

Leonard SINGER



**LET
YOUR
VOICE
BE
HEARD**

for Ramsey

Dear Voter,

The time to take decisions that will shape the future of Ramsey and this Island is now.

There has been no voice in Tynwald speaking up for Ramsey, no one there putting Ramsey first which is why I shall be seeking your support on September 29th.

I believe MHKs have a dual responsibility, to their constituents and to the nation. And for MHKs to be truly effective I believe they must work to bring about change at national level but equally, must be sensitive and alert to local issues of concern to the people they serve.

For the past five years those in power have failed to take the decisions that could improve our quality of life and economic and social wellbeing. Regeneration is beginning in Ramsey - slowly - but for the present the town is tired, neglected and unattractive. Worse still, there has been no dynamic investment to create jobs in Ramsey.

I have lived and worked in Ramsey for 20 years and served as your MHK from 1996 to 2003, as an MLC from 2003 to 2006 and as a Ramsey Town Commissioner from 1991 to 1996 and again since 2008 until the present time.

I have never flinched from speaking up for the people of Ramsey and, when necessary, will step on 'political toes' and ask the difficult questions to express your concerns.

My priority has been - and always will be - to support the people and the town of Ramsey. As an independent candidate I am not controlled or directed by a political party.

With your support I shall continue to serve you and work to achieve your hopes for this town and this Island. If you choose to elect me it will not be my intention to use your support for self promotion but to work with you. I pledge to you my experience, dedication, determination and vision but above all I promise to work towards moving Ramsey and the Isle of Man forward and ensuring your voice is heard.

Leonard Sawyer

Good Government. What should we expect?

- ◆ Strong leadership;
- ◆ An efficient health service;
- ◆ A securely funded education system;
- ◆ Rigid control on expenditure;
- ◆ Forward planning;
- ◆ Investment distributed across the Island;
- ◆ Ensuring senior citizens are valued and respected
- ◆ Protection of the vulnerable;
- ◆ Trust between government and the electorate;
- ◆ Politicians, not civil servants, deciding policy.

So have those expectations been met?

NO



- ◆ Weakest leadership of any Manx government for years;
- ◆ Ministers not accepting responsibilities for failures; Money wasted on projects to the tune of several millions, e.g:
 - ◆ Richmond Hill Road works (£3m)
 - ◆ Prison overspend (£12m)
 - ◆ Paying for the airport extension (£2m)
 - ◆ The £250,000 Gawne roundabout

So have those expectations been met?

NO

- ◆ Hospital waiting lists stretching up to 24 months;
- ◆ Funding threatened to be removed from life-saving Isle of Man Hyperbaric Chamber. Funding grudgingly returned after public protest;
- ◆ Primary school teacher numbers reduced while Isle of Man Business School allowed £1/3 m overspend;
- ◆ Government 'rolls over' and gives up reciprocal health agreement - public pressure restores it and government rewrites history to claim the glory;
- ◆ Despite warnings from 2006 no decisions taken to tackle Civil Service pension deficit - likely to reach £3.6 billion by 2030 if no action taken. Final salary pensions for new government employees unsustainable;
- ◆ Manx Electricity debt is over £400 million. Treasury claims no knowledge of £120 million borrowed by Manx Electric Authority - a blatant admission of incompetence and total lack of political leadership;
- ◆ 'Smoke and mirrors' ineffectual 2011 budget despite belt tightening call after £140 million black hole caused by VAT clawback. Problems growing in the face of second VAT raid from UK government;
- ◆ Investment opportunities directed solely to Douglas at the expense of Ramsey and other towns;
- ◆ Excessive and costly over-reliance on consultants. Senior officers returned as consultants on high fees to avert blame from government when things go wrong.

I believe we deserve better leadership, Tynwald members should contribute to their own pensions and we must balance our books as a matter of urgency. With the current world financial instability and the horrendous loss of VAT income there is an immediate need to look closely, without exception, at every Government function to seek out savings, efficiencies and new sources of income.

