

House of Keys By-Election, Thursday 12th November 2015

JON JOUGHIN

Independent candidate for Douglas East

On 12th November you will be asked to decide who your new representative in the House of Keys will be. In the current climate that is not a decision that is easy to make, or can be taken lightly.

I firmly believe that our Island cannot continue to head down the direction that it has taken over the last few years and that change must come, in terms of not just how we do business but also the way that our elected representatives engage with the public at large.

Respect for politicians is at an all time low and I believe that this can only be changed by having members of the House of Keys that are there to do what they should be doing, representing you the people who put them there in the first place. Only through this agenda of mutual respect can we hope to overcome not just our current difficulties but also those that face us in the future.

I hope after reading my detailed manifesto you will consider lending me your vote on 12th November.



JON JOUGHIN

for Douglas East

Proposer: Major Charles Wilson
Secunder: Councillor Raina Chatel

GROWING THE ECONOMY

Our Island needs a long term economic growth strategy, one that focuses on how the economy is going to be expanded and developed over a 30/40 year period rather than one just for the length of one parliament. It is to the detriment of the Island that there is not one currently in place. Our government cannot simply cut its way out of its current problems; only by investing in a long term economic strategy can we ensure our Island and its resident's long term future. All economic factors should be taken into consideration with; focus on both existing businesses and promoting our Island to new and innovative industries. It is only by achieving a truly diversified economy that we can ensure that we have economic security in the decades ahead.



EDUCATION INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

It is Important that we continue to invest in education. The increasingly difficult job market demands higher qualification criteria putting increasing demands on our young people. It is crucial that we retain and recruit the best possible teaching staff, in order that our young people can achieve the best educational start in life.

It is a welcome development to see the ICT project in the Nunnery finally getting underway. This involves supporting present skills and developing them further to include a wider range of qualifications for the modern more demanding job market.

The new community primary school on the old Nobles site is a much needed addition. It not only improves the surrounding area of the school it Improves morale and confidence in the sector by providing an excellent environment for both staff and pupils to excel. A modern school with modern facilities in this area was well overdue and should be an example going forward of what we need across our whole Island.

OUR FRONT LINE SERVICES

We have seen huge losses in revenue, which have forced our government to restructure our finances and the way services are delivered. This government has now publicly stated that they have balanced the books, albeit only the revenue side. It is important going forward, that what funds we currently have allocated to our front line services such as policing, education and health are ring fenced and protected from any further cuts and not further eroded away by attempts to shore up the capital budget which is still in deficit.

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

I would support an index linked pension either linked to Retail Price Index or Consumer Price Index. This would save valuable time and money debating the subject every year.

We need to protect the people who are in the social care system making sure we provide more than just a financial obligation. One of the biggest losses to the Community care is D.A.S.H. There are many charitable community services out there in the third sector and government should make stronger links with them. Although cuts have had to be made in some areas of delivery it shouldn't be to the detriment of the most vulnerable in our society.

SMALLER SMARTER GOVERNMENT

The Government should lead by example when cutting costs, by reforming itself first and foremost. Starting with the Ministers and departments, these should be condensed into smaller numbers. This would reduce the number of senior civil servants required and an ideal opportunity to reduce the bureaucracy that currently exists. A fundamental restructure would also help to release more funding to be directed to our front line services. I also believe that serious consideration should be given to reducing the total number of MHKs and MLCs.

I do believe that all MLCs should be elected by the people and not Tynwald. The image of MLCs has been tarnished over the years and brought into disrepute with the farcical election process we see each time selections are made. The public have vocally expressed their distain of this system and this has led to there being a lack of creditability to the entire structure as it stands.



It is also essential that MHKs and MLCs lead by example and start paying for their own parking. Yes there were problems with the civil service element that was proposed but there is no reason that someone could not have proposed an amendment that Members start paying and the civil service element be re-examined.

I strongly believe we are over burdened with local authorities. Having been actively involved in talks about local authority reforms during my time as a Douglas Town Councillor. I would fully support the establishment of four or five main local authorities plus Douglas. After extensive talks with government for the past three years still nothing has been finalised. It seems very unlikely that anything will have been done this side of the general election, and this is totally unacceptable. Another three years of wasted time and tax payers' money just for any reform to yet again be shelved.

BLOTS ON THE LANDSCAPE

I feel there are currently four main sites of concern in central Douglas. We have Summerland, Middlemarch (Walpole Ave), Cambrian Place and the Bus Station. These are all major pieces of real estate that are crying out for development and they belong to us, the taxpayers of the Isle of Man. There have been numerous grand plans from major investors that have been either rejected or stalled by our Government. These sites need to be developed not just to improve the appearance of the gateway of our capital, but also to increase growth in our economy and give Douglas the vibrancy that has long been lacking. This in turn will generate jobs and new places of interest for visitors and residents. I would actively encourage any viable development of any of these sites.

