

Nigel Dobson – Garff

Political Questions (2016)

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

I have been involved in local politics for nine years and in business for 16 years on the Island, I would like to contribute to a community that has been good to me.

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

The economy and the health service, the former of which needs to prosper so that the latter can provide us with the best health care available.

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

To engage with constituents throughout my term of office and not just appear at election times.

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

It's done OK, but as my teachers used to say, could do better. Progress has been made on balancing the budget, but some tough decisions have been ducked. Being an MHK should not be a popularity contest, but a job where hard decisions are taken when needed.

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

Getting our finances in order so that we no longer have to deplete our reserves and continuing to make the Island an attractive place to live and work so that we can grow our private sector

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

As others have said, smaller smarter Government would be a starting point. Let's examine if we are doing things in the most efficient manner or are we just sticking with what we know. Are we providing the best possible service or protecting our own little fiefdoms?

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

I don't pretend to be an expert on the subject. But what is clear is that the current system is unsustainable in the future. Our public servants, in the main, get a much better deal than many in the private sector. Can this continue?

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

Some of the regeneration projects have been very good and, as I have previously said, some progress has been made on our budget deficit. More needs to be done.

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

I believe our health service has struggled to keep up with demand. Whether this is due to underfunding or poor management, I'm not sure. There have been changes at the top recently and I would look to see how they are improving our front line services. A 12 month plus wait to see a chronic pain specialist is unacceptable. Read that again, over a year to see a **chronic pain**

specialist

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

It could be argued that we are over reliant on finance or e commerce, but this shouldn't be seen as a negative. We should encourage their growth. It is for Government to provide a framework for other industries to become equally important to us.

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

As said above, have a framework where we can respond to new opportunities quickly but also to recognise that parts of our current economy need help to grow and prosper

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

No, certainly not at this time.

If you are, in which areas?

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

What to do with LEGCO. Many efforts have been made to bring about some form of reform but no agreement has ever been reached. I haven't yet studied the latest recommendations in detail but the idea that it ceases to be a home for old politicians certainly appeals.

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

Who should have the responsibility of electing the Chief Minister?

This I find difficult. In principal, our leader should be chosen by the people. But an Island wide vote for Chief Minister would create a Presidential style position, and I wouldn't be happy with that. Party politics has always been my answer in the past but until we have political parties that encompass the full range of views from left to right, that isn't practical.

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?

If it is economically viable and environmentally sensible, then yes.

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

In some cases, yes.

If you are, in which areas?

Take local authority housing. When you enter the system you have a need,



otherwise you don't get a house. But that house then becomes your home. If the household income increases under the current system when your five-year lease expires you have to move. I would prefer to see a system that supported those most in need better, the status quo for the 'average' tenant and an open market rent for those whose lot has improved. This would involve means testing.