The government has distanced itself from the people using its 'bloc vote'. It has not listened to the voices of the people or of the other elected members of Tynwald. The government is woefully lacking in ideas, it is not leaner, fitter or better prepared to take us forward and I doubt I am alone in my belief that some current members of Government have neither the wit nor the wisdom to secure our future and that of the next generation.

What I want for the Island nationally

- ◆ A first-class health service;
- ◆ Educational opportunities for young people of all abilities;
- ◆ Protection for the most vulnerable;
- ◆ The needs of senior citizens are met;
- ◆ Creative measures to attract high quality new business to the Island, to provide more career opportunities and encourage local talent to stay;
- ◆ A common sense approach to tackling our mounting financial problems;
- ◆ Support for our agricultural industry to encourage production of more local produce rather than pay farmers not to produce food.
- ◆ Support wildlife and conservation initiatives;
- ◆ Efficient public transport carrying passengers when they want, where they want;
- ◆ Openness and transparency across government and an accountable Council of Ministers;
- ◆ True democracy. I fully support the public election of the Legislative Council and the Chief Minister and would be prepared to pursue this by bringing forward a private member's Bill;
- ◆ Introduction of a viable Freedom of Information Act;
- ◆ A government with 'backbone' and fearless determination to fight any further threats from the UK;
- ◆ Greater protection of our safe environment and promotion of our community spirit;
- ◆ No more abuse of the work permit scheme;
- ◆ A fair judicial system for all;
- ◆ North/South divide abolished and all regions of the Island to receive equal treatment;
- ◆ Cross-departmental information sharing in government leading to greater efficiency.
- ◆ Full investigation into whether privatisation of selected government run departments such as the Airport or the Villa Marina could lead to increased efficiency;
- ◆ Common sense approach to health and safety legislation; A government that listens and respects the people it serves. No more 'them and us'.

Health

We all know that a health service that meets the needs of modern society is essential. We also all know there is no bottomless money pit on which to draw to cover rising NHS costs.

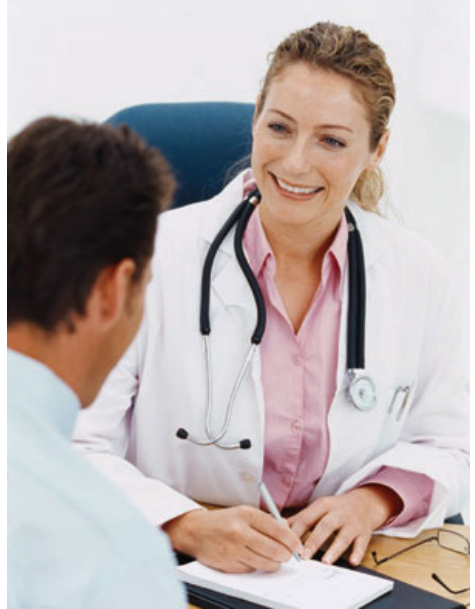
The solution is to find efficiencies, make savings and think smarter. With advances in medicine and technology the 'prevention is better than cure' approach has never been more achievable. Detection and intervention at an early stage help save lives, return people to health sooner and lessen pressure on the NHS.

And healthier people lead to a healthier economy.

However, promoting a health policy more idealistic than realistic is pointless. Those in the health service need to 'get real' not pay mere lip service to developing a better healthcare system while protecting their own little empires.

A policy of prevention is effective in the long term but costly in the short term, demanding the best and most sophisticated equipment as well as changes in approach, such as looking closely at the current number of administrators, a sensible prescribing strategy, an efficient buying policy, control on repeat prescriptions and measures aimed at reducing the level of missed NHS appointments.

A way forward worth investigating would be to attract a private healthcare company to one of our hospitals as a source of potential



added income which could attract top consultants to practice in Ramsey or Douglas and lead to exemplary standards of medical treatment. And, as a condition of their contract, those consultants would be required to perform procedures previously not available on-Island to NHS patients who currently have to be transported across at considerable cost.

But however visionary, new policies to effect lasting change, sustainable funding and a government committed to healthcare reform are crucial if we are to work towards a health service the people of Ramsey and the Island demand and deserve.

