

Kurt Buchholz – Douglas Central

Political Questions (2016)

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

To make the life better for the people of the IOM by developing the economy in the right direction, by really growing the economy, by reforming the management in all government departments and to secure access to the European market. Making the IOM less dependent of the UK and Westminster.

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

Removing obstacles for real economical development, improving the management of government. Increasing the number of working days for MHK's to solve the imminent problems.

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

Improve the roads, the traffic routing, look at solutions to improve car parking for residents and short delivery parking permits for businesses, creating more usable green zones for residents, introducing a fast track and positive approach to planning applications

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

There is a lack of leadership in the government, the lack of competence of ministers and their non decision making, there is no realistic vision for the future,

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

no course where the IOM should be heading. The main problem of a divide between the ministers and their little kingdom departments are still not solved. The kings of the departments (directors) still seem to operate independent from the political control. The planning department is still out of control and decides at will even against their own department. You can only summarise that the present administration leaves a political, economical, financial and social mess.

The new government needs MHK's with management skills and economical background. The new MHK's need to develop a resilient and realistic combined strategy for all critical sectors such as economy, finances, health care, education, pensions, tourism, access to the Island and island's access to the European market . Such strategy cannot be developed in a one day working week. MHK's need to work a lot harder and many more days. We have to stabilise the critical and vital sectors such as the health service, pensions, the IOM finances and we have to ease the financial burden of the elderly.

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

The answer is simple, I would be prepared to invest my energy and taking over responsibility in the new government. I would be interested to become responsible for the two departments with the biggest challenges, economy and infrastructure. This should include the office of fair trading and the planning department. Economy and infrastructure are the two work horses and of vital importance for all the other critical departments, the health service, education, finances, tourism etc.

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

The new government needs to review and re-evaluate the financial situation. Based on the outcome we would have a clear idea what is possible and what is financially not possible. It is then the task of the government to share the reality and the truth with the public. The full payout of individual pensions has to be stopped immediately. We have to swipe away the smoke screens and become realistic as painful as it might be. Deceiving the public is not the way forward.

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

I am sorry?

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

Introduction of new taxes and raise of taxes. Explosion of rates, the roads have become dangerous, large companies have left the IOM or are in the process of leaving, the financial reserves are running low, waste of huge sums of money on consultants, the promenade has become an off-road course. The monopoly of the gas provider has resulted in another monopoly abuse and we are facing the situation that the present and outgoing government might try to sign a deal for the ferry service without a tender process. If the contract will be signed without a tender, and I will be elected, I will make sure that such contract will be cancelled on legal grounds before the end of the year and the service will go out to tender.

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

The online gambling, banking, CSP's, the gas monopoly, the ferry monopoly, the de-facto oil importing monopoly

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

Due to the location as an island we will not create a big production and export sector. Services such as banking, insurance and mainly tourism with affordable travel costs to get here is the way forward. Again the location, the

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

natural beauty, miles of pristine empty beaches and very important the safety could make us a preferred holiday destination. Therefore we should develop the tourist sector, hotels, guest houses, camping sites, looking at the possibility to create holiday resorts and possibly a casino area. We have to create an open mind approach for any development in the economy and we have to remove obstacles by reforming and controlling the planning department.

I see three possible scenarios

1. The IOM keeps the status quo, the UK makes most decision in their interest and we have to follow. All decisions will be made in Westminster with no say of the IOM in reality. The UK will defend us from an unknown threat which we have to pay for; the UK will make economical and foreign policy decision exclusively in their interest.
2. The IOM becomes part of the UK like Wales, Scotland and N-Ireland. We would have representatives in Westminster. We would become an area which will be supported through regional support funds like Cumbria and Lancaster. We keep our

Parliament and a similar political status as the other UK countries. Otherwise not much else would change.

We would become an independent country. As an independent country we could chose how close and with whom we want to trade. There would be a possibility to become a member of EU which would see an enormous unseen influx of EU funding. The whole infrastructure, such as road, airports, bridges etc will be brought up to an EU standard. But this comes at a price . The UK just decided not to pay this price anymore, despite all the before mentioned possibilities.

If you are, in which areas?

More Independence as a nation, in foreign affairs, withdrawing from the defence agreement as there is no thinkable threat from anywhere.

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

Yes absolutely.

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

The government has to be streamlined, it has to become more modern, the LogCo needs to be transformed. Tynwald with the elected representative need to make the decision, the MLC's

Who should have the responsibility of electing the Chief Minister?

need to be stripped of their voting rights, their "work" in government departments and their possibility to obstruct Tynwald decisions. We need to improve the standard of our politicians. To become a minister you should have a certain degree level of education.

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

The position is just a minister, therefore very clearly it should be Tynwald. If we would have a president, the people should elect the president.

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

It is an interesting idea and would give direct influence on the price levels and control. In reality private companies operate better. The perfect solution for the IOM is a PPP, (Private Public Partnership) for the sea service. The air service does not need such regulation.

Are you in favour of an increase in

Yes, very much. Energy prices will rise permanently. We have an abundance of free energy resources, such as wind, tides and current. Opposite to oil production countries, there is no pollution and the energy resources will never run out.

Yes

means testing for financial support and/or services provided by Government?

If you are, in which areas?

I cannot understand how the support of individual people in need could be provided without testing if they are eligible. Such testing should be done regularly once a year. Support with taxpayers money of people in need comes with the obligation of the government to control that the support is still needed. The basis of support is the minimum level of available income. People who are living in supported council houses and have a collective income above such level need to move out of such supported houses. There is no right to inherit living in a council house, there is no right to stay in a council house if the conditions are changing. For example a council house for four persons cannot be kept by one person if the other persons who lived there initially are not living there any longer. In such case the government needs to offer another suitable place and there should be no right to contest the government obligation in such actions legally in court.