

Positive Action Group

Dear Elector

Positive Action Group (PAG) seeks to encourage active citizenship and none more so than informed voting. [Our charter explains this.](#)

We have compiled this candidate questionnaire as an aid for you to determine the candidate closest to your views. It should be read in conjunction with the candidates manifesto. Manifestos are notoriously difficult to compare given the variety of subjects and writing styles, we hope this will help you navigate them.

We'd like to thank Amy, Bill, Keith and Kurt for taking the time to participate during a very hectic time for them.

Email: info@positiveactiongroup.org

The answers available for the following sections were:

Strongly Agree - Agree - Neutral - Disagree - Strongly Disagree - Don't Know

REF STATEMENT

1 OVERALL IMPRESSIONS OF THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT

1.1 The current government are doing an excellent job in difficult circumstances

Amy Burns	Disagree
Keith Fitton	Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Disagree
Bill Malarkey	Disagree

1.2 The current government are transparent in their dealings and fully engage with the public

Amy Burns	Strongly Disagree
Keith Fitton	Strongly Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly Disagree
Bill Malarkey	Disagree

2 STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT

2.1 The Chief minister should be elected by the people

Amy Burns	Strongly Agree
Keith Fitton	Neutral
Kurt Buchholz	Disagree
Bill Malarkey	Strongly Agree

2.2 Ministers should only be appointed from directly elected members of Tynwald

Amy Burns	Agree
Keith Fitton	Strongly Agree
Kurt Buchholz	Agree
Bill Malarkey	Strongly Agree

2.3 The number of departmental members ought to be reduced

Amy Burns	Strongly Agree
Keith Fitton	Agree
Kurt Buchholz	Agree
Bill Malarkey	Disagree

2.4 The soon to be enacted Freedom of Information Act will enable transparency I expect of Government.

Amy Burns	Neutral
Keith Fitton	Neutral
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly Disagree
Bill Malarkey	Agree

3 GOVERNMENT FINANCES

3.1 Pinewood was a reasonable investment to make

Amy Burns	Disagree
Keith Fitton	Strongly Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly Disagree
Bill Malarkey	Agree

3.2 The government should continue with a final salary pension scheme.

Amy Burns	Disagree
Keith Fitton	Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Agree
Bill Malarkey	Strongly Disagree

3.3 The so called 'toilet tax' is fair and does not need reform or removal.

Amy Burns	Strongly disagree
Keith Fitton	Strongly disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly disagree
Bill Malarkey	Neutral

4 ECONOMY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The Island is well set to take part in the emerging economic/technological developments that will create sustainable, meaningful jobs and livelihoods.

Amy Burns	Disagree
Keith Fitton	Agree
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly disagree
Bill Malarkey	Agree

4.2 The island should be self-sufficient in terms of food production.

Amy Burns	Agree
Keith Fitton	Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Don't know
Bill Malarkey	Neutral

5 BENEFITS AND PENSIONS

5.1 Benefits are too generous

Amy Burns	Disagree
Keith Fitton	Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Neutral
Bill Malarkey	Agree

5.2 We should introduce a benefit cap similar to that in the UK

Amy Burns	Strongly disagree
Keith Fitton	Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly disagree
Bill Malarkey	Agree

6 EXTERNAL RELATIONS

6.1 The government should tighten up on work permits

Amy Burns	Agree
Keith Fitton	Agree
Kurt Buchholz	Disagree
Bill Malarkey	Strongly Agree

6.2 The government should be more independent of the UK

Amy Burns	Strongly Agree
Keith Fitton	Neutral
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly agree
Bill Malarkey	Agree

7 HEALTH

7.1 The GP service is adequate

Amy Burns	Neutral
Keith Fitton	Neutral
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly disagree
Bill Malarkey	Agree

7.2 The IoM public dentist service is adequate

Amy Burns	Strongly disagree
Keith Fitton	Strongly disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly disagree
Bill Malarkey	Disagree

7.3 Nobles hospital performs as well as can be expected

Amy Burns	Disagree
Keith Fitton	Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Strongly disagree
Bill Malarkey	Strongly Disagree

8 HOUSING

We have adequate public housing stock for our needs

8.1	Amy Burns	Disagree
	Keith Fitton	Disagree
	Kurt Buchholz	Disagree
	Bill Malarkey	Strongly Disagree

Public sector tenants should have a right to buy their rented property.