Scrutiny

Rigorous scrutiny is the key to accountable government and parliament.

There is no effective mechanism currently in place to challenge actions taken by the Council of Ministers. Policies and decisions taken by government and its departments are not subject to detailed scrutiny. Problems are only identified after they have occurred, particularly the financial problems. Most MHKs and MLCs are departmental members, therefore I would support the introduction of scrutiny committees comprising Tynwald members who would not hold departmental posts and who would be charged to look in detail - and impartially - at all policy making procedures.

Freedom of Information

Government has been promising a Freedom of Information Act for several years yet continues to stall its introduction. We are entitled to know how and why decisions are being made on our behalf. However government proposals include so many exceptions that our access to information will be more restricted than it is now. Government now claims that allowing the public access to information as a right will cost too much. And this coming from an administration that has poured money - our money - down a very large drain. This is an indefensible position I want to see changed.

Safeguarding the Island's business reputation

The Isle of Man's international profile as a responsible well-regulated world-class jurisdiction is growing. It is therefore regrettable that the Treasury Minister should have signed a double taxation agreement with Bahrain. An ill-judged action demonstrating the Isle of Man's official recognition of a country denying its citizens their human rights and killing its own people for opposing the government.

Off-island travel

The cost of travelling off-Island by boat or plane is increasingly prohibitive. Government, however, dismisses this national concern as not being their problem, although there are solutions a capable future government could introduce.

Whilst the User Agreement is questionable in terms of the power it has given to the Steam Packet there is a need for government to open discussions with the company to secure us a better deal. As an Island, you have to have some control of supplying and feeding your people.

The current 'open skies' policy does not prevent airlines coming to the Isle of Man and only operating the more profitable routes, which reduces the viability of an airline also providing services on less lucrative air links. I have always supported a licensing system that permits an airline to operate a route and, in return, requires it to guarantee frequency, reliability and, importantly, affordable fares.

Criminal Justice

For there to be complete confidence in our judicial system, custodial sentences must reflect the serious nature of the offence - including drug dealing and trafficking. Prison should not offer offenders a lifestyle and facilities better than those of law-abiding citizens.

MY RECORD IN GOVERNMENT

Highways

- ◆ 'Cats eyes' installed on the Mountain Road;
- ◆ 20mph speed limit imposed outside schools;
- ◆ Private contractors given work on pavements and roads that allowed the Department of Transport to concentrate on major schemes.

Fisheries

- ◆ Working relationship re-established between fishing industry and the then Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry;
- ◆ Meeting European Fisheries senior officer in Brussels to put the case for the Isle of Man fishing industry;
- ◆ Overseeing purchase of Fisheries protection vessel, the 'Barrule', to protect Manx waters.

Department of Trade and Industry

- ◆ As chairman of the Economic Development Committee had direct contact with investors worldwide, encouraging new business to the Island including e-business, precision engineering, clean technology, software development and high-tech manufacturing;
- ◆ Created direct link between Economic Development and the Treasury;
- ◆ At request of the then Chief Minister was asked to act as a link between the 'warring factions' of the departments of Trade and Industry and Home Affairs.

Private Members' Bills

I remain very proud to have successfully steered three private members' Bills through the House of Keys, two of which gave increased protection to vulnerable young people.

My record in Ramsey

Living and working in Ramsey has helped me to keep in close contact with you, speak up for you and see problems through to their conclusion.

As chairman of the Ramsey Cottage Hospital League of Friends I have been delighted that the committee has been able to invest more than £750,000 and provide the best in modern equipment. Ramsey Cottage Hospital has become a centre of excellence with the power to attract more consultants thereby saving patients the need to travel to Douglas.

We intend to continue investing in the hospital and I extend my sincere thanks for your donations. My one regret is that despite promises from elected MHKs to support the 24-hour service after the last election (a time when the Island had more money), no positive action was taken to restore this essential service. The opportunity no longer exists to restore the 24-hour service.

