

**LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTIONS
THURSDAY, 24TH APRIL 2008**

Dear fellow Braddan resident,

First, may I thank those who elected me four years ago; and also to all those who have supported my efforts to offer effective, and honest, representation to Braddan ratepayers.

I do hope that I have repaid the trust you placed in me. I hope that I have offered hard work and a commitment to public service, but also some good, old- fashioned common sense.

If you have been reading your newspapers over the past four years, you will know that I have not hesitated to ask difficult, but necessary, questions.



**Candidate
For Braddan
Andrew Jessopp
BSc (Hons)**

About me:

I am married to Ann, a primary school teacher, and we have three children

I am self-employed, and work in marketing, PR and the media

I am a committee member of the Positive Action Group

I am Deputy Chairman

An admission - things were actually worse than I thought!

Four years ago, I wrote this:

"Our local authority, Braddan Parish Commissioners, has had a chequered history. In recent years it has swung from an authority renowned for its profligate use of ratepayers' money to one of the most efficient and effective on the Island."

I freely admit that I was right about the first bit - but not about the second!

Once elected in 2004, it did not take long to learn that, although Braddan may have been good at collecting rates and rents, its financial controls and management left much to be desired.

So, since my election, I have worked hard to try to put this right.

Probably more than any other member, I have probed, asked questions, sought information, and done my best to stop waste of ratepayers' money.

I also have no regrets in the unanimous decision, by the retiring Board, to dismiss the previous clerk in 2007 for serious misconduct. In my opinion, appropriate action should have been

The Deficit

How did it arise?

With my commitment to sound financial management, you may ask why I (in common with other retiring Commissioners) approved most of the expenditure leading to the present deficit. The answer is simple - **financial reports presented to the Board did not make clear the true financial position of the Authority.**

Even though I raised serious doubts about the rate-setting process, and the level of expenditure - particularly on administration - I was shocked to discover the true extent of Braddan's deficit. Some of this deficit appears to have sat 'hidden' on the balance sheet from the mid-1990's.

The impact on the rates and proposed capital schemes

Unfortunately, this necessitated an above-inflation rise in rates; the deferring of some capital schemes (e.g. the car parks at Union Mills and Quines Hill); and the cancelling of others (e.g. the refurbishment of the Cooil Hall).

(On Cooil Hall, I did not believe we could afford to spend money on a property we do not own - particularly if we are to build community facilities, for the entire parish, at the Strang.)

Controlling expenditure

I have been proactive in seeking to protect ratepayers' money.

For example, I (alone) voted against the new contracts of employment, in 2006, which enabled one employee to be paid, in the year ending 31st March 2007, circa £33,000 on top of the employee's basic salary of circa £50,000.

Controlling expenditure continued

To put these sums into perspective, in the financial year ending 31st March 1990 – the year before the previous Clerk became employed by the Authority – the total cost, to the ratepayers, of administering the Authority was £19,627 - or circa £32,000 in today's money (allowing for inflation).

If elected, I am determined to ensure that financial procedures, and future expenditure, are much more tightly controlled - and that all our overheads are reviewed, and savings identified, wherever possible. With the new management structures in place - and with the election of Commissioners committed to robust financial controls, and management reforms - Braddan will emerge stronger and better.

Why am I standing again?

Despite the turbulence during the four years I have served you as a Commissioner – including, in the past, some abuse and threats of prosecution directed towards me - I am still prepared to put myself forward for another term; and for the reasons below:

The future of Local Authorities

First, **I want to see local authorities continuing to play an important role** in the future of the Isle of Man.

However, closer co-operation between authorities is essential if we are to retain services that central government could take from us, eg. waste collection and housing.

Braddan has set the ball rolling by delegating our main waste collection function to Onchan Commissioners, and by agreeing to allow Douglas Corporation to operate the soon-to-be-introduced doorstep recycling service.

Protecting rural Braddan

Secondly, **I want to continue the fight to retain and protect the rural environment** of our parish.

Planning

I helped prevent a new local plan being approved. It emerged from a process tainted by a public perception of bias. It would also have zoned land for 900 – 1100 houses, contrary to the clearly-expressed wishes of the majority of residents.

The preparation of an Eastern Area Plan is due to commence soon. The DLGE are currently making serious plans for an expansion, of the industrial zone, to the south of the Cooil Road. **I want to be able to see that residents' views are not ignored** in this process.

The incinerator

Thirdly, I would like the opportunity **to carry on representing your interests on the Richmond Hill Consultative Committee** - the body that helps to regulate the operation of the incinerator. Two Ministers have commented that although at times they found my questioning of their Department's activities 'uncomfortable', the public interest was well served by it.

The next four years

Fourthly, I hope that the new Board will be able **to deliver on some of the long-promised community facilities** at the Strang corner-field, and elsewhere in the parish.

Finally, I believe **it will be valuable to have continuity** in Board membership - particularly to carry through the reforms started recently.

"My pledge to you remains that I will devote my time and energy to work honestly and in the best interests of the electors and ratepayers of Braddan Parish."

Finally - and once again - thank you to those of you who have supported me in the past.

If you think that I am the candidate most likely to carry on living up to your expectations – then please:

VOTE ANDREW JESSOPP ON THURSDAY 24th APRIL

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