

Michelle Inglis – Douglas Central

Political Questions (2016)

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

I chose to move to the Island in 2003 due to the idyllic place and opportunities for progression in all areas. The Island was big on community and its success and was driving the way forward for all age ranges. However, today we have taken a backwards step with education fees for Further Higher Education, less support in grants, cuts in both benefits and living allowances. Opportunities are few and far between these days with the poorer getting being worse off. I want to change this for the better and close the gap that has been created over the last few years. I want to make a better future for our children and reignite sectors which once thrived here.

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

LegCo should not be attached to departments, should sit on committees that review the behaviour of the MHKs and the laws written by the MHK's, thus simply a review body.

Brexit has created a unique but difficult situation for the Isle of Man prompting numerous debates and ultimately a referendum. I see this referendum being to choose one of three possible outcomes;

1) we stay with the UK no matter what,

2) we try to negotiate a deal with the EU and the UK,

3) we try to leave the UK and join another country who is attached to the EU.

The public must have a vote on this and like the UK we must listen to the public. However, I do not feel that we can make an informed decision until we know where the UK lies once they have left the EU.

Regulation of all of our services in line with the EU, UK and other countries is a must. An independent committee that reports to Tynwald needs to be set up to ensure the regulations are being adhered too, and to make sure that the Government is doing all they can to provide the best possible services to the people. Areas that we should look at is the Hospital, Hotels which are being award stars on a tick box basis, GP's, Education and Ferries to name a few.

The income budget itself is healthy however, the need is much more leading to the depletion of our reserves. We need urgent attention to balance this budget and protect our reserves. To do this, I am proposing a slight increase in tax for all however, bringing back the opportunities to prevent a divide in our communities. The poor need to have this chance and the rich need to not feel penalised. Initiatives such as supporting

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

companies to support students into further education with jobs waiting is just one idea – Academic Apprenticeships. Tynwald need to be held accountable and LegCo should be responsible for this. Accountability needs to be written into their contracts, the MLC's should be kept separate from the MHK's by removing any ministerial posts from the MLC's. We need a more transparent and open government.

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

The private sector housing is invariable damp hence making the tenants ill, this can be sorted by regulation accompanied by fines or revoking licences to let properties. Rates on empty properties which are falling into disrepair should still have to pay the full amount, if they are not repaired the owners should incur fines have the property appropriated.

The previous administration has demonstrated a lack of planning, succession planning, transparency and honesty in all areas. They have failed so far to consider any sort of plan for Brexit leaving it to the new administration. They have failed to balance the books, only decrease our reserves. They have failed to even choose a plan for the

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

Douglas Prom, such a simple decision that these individuals couldn't agree on. This is not what the electorate needs, what we need is a direct approach to making changes for the better and agreeing on changes that clearly will be for the better in a timely manner

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

The UK and EU is the most important challenge for the Island, where the Island will fit in with the UK's negotiations and agreements. Getting the reserves back to a reasonable balance without full austerity measures and ensuring there is adequate monies to cover the pension deficit.

A reduction in the younger economically active population requires urgent attention to support the diversification and development of businesses, as well as to boost the pension fund.

We need to consider increasing taxes by the amount needed to cover the budget required with efficient spending rather than the current careless spending.

A referendum for the Manx people so that they can decide democratically where their future lies. This would of course be after the UK have completed their negotiations so that we have a full

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

picture of our options.

We need to encourage our younger generation to stay on the island with sufficient opportunities for employment and a good lifestyle.

The public sector pension was changed to GUS and for some inexplicable reason the lump sum on retirement was massively increased. This caused an exodus of individuals retiring on exorbitant lump sums. This should have been capped at £250,000 with a small increase to annual pension

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

Relationships with China, Jersey and Guernsey on a political and trade level have been forged. These need to be built on further incorporating other countries. The Island has now been put n the map as something other than a tax haven and this needs to continue.

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

Spending appears to be out of control with purchases being made with little or no consideration of the needs. People no longer have any trust or confidence in a system that is not open and transparent. Cuts in grants, benefits and Dependability has created a vulnerable group leaving them without any support.

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

Yes it relies heavily on the finance and e-gaming sectors, this should be diversified.

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

Farming exports, manufacturing – with improved sea links via competition and a Foreign Trade Ambassador to create opportunities and assist with exports.

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

At this moment in time they are our safety net although this may change once article 50 is triggered. This will need to be addressed with the community at large. Personally, I am worried that the UK may wish to tax the islands harder despite us not having an option in the Brexit vote, this could leave us with no option but to reconsider our links to the UK.

If you are, in which areas?

The VAT agreement should be re-negotiated as it is unsustainable in its present form and the Lt Governors salary should be paid out of the VAT agreement or from the UK and not the Tax payers on the Island.

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

Yes Lord Lisvane made a number of points to reform the parliament here,

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

these need to be considered carefully.

Tynwald needs reformed as stated by Lord Lisvane, whereby LegCo simply review any laws as put forward by the House of Keys. MHK's need to be held accountable and this should be done by a scrutinising committee set up and ran by MLC's and Public members.

Who should have the responsibility of electing the Chief Minister?

The public as they are ultimately the individuals voting in the government

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

I am as this will attract competition and ultimately benefit the Manx people. They should also pay into the Manx economy not take all of the profits to another country, including hiring locally.

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

Renewable energy projects are the way forward, these should be encouraged. Private houses should also be encouraged to use renewable energy, through grants and support including the MEA buying excess supplies from the householders, this will drive down household bills.

Are you in favour of an increase in

Means testing is already used in most

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

benefits and should also be used for further education so that our children don't leave university in debt.

If you are, in which areas?

University students presently have to pay £2500 per year either individually or via a loan system. This immediately puts them in debt to £7500 on completion of their course. This should be means tested so as not to deter any student from reaching their potential.