Voicing your concerns

I have spoken out against:

- ◆ Closure of the Assessment and Therapy Centre for vulnerable older people at Ramsey Cottage Hospital;
- ◆ Changes to the bus timetable. I will continue to fight for the town bus service and the restoring of the Douglas Number 3 promenade route that suits passengers', not the operator's needs;
- ◆ Difficulties in contacting the medical emergency doctor service due to the absence of telephone queuing service.

Regrettably I received no support from our MHKs on any of these matters. However, I remain committed to speaking up on your behalf and asking those difficult questions that demand answers from government.



My vision for Ramsey

- ◆ Best use made of regeneration funding to restore a sense of civic pride and for the town to become more attractive to visitors, new business and investors;
- ◆ Re-energizing the marina project - certainly in the inner harbour;
- ◆ Transferring planning powers from the faceless committees of Douglas to the Commissioners, who are sensitive to the needs of Ramsey and its people;
- ◆ That the local authority act as agents for functions such as minor road repairs and street cleaning, leading to greater efficiencies;
- ◆ Public sector housing waiting lists reduced through a shared equity first-time buyers' house purchase scheme, which would enable more young people to gain a foothold on the property ladder. Residents of public sector housing with high income should pay a fairer rent more in line with the private sector.

'Well done, Ramsey Town Commissioners'

- ◆ For ensuring Ramsey not Douglas became home to the Island's only tenpin bowling complex, despite government opposition;
- ◆ For supporting the new hotel on the Mooragh Promenade on Commissioners' land. (I was the first person to call for the new hotel to be completed before the Grand Island Hotel apartment development could proceed). However despite receiving several hundred thousand pounds in government grant the developer was permitted to take out from the original plan the provision of a much needed function room for 150 people.
- ◆ For prudent budgeting that has kept Ramsey's rate unchanged for two consecutive years while increasing service levels.
- ◆ If elected I intend to meet with the Commissioners regularly, as I believe it is essential that MHKs work in partnership with the local authority, a practice rarely seen in Ramsey during the last five years.

The Queen's Pier



Photo courtesy of Ray Collister.com

We have been conned by the Council of Ministers and members of Tynwald into believing that spending £1.8 million to put sections of the pier into storage in Jurby amounts to refurbishment. Little will remain of the pier after this 'demolition by stealth' programme. Were government truly committed to refurbishment, the £1.8million would have been used for stage by stage restoration, the work continuing when more funding became available. Where were the voices in Tynwald calling for real refurbishment after an Island-wide poll showed 80 per cent were in favour of restoration?

Don't ask questions!

Ministers, especially the Economic Development Minister, would have us remain silent and not ask questions for fear of ruining investors' confidence in the Island!! What Ministers really mean is: 'Don't embarrass us by scrutinising actions and failures we would prefer to hide under the carpet.' I maintain it is an MHKs duty to ask questions and not give in to bully-boy tactics. If more questions had been asked in Tynwald, millions might not have been wasted and this recession might not have been as painful for the public. However, there is a woeful reluctance on the part of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers to fight back or even question UK measures that pose threats to the Isle of Man. Consider the reciprocal health agreement and the raids on our VAT income that amount to more than £5000 per Manx household as prime examples.

There is now a strong possibility that much of the economic progress achieved over the last 30 years could be wiped out through government weakness and failure to challenge.

Time and time again government has either capitulated or disguised the truth. My message to government is: You cannot fool all the people all of the time. Ignore the electorate at your peril.'

My pledge to you

Vote for me on September 29th and I pledge to continue my work in the national interest, supporting the Government when I think they are right but questioning their actions when I believe their proposals are wrong, while always putting the people and Ramsey town first.

I have been calling on electors since May but I sincerely apologise if I don't manage to see everybody before the election. If you need to speak to me please ring the number below.

Contact me

I am very pleased at the level of support and help I have been offered for the election by the people of Ramsey and I thank you. If you would like to display a poster, help on election day, need a postal vote, proxy vote or a lift to the polling station, call me on **816307/499196** or email leonard.singer@manx.net



Your vote counts

You have up to two votes.

Please use your vote for Leonard SINGER

Don't leave it to others to vote.

They may be leaving it up to you.

Thank you for your support.

VOTE SINGER X