8.2	Amy Burns	Neutral
	Keith Fitton	Strongly disagree
	Kurt Buchholz	Disagree
	Bill Malarkey	Strongly Disagree

8.3 Any Landlord and Tenant Act should apply equally to both private and public sector.

8.3	Amy Burns	Strongly agree
	Keith Fitton	Strongly agree
	Kurt Buchholz	Agree
	Bill Malarkey	Strongly Agree

9 TRANSPORT

The current ferry service is on balance fair to Islanders.

9.1	Amy Burns	Disagree
	Keith Fitton	Disagree
	Kurt Buchholz	Strongly disagree
	Bill Malarkey	Agree

Isle of Man Bus and Rail perform well.

9.2	Amy Burns	Disagree
	Keith Fitton	Agree
	Kurt Buchholz	Agree
	Bill Malarkey	Agree

10 SOCIAL CARE

10.1 Social care is adequate and fit for purpose.

Amy Burns	Disagree
Keith Fitton	Neutral
Kurt Buchholz	Neutral
Bill Malarkey	Disagree

11 WELLBEING AND SOCIAL

11.1 The "wellbeing" of the people of the Isle of Man - a balance of happiness, health, financial security, social connectedness and purposeful living - is currently the best it's ever been.

Amy Burns	Strongly Disagree
Keith Fitton	Strongly Disagree
Kurt Buchholz	Disagree
Bill Malarkey	Disagree

11.2 With the last 2 years I have responded to more than one government public consultation

Amy Burns	Strongly agree
Keith Fitton	Agree
Kurt Buchholz	Agree
Bill Malarkey	Agree

12 WHAT WILL YOU DO IN YOUR FIRST SIX MONTHS IN OFFICE TO REALISE YOUR MANIFESTO PLEDGES?

Amy Burns

I will be (and already am) standing by my constituents and sounding out problems in my area. I have strongly come to realise that things are worse in Douglas South than first thought. The Mental Health department needs instant attention.

Keith Fitton

1. I believe that government is frequently found not to be thinking in a strategic manner. We repeatedly see knee jerk reactions that fail to take into account all consequences. The regular increases in indirect taxation or costs due to government failures are evidence of this. There are some bright points and I support, for example, the Chief Minister's visits to China etc, to try and attract new business.

Council of Ministers and the 'collective responsibility' are the biggest blockage in terms of 'open & transparent' government. The manner in which government conduct themselves avoids scrutiny or accountability.

2. I don't have a problem with the Chief Minister being elected by MHK's if they first produce a programme for government or a manifesto, so they can be held to account. I would have concerns that a publically elected CM

would become more of a presidential figure and also the additional expense of a further election, after the General Election.

I'm not convinced the FoI Act will tell us what we need to know, so I'm neutral until I see it working.

3. The film fund has cost the IoM about £34 million as a guess, although who actually knows? How much has it brought in to the Isle? Who knows. If the government were open & transparent about Pinewood, then we would know but right now, we simply don't know. On balance of what we do know, it looks like a disaster.

Final Salary Pensions are simply unsustainable and government need to address this as a matter of urgency. However, it also needs to be handled carefully and with skill, otherwise we make the IoM less attractive for key professionals, in particular health service staff.

4. The Isle of Man can never be self sufficient in terms of food production (Manx bananas anyone?) However more can be done in terms of 'buy local'. I don't understand why I can buy Manx cheese cheaper in Liverpool than I can in Douglas? Let's have pride in our home produce but let's see that it is competitive too.

5. There is a danger of falling in to the trap that it is the poorest people in our society that are causing the problems in our society. This isn't a true correlation. We do need to examine benefits and work should always be preferable.

Means tested benefits would help but simply focussing upon 'benefits' as a generalisation is part of the problem, not the solution.

6. Regarding Work Permits, I've agreed, but I think in general they do a good job. It is certainly more difficult to get a Work Permit for new staff now than it once was. However, some job descriptions are written in such a manner that it precludes local people from meeting the requirements. I would like to see this challenged.

Regarding independence from the UK, we've probably got it about right, both from a social perspective and allowing for trade within the UK & Europe. Distancing ourselves further is likely to cause problems.

7. Some GP's are excellent (including mine) others are appalling. So I've marked this neutrally on balance, but there is work to be done in some areas.

NHS dentist service is dire. Introducing charges is likely to be counter productive. There aren't enough of them, there are long waiting lists & times and now a charge to further put people off. My fear is that conditions that are frequently picked up by dentists, such as mouth cancers will be missed, leading to painful & expensive treatments as well as the pain and misery for the individual and their family. Counting pennies in dentistry to spend many pounds in health & social care.

