choose policy direction at present, as clarified by the recent Lisvane Report. Economically are pursuing a model which has not and does not work anywhere, and the public is not able to change this. The long term consequences of this trajectory could be terminal for the IOM as it stands. IOM needs to look at our niche strengths - ease of doing business, energy, tourism, specialist manufacturing.

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

Handing over more power to local authorities and facilitating increased efficiency via direct democracy. Questions over big ticket items like a marina in PSM or redevelopment of the Marine Biological Station in Pt Erin need to start with the residents. What do they want? How are we going to fund it?

**How well do you think the present**

Not well. The reality of the loss of income

**administration has handled the major challenges of the past five years?**

from the VAT sharing agreement has been on the table since before the last election, and yet we have seen very little action to make the difficult decisions needed - other than cutting funding and raising stealth taxes.

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

Further significant cuts in public services and support - or significant borrowing and debt - or significant changes to our taxation policies. It is simply not possible to maintain such high standards of public service in conjunction with low taxation - the sums just don't add up. The choices are very simple - it's one or the other - either we accept that services and support are not going to be provided as they have been, or we find another way to pay for them. The third option is to load debt on to future generations, which is a road to near certain absolute failure for a dependant jurisdiction like the IOM because people will just leave when times get harder and young people will not return - likely culminating in the UK stepping in. If the wrong choices are made the consequences for the IOM will be significant.

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

Democracy. Real democracy. Ask people what they want the government do for them, be honest about what that

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

costs, make it as efficient as possible, be fair about how it's paid for, accept what cannot be done, get on with what can. This will only happen if people engage, ignoring it will only make it worse. Pretending growth can solve it will only make it worse.

As above. Honesty, democracy and compromise in the interest of the majority is the only way. If the liabilities are simply too great for the economy to bear then eventually it will fail, and those liabilities will be worth nothing. The people holding them need to consider that. The IOM cannot print money to solve this, it can fail. If the UK step in there is no guarantee those commitments will be met in full.

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

Broadly - very little. Some specific plus points - Same Sex Marriage, Passivhaus Government Housing, Bio-Sphere Status...

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

Rapid and significant decline in Health Service provision - massive pressure being put upon frontline staff, longer waiting times, selective funding, etc. Education also suffering - reduced support and increasing pressure across the board. I'm sure this is a trend seen

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

across government - from my own business I know how much pressure is being placed upon Planning & Building Control frontline staff. This trend is likely to continue.

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

I would say yes it is. The information that's available indicates a large proportion of GDP comes from finance and e-gaming. These are both fairly volatile sectors, which can be very easily transferred elsewhere.

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

IOM has a strong small manufacturing sector which should be supported as far as possible. Skilled high value production is going to become increasingly valuable in a technologically driven world. This type of wealth generation is deeply rooted and easily supported, it can tie in to other sectors like education to further embed the value to the local economy. These businesses rely on more than just taxation policy. If a business is viable it should not need money throwing at it.

Broadly yes - if it is proven to be of an advantage and the majority agree. If the UK struggles over the next few years this could be the case. You only have to look at Iceland to see what a tiny

**If you are, in which areas?**

population living on a truly isolated rock can achieve if the desire is there.

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

All areas. The only area we cannot realistically cover is defence, and looking at global trajectories it is questionable as to whether the support we receive from the UK on this front will continue to be good value for money.

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

Absolutely. It is essential if we are going to achieve the best compromise for all, or indeed any change.

**Who should have the responsibility of electing the Chief Minister?**

Broadly I would be in favour of a unicameral system with direct democratic powers over that (to act as a safety / scrutiny check). This would be the most efficient, and provide the best result for the public. I gave a full review of my preferences to the Lisvane review - <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/offices/cabinet-office/review-of-the-functioning-of-tynwald/>

The Public. They should maintain power of recall over all members including CM in order to ensure correct direction is

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

taken.

In theory yes. We need to recognise our position. We are a small population living on a small island. If the public agree (they should be asked) that open competition is not viable as a first choice, then the terms of any deal should also be decided by the public. My own opinion is that owning the infrastructure guarantees essential services at the very least.

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

I'm in favour of implementing the recommendations of the AEA report which the government commission in 2010 and then ignored. Biomass is far cheaper and more secure, and more likely to put money back in to the manx economy.

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

Yes. If you don't really need help you shouldn't be getting it.

**If you are, in which areas?**

All areas. If you are expecting assistance from the taxpayer in any form there needs to be proof of need or return.