Alongside this all Local authorities need to be given more authority from government to deal with the increasing numbers of derelict buildings around the Island. We have a prime example in the Castle Mona Hotel. My personal view is this historic and iconic building cannot be left to fall into disrepair, it is a land mark building with significant historic providence. The current powers to deal with dilapidation are not strong or meaningful enough and with the relevant powers being introduced it is a problem that can only get worse as our housing stock on the island ages.

DOUGLAS PROMENADE

During my time as a Douglas Town Councillor, many schemes came to our attention for re new proposal was put forward, and the last dismissed. I believe that if the latest proposal is after the next general election. In fact even as this is being written it appears Tynwald appromenade roadway is in a very serious state of repair, the roadway is our shop window for detracts from it. There is no quick fix it needs to be completely refurbished and if elected,

REGENERATION

As the Island's Capital and gateway it is important that Douglas looks its best at all times. The town centre regeneration scheme must be completed to include Castle Street and Duke Street. The shopping area needs to be an attractive place to go and the regeneration scheme is helping to deliver this. But it has been a slow progress and the shops have suffered greatly and any further schemes require assistance to be in place for those businesses, some of whom have seen a 40% drop off in trade while the works have been undertaken.

We can also see how successful Regent Street has become. The area is used at different times of the day to socialise or maybe enjoy lunch. Also market stalls are branching out from the different businesses in the area and helping new entrepreneurs sell their wares. In light of this I believe it is even more crucial that we have a proper Town square which will only help to compliment and further enhance our town centre experience.



refurbishing Douglas Promenade. Every time a new minister was appointed to infrastructure a scheme was not accepted by this present government, it will be shelved and will never get done until approval for the scheme has slipped from November 2015 to February 2016. The whole of the scheme is for visitors and rather than enhancing and adding to people's first impressions of our Island it would support the present proposal as I did in Council.

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

The state of our roads and pavements, have now become a major concern. Car taxes go up every year but the roads never get the full attention they need. Currently there is no link between the budget allocated for maintenance and the amount of tax raised. Car tax is not ring fenced but simply goes into the central Treasury pot. Lack of basic maintenance, such as road markings have in my view now become a health and safety issue.

Parking has always been a problem in the Capital. As a councillor I supported a new car park to be built on Cambrian Place but once again government would not support us. Yet, governments own masterplan consultants themselves highlighted the need for new car parking infrastructure. The current economic climate suggests that now is not the time to be spending money, but we seem to be spending plenty of money writing reports and debating problems but never bringing anything to fruition. If now is not the right time for action then there never will be one.

TOURISM

We have to recognise that the Island will never have mainstream tourism again in the way it did in the 1970's/80's. However, I do think the Island has great potential to increase its footfall of tourists from where it is today. I feel the government should give more help to support the promotion of events should as athletics, cycling and other sporting events. We have a great sporting culture and history on the Island. There is already a fantastic following for motor cycle racing. Recently we have seen a huge growth in the vintage motor cycles and cars events. The Jurby festival has been a phenomenal success story. As an owner of a vintage motor cycle I have spoken to many fellow vintage enthusiasts, who would love to come over and hold events on the Island. This Island is full of vintage machinery and transport. It's an untapped gold mine for enthusiasts.

We should do more to promote walking and rambling holidays around the Island's wealth of coastal walks, footpaths and glens. As a dog owner I fully support the introduction of dog friendly accommodation, bars and restaurants.

FUEL PRICES



I have viewed with great concern the recent changes in the way that gas prices on our Island are being calculated. The front loading of charges onto the standing charge will have an impact on what we pay. Although there are some at the moment that will pay less than previously it would take only a small rise in the unit price in future years for this to change quite dramatically. Crucially Manx Gas has made no commitment on unit price in future years and I fear what will be a short term gain for some over the next year will ultimately result in long term pain.

In relation to petrol prices I believe that the time has come for a full in-depth analysis of the true cost of shipping fuel to the Island, both in terms of shipping costs and also forward buying policy. The difference between prices here and the UK, and even Northern Ireland is still to my mind too large and has a cost impact on our economy.

CHANGING THE ELECTORAL ROLE - ENSURING OUR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

I totally support Councillor David Ashford's proposed reform of the electoral roll, to be electronically updated. The system we have now has proved it is not fit for purpose and still is based in Victorian times rather than the needs of the 21st Century. It cannot be right, that in the modern day and age, anyone wanting to join the electoral roll and exercise what is their democratic right can have to wait up to three months to appear on the roll.