Nobles Hospital can perform better. I hope that Minister Quayle and the new management team will ensure that this happens. The West Midland Quality Review audits will ensure a baseline to be met. Regular inspection would help too as would robust complaints processes.

8. I don't believe that people should have a right to buy the social housing unless it is at a fair market rate that allowed for additional stock to be developed. A fair, reasonable & workable first time buyer scheme would be preferable.

Landlord & tenant legislation should apply to private and government equally. 100% agree. I can't think of any good reason why it wouldn't?

9. The existing ferry service is an expensive monopoly. However, the user agreement ensures a service level is met all year around. We need to be careful what we wish for. The Steam Packet is a very profitable company, making on average about £7 million pounds in profit annually. I don't think we get good value at the moment but I am concerned that a 'free for all, open seas' approach could end with a worse service. Also, the crew on the Steam Packet are paid 'proper' rates. I would strongly oppose any alternative company coming in that reduces

overheads by paying crew International Transport Federation (ITF) rates. ITF rates are substantially below National Minimum Wage rates.

The buses probably offer good value for money in a largely rural area. They could be better and probably more efficient, but on balance, they probably deliver a decent service.

10. Health & Social Care together could improve. There are gaps in provisions that are frequently down to chronic staff shortages (for example the Occupational Therapy service or Speech & Language service). Too often, the people who get the most 'joined up' service are those who know how the system works and are prepared to make a noise, or have someone advocate on their behalf. The government state that they want people to remain in their own homes but are not (yet) showing evidence of investing in structures to make this happen. Done well, improved community services lead to improved outcomes for people and cost savings for government. Done badly they result in isolation, poor outcomes and increased costs elsewhere in services. I'm hopeful that the recent visit to New Zealand will result in meaningful, planned investment in the right services. The government urgently needs to look at the use of Electronic Assistive Technology (EAT). EAT offers a wide range of possibilities that enable individuals to remain in the community. These are often people with physical disabilities or people with dementia.

The lack of implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act (now nine years old) is an embarrassment. This need not have been an expensive piece of legislation. However, clearly any organisation INCLUDING GOVERNMENT that has not voluntarily moved to a position where the DDA could be enforced, after nine years of it laying dormant on the statute (not to mention the 'planning time' before it was brought in) has no intention of ever voluntarily complying. It is a disgrace that disabled people can still be denied the basic right of not facing discrimination. Does this actually happen? Well, I know for a fact of an incident around Christmas where a blind visitor to the Isle of Man went in to a café with his guide dog. He was refused service and told to leave. Refusing to serve food to a blind person on the Isle of Man? That is apparently both acceptable and legal. It shouldn't be either. Will he ever visit the Isle of Man again? Will his family? Will he tell his friends? How much trade will that blatant discrimination cost us as a community?

11. If the government really believe we've had 'thirty years of uninterrupted growth' I suggest they get out and talk to more people.

I've responded to the Equality Bill consultation. I began the NI consultation but felt the 'benefits' section was politically loaded to get the answer they are looking for.

12. Many of the pledges in my manifesto go well beyond a first six months. I hope if I am elected a message will begin to get through to government that people want change and are fed up with the current system of governance.

We will then build upon this over the remaining lifetime of the parliament so that after 2016 we will be in a position of serious influence. Therefore, we will be looking to build upon success of a bye-election. That said, we will push for changes as far as we can. The manifesto will remain at the forefront of my views but I'm not going to make promises that I cannot deliver upon.

Kurt Buchholz

Starting to influence the member in Tynwald to accept the need to modernize the country.

Using the time to the next general election to attract different and the right people into politics.

Taking responsibility as soon as possible, just to be an MHK is not satisfactory. Infrastructure and economy would be interesting.

Bill Malarkey

Seek to have a Select Committee investigate the future of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

Amy Burns

If Elected I will not be taking any positions within government.

I will not be accepting Tax free expenses that are paid directly to our salaries and instead reinvesting them in the community.

Keith Fitton

No text entered here but seems to have more than covered this extensively in section 12 above!

Kurt Buchholz

Do you think we need a new bus terminal and where should it be?

We have the "Sea Terminal", about 100 meters where the busses stop now. It is only used about 10 % of the day when ferries arrive/depart. In front should be the bus area, short term free parking for cars should be made available next to the Steam packet building.

Bill Malarkey

Our present pension system is at breaking point. We must act now to protect our pensions and pensioners. - Local Government, across the Island, needs to be reformed and reduced in size. - All members of Legislative Council should be elected by the public.