What has been highlighted in the past few months has made a mockery of our political system. Not just for me personally but also the embarrassment it has caused the other long standing hard working commissioners around the Island. The removal of any democratically elected official other than by the electorate who put them there is an attack on democracy. We also now have the issue of a candidate in this election not being able to stand due to being issued with an old electoral roll, the system needs radical change.



STATE PENSIONS

I fully support the reciprocal pensions' agreement with the UK government. For us to break away from this agreement will be for short term financial gain for the IOM government and would be to the detriment of pensioners in the long term. I fully believe in a state pension, and a pension comes at a cost. We all have to pay into a pension scheme to reap the benefits. Pensions have come under tremendous pressure over the years. This is mainly to do with life expectancy and longevity, which is great news for all our pensioners, but unfortunately not for the fund. If we wish to retain the state pension at this level we will have to have an increase in funding.

I do believe in state pensions, it is our fundamental basic right. Pensioners have worked hard all their working life, they deserve dignity in retirement and it's the governments job to honour their pledge and provide it.

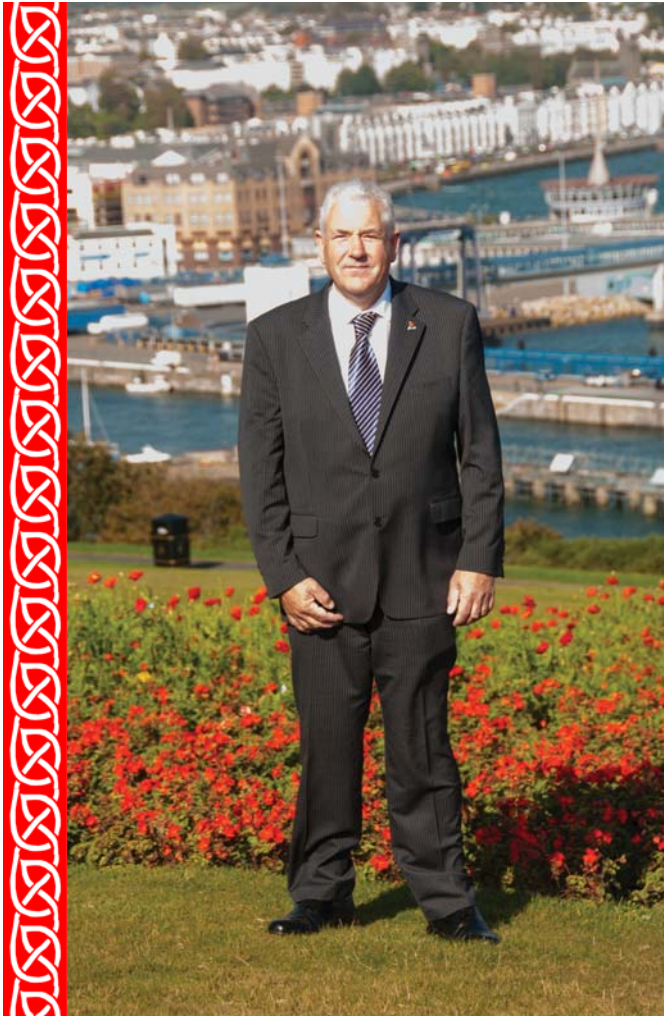
PUBLIC SECTOR PENSIONS

I am in a privileged position of being a trustee and a chairman of the only two funded public sector schemes'. One is fully funded the second is 70% funded by the members of the scheme. This is how all public sector schemes' should be run.

All other public sector pensions have no separately funded scheme they are all taken from government reserves. It would need an amount of approximately 3.6 billion to fully fund the schemes liabilities.

For too long government has buried its head in the sand and done nothing to address this problem. Over twenty years ago it became known that a problem was imminent in pensions in general.

This is a debt we are obligated to pay, despite the media's portrayal these pensioners are not all high ranking civil servants. The majority of the members are hospital porters, manual workers, nurses, police, firemen and teachers. All front line services, people who serve all of us on a daily basis. This is a problem of governments own making which needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency.



MY KEY PRIORITIES

GROWING THE ECONOMY

PROTECTING THE FRONT LINE SERVICES

SMALLER SMARTER GOVERNMENT

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

Polling Stations

Polling Station 1	Scout Hall Demesne Road Douglas IMI 3DW	Tynwald
Polling Station 2	Methodist Church Loch Promenade Douglas IMI 2LY	Crescent
Polling Station 3	Douglas Town Hall Ridgeway Street Douglas IMI IEP	Strand
Polling Station 4	Methodist Church Loch Promenade Douglas IMI 2LY	Windsor
Polling Station 5	Douglas Youth Arts Centre Kensington Road Douglas IMI 3EG	Derby

If you require transport on polling day please ring

463202 